

the WholeNote™



Volume 27 No 2
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2021

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MAKES US”**
Zorana Sadiq

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Volume 27 No 2 | October 29 – December 10, 2021

ON OUR COVER



PHOTO: DAVID LEYES

Music makes us ... humans are instruments ... we come out of the box with everything we need to express ourselves ... My hope is that audiences will become aware of their own 'instrumentality' in the course of the play.

— Zorana Sadiq, pg 6

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TOPIC FOR A TOPICAL PIECE

DAVID PERLMAN

There are those who turn the lack of a topic into a topic for a journalistic piece. The choice is absurd in a world like ours where things of incalculable interest are happening. Someone who thinks of sitting down to write about nothing need only flip through the day's newspaper to make the initial problem turn into its exact opposite: how to know which topic to choose out of the many on offer. See, for example, the front page of your average newspaper. "Two children burned while playing with flying saucers." Light a cigarette. Look over, very carefully the scrambled alphabet of the Underwood and begin with the most attractive letter.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Nobel Prize-winning author of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Love in the Time of Cholera* made his literary start, from 1950 to 1952, under the name Septimus, grinding out a 700-word column, usually whimsically scathing, for *El Heraldo*, the local paper in Barranquillo, Colombia. "I'd write a piece and they'd pay me three pesos for it," he later recalled, "and maybe an editorial for another three." The title I have pirated for this opener, roughly translated, is his, from a column, "Tema para un tema", written on April 11 1950.

So, in the spirit of that column, as we emerge from our own many weeks of solitude in times of plague, here is my three-pesos-worth – on a bit of this and a bit of that. And having got the above bit of whimsy out of my system, I will, for once, stick to being helpful.

Under construction

Regular readers will notice that, for the first time in many months, the yellow UNDER CONSTRUCTION warning sign at the beginning of our Listings Section, which starts on page 22, has disappeared from that location, because we are a lot further ahead than we were when the sign went up. Please check out the revised notice that appears in its stead.

Whether you are looking for live music to attend now that restrictions have eased, or are still not ready to take in live performances again (no matter what the authorities say), you will still find the music (and musicians) you know, here in these listings – live, livestreamed and, best of all, in hybrid forms of live and digital, the best of which will, I am sure, be here to stay.

So I have a suggestion: rather than treating the listings as printed in this edition as "a concert bible," as so many of you have called it

over the years, think of them instead as *evidence* of what's going on, meriting further investigation.

One reason is that we are on a slightly reduced schedule this year (eight issues instead of nine). So the publication date only matches the start of the calendar month roughly every two issues. Next issue after this one, for example, will come out in the middle of December and cover events roughly to the end of January. And the second reason is that things continue to change so rapidly that *anything* we say about events could have changed by the time you read it. An example: the TSO fall season was cautiously designed on the assumption that live attendance would be impossible or, at the very best, severely constrained. Now, all of a sudden, 60% capacity attendance at Roy Thomson Hall is a reality, which means 1,500 or so tickets available for live attendance at November concerts.

Music makers are gradually getting into the habit of sending us new info or changes in time for our weekly listings updates (details are on page 22); so, readers, please make it worth their while by signing up to receive those updates every weekend.

Baker's dozen

I recently had an email from a longtime *WholeNote* reader who had just picked up the previous issue of the magazine (Vol 27, no 1). "It's been a busy and distracting period, but I'm so glad to see *WholeNote* is up and running again," they said. Fact is, since the 2020 mid-March lockdown we have published 13 times (including this one). But no hard feelings! We have all to a greater or lesser extent fallen prey to "refrigerator syndrome" – where nothing exists till one opens the door and the light comes on.

We do have back issues though and will be delighted to send them out to you while our increasingly limited supplies last (see page 58). And as restrictions on mainstreet indoor activity are lifted, so too our network of what we call our "legacy" distribution points – places where complimentary copies are available – is steadily growing again. There's a list and map, updated weekly, under the "About Us" tab on our website.

So, back at *you*, dear reader: "Thanks for the note. As you say, it's been a busy and distracting period, but *we're* so glad to see that *you're* up and running again!"

Up and running again, indeed! Based on the buzz in the issue, it sure feels like it.

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Upcoming Dates & Deadlines

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for Volume 27 No. 3
DECEMBER 2021 & January 2022

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High and Dry: Zorana Sadiq at Music Mondays in July of 2014.

ZORANA SADIQ at CROW'S

LYDIA PEROVIĆ

One-woman show. A listening room. A melding of narration and sound-making. Personal and universal. A monologue but also very much a dialogue with the musical tradition.

I'm seated at a picnic table in Leslie Grove Park with Toronto-based soprano Zorana Sadiq, trying to tease out what her new creation opening at Crow's Theatre on November 9 is going to be like. Before the pandemic, Toronto's classical world was beginning to feature some beautifully crafted one-artist shows (Isaiah Bell, Teiya Kasahara) and the years ahead looked promising for this low-cost, high-creativity format. But then the pandemic stopped everything – and for far too long. And it's no surprise that one of the very few live events in Toronto this autumn will be a one-performer play: Sadiq's shape-shifting *MixTape*.

The one-singer play, directed by Crow's artistic director Chris Abraham, is a result of Sadiq's many years of music listening, making and teaching. The spark was, however, ignited at a musical event some seven years ago. "Back then, I did a concert of arrangements of my first musical loves, Kate Bush, Prince and Radiohead," says Sadiq. The songs were arranged for classical soprano and a small chamber ensemble, Joe Macerollo on accordion, Peter Tiefenbach, piano and Timothy Francom, percussion. "Each song was transformed differently – sometimes they sounded like tango, other times like Glass. It was a lovely period working with those open-minded and creative musicians. They approached the pop music



that I brought in as new works, which was perfect."

The record of the July 28 2014 performance at Holy Trinity Church concert series Music Mondays is available on YouTube: if you search Sadiq's name, the video of their remarkable riff on Radiohead's "High and Dry" will be easy to find.

Sadiq's friend, director Nina Lee Aquino, came to the concert and told her that there was a show in there. At first she wasn't sure. "But once all those things were out on the table – those early loves; my classical voice; what those artists showed me to do – I began to think how it all relates to who I am now and what I do as an artist," Sadiq says. "I was curious about how art makes us. How it builds us. How the paths can be unusual."

Sadiq has always been a fan of words and grew up in a book-reading household, her mother a writer. "I love to write but I never applied myself in this way. Once I decided to do it, it all came together. You realize your musical obsessions, you can trace them through all your roles, and through your teaching. I would often say to my students at Regent Park School of Music, listen how the melody is saying it too! Not just the words. And listen for what is there that is relevant to you. This kind of music is not some dusty thing in a museum; it's *you*, it's *your thing*."

As the title suggests, Sadiq has crafted the piece in the format of a mixtape: DIY, democratic and low cost, and often containing widely different things. This live mixtape will have no instruments other than Sadiq's voice in the mix, however. "The story goes through the prism of speaking and sound." And the topics? "How music makes us. How humans are instruments. How we come out

of the box with everything we need to express ourselves. All of us get filtered through language, pack up and condense those sounds that we're making. And then some people train their voices, in a number of different styles, in my case classical. That's a further attempt to cultivate this instrument that we all have. And I really do mean that we all have it. Some of us are more aware of that than others, and my hope is that audiences will become aware of their own 'instrumentality' in the course of the play."

Other artists will appear in the show's repertoire: Neil Diamond, Kate Bush, showtunes. "Miles Davis is a big part of my life. Messiaen is a big part of my life. Some Eastern musicians that have influenced me with different styles of singing are there too. Lots of popular stuff."

What does she love about Kate Bush, for example? Her eyes light up. "She has a very rangy, almost operatic sound. She's unabashed about using that range, and this was the time when female popular sound was nothing like that. She's also a wild storyteller," she adds. "Her work was so programmatic. As a young person, if you wanted to jump into a make-believe world, she was your ticket." Bush also came to prominence in the MTV era, when the video was an important component of music making, no? "Totally. She's a polymath. She studied mime in Paris – what she could say without sound, which was interesting to me. She was a dancer. She used all that and synthesized it."

What does Bush mean to you personally? I ask Sadiq. "She is... feminine power to me. Deeply, deeply feminine, in a conventional way at that time in the 1980s, but so powerful. That high voice... I love that: unapologetic power." And there's her storytelling, never obvious, always with a dash of mystery, combining the narrative with the poetic. "And then, I think, with sex represented in music; when someone is bold and warm like that, it shows you a possibility, it gives you a little *whoah*, you say to your young self, OK, so *that's* what a sexual identity is like. It could be like *that*. She modelled how to be a sexual woman."



Streetcar Crowsnest Theatre

Mozart too makes an appearance in the play? "Pleasure comes up a lot in this show," says Sadiq. "There's so much pleasure in making classical sounds and the sort of a flight feeling when you are singing well. And although Mozart is extremely difficult and really tests the musician on all levels, it's also the most delicious music – the earliest kind of success feeling for a singer. It's a truly beautiful thing to sing and hear. As a child I actually first heard his clarinet concerto in A Major on the soundtrack in *Out of Africa* and adored it. I couldn't get enough of it. And the first thing I sang as a 19-year-old was "Ridente la calma", the Mozart Lied that everybody sings. And I thought, This is so lovely and so hard, but pleasure in execution is really high in Mozart. You can see the brilliance of how he wrote for the voice, how much he loved that instrument."

Sadiq has also sung a lot of contemporary music in her career of a soprano, and that, she argues, is a wholly different experience. "When



Tuesday, November 9 at 8 pm

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you sing Elliott Carter, for instance, another composer that I love, the pleasure is of a different sort. There is an intellectual pleasure going on there; there's a sort of a rhythmic, animal pleasure going on as well."

I ask her if any of the Mozart-Da Ponte heroines are included in her *MixTape* narration. "It's rather the non-verbal component of music that I'm making the case for. I do very much investigate actual melody and sound, but characterization wasn't that appealing to me for this show. This is a personal story of what I made of my life – through my ears."

Is she a very literary singer? Sadiq confirms she is an avid reader. "I will asterisk passages in books and dog ear them, and go back multiple times – something will arrest me in the way somebody arranges words." Like a lot of musicians, she seeks and finds the music of the sentence, the way words sound together, the rhythm of their jostling. "Sentences can lacerate me. I kind of collect them. Those crazy sentences that I write down when I find them, because they're so evocative."

She also reads poetry and enjoys lyrical fiction. "Anne Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces* is one of my favourites of all time. And I love her poetry." Plotting in novels, she can take or leave. "Plot is secondary for me. It's all about *how* you say it."

MixTape runs at Crow's Theatre from November 9 to 28 at 8pm, with Sunday matinees at 2pm. Choose your own emergent comfort level: half the performances will be at 50% capacity, the other half at 100%. 

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



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CLASSICAL AND BEYOND

GOODYEAR, THEN LISIECKI AT KOERNER; RTH at 60% capacity for Gimeno's TSO return

PAUL ENNIS

There are hopeful signs of live-music life at the RCM's Koerner Hall. On November 27, virtuoso pianist Stewart Goodyear, joined by the Penderecki String Quartet, perform the world premiere of his piano quintet based on themes from Beethoven, after which Goodyear takes on Beethoven's monumental *Symphony No. 9*, in Franz Liszt's transcription for solo piano and voices, accompanied by members of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, soprano Jonelle Sills, mezzo-soprano Beste Kalender, tenor Zachary Rioux and baritone Korin Thomas-Smith, all current or recent students of The Royal Conservatory.

I caught up with Goodyear for an email conversation that touched on his response to the pandemic, his relationship to Beethoven and how he is feeling about his first public appearance in Toronto since the pandemic.

WN: It's been about a year since our most recent email exchange; you were just about to traverse Beethoven's ten sonatas for violin and piano with James Ehnes last December – livestreamed from an empty Koerner Hall, and you talked about how the finale of the Ninth Symphony was the first piece of Beethoven's music that made a strong impression on you. "I was riveted," you said. "I never heard such music – comforting and exulting the listener, a music of optimism and a bright hope for humanity." What's it like to be back?

SG: It will be my first public appearance [here] since the pandemic. Very meaningful to me as I was in my home town for most of the pandemic; finally performing in public in this city makes me feel like I am playing for friends who I grew up with. I am honoured to perform Beethoven's Ninth; its ode to humanity is something I believe we all have to internalize, especially with the things that have happened these past two years.

Was the pandemic a fertile time for you creatively?

Yes and no. It was a very trying time, and there were moments where it took a lot of energy to feel hopeful and optimistic. I wish I was a composer who can pour out emotions when spirits are low, but I felt depleted of inspiration, and I spent more time learning repertoire, reading and cooking than writing. I must say, however, that after the pandemic my approach to composing deepened, and my piano playing has changed as well. I think that is due to a feeling of hope spreading everywhere, plus the warmth I have experienced from audiences in the past few months as concert halls reopened.

It's an auspicious return to Koerner, not the least of which is the world premiere of your Piano Quintet. What sparked you to base it on themes from Beethoven?

Beethoven has been a part of my life from the very beginning, and the power of his music inspired and strengthened me in different chapters of my life. When I was commissioned to write a work that paid homage

Stewart Goodyear

UPDATE: This concert has been rescheduled
to Wednesday February 9, 2022

ANITA ZVONAR

to Beethoven, it probably was the most personal assignment, as this brought me to the beginning of my journey as a musician.

How long did you work on it? What challenges did you encounter?

I worked on the first three movements very quickly. I wrote them in swift succession in the winter of 2020. It was the closing movement that took the majority of time. Beethoven's music is filled with hope, even in the darkest hour, and I needed to feel that hope. That feeling finally came this fall, and I could only then bring the quintet to its conclusion.

What are the Beethoven themes you incorporated in it?

The first movement is a slow-burning passacaglia, based on an 11-note sequence from the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The themes of the second movement are original, using only the gestures of a Beethoven-esque minuet. The third movement is a furious scherzo, with themes from Beethoven's "Waldstein" sonata, Second Symphony and the Op.135 string quartet used as hip-hop sampling. The last movement is original, calm and hopefully ethereal.

How early did you discover Liszt's piano arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies?

When I was six years old.

Did Liszt include soloists and a choir in any version of the Ninth Symphony? Performing it with singers seems to be a rare occurrence. How many members of the Mendelssohn Choir will participate?

The Liszt arrangement of the Ninth Symphony has choir and orchestra incorporated in the fourth movement. For my Koerner Hall performance, I will be incorporating Liszt's transcription for the wholly orchestral moments and scaling back the arrangement during the solos and choir moments. This will be my first time ever performing this work. There will be around 27 members of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir participating.

Jan Lisiecki: Now 26, Jan Lisiecki makes his sixth Koerner Hall appearance on December 12 with a rare pairing of Chopin's Études Op.10, Nos. 1 to 12 with 11 of the composer's Nocturnes (all 20 of which appear on Lisiecki's latest Deutsche Grammophon recording). In an Ottawa Chamberfest conversation with Eric Friessen on September 30, he described growing up with the Nocturnes, and the many years it took to plan the double CD – years during which he played the nocturnes as encores to get feedback. "Nocturnes are poems written in the moment," he said. "Each nocturne needs to tell its own unique story." And slowing the tempo – as Lisiecki often does – creates more interior space and contributes to a dreamlike nighttime mood. When I saw the unusual juxtaposition of the Études with the Nocturnes in his upcoming recital, I asked Lisiecki about his programming choices.

"The concept of putting this program together started very much with an idea, or a wish to include Chopin's Nocturnes in a recital program" he replied. "Now, including purely Chopin's Nocturnes would be very challenging, for the attention of the audience, for the communication with them, for the atmosphere – while putting simply a few, an opus or two would ... result in a program that is completely standard, nothing special whatsoever. So, I came up with the idea to match Chopin's Études from Op. 10 with his Nocturnes. They are matched according to

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"Nocturnes are poems written in the moment": Jan Lisiecki, online from Poznań, Poland; in an Ottawa Chamberfest "Chamber Chat" with Eric Friessen (September 30, 2021)

STUART-LOWE



Gustavo Gimeno Conducts the TSO

key and of course according to atmosphere as well. I believe they form a very nice line from the very beginning to the very end, while also presenting the Nocturnes which, as I said, was my first goal."

I see that you are playing the Op.10 Études in ascending order from 1 to 12. So how did you decide which nocturnes to program and where to place them?

Putting the Op. 10 Études in order from No.1 to No.12 was a very simple choice made purely because the first Étude is a fantastic opening and the last is a fantastic closing, and everything fits very beautifully in between. Since that was sort of a backbone, it didn't make sense to shuffle things up – there was no point in doing so, and the Nocturnes could be fitted in between the Études.

Toronto Symphony Orchestra: Heralding a return to live concertizing in front of an audience, the TSO and their new musical director, Gustavo Gimeno, got together for a surprise livestream event on October 14 for donors and patrons. The program ranged from Joseph Bologne's elegant *Symphony in D Major Op.11, No. 2*, to Gary Kulesha's arrangement of Nathaniel Dett's melancholy "His Song", to Brahms' *Serenade No.1, Op.11*, a work foreshadowing the soaring melodies of the symphonic composer we're familiar with. Smooth and balanced, the program was a big step back into orchestral waters – "typical of the different musical perspectives we plan for this season," as Gimeno described it.

Gimeno's long-anticipated in-person debut as TSO music director comes just as audiences are able to return to Roy Thomson Hall for the first time in 18 months, November 10 to 13. Anthony Barfield's *Invictus* – a 2020 composition that reflects on this unique moment in time and delivers a stirring ode to humanity's capacity for resilience – serves as the season-opening fanfare, followed by Haydn's *Overture to L'isola disabitata*, then by the Jazz Age spirit and celebratory flourish of Hindemith's *Concert Music for Strings and Brass*. Schubert's

free-flowing melodic gifts are on full display in his Fifth Symphony which rounds out the program.

The TSO's November 17 and 18 concert, also conducted by Gimeno, focuses on the orchestra's strings. An 11th-century poem by Omar Khayyám inspired pop-influenced grooves in the music of Sri Lankan-born Canadian Dinuk Wijeratne; fellow Canadian Kelly-Marie Murphy's *Rains of Ash and Embers* extols our country's natural wonders. Mahler's heart-rending *Adagietto* from his *Symphony No. 5* and Schoenberg's sensuous *Verklärte Nacht (Transfigured Night)* are among the most stunningly beautiful works in the classical canon.

The TSO's woodwind, brass and percussion sections take centre stage on November 19 and 20 in a lively program: Joan Tower's *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman, No.1* (in the composer's words, "dedicated to women who take risks and are adventurous"), Dvořák's charming *Serenade in D Minor*, Steve Reich's mesmerizing *Music for Pieces of Wood*, and Stravinsky's colourful salute to Debussy, *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*. The program, which marks Gimeno's final TSO appearance of 2021, closes with the *Sinfonietta for Winds and Percussion* from one of Canada's most acclaimed 20th-century composers, Oskar Morawetz.

Rounding out the month, Peter Oundjian returns to Roy Thomson Hall for his first concert as TSO conductor emeritus, on November 24, 25, 27 and 28, in a program headed by Beethoven's "Egmont" Overture, Strauss' lovely *Serenade in E-flat Major* and the radiant music of Florence Price. All of which serve as prologue for Tchaikovsky's uber-Romantic, unforgettable *Violin Concerto* with Canadian rising star Timothy Chooi, just 27 years old.

Approximately 60% of available capacity will be offered for TSO performances in November at Roy Thomson Hall (roughly 1,550 seats out of 2,600). Proof of COVID vaccination is required; masks must be worn at all times except when eating or drinking.

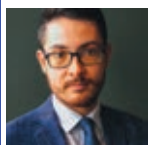
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QUICK PICKS

NOV 7, 3PM: Trio Arkel (Marie Bérard, violin, Winona Zelenka, cello, and new member Rémi Pelletier, viola) open their new season with Jean Cras' inventive string trio. Montreal pianist Philip Chiu joins them for Schubert's enthralling *Fantasia* (arranged for piano quartet) and Guillaume Lekeu's *Piano Quartet*. Lekeu died of typhoid fever at 24 before finishing the work, commissioned by fellow Belgian, noted violinist Eugène Ysaÿe. Vincent d'Indy, who considered his former pupil a genius, added seven bars to complete the piece. The concert, which takes place at Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, will be available on demand for 14 days from November 14.

NOV 9, 8PM: Music Toronto presents pianist Stephen Hough in a varied program that climaxes with a Chopin grouping – a ballade, scherzo and two nocturnes. Hough's playing is always thoughtful and often astonishing, making any Hough recital unmissable.

NOV 18, 8PM: The St. Lawrence String Quartet's affinity for Haydn will be on display in a Jane Mallett Theatre Music Toronto presentation of four of the master's Op.76 string quartets, Nos. 4, 2, 5 and 3. Expect an ebullient performance led by first violinist Geoff Nuttall and an exuberant verbal commentary from him as well.

NOV 20, 7:30PM: Kingston's Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts presents "A Celebration of the Violin" with violinists Jonathan Crow and David Baik and pianist Philip Chiu in works by St. Georges, Ysaÿe, Brahms and Moszkowski.

NOV 21, 7PM: Stratford's INNERchamber Ensemble presents "Love Story – Selected Letters by Clara Schumann

and Johannes Brahms". Between movements of Clara Schumann's *Piano Trio op. 17 in G Minor* and Brahms' *Piano Trio op. 87 in C Minor* performed by Emily Hamper (piano), Andrew Chung (violin) and Ben Bolt-Martin (cello), Marion Adler and Scott Wentworth read from the two composers' intimate letters.

NOV 25, 1:30PM: For the next concert in the Women's Musical Club of Toronto (WMCT) season, percussionists Beverley Johnston, Aiyun Huang and Russell Hartenberger will roll out a broad range of instruments – from marimba and vibraphone to drums and flower pots – with (literally) lots of bells and whistles from the percussion studio directly behind the Walter Hall stage. Flutist Susan Hoepfner and violinist Marc Djokic join them in a program that includes Bach on marimba, 20th-century classics by Lou Harrison and Astor Piazzolla as well as *Eagles*, by Russell Hartenberger, a WMCT commission premiere. **O**

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.

2021/2022

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For almost anyone with an internet connection, streaming services are a hugely popular source for entertainment, requiring only a compatible device to access a near-infinite variety of entertainment. Classical music occupies a miniscule slice of the market, but medici.tv and a few other, smaller services, nevertheless present a wide range of performances and documentaries for enthusiasts everywhere, performed by an equally wide range of musicians, orchestras and ensembles.

In December last year in this column, I wrote that early music specialists, The Toronto Consort, had joined the party by launching Early Music TV (earlymusic.tv) – the Consort’s response to external circumstances, as the global pandemic ravaged performing arts organizations around the world.

Now, almost a full year later, the ensemble has announced that Early Music TV will continue to be the primary vehicle for all new Consort material, for the duration of the 2021/22 concert season. The consolation, for The Consort’s devotees, hungry for live music in familiar surroundings, is that all performances are being staged and recorded at Jeanne Lamon Hall in the Trinity-St. Paul’s Centre, the ensemble’s home for as long as most of us can remember.

The Consort’s 2021/22 season features four concerts, each with a clear focus. On November 17, *Fellowship of Creatures*, described as a new contextualization of ancient works, will be released, featuring storytelling, traditional songs, and vocal and instrumental works by Josquin, Gibbons, Ravenscroft and Palestrina. Curated by Consort artistic associate Alison Melville, the program is a special collaboration with Cree-Métis baritone Jonathon Adams, Ojibwe singer-drummer Marilyn George, and award-winning visual and performing artist Rene Meshake, who describes himself as “an Ojibwe funky elder, ... author, storyteller, flute player, and new media artist.” Subtitled as “An offering to our nation’s conversation”, *Fellowship of Creatures* is described by the Consort as “a reflection on the living community of our shared world” and should provide for a fascinating, mind-opening approach to works that are embedded in the Western classical music tradition.

The spirit of the season then takes over in December with *A Christmas Story*, which goes into production in early November. It will be a narrated concert incorporating William Tyndale’s biblical translations, read in historical dialect by Consort founding member David Klausner. Tyndale, who lived from 1494–1536, was the first English translator to work directly from Hebrew and Greek texts,

and his labours resulted in the first English biblical translation (completed by Myles Coverdale) that was mass-produced as a result of new advances in the art of printing. These dramatic readings will be interspersed with masterpieces of sacred polyphony, festive dances, and carols, taking that familiar Christmas story and making it into a uniquely heartfelt and engaging experience. Blankets and cocoa are recommended, but not required!

The textual mastery of Tyndale’s translations is replaced by more worldly (and, alas, entirely topical) fare in March 2022 with *Escape from Florence*, centred around excerpts from Giovanni Boccaccio’s



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The Decameron. A flamboyant how-to guide for surviving a pandemic and considered a masterpiece of classical early Italian prose, *The Decameron* contains 100 tales told by a group of seven young women and three young men who are sheltering in a secluded villa just outside Florence in order to escape the Black Death. A documentation of life at the time, Boccaccio conceived of *The Decameron* after the epidemic of 1348, and completed it by 1353. This performance, scheduled for production over the winter, will be Consort stalwart Laura Pudwell's first EarlyMusic.tv curatorial outing; it promises to be both a darkly comic evocation of the pangs of the past two years and at the same time a soothing balm for them!

The season draws to a close in June with *Celestial Revolutions*, featuring the world premiere of a new commission by Canadian composer Alex Eddington, as well as music from the cosmopolitan cities of 16th-century Leipzig, Basel and Prague. This concert is constructed around the life and work of Danish astronomer and alchemist Tycho Brahe (1546-1601), who, among other things, lost part of his nose in a sword duel and wore a prosthetic for the rest of his life. Driven by his passion for accurate observations and the quest for improved instruments of measurement, Brahe made groundbreakingly precise astronomical determinations without a telescope. An exploration of the music of Brahe's life and times, *Celestial Revolutions* will be a treat for the mind and the ears; true to The Consort's inclusive spirit, it will likely be equally satisfying



BRUCE ZINGER

Laura Pudwell



DAHLIA KATZ

Alex Eddington

to those who are astronomically inclined and those who are not.

For anyone with a passion for early music, Early Music TV is a terrific resource. While The Consort's music is, in the best sense, rather backwards-looking, Early Music TV is decidedly modern, engaging with most of the available technology and accessible through web browsers, apps on iOS and Android, streaming through Apple TV, Amazon and Chromecast, as well as a RokuTV app. At the same time it is straightforward enough that even the least tech-savvy person can navigate it. The content itself is both engaging and satisfying, with high-definition audio and video providing as close to an in-person experience as one can obtain from their living room. With concerts available both individually and as a season-long pass, viewers are free to choose those performances that are of greatest interest or to take in the year in its entirety, providing the same level of purchasing flexibility as in an in-person season.

If you have not yet done so, you can explore and subscribe to the channel here (<https://earlymusic.tv/>) before *Fellowship of Creatures* is released in November. The challenges of the last two years have led, of necessity, to advances in the technological capabilities of performing groups both large and small. The Toronto Consort's upcoming season promises to make a virtue of that necessity. ●

Matthew Whitfield is a Toronto-based harpsichordist and organist.

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Introducing Jean-Sébastien Vallée

DAVID PERLMAN



THAM LAN TRUONG

I recently connected, twice, with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir's recently appointed artistic director, Jean-Sébastien Vallée (the eighth conductor in the choir's 127-year history). The first time was on September 20, when I visited a TMC rehearsal; the second on October 4, for a chat in *The WholeNote* office. Both visits were on Mondays, because, at time of writing anyway, Mondays are Vallée's only Toronto day. In a typical week, both his choral and his environmental footprint grow – flying between home-base Montreal (where he is music director of the renowned Choir of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, and teaches at McGill's Schulich School of Music), Ottawa (where he conducts the all-amateur Ottawa Choral Society), and now Toronto.

September 20 (Election Day)

"Turn left to vote, right to sing" said the friendly greeter, seated in the little lobby area that links the sanctuary at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church with the adjoining community hall.

I'd already voted, so I dutifully turned right, not in the expectation of doing much singing, but to observe Vallée putting the choir through its paces in preparation for *Coming to Carry Me Home*, their November 2 season-opening concert. It was the first rehearsal at which actually rehearsing took priority over things like handing out scores and all the other seasonal business that goes with a large choir creaking back to life.

After presenting proof of full vaccination, I sat in the side pews, adjacent to the basses, armed with scores at hand for both works being rehearsed, but having declined Vallée's invitation to join in if I liked. That being said, the energy over the course of the close-to-three-hour rehearsal was contagious, and from time to time I found myself rumbling along.

The two works being rehearsed, with all choristers masked, were Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* and Nathaniel Dett's *The Chariot Jubilee*. At this particular rehearsal it was the Brahms that received the lion's share of attention, which worked well for me, because the work is a member-in-good-standing of the "great classical master-works of the world" fraternity, and therefore familiar to both choir and conductor. So the rehearsal was a more nuanced affair than grappling with a new piece for the first time would likely have been -- and

therefore more of an opportunity to get some early hints of the things Vallée cares about most as a conductor.

Passion anchored in practicality would be one way to describe what I saw and heard: an insistence on clarity of articulation and phrasing so the music always serves the work's narrative arc. Patient iterative work with a clear emotional goal always in mind.

There were some particularly nice moments: "*Brahms is a genius, my friends, but here he has some problems*" (Vallée says, stopping the choir in mid-measure). He then gets the whole choir to sing the problematic passage in unison, after which the three sections not usually singing that line have a much clearer idea of what it is that they have a responsibility not to overpower. Another nice moment, during a devilishly long passage: "*Let's talk about the difference between individual and common breathing. The one is part of the music, the other is not. In theory, a choir could actually sing forever without having any breath that the audience hears.*"

And my favourite moment (stopping things mid-stream again): "*A general rule, please: never make the highest note your most important.*" (I've been going through my mental rolodex of anthems ever since, to test that one!)

October 4

Two Mondays later, mid-afternoon, we met up again, this time to talk. He came straight to *The WholeNote* office from the airport, with a plan that someone would pick him up from here to take him for a quick meal before the evening's rehearsal. (It must have been a very quick bite, because we rambled on for a lot longer than we had planned.)

In an ideal world, this is where I would say that you can find the longer version of the conversation on our website. And it may still happen. But I don't advise holding your breath (individually or in common) in the meanwhile.

Here's just a taste.

On his busy schedule:

They say if you want something done well, give it to a busy person, but even so, isn't this pushing it?

Maybe so. I started in August, thinking through how to make it all happen. So I'll be doing all the special projects and concerts [at St. Andrew-St. Paul] this year. But none of the Sunday services ... so now I can travel on Sundays! I've been working as a church musician since age 16. I figure it could be time to be able to travel or just have brunch. So this is my last year with them. Right now I leave [Toronto] right after rehearsal, take the 11pm flight back to Montreal and usually teach at 9:30 in Montreal on Tuesdays, but I may try to move my teaching schedule. That way once we've got longer stretches here -- Monday and Wednesday rehearsals -- I will stay longer.

But Ottawa Choral Society is also Wednesdays, right?
Usually, but on a flexible schedule, with three concerts to prepare. And I have a really good associate that we just hired who's covering most of the rehearsals. So it will become a bit more under control. Not last week though! Monday was here, Tuesday in Montreal, Wednesday in Ottawa. And back again. We don't get bored.

On team building:

Speaking of artistic associates, at TMC there will be three of you, right? You, Simon Rivard [also RBC Resident Conductor with the TSO and conductor of the TSYO] as associate conductor, and Irene Gregorio as collaborative pianist. How will it work?

I'm doing three of the four concerts, with Simon co-conducting Festival of Carols in December, and also playing a role in *Endangered* in May with me. And in between he's fully taking on *Sacred Music for a Sacred Space* in April, along with Brainerd Blyden-Taylor of the Nathaniel Dett Chorale.

And Irene Gregorio? You worked with her at the University of Southern California, right?

Worked together, yes, and were colleagues and friends.

Is that how she came on board?

We had a real search process ... close to 18 applications, of which we shortlisted 10 or 12. Auditions, I made sure she knew about that because of what I remembered of her. I had moved back to Canada in 2015 so it had been six, seven years, but I had such a great memory of my time with her. Not just as a wonderful pianist, but someone really good at understanding what a choir needs – not just the music, but also how you work with people in this kind of context. That's something that needs to come from every member in the team. So, you know, I made sure she knew.

On the TMC's home-page mission statement:

The mission statement on the TMC website says three things: the TMC is "one of Canada's largest choral organizations"; its role is to "provide Canadian audiences the experience of the classical choral masterworks of the world"; and that "grand symphonic sound has been the TMC's trademark for 125 years." How do you honour all that but still find room to do things differently?

That's the challenge for every large choral group, especially one that's been in the field of music for as long as TMC. Yes there's [a core canon] of masterworks, some less well known than the Brahms *Requiem*. How do we renew our mission and still honour that? It's much easier when I'm working with a chamber choir. Twenty voices is a much more flexible medium for commissioning and taking on newer works.

Part of the answer is what we're doing with this first concert: to look at the time-tested Masterworks, but in a way that is a bit newer, mostly by matching them up in the same program with other works that do not meet that "official" criterion. That way we shed new light on each of these works, taken together. But clearly the definition of Masterworks is itself problematic – not insofar as questioning the quality of the works – I would never dare question the value of work by Brahms or Bach – but in how that leads to overlooking other works. That's why I'm also hoping, in the seasons to come, to revitalize the role of the professional core of TMC – it used to be the Elora Singers in that role.

And it was called the Chamber Choir before that?

The chamber choir, exactly. But whatever we decide to call it, that group will be able to do more things on their own, not to shine independently but to contribute to the organization's larger goals – taking on repertoire that shines in its own right but also turns around the way we view the so-called larger Masterworks.

And in every area – organizational, recruitment, community engagement, repertoire, sound, working with other choirs – there are things that we can turn around this way, given time.

Seven conductors in 127 years is an average of 18 years each. Time shouldn't be a problem. 

David Perlman can be reached at publisher@thewholenote.com

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JENNIFER PARR



Who's That Woman? (The MirrorSong) with Jackie Richardson as "Stella" at centre; with (left to right) Tess Bengel, Cynthia Dale, Jenni Burke, Mary Lou Fallis, Charlotte Moore (behind Richardson), Katelyn Bird, Lorraine Foreman, Denise Fergusson, Ma-Anne Dionisio, Kimberly-Ann Truong.

The air was electric with anticipation as a top-notch staged-concert production of Stephen Sondheim's and James Goldman's iconic musical *Follies* at Koerner Hall on the weekend of October 16/17 signalled the return of indoor live musical theatre to town. For most of us this was the first indoor live performance we had seen since lockdown back in March of 2020.

The performance went from strength to strength; the connection between stage and spectators grew stronger; and a joy-filled audience leaped to a standing ovation at the end. Not only had we witnessed a near-perfect rendering of one of Sondheim's most complex shows but, at the same time, been given the chance to celebrate the depth and breadth of musical theatre talent in our own country.

Back in 2019, director Richard Ouzounian had suggested to producer Mervon Mehta that they produce a Canadian "all-star" concert production of *Follies* in honour of Sondheim's 90th birthday in the fall of 2020. Its postponement until *this* fall made it an even more profound celebration. Its trademark Sondheim darkness and cynicism, notwithstanding, *Follies* is, perhaps more than any of his other musicals, perfectly suited for this occasion. Set in a Broadway theatre about to be demolished in spite of its long history as the home of the Weismann (think *Ziegfeld*) *Follies*, a one-time-only reunion is about to take place there, gathering together *Follies* performers from throughout the theatre's history. Most of the show's characters are these performers, along with a few of their partners.

At the heart of the story are two couples: Sally and Buddy, Phyllis and Ben, who had been friends 30 years before when Sally and Phyllis were in the company and Buddy and Ben were the boys who "waited for the girls upstairs" to take them out after the show. As the guests all reminisce about the past and relive some of their favourite moments onstage, the quartet of friends, shadowed by their younger selves, go on a painful journey through the "follies" of their youth, and their paths taken since the *Follies* closed. The device of the younger shadowing couples brilliantly allows the characters to interact not just with each other but with their younger selves, working through the impact of decisions taken or not taken in a way that – in this version of the book – allows them to find a measure of redemption and hope by the end.

One of the most extraordinary moments of this is the duet between Buddy and his younger self as he sings the agonizing "The Right Girl", his own body jabbing out sharply as the accents of the music depict the jabs of agony inside, while young Buddy dances – reacts with his full body – expressing even more of this shared anguish in wonderful choreography by Genny Sermonia, a talent to be watched. Playing Buddy is Toronto native and TV star Eric McCormack, truly staking a claim to this role. As Young Buddy, Gabriel Antonacci is uncanny in his mirroring of McCormack's physicality, making this number an early show highlight. McCormack's one-man – with puppets – version of "The God Why Don't You Love Me Blues" in the second half is another virtuoso – and fun – highlight.

Paired with McCormack is Ma-Anne Dionisio as Sally. Still known primarily for her breakout starring role in *Miss Saigon*, Dionisio has been quietly staking a claim to roles of emotional depth in musical productions around the country, including recent Toronto productions of *Parade* and *Next to Normal*. It is astutely unusual casting – she lacks what I think of as the usual Sondheim bitter edge, yet it works wonderfully, contrasting her soft, deeply felt performances of "In Buddy's Eyes" and the more devastating "Losing My Mind" with the bitterness displayed by the other characters. Interestingly, her younger counterpart, played by rising star Kimberly-Ann Truong, has more edge than she does, giving the portrayal of Sally an unusual and interesting arc.

In total contrast to Sally, as the character demands, is TV and Stratford star Cynthia Dale as Phyllis, showing just as much emotional depth but with style and edge, particularly in the vicious parody of Lancelot's "If Ever I Could Leave You" from *Camelot* – "Could I Leave You" – which she performed with an elemental and yet sophisticated savagery that left us breathless. In "The Story of Lucy and Jesse" she got to unleash her sardonic humour, again, as well as superb dancing chops in sexy choreography wonderfully backed up by Young Buddy and Young Ben. Paired with Dale as Ben is Marcus Nance who has been increasingly visible as a leading man this summer in superb cabaret performances for the Stratford Festival's digital *Up Close and Musical* series, and in the live cabaret *Why We Tell the Story*. Nance's velvet baritone voice is just right for Ben and he is echoed nicely by Andrew Broderick as his younger self. Tess Bengel, as Young Phyllis, establishes the bright promise of the young Phyllis and we get the chance to see all four young versions together in the period perfect "You're Gonna Love Tomorrow/Love Will See Us Through".



The Story of Lucy and Jesse: Cynthia Dale at centre as Phyllis, with Gabriel Antonacci (left) and Andrew Broderick, (right).

Around the central drama of the four friends, the other guests are reliving their own memories and along the way treat us to highlights from past *Follies* and wonderful pastiches of period songs. An early “Montage” of three numbers really sets the theatrical scene with the soft-shoe duet “Rain on the Roof” delightfully performed by veterans (and both artistic directors in their own right) Jenni Burke and Avery Saltzman, followed by the sexy “Ah, Paris!” performed by the 86-year-old star of earlier Stratford and Shaw seasons, Denise Fergusson, and the often-covered standard “Broadway Baby” performed by 92-year-old veteran of *Show Boat* and many other big musicals, Lorraine Foreman.

Part of the delight of this show is the meta-theatrical fun of watching our own stars play stars of *Follies* past, while showing that without a doubt, they still “have what it takes”. Other highlights include beloved operatic comedienne Mary Lou Fallis singing “One Last Kiss” doubled by her younger self – the classically sweet-voiced Katelyn Bird (still a graduate student at the Glenn Gould School), and the always excellent actor/singer Charlotte Moore doing a wonderfully biting theatrical take on the show’s anthem – never more resonant than now – “I’m Still Here”.

Another memorable moment in the staging brought Fallis and Moore together, in the backup ensemble, in the number known as the “The Mirror Song” with Moore having to correct Fallis’ arm choreography – a deliciously silly moment that surely must have been improvised in rehearsal. It was another early show highlight, bringing all the former *Follies* girls together to sing “Who’s that Woman?” led by the irresistibly earthy and jazzy Jackie Richardson.

Not only the staging, but the music direction of this staged concert was of the highest quality, with music director Paul Sportelli and the onstage orchestra completely and clearly attuned to the performers and everything happening onstage.

Harbinger of things to come

This gala staged concert of *Follies* left me feeling as though the door is opening to an actual season of live music theatre, albeit with some companies taking tentative first steps before returning to full throttle, and others sticking to digital production for now, but offering an increasingly wide variety of filmed shows.

On the live side, over at Mirvish Productions, while we all wait for *Come From Away* to reopen the Royal Alex in December, the CAA Theatre is hosting the latest incarnation of “that other Newfoundland musical” *No Change In the Weather*, which has a

semi-comic original book with a background of Newfoundland’s political history, set to music of the area by various artists including Ryan’s Fancy and Murray McLauchlan. Later in the fall, the larger Ed Mirvish Theatre will host the North American touring company of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, a remount of the Olivier Award-winning Regent Park Theatre production in celebration of the musical’s 50th anniversary.

The National Ballet is also back at last with a live performance in November, a nice mix of the modern Balanchine classic *Serenade* with the exuberant ultra kinetic *Angels’ Atlas* by superstar Canadian choreographer Crystal Pite. In Niagara-on-the-Lake, after a summer of innovative outdoor programming, the Shaw Festival is moving indoors with a full-scale stage version of the Irving Berlin classic film, *Holiday Inn*. This promises to be great fun with a cast of Shaw regulars, direction by Kate Hennig and choreography by Allison Plamondon.

On the digital side there is an interesting mix of offerings. The Musical Stage Company’s annual must-see *Uncovered* concert, this year focusing on the songs of Dolly Parton, had two live shows in early October at Koerner Hall with strictly limited audiences but the event was also captured on film to be released online starting



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on November 24 and running into December. Opera Atelier, who are sticking to the digital format until later in the year, have taken this opportunity to finish their long-gestating original creation, *Angel*, as a film, adding newly commissioned music by Christopher Bagan to Edwin Huizinga's original score and Baroque selections, as well as new poetic selections from Rainer Maria Rilke and John Milton. On the sillier side, Tapestry Opera has just released the third instalment of S.O.S. *Sketch Opera Singers*, their ongoing digital opera/comedy hybrid that is sure to induce giggles from opera fans and new watchers alike.

News of more productions, both live and online, is being revealed almost daily for the holiday and winter seasons. The door to live music theatre has been well and truly opened; let the celebration begin.

QUICK PICKS

LIVE & DIGITAL:

NOV 12, 8PM: *All Together Now!* is a one-night-only live broadcast event and in-person performance of a new musical theatre revue from Music Theatre International. Live from 56 Queen Street East with a local cast of singers joined by a live orchestra, this show benefits Met's Community Services program. Metropolitan United Church. 416-363-0331 x228

LIVE:

NOV 11 to 27: *Angels' Atlas & Serenade* (ballets) by Crystal Pite & George Balanchine. National Ballet of Canada Four seasons Centre, national.ballet.ca.

NOV 14 to 28: Shaw Festival. *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn*. Shaw Festival Theatre, 10 Queen's Parade, Niagara-on-the-Lake. 1-800-511-SHAW (7429) or shawfest.com. \$25-\$94.

NOV 19 to 27: No Change in the Weather by Walter Schroeder and Bernadette Stapleton. CAA Theatre 651 Yonge St. mirvish.com. 1.800.461.3333.

NOV 30 to JAN 2: *Jesus Christ Superstar* (musical) by Andrew Lloyd Webber. North American touring company. Ed Mirvish Theatre. 1-800-461-3333. mirvish.com.




TAPESTRY OPERA – S.O.S. Sketch Opera Singers: Episode 3

DIGITAL:


FROM OCT 21: *S.O.S. Sketch Opera Singers* on Tapestry Opera's YouTube channel. [tapestryopera.com/performances/sketch-opera-singers/](https://www.tapestryopera.com/performances/sketch-opera-singers/)

OCT 28 to NOV 12: Opera Atelier. *Angel*. 70-minute film fully staged and filmed at St. Lawrence Hall. OperaAtelier.com.



NOV 24 to Dec 11, & DEC 30: *Uncovered: The Music of Dolly Parton*. The Musical Stage Company. Filmed at Koerner Hall. musicalstagecompany.com. 

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.



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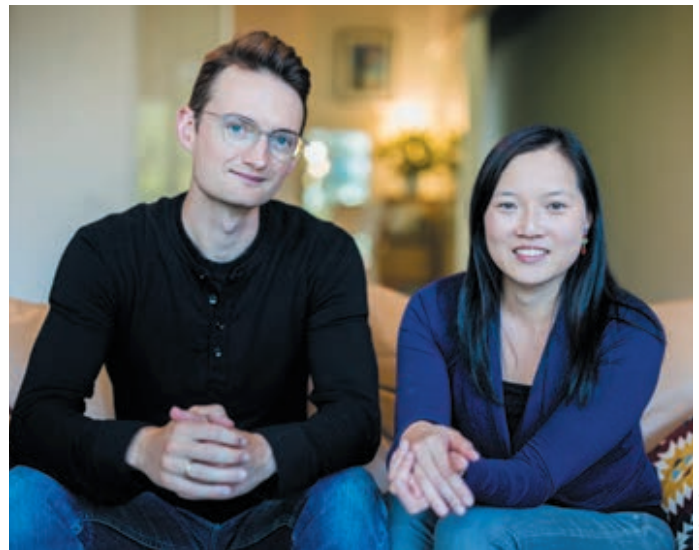
POCKET CONCERTS' EVOLVING PARADIGMS

MAX CHRISTIE

Once upon a time (the spring of 2021, actually) I made contact with some colleagues and friends known collectively as Pocket Concerts, and individually as Emily Rho and Rory MacLeod, interested in knowing how their particular brand, based on house concerts, was holding up in response to the new paradigms of pandemic performance.

Their biggest news back then was a book in progress, expanding on what they'd learned in developing Pocket Concerts, explaining how other artistic entrepreneurs might get their own ideas off the ground. Envisioned as an online publication, the book was at that point already more than 75% complete.

Life, however, intervened, as it will, and the book has been sidelined. The two remain committed to it, but have each found they have too many other irons in the fire to give it their complete attention. The goals they originally had for it haven't shifted but life has. As Rho says: "It will take a different shape in the future, I believe, because everything is changing around us so fast, all the time; it's one thing to put pen to paper, another to find time for the ink to dry... [when] the dust



ALICE HONG

Rory McLeod and Emily Rho

settles ... then I think we'll have more clarity on how to continue."

Pocket Concerts (PC) fell as hard as the rest of us did, but was probably better positioned than most to rebound, because it specializes in chamber music, presented in homes for small collections of friends and acquaintances of the homeowner. It works in one of a few ways: they can sell entire events to individuals or businesses, or sell individual tickets to a paying public. The venue, provided by a private householder or small business owner, is deemed a donation-in-kind, thus saving PC the expense of a hall rental.

So, like chamber salons of a bygone age, Pocket Concerts take place in settings reminiscent of where and how chamber music was originally offered, with most of the proceeds going directly to the players. Venue providers come away with the feeling of doing something good for the community, and perhaps some social currency, even pride, as well, which seems fair. In existence since 2013, McLeod estimates that during that time they've employed around 120 different musicians (although they stopped keeping track after one hundred). Concerts have taken place before audiences ranging from two to 100, but the typical size was and is still 35 or so. Given indoor restrictions they had to take the show out on the porch (or back deck, or back lawn) over the past two summers, but they managed that without missing a beat.

Weather, however, tends to put the damper on that type of thing, of course, and last year they began to wonder how to connect directly

21/22

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Not Alone – Oct.28.21

Aulos – Nov.11,18,25.21

50th Anniversary Distanced
Commissioning Series: John Oswald
– Feb.17.22

Difficult Grace: Seth Parker Woods
in Concert – Mar.10.22

Imagined Sounds – Apr.10.22

SWARA Sutras – Apr.30.22

All concerts at 8pm

with the listening community in order to keep *live* music alive. That's what the book was going to be for: sharing methods for fostering *community*, especially among independent musicians whose circumstances have been most severely impacted by the pandemic.

Mind Music: Out of this came "Mind Music" – an idea they got when they took part in a voluntary initiative set up by their friend and colleague Dominique Laplante: she began by asking musicians to take part in interactive zoom meetings, as an outreach project for care home residents who were cut off from so much during the worst days of the lockdown. McLeod and Rho pursued the idea the way they did their live porch concerts, focusing on getting work for freelance musicians who haven't the benefit of a contracted position with one of the larger, better-funded performance companies.

Initially, Mind Music was intended to be a one-on-one format: a performer and a listener; part demonstration or recital; part conversation or demonstration. As such, it's a format suited to, and even designed for remote performance. But the idea grew, with some careful cultivation.

The turning point was when they reached out to businesses, pitching the idea as a perk that might be offered as employee appreciation. TD Bank bought in, and more recently they approached Google's head office in San Francisco. Google has booked them for a monthly program for this year, creating pocket-sized concert encounters online for *Googlers*. (Unless you work for Google, you aren't a *Googler*, which was among the things I learned in our more recent conversation.) The first Mind Music for *Googlers* featured Toronto flutist Anh Fung who gave a solo performance with electronics and a beat machine, and followed up with a question-and-answer session.

It seems like an idea that will take hold: in Rho's estimation, "workplaces are not going back to in-person *ever*, possibly, so it's an option to engage with the virtual community in workplaces..." Based on their track record, they are well positioned to offer more as the market for online musical encounters grows. They aren't in a hurry, though, feeling their way, gauging demand and honing the productions. "One at a time" for a company the size of Google may seem counterintuitive, but it's how these two work, and it seems to work well.

Scale: The concept of scalability is what most start-ups look to as the holy grail, and sometimes go astray seeking. Get something going, the conventional wisdom says, say like a food delivery app, see if it gets off the ground with a small user base, and then spread the reach. But as Rho and McLeod explained to me back in the spring (and I assume the same is true now), the "products" of their musical entrepreneurship are by definition neither intended nor designed to scale up. It's like "slow food," as Rory put it. Absolutely not UberEats, in other words. And they aren't into hurrying anything, especially not when it comes to building community among audience and performers.

So for both of them, connecting with one of the big banks in Canada or a Goliath like Google in the U.S., still comes down to small-scale concerts, interaction at the personal level, and community. Mind Music is now simply offered under the Pocket Concerts brand – a variation of the original idea tailored to online interaction, perfect for small audiences still; featuring primarily solo performers, but going up to small ensembles if buyers want to add to their cost. McLeod and Rho don't seem to feel pressure to expand the scope or reach of the product. Google has expressed interest in Mind Music for their Toronto

Googlers, because the first one was a huge success in San Francisco; the format and scope will remain the same.

The Pocket Concerts story is an ever-unfolding journey with lots of twists and turns. Around the time we first spoke, for example, McLeod was taking courses in editing, which, given their intention to write a book, made perfect sense. Then along came an offer to take the reins as executive artistic director at Xenia concerts. Xenia's mandate is the elimination of the barriers to musical experience too often encountered by members of the autistic community, and others marginalized by disability. Xenia and McLeod seem made for one another – now, on his current to-do list you'll also find the completion of a master's degree in Inclusive Design.

Meanwhile, for her part, Rho is simultaneously pursuing a master's degree in Strategic Foresight and Innovation, and working with education bodies as a consultant in the same discipline.

Even with their adaptability, it's not all plain sailing. In our first conversation I recall both expressing the intention to increase access to concert productions for marginalized groups, to improve equity in presenting more BIPOC and LGBTQ artists, and to vary the products they offer to include a wider diversity of musical styles and origins.

The stumbling block, ironically, is that the Pocket Concerts model is consumer driven; the hosts determine what sort of repertoire they want presented. PC can't insist on presenting musicians and styles beyond the norms of Western Classical Chamber Music, given the baked-in homogeneity of what much of the classical music niche market they serve demands. It's a problem they are well aware of – till now a fairly silent elephant in the room, a fact that goes from invisible to inescapable, once you admit to it. Regarding Pocket Concerts' undertaking "to include more BIPOC musicians, more artists from diverse backgrounds" McLeod simply says, "It's difficult."

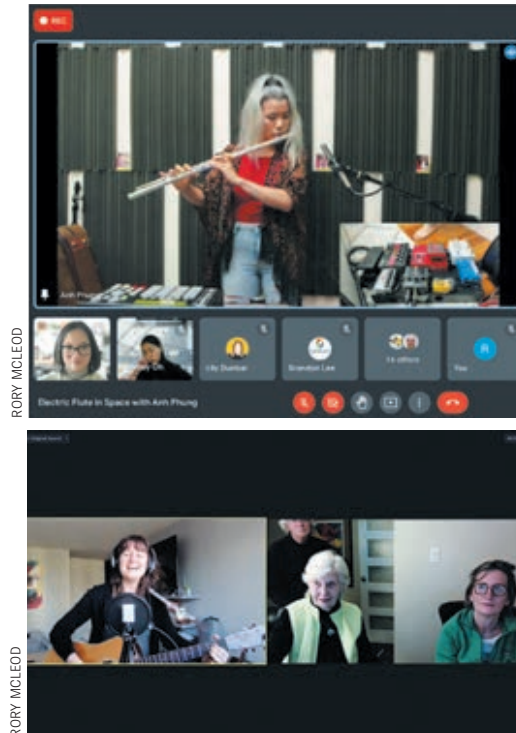
But not impossible. They point to larger musical organizations who are engaged in outreach now: the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, and Toronto's Tafelmusik, who,

McLeod says, are "reaching new audiences in remote places and from demographics that wouldn't normally have come to their concerts. That's exciting to see."

Will the underprivileged, whether by economic or societal forces, physical or mental disability, or simply by geography, ever be given the kind of access to musical experiences taken for granted by the privileged? Let's hope so. One bet you can make is that it will come about through the efforts and ideas of people like Rho and McLeod, with their commitment to community, sustainability, and something more valuable than a scalable app.

As for me, I'm still sad about the book being delayed: I was looking forward to writing an article built around clever quotes from the jazz standard "I Could Write a Book" by Rodgers and Hart. That said, it's been heartening to check in with Rho and McLeod again, to see how much further they've gotten along the path toward fostering, by their own actions, a more inclusive, equitable and accessible arts industry. If I ask Rho to consult her strategic foresight crystal ball, I wonder what she'll see. Foresight and innovation are what this dynamic duo continue to excel in, if I read the evidence right. **●**

Max Christie is a Toronto-based musician and writer. He performs as principal clarinet of the the National Ballet Orchestra when restrictions allow, and otherwise spends too much time on Twitter, @chxamaxe



Top: Flutist Anh Phung performs for Googlers, September 2021, Kristen Graves performs Mind Music

Fall with a spring in its step

COLIN STORY

The crunch of a crisp brown leaf underneath one's foot; the chill of the wind as it comes off the lake; a Conservative premier embroiled in a minor controversy about his comments regarding immigration and labour. Though the pandemic is far from over, it certainly seems as though Southern Ontario is getting back to its typical autumn rhythm.

Things are much different, however, than they were at this time last year: with a proof-of-vaccination system in place, steadily declining case numbers, and capacity limits gradually being lifted for a variety of indoor business spaces, we may be forgiven for permitting ourselves a sense of cautious optimism. It is a great relief to be able to contemplate the idea of meeting friends for a drink and a show without feeling an immediate sense of imminent dread (although I suppose this is somewhat dependent on the show and the friends in question).

Jazz Bistro: Luckily, there's no scarcity of excellent gigs in the books for the coming months. On October 30, guitarist Ted Quinlan brings his quartet to Jazz Bistro. Quinlan is a fluid, technically accomplished guitarist whose dense linear flourishes are always deployed in the service of tasteful melodicism. His latest release, *Absolutely Dreaming*, was nominated for a 2020 Juno Award for Jazz Album of the Year, in the Solo category. His show at the Bistro features the same rhythm section as the album: pianist Brian Dickinson, bassist Kieran Overs and drummer Ted Warren. The band members are all amongst Toronto's first-call players in their peer group; behind Quinlan, they play with an emphasis on harmonic integrity and propulsive time feel.

Jazz Room: The Jazz Room, in Waterloo, has long been an important home for music in Southern Ontario, typically presenting shows twice a week, on Fridays and Saturdays. Within this regular programming, they host a series called Women in Jazz, sponsored by Diva International. On November 27, saxophonist and vocalist Elena Kapeleris plays the Jazz Room as part of the series, with drummer Mark Micklethwaite, bassist Lauren Falls, trumpeter Kevin Turcotte and pianist Stacie McGregor. Whether she's singing a melody or playing it on the saxophone, Kapeleris has a confident sense of phrasing, commanding tone and a strong sense of tuning. The following weekend, on December 4, the series continues with Rebecca



Elena Kapeleris



Ted Quinlan

Hennessy's Makeshift Island project. Like Kapeleris, Hennessy does double duty, both singing and playing trumpet, though Makeshift Island has a different aesthetic bent. Driven by Hennessy's original compositions, the group puts an emphasis on communicative, melodic music, with touches of folk, pop and other styles influencing the intimate, acoustic jazz vibe.

The Rex (1): the Juno Series continues, with weekly four-night engagements by a variety of excellent Juno-winning and -nominated acts. Throughout November, these include bassist Roberto Occhipinti, who celebrates the release of his new album, *The Next Step*, from November 3 to 6. Joining him are pianist Adrean Farrugia and drummer

Continues on page 29

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

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.

Register for the weekly updates at
thewholenote.com/newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE: THREE LISTINGS SECTIONS

• Section 1: Events by date for Oct 27 – Dec 17

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.

• Section 3: In the clubs (Mostly Jazz)

How to List

1. Use the convenient online form at thewholenote.com/applylistings
2. Email listings to 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 December 2021 and January 2022, and the submission deadline for new listings and updates to listings previously processed is **6pm Monday November 22.**

Events by Date | October 27 to December 17, 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.

Wednesday October 26

Music TORONTO



October 26 at 8 pm
DAVID JALBERT
pianist

• **8:00: Music Toronto.** David Jalbert, Piano. Murphy: Smoke Darkened Sky (world premiere); Debussy: Images I: Reflets dans l'eau, Hommage à Rameau, Mouvement, and other works; Ligeti: Etudes Book 1: Arc-en-ciel, Auytomne à Varsovie; Prokofiev: Sonata No. 6 Op. 82 in A. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. \$47.50-\$50.

Wednesday October 27

• **8:00: Hugh's Room/El Mocambo.** Dione Taylor. El Mocambo, 464 Spadina Ave. elmocambo.com. \$30.

Thursday October 28

• **12:10: University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** Thursdays at Noon. Piano Laureates. Naomi Wong, piano; Vanessa Yu, piano; and Jingquan Xie, piano. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park. Free. STREAMED
• **7:00: Opera Atelier.** Angel. 70-minute film fully staged and filmed at St. Lawrence Hall. Music by Edward Huizinga, Jean-Philippe Rameau, William Boyce, Matthew Locke, and Max Richter. Measha Brueggengosman, Mireille Asselin, Meghan Lindsay, sopranos; Colin Ainsworth, tenor; Jesse Blumberg, baritone; and others; Marshall Pynkoski, stage director; Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg, choreographer; Artists of Atelier Ballet; Nathaniel Dett Chorale; Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra; David Fallis, conductor. OperaAtelier.com. Single tickets on sale Oct 1. Available until Nov 12. ONLINE
• **7:30: Niagara Symphony Orchestra.** Steven Page with the NSO. Steven Page Trio; Bradley Thachuk, conductor. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. niagarasymphony.com or 905-688-0722 or 905-688-5601

x3700 or 1-855-515-0722. \$68; \$60(sr); \$39(arts worker); \$15(st & youth).
• **8:00: Canadian Music Therapy Fund.** UN-done. A hybrid livestream and in-person fundraising event in support of music therapy & mental health. Simone Denny, Kayla Diamond, Mike Mitchell, Courtney Gilmore, and others; Angeline Tetteh-Wayoe, host. Tranzac Club, 292 Brunswick Ave. info@musictherapyfund.ca. LIVE & STREAMED
• **8:00: New Music Concerts.** Broadcast: Not Alone. Broadcast from Koerner Hall. Works for soloists with electronics by George Lewis, Malin Bång, Michel van der Aa, Bruno Mantovani, Luigi Nono, and Rebekah Cummings. Available on Facebook and YouTube. newmusicconcerts.com or 416-961-9594. ONLINE
• **8:00: Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra.** Music and Magic. Purcell: Excerpts from The Fairy Queen; Vivaldi: Concerto for Violin in E "Spring" from The Four Seasons; Handel "What passion cannot music raise or quell" from Ode for St Cecilia's Day; Bach: Andante from Sonata for Solo Violin in a; Handel Overtures to Flavio & Ode for St. Cecilia's Day. Nick Wallace, magician; Quinten Melo, contortionist; Ryan Joyce, stage director; Elisa Citterio director. info@tafelmusik.org or 1-833-964-633. Single tickets available Oct 7. ONLINE

Friday October 29

• **12:10: Music at St. Andrew's.** Friday Noontime Recital. Schumann: Märchenbilder Op.113. The Ezra Duo. St. Andrew's Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. standrewstoronto.org. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE
• **5:00: Lucky Penny Opera.** Talk One: Digital Creation Hacks. This seminar brings together three artists from three different art practices to talk about their work and process, inspiring you to try brave new things, digitally. There will be a 30-minute Q&A. Sammy Chien, June Fukumara, and Annie Tung, speakers.

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tinyurl.com/tennkxpa or 778-554-4458. By donation: \$5-\$20. ONLINE

● **5:30: The Rex.** Jeff Halischuk Trio. Proudly supported by Friends of the Ken Page Memorial Trust. Jeff Halischuk, drums; Chris Gale, saxophone; John Maharaj, bass. 194 Queen St. W. 416-598-2475.

● **8:00: Crow's Theatre.** *Ghost Quartet in Concert.* Written and Composed by Dave Malloy. Four friends (or are they ghosts?) sing, drink, and tell stories that span seven centuries in this surreal, chamber musical of murder ballads, doo-wop, and a purgatorial intermezzo. Beau Dixon, Hailey Gillis, Kira Guloien, and Andrew Penner. crowstheatre.com. \$20. Available Oct 29-31. ONLINE

● **8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra.** *Beethoven and Prokofiev.* Prokofiev: Violin Concerto No.2 in g; Beethoven: Symphony No.7 in A. Kerson Leong, violin; Andrei Feher, conductor. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. \$15-\$100 per stream. Available Oct 29-8pm to Oct 31-11:59pm. Purchase 1 stream per household. ONLINE

Saturday October 30

● **3:00: Opera Revue.** *Opera Revue at Castro's Lounge.* Fun, casual afternoon of opera, art song and more in a comfortable bar setting. Puccini: O mio babbino caro from Gianni Schicchi; Mozart: Selections from Don Giovanni; Poulenc: Fleurs; Satie: Je te veux; Weill: Youkali. Danie Friesen, soprano; Parker Clemens, baritone; Claire Harris, piano. Castro's Lounge, 2116 Queen St. E. 647-637-7491. PWYC.

● **7:30: Canadian Opera Company.** *Gianni Schicchi.* By Giacomo Puccini. Roland Wood (Gianni Schicchi); Hera Hyesang Park (Laurietta); Andrew Haji (Rinuccio); Meghan Latham (Zita); and other soloists; Canadian Opera Company Orchestra; Jader Bignamini, conductor; Amy Lane, stage director. coc.ca/watch. Available until Apr 30, 2022. ONLINE

● **8:00: Kindred Spirits Orchestra.** *Opening Night Gala: In Sinistris Manibus.* Dukas: Fanfare pour précéder La Péri; Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No.4 (for the left hand); Stravinsky: Symphony in Three Movements. Dong Xu, piano; Michael Berec, host; Kristian Alexander, conductor. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St., **Richmond Hill.** 905-604-8339 or ksorchestra.ca. \$20-\$40. LIVE & STREAMED

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix Series: Daniel Lanois and Heavy Sun.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$40-\$105.

Sunday October 31

● **3:00: Magisterra Soloists.** *To the Earth.* Abigail Richardson-Schulte: To the Earth; Emily Doolittle: Sapling; Jeff Smallman: Serenade. Russell Braun, baritone. Museum London Theatre, 421 Ridout St. N., **London.** 519-615-0163. magisterra.com. \$16.93-\$43.45(in person); \$30(livestream). Limited seating. LIVE & STREAMED

● **3:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica: From Bach to Piazzolla.* Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Astor Piazzolla and 75th birthday of Gidon Kremer with a special homage to Glenn Gould. Valentin Silvestrov: Hommage to J.S.B. for violin and vibraphone; Bach: Harpsichord Concerto No.7 in g BWV1058; Piazzolla: Three

Pieces for Piano and Strings; Two pieces from Art of Instrumentation (based on Bach works and dedicated to Glenn Gould; Bach: Variations on "Goldberg Aria" (arr. Tickmayer); and other works by Bach and Piazzolla. Gidon Kremer, violin; Georgijs Osokins, piano; Per-Arne Glorvigen, bandoneon; Andrei Pushkarov, vibraphone; Kremerata Baltica Chamber Orchestra. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. rcmusic.com/Tickets. From \$50.

● **3:00: Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *Red Hot Ramble.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or redhotramble.ca or smoke-showbbqandbrew.com.

● **8:00: Ashkenaz Festival.** *Nu? Normal! The Barn Sessions - Episode IV.* Hartzedike-Lider (Heartsongs). Allan Merowitz & Brian Katz with special guest Jane Bunnett. ashkenaz.ca. ONLINE

Tuesday November 2

● **7:00: TO Live.** *The Spectators' Odyssey - o dell' Inferno.* An immersive, contemporary multimedia theatrical experience created by Daniele Bartolini. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. tolive.com or 416-366-7723 & 1-800-708-6754 or at boxoffice@tolive.com. \$50 per journey or combined ticket of \$75 for both. Groups of 8 will begin their voyage every 15 minutes for one of two different journeys, each approximately one hour. Audience can choose to do journey A or B or both. Also Nov 2-6 (7pm); 7 (1pm & 6pm); 10-11 (7pm); 14 (1pm & 6pm).

● **7:30: Toronto Mendelssohn Choir.** *Coming to Carry Me Home.* Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem; Dett: The Chariot Jubilee. Jonelle Sills, soprano; Brett Polegato, baritone; Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Toronto Symphony Orchestra; Jean-Sébastien Vallée, conductor. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-408-0208. LIVE & LIVE STREAM

Wednesday November 3

● **7:00: Canadian Music Centre.** *Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition Winner Julien Siino.* Cusson: La Pieta for solo cello; Lutoslawski: Sacher Variation for solo cello; Eckhardt-Gramatté: Duo Concertante for Cello and Piano E.146; Good: Song of Longing; Britten: Sonata for Cello and Piano in C Op.65. Julien Siino, cello; Chiharu Iinuma, piano. 20 St. Joseph St. 416-961-6601 x202. General: \$20/\$15(adv); CMC Members & Arts Workers: \$15/\$12(adv); \$10(st).

● **7:00: Confluence Concerts.** *Bach Cello Suites: Part 3.* Bach: Cello Suites No.2 in d BWV1008 & No.5 in c BWV1011. Andrew Downing, double bass; and Ryan Davis, viola. confluenceconcerts.ca. Live concert **Nov 3.** YouTube premiere **Nov 10.** A limited number of tickets available for in-person attendance. LIVE & ONLINE

● **8:30: Lucky Penny Opera.** *The 48-Hour Opera Project: Viewing Party.* Six newly-composed mini-operas created by the participants of the 48-Hour Opera Project Creation Weekend. Six teams of artists from across Canada, the US, and New Zealand. 778-554-4458. luckypennyopera.com/viewing-party. By donation: \$5-\$20. 5:30pm Pacific Time: Fox Cabaret (Vancouver) / 8:30pm: Tranzac Club (Toronto). ONLINE

Thursday November 4

● **12:10: University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** *Thursdays at Noon.* In celebration of its 75th anniversary, U of T Opera reflects on the school's important history while sharing its forward looking vision for opera's future. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park. Free. LIVE STREAMED

● **7:00: Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *Carlos Morgan Live.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or smoke-showbbqandbrew.com.

Friday November 5

● **12:00 noon: Music at Met.** *Friday Noon at Met Concert Series.* Works by Howells, Vierne, Franck and others. Joshua Duncan Lee, organ. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. metunited.ca/live. Free. LIVE & LIVE STREAM

● **12:15: Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* Works by Debussy, Liszt, and Prokofiev. Jean-Luc Therrien, piano. St. Andrew's Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. standrewstontoronto.org or 416-593-5600 x231. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE

● **7:30: Jenny Crober & Emily Vick Agnew.** *"Love Stories" Fall Cabaret / A VOCA Chorus Fundraiser.* Featuring our choir's professional leads, special guests, and an excerpt from one of our in-person rehearsals. Works by Piaf, Joel, Donizetti, and others. Dallas Chorley, soprano; Alex Hetherington, mezzo; Kevin Mulligan, tenor; Eli Theodoridis, tenor; Justin Welsh, baritone; Parker Clements, baritone; and guests. 416-931-8224 or vocachorus.ca or eventbrite.com/x/love-stories-fall-cabaret-voca-fundraiser-tickets-189750999347. \$20. ONLINE

● **7:30: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Glenn Gould School Chamber Opera: Ana Sokolović's Svadba.* Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$20. Also Nov 6. Proof of vaccination required.

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Jerusalem String Quartet with Pinchas Zukerman & Amanda Forsyth.* Bruckner: Adagio from String Quintet in F WAB112; Dvořák: String

Sextet in A Op.48; Brahms: String Sextet in B-flat Op.18. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$44-\$110. Proof of vaccination required.

Saturday November 6

● **4:00: Beach United Church.** *Life and Songs of Irving Berlin.* Dr. Mike Daley and Jill Daley. 140 Wineva Ave. Visit eventbrite.ca/e/jazz-reflection-the-life-and-songs-of-irving-berlin-tickets-188507780847. Suggested donation \$25 for limited in-person seating. Vaccination proof is required plus wearing a mask. LIVE & LIVESTREAM

● **7:00: New Adventures in Sound Art.** *I Eat the Stars.* Laurel MacDonald: I Eat the Stars; Laurel MacDonald & Phil Strong: Videovoice. 705-386-0880 or naisa.ca/purchase-tickets/. \$10; Free(st). Suggested prices. Online location issued after registration. ONLINE

● **7:30: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Glenn Gould School Chamber Opera: Ana Sokolović's Svadba.* Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$20. Also Nov 5. Proof of vaccination required.

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Quiet Please, There's a Lady on Stage Series: Nella & Daymé Arocena.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$40-\$80. Proof of vaccination required.

● **9:00: Hugh's Room/El Mocambo.** *A Tribute to Bob Dylan with Paul James.* El Mocambo, 464 Spadina Ave. elmocambo.com. \$40.

Sunday November 7

● **1:30: Toronto Early Music Players Organization (TEMPO).** *Baroque Ornamentation: A Duel Between France and Italy (An Online Workshop).* Focusing on the differences between the French suite and its influence on musicians in the Baroque era versus the famous sonata which spread across Europe in the same period. Sophie Larivière, recorder & Baroque flute. info@tempo-toronto.net or tempotoronto.net. ONLINE

● **2:00: Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra.** *In Concert.* Brahms: Symphony No.3; Dvořák: In Nature's Realm. Christine Fong,

Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra

guest conductor **Christine Fong**



Sunday Nov. 7, 2021 at 2 pm
P.C. Ho Theatre

Brahms Symphony No. 3
Dvořák In Nature's Realm
Kevin Lau River

Tickets: \$30 adult \$25 student/senior (children under 12 are free)

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Events by Date | October 27 to December 17, 2021

guest conductor: P.C. Ho Theatre, Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, 5183 Sheppard Ave. E., **Scarborough**. 416-879-5566 or cathedralbluffs.com or cbso-boxoffice@gmail.com. \$30-\$48; \$25-\$38(sr/st); Free(under 12).

● **3:00: Trio Arkel.** *Fantasia*. Jean Cras: String Trio; Schubert: *Fantasia* (arr. for piano quartet); Lekeu: Piano Quartet. Marie Bérard, violin; Winona Zelenka, cello; Rémi Pelletier; viola; Philip Chiu, piano. Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. admin@trioarkel.com or 647-229-6918. Suggested donations: \$40(live); \$20(stream). A limited number of seats available for the live performance on a first-come, first-served basis. Streamed on-demand Nov 14-28. LIVE & STREAMING

Tuesday November 9

Music TORONTO



November 9 at 8 pm STEPHEN HOUGH

● **8:00: Music Toronto.** *Stephen Hough, Piano*. Rawsthorne: Bagatelles; Schumann: Kreisleriana; Hough: Partita; Chopin: Ballade No.3 in A-flat, Two Nocturnes, Scherzo No.2. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. \$47.50-\$50.

Wednesday November 10

● **12:30: ORGANIX Concerts.** *Thomas Fitches, Organ*. All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church, 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or organixconcerts.ca. Freewill offering - \$20 suggested.

● **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *A Welcome Return: Gimeno & Your TSO*. Anthony Barfield: *Invictus* (Canadian premiere); Haydn: *Overture to L'isola disabitata* (The Desert Island); Hindemith: *Concert Music for Strings and Brass*; Schubert: *Symphony No. 5*. Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 11, 13. Also available as a live stream Nov 10-8pm. TSO.CA/Livestreams. LIVE & ONLINE

● **9:00: Jazz Bistro.** *Diane Roblin's Life Force Band*. Diane Roblin, keyboards/compositions; George Koller, bass; Bruce Cassidy, EVI; Kevin Turcotte, trumpet; Jeff LaRochelle, tenor sax/bass clarinet; Tim Shia, drums. 251 Victoria St. dianeroblin.com. \$15 cover.

Thursday November 11

● **7:00: Magisterra at the Museum/Museum London.** *Bohemian Journey*. Martinu: Bergere; Beethoven: *Trio Op.14 "Gassenhauer"*; Smetana: *Trio in g*. Brett Kingsbury, piano. Museum London, 421 Ridout St. N., **London**. Visit eventbrite.ca/e/magisterra-at-the-museum-bohemian-journey-tickets-120292980543. \$35; \$30(sr); \$15(st with id); \$95(young adult pass-30 and under); from \$15(streamed tickets). All tickets must be purchased in advance.

● **8:00: New Music Concerts.** *Broadcast: Aulos*. Broadcast from Koerner Hall. Works for flutes by Maurice Ohana, Hitomi Kaneko, Yoshihisa Taitra, Toru Takemitsu, Hilda Paredes, and others. Dianne Aitken, flute; Robert Aitken, flute. Available on Facebook and YouTube. newmusicconcerts.com or 416-961-9594. Also Nov 18 & 25. ONLINE

● **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *A Welcome Return: Gimeno & Your TSO*. Anthony Barfield: *Invictus* (Canadian premiere); Haydn: *Overture to L'isola disabitata* (The Desert Island); Hindemith: *Concert Music for Strings and Brass*; Schubert: *Symphony No. 5*. Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 10, 13. Available as a live stream Nov 10-8pm. TSO.CA/Livestreams. LIVE & ONLINE

Friday November 12

● **12:15: Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital*. Haydn: *Sonata in D Hob.XVI.51*; Scriabin: *Two Poèmes Op.32*; Two Etudes Op.2 No.1 in c-Sharp & Op.42 No.8 in E-flat; *Sonata No.2 in g-sharp "Sonata-Fantasy"* Mvmts I (Andante) & II (Presto); Bach (arr. Busoni): *Chaconne from Partita in d for solo violin*. Tristan Savella, piano. St. Andrew's Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. standrewstoronto.org or 416-593-5600 x231. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE

● **1:00: Shaw Festival.** *A Christmas Carol*. Original book by Charles Dickens. Adapted and originally directed by Tim Carroll. Original music and original music direction by Paul Sportelli. Graeme Somerville (Scrooge); Jason Cadieux, Peter Fernandes, Patty Jamieson, Andrew Lawrie, Marie Mahabal, and other performers; Molly Atkinson, stage director; Ryan deSouza, music director. Royal George Theatre, 85 Queen St. **Niagara-on-the-Lake**. 1-800-511-SHAW (7429) or shawfest.com. \$25-\$59. Runs Nov 12-30. All dates except Nov 12 sold out. Limited seating available for Nov 12.

● **8:00: Crow's Theatre.** *Mixtape*. Written and performed by Zorana Sadiq. Chris Abraham, director. Streetcar Crowsnest, 345 Carlaw Ave. crowstheatre.com or 647-341-7390 x1010 or boxoffice@crowstheatre.com. \$35-\$55; BMO Virtual Stage tickets \$20. Runs Nov 12-28. Tue-Sat 8pm; Wed, Sat, Sun 2pm.

● **8:00: Music at Met.** *All Together Now!* A global event celebrating local theatre. Live broadcast and in person concert of new musical theatre revue with professional soloists from the Toronto music community and band. Charles Davidson, Kirsten Fielding, Nicholas Higgs, Gisele Kulak, Derrick Paul Miller, and others. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. metunited.ca/ATN.

\$20-\$35. Tickets required.

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Quiet Please, There's a Lady on Stage Series: Artemis*. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$50-\$90. Proof of vaccination required.

● **8:00: Sinfonia Toronto.** *Healing Classics: Beethoven & Mozart*. Beethoven: *Piano Concerto No.2*; Kuzmenko: *A Prayer*; Mozart: *String Quartet No.23* (orchestral version). Jarred Dunn, piano; Nurhan Arman, conductor. Trinity-St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. 416-499-0403 or sinfoniatoronto.com. In-person: \$44; \$37(sr); \$17(st); Livestream: \$15. LIVE & ONLINE

● **8:00: That Choir.** *That Choir Remembers*. St. Anne's Anglican Church, 270 Gladstone Ave. 416-419-1756 or info@thatchoir.com or thatchoir.com. PWYC. Also Nov 13.

Saturday November 13

● **7:13: Canadian Opera Company.** *Espiral*. By OKAN. Selections from *Espiral*, OKAN's 2021 Juno Award-winning album, fusing jazz, folk, and global rhythms with Afro-Cuban roots. OKAN: Elizabeth Rodriguez, vocals/violin; Magdelys Savigne, vocals/percussion; Jeremy Ledbetter, piano; Roberto Mederos, bass; Frank Nodarse, drums. coc.ca/watch. ONLINE

● **7:30: Bravo Niagara! Festival of the Arts.** *Sultans of String: Refuge and Sanctuary*. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., **St. Catharines**. 905-688-0722. \$50; \$25(st/youth with id).

● **7:30: Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.** *Beethoven's Eighth*. Bruckner: *Three Pieces for Orchestra*; Andrew Balfour: *Kiwetin-acahcos* (North Star); Britten: *Serenade for tenor, horn and strings*; Beethoven: *Symphony No.8*. Lawrence Wiliford, tenor; Jessie Brooks, horn; Stephen Sitarski, conductor. FirstOntario Concert Hall, 1 Summers Ln., **Hamilton**. 905-526-7756 or hpo.org. In-person: \$35-\$80; \$30-\$75(sr); \$20(age 5-17). Live stream \$24. Live stream and on demand viewing available. LIVE & ONLINE

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix & Canada on Stage Series*. Skratz Bastid with Special Guests Andrew Forde & re:verse. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$40-\$65. Proof of vaccination required.

13th SEASON

THAT CHOIR REMEMBERS

conducted by Craig Pike



NOVEMBER 12 & 13 | 8PM
St. Anne's Anglican
270 Gladstone Ave

www.thatchoir.com

● **8:00: That Choir.** *That Choir Remembers*. St. Anne's Anglican Church, 270 Gladstone Ave. 416-419-1756 or info@thatchoir.com or www.thatchoir.com. PWYC. Also Nov 12.

● **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *A Welcome Return: Gimeno & Your TSO*. Anthony Barfield: *Invictus* (Canadian premiere); Haydn: *Overture to L'isola disabitata* (The Desert Island); Hindemith: *Concert Music for Strings and Brass*; Schubert: *Symphony No. 5*. Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 10, 11. Also available as a live stream Nov 10-8pm. TSO.CA/Livestreams. LIVE & ONLINE

Sunday November 14

● **1:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Charles Settle*. De Mey: *Musique de tables*; Akiho: (intuition) (Expectation); Assignaak: Waaban; Saariaho: *Ciel étoilé*; Becker: *Mudra*. Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$25. Also 2pm. Proof of vaccination required.

● **2:30: OperOttawa.** *Acis & Galatea*. Music by Handel. Alexander Cappellazzo (Acis); Erinne-Colleen Laurin (Galatea); Iain Macpherson (Damon); Norman E. Brown (Polyphemus); Patricia Beckett (Solo Voice); Frederic Lacroix, piano; Gerard Nieuwenhuis, recorder; First Baptist Church Ottawa, 140 Laurier Ave. W., **Ottawa**. norman_e_brown@rogers.com. \$35.



● **3:00: The Annex Singers.** *What Will Remain*. An exploration through words and music of themes of past and present, war and peace, memory, separation and hope. Works by Esenvalds, Paulus, Case, Lennon & McCartney, and U2. Melanie Conly, Isabel Matwawana, Joshua Clemenger and Jason Fowler; soloists; Maria Case, conductor. annexsingers.com. Donations appreciated. Available until Dec 5. ONLINE

● **5:00: Bedford Trio.** *Silver Screen: Classical Music in Cinema*. Schubert: *Trio No.2 in E-flat for piano, violin, and cello D929* ("Barry Lyndon"); Ravel: *Piano Trio for piano, violin, and cello* ("Birdman"); Beethoven: *Symphony No.7* ("The King's Speech"); Tchaikovsky: *Waltz of the Flowers* from *The Nutcracker* ("Fantasia"), and others. Alessia Disimino, violin;

Andrew Ascenzo, cello; Jialiang Zhu, piano. Ernest Balmer Studio (315), Distillery District, 9 Trinity St. eventbrite.ca/o/bedford-trio-17584435400. \$45.

Monday November 15

● **7:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *Gryphon Trio with Patricia O'Callaghan.* 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. \$10-\$39; free(online). Proof of vaccination required. LIVE & ONLINE

Tuesday November 16

● **2:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* Music & Lyrics by Irving Berlin. Carla Bennett (Stella); Kyle Blair (Jim Hardy); Wren Evans (Charlie Winslow); Kristi Frank (Linda Mason); Elodie Gillett (Rose/Radio Quartet); Kyle Godemba (Ted Hanover); and other performers; Kate Hennig, stage director. Shaw Festival Theatre, 10 Queen's Parade, **Niagara-on-the-Lake.** 1-800-511-SHAW (7429) or shawfest.com. \$25-\$94. Runs Nov 16-28.

Wednesday November 17

● **12:30: ORGANIX Concerts.** *Imre Olah, Organ.* Our Lady Of Sorrows Catholic Church, 3055 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or organixconcerts.ca. Freewill offering - \$20 suggested.

● **1:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16. Runs until Nov 28.

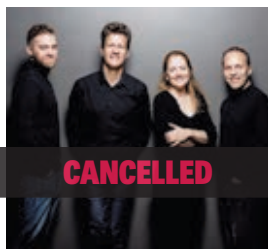
● **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *String Showcase.* Caroline Shaw: Boris Kerner; Dinuk Wijeratne: "A Letter from the After-life" from Two Pop Songs on Antique Poems; Kelly-Marie Murphy: Rains of Ash and Embers; Mahler: Adagietto from Symphony No.5; Schoenberg: Verklärte Nacht (Transfigured Night) (String Orchestra Version, 1943). Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 18.

Thursday November 18

● **1:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16. Runs until Nov 28.

● **7:00: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *Imagine Online Festival: Theatre, Dance, and More.* Michael Capon, Gord Love, Movement Market Collective, Inner Harbour Collective, Bridge & Wolak. Isabel Digital Concert Hall. 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. Free. ONLINE

Music TORONTO



CANCELLED

**November 18 at 8 pm
ST. LAWRENCE
QUARTET**

● **8:00: Music Toronto.** *St. Lawrence String Quartet.* Haydn: Quartet Op.76 No.4 in B-flat "Sunrise", No.2 in D "Quinten", No.5 in C "Largo", No.3 "Emperor". St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. \$47.50-\$50. **CANCELLED**

● **8:00: New Music Concerts.** *Broadcast: Aulos.* Broadcast from Koerner Hall. Works for flutes by Maurice Ohana, Hitomi Kaneko, Yoshihisa Taitra, Toru Takemitsu, Hilda Paredes, and others. Dianne Aitken, flute; Robert Aitken, flute. Available on Facebook and YouTube. newmusicconcerts.com or 416-961-9594. Also Nov 11 & 25. ONLINE

● **8:00: Tafelmusik.** *Spotlight 15.* Fifteen soloists and fourteen concertos in this mix-and-match showcase of Tafelmusik. Pisenel: Allegro from Concerto for 2 oboes & bassoon in E-flat; Bach: Allegro from Concerto for viola in E-flat after BWV1053 (premiere of a new transcription by Brandon Chui); Telemann: Grave - Allegro from Concerto for 2 violins in G; Telemann: Siciliano - Allegro from Concerto for oboe d'amore in A; Adagio - Allegro from Telemann: Concerto for 2 violins & bassoon in D; and other works. Elisa Citterio, director. info@tafelmusik.org or 1-833-964-633. ONLINE

● **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *String Showcase.* Caroline Shaw: Boris Kerner; Dinuk Wijeratne: "A Letter from the After-life" from Two Pop Songs on Antique Poems; Kelly-Marie Murphy: Rains of Ash and Embers; Mahler: Adagietto from Symphony No.5; Schoenberg: Verklärte Nacht (Transfigured Night) (String Orchestra Version, 1943). Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 17.

Friday November 19

● **12:00 noon: Music at Met.** *Friday Noon at Met Concert Series.* Works by Buxtehude, Scheidemann, and Pepping. Cari Astleford, organ. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. metunited.ca/live. Free. LIVE & STREAMED

● **1:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16. Also at 7pm. Runs until Nov 28.

● **7:30: Bravo Niagara! Festival of the Arts.** *TD Jazz Series.* Robi Botos Trio with Special Guest Joanna Majoko. Robi Botos, piano; Mike Downes, bass; Larnell Lewis, drums; Joanna Majoko, vocals. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., **St. Catharines.** 905-688-0722 or 289-868-9177. \$50; \$25(st/youth with id).

● **7:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Winds, Brass & Percussion Spotlight.* Joan Tower: Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman, No.1; Dvořák: Serenade in d; Steve Reich: Music for Pieces of Wood; Stravinsky: Symphonies of Wind Instruments (1947 revision); Morawetz: Sinfonietta for Winds and Percussion. Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 20(8pm).

● **8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra.** *Awakenings.* Berlioz: Les nuits d'été; Sokolović: Ringelspiel; Tomas: Fanfares liturgiques. Julie Boulianne, mezzo; Andrei Feher, conductor. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. \$15-\$100 per stream. Available Nov 19(8pm) to Nov 21(11:59pm). Purchase 1 stream per household. ONLINE

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Royal Conservatory Orchestra & Canada on Stage Series: Earl Lee Conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra.* Beethoven: Overture from King Stephen Op.117; Walker: Lyric for Strings; Saint-Saëns: Piano Concerto No.5 Op.103 ("Egyptian"); Borodin: "Polovtsian Dances" from Prince Igor; Kodály: Háry János Suite. Thomas Torok, piano. Earl Lee, conductor. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$25-\$60. Proof of vaccination required.

● **8:00: Soundstreams.** *Love Songs.* Music that contemplates our place in the universe. Works by Claude Vivier and Christopher Mayo. Tickets at soundstreams.ca. Free. ONLINE

Saturday November 20

● **4:30: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Taylor Academy Concerts Series: Taylor Academy Showcase Concert.* Concert by leading young classical musicians. Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. Free. Proof of vaccination required.

● **6:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16. Runs until Nov 28.

● **7:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *A Celebration of the Violin.* St. Georges: Sonata for Two Violins; Ysaye: Sonata Solo Violin; Brahms: Sonatensatz; Moszkowski: Suite for Two Violins and Piano. Jonathan Crow, David Baik, violin; Philip Chiu, piano. 390 King St. W., **Kingston.** 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. \$10-\$39; free(online). Proof of vaccination required. LIVE & ONLINE

● **7:30: Slow Rise Music/Canadian Music Centre.** *Hanging By a Thread.* Works by Anika-France Forget, Tristan Zaba, and Isaac Zee. McKenzie Warriner, soprano and piano; Tristan Zaba, bass and electric guitar. fb.me/e/14dHrC4Eu. ONLINE

● **8:00: Acoustic Harvest/Live Music East.** *RPR.* St. Paul's United Church (Scarborough), 200 McIntosh St., Scarborough. acoustic-harvest.ca. \$30. No walk-in patrons. Following distancing measures, seating will be limited and restricted.

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Quiet Please, There's a Lady on Stage Series: Rosanne Cash.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$60-\$120.

● **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Winds, Brass & Percussion Spotlight.* Joan Tower: Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman, No.1; Dvořák: Serenade in d; Steve Reich: Music for Pieces of Wood; Stravinsky: Symphonies of Wind Instruments (1947 revision); Morawetz: Sinfonietta for Winds and Percussion. Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 19(7:30pm).

Sunday November 21

● **2:00: Peter Margolian and Friends.** *Chamber Music Concert.* Music by English composers for voice, winds, strings, percussion and piano. Works by Purcell, Gay, G. Bush, Berkeley, Whettam, and Ireland. Victoria College Chapel, 91 Charles St. W. Pre-register at 647-980-5475 or peter.margolian@gmail.com. Free. Please observe COVID-19 precautions

MSO MASTERWORKS

A TRIUMPHANT CELEBRATION

NOVEMBER 20, 2021 8PM
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INFO: MISSISSAUGASYMPHONY.CA

Events by Date | October 27 to December 17, 2021

including masking and distancing.

● **2:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16. Runs until Nov 28.
● **2:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *Isfahan.* Sadaf Amini Trio. 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. \$10-\$39; free(online). Proof of vaccination required. LIVE & ONLINE

● **3:00: Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *York Jazz Ensemble.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or smokeshowbbqandbrew.com. Also Dec 19.

● **7:00: INNERchamber Ensemble.** *Love Story.* Selected letters by Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms. Clara Schumann; Piano Trio in g Op.17; Brahms: Piano Trio in c Op. 87; and other works. Scott Wentworth, actor; Emily Hamper, piano; Andrew Chung, violin; Ben Bolt-Martin, cello. Revival House, 70 Brunswick St., Stratford. innerchamber.ca or tickets@innerchamber.ca. \$40; \$10-\$25 (arts workers/st). Pre-show 6:30pm. A light meal is available for patrons living in Stratford. LIVE & ONLINE

Wednesday November 24

● **12:30: ORGANIX Concerts.** *Matthew Larkin, Organ.* All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church, 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or organixconcerts.ca. Freewill offering - \$20 suggested.

● **1:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16. Also at 7pm. Runs until Nov 28.

● **7:30: Thin Edge New Music Collective.** *Premieres X.* Works by Matthew Ariaratnam, Homa Samiei, Kimia Koochakzadeh-Yazdi, and Paolo Griffin. thinedgenewmusiccollective.com or 647-892-8251. Free. ONLINE

● **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto.* Beethoven: Overture to Egmont; R. Strauss: Serenade in E-flat; Price: String Quartet No.2 - Mvt.II; Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto. Timothy Chooi, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 25, 27, 28-3pm. TSO.CA/Livestreams. LIVE & ONLINE

Thursday November 25

● **1:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16. Runs until Nov 28.

WOMEN'S MUSICAL CLUB OF TORONTO

MUSIC IN THE AFTERNOON



NOVEMBER 25 | 1.30 PM

**BEVERLEY JOHNSTON
& FRIENDS**

**416-923-7052
wmct.on.ca**

● **1:30: Music in the Afternoon.** *Beverley Johnston & Friends.* Works by Bach, Russell Hartenberger, Christos Hatzis and Astor Piazzolla. Beverley Johnston, Aiyun Huang, and Russell Hartenberger, percussion; Susan Hoepfner, flutes; Marc Djokic, violin. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park. wmct.on.ca or 416-923-7052. LIVE & ONLINE

● **7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** *U of T Opera: The Barber of Seville.* Music by Gioachino Rossini. Libretto by Cesare Sterbini. Sung in Italian with English Surtitles. Russell Braun, conductor; Michael Patrick Albano, director. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. uoftopera.ca/productions. Free. Also Nov 26, 27, 28.

● **8:00: New Music Concerts.** *Broadcast: Aulos.* Broadcast from Koerner Hall. Works for flutes by Maurice Ohana, Hitomi Kaneko, Yoshihisa Taitra, Toru Takemitsu, Hilda Paredes, and others. Dianne Aitken, flute; Robert Aitken, flute. Available on Facebook and YouTube. newmusicconcerts.com or 416-961-9594. Also Nov 11 & 18. ONLINE

● **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto.* Beethoven: Overture to Egmont; R. Strauss: Serenade in E-flat; Price: String Quartet No.2 - Mvt.II; Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto. Timothy Chooi, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 24, 27, 28-3pm. TSO.CA/Livestreams. LIVE & LIVESTREAM

Friday November 26

● **1:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16. Also at 7pm. Runs until Nov 28.

● **7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** *U of T Opera: The Barber of Seville.* Music by Gioachino Rossini. Libretto by Cesare Sterbini. Sung in Italian with English Surtitles. Russell Braun, conductor; Michael Patrick Albano, director. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. uoftopera.ca/productions. Free. Also Nov 25, 27, 28.

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Jazz From Around the World Series: Etienne Charles Quartet & Guy Mintus Trio.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$35-\$80. Proof of vaccination required.

Saturday November 27

● **1:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16. Also at 7pm. Runs until Nov 28.

● **7:30: Arcady.** *There's a Song in the Air.* Central Presbyterian Church (Brantford), 97 Wellington St., Brantford. info@arcady.ca or 519-428-3185. \$35.

● **7:30: Canadian Opera Company.** *Mozart's Requiem.* Midori Marsh, soprano; Marion Newman, mezzo; Andrew Haji, tenor; Vartan Gabrielian, bass; Canadian Opera Company Orchestra & Chorus; Johannes Debus, conductor; Joel Ivany, stage director. coc.ca/watch. ONLINE

● **7:30: Guitar Society of Toronto.** *In Concert: Canadian Guitar Quartet.* St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. guitarsoforytoronto.com or 416-964-8298.

Advance: \$35; \$30(sr); \$15(st); Door: \$40; \$35(sr); \$20(st).

● **7:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** *U of T Opera: The Barber of Seville.* Music by Gioachino Rossini. Libretto by Cesare Sterbini. Sung in Italian with English Surtitles. Russell Braun, conductor; Michael Patrick Albano, director. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. uoftopera.ca/productions. Free. Also Nov 25, 26, 28.

● **8:00: Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan/Sixtrum Percussion.** *Fusion Point/Le point de fusion.* Melissa Hui: TBA; Alithéa Ripoll: Kālī; Chris Paul Harman: When Time Turns Around; Marc Duggan: La machine de l'angoisse (arr. of L'angoisse des machines by Alain Thibault). The Music Gallery, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. \$5-\$30. Also Nov 28(5pm).

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Steward Goodyear with the Penderecki String Quartet & Toronto Mendelssohn Choir.* Goodyear: Piano Quintet (world premiere); Beethoven: Symphony No.9 Op.125 (trans. Liszt S464/09) for solo piano, choir and singers. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$45-\$110. Proof of vaccination required. **RESCHEDULED to Wed Feb 9, 2022**

● **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto.* Beethoven: Overture to Egmont; R. Strauss: Serenade in E-flat; Price: String Quartet No.2 - Mvt.II; Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto. Timothy Chooi, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 24, 25, 28-3pm. TSO.CA/Livestreams. LIVE & LIVESTREAM

Sunday November 28

● **2:00: Shaw Festival.** *Irving Berlin's Holiday Inn.* See Nov 16.

● **2:30: Niagara Symphony Orchestra.** *All Tchaikovsky.* Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No.1; Romeo & Juliet Fantasy Overture; 1812 Overture. David Fung, piano; Bradley Thachuk, conductor. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. niagarasympphony.com or 905-688-0722 or 905-688-5601 x3700 or 1-855-515-0722. \$68; \$60(sr); \$39(arts worker); \$15(st & youth).

● **2:30: University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** *U of T Opera: The Barber of Seville.* Music by Gioachino Rossini. Libretto by Cesare Sterbini. Sung in Italian with English Surtitles. Russell Braun, conductor; Michael Patrick Albano, director. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park. uoftopera.ca/productions. Free. Also Nov 25, 26, 27.

● **3:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Invesco Piano Concerts Series: Jean-Yves Thibaudet.* Debussy: Préludes, Book 1, L.117; Book 2, L.123. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$50-\$110.

● **3:00: Smoke Show BBQ & Brew.** *Red Hot Ramble.* Smoke Show, 744 Mount Pleasant Rd. 416-901-7469 or redhotramble.ca or smoke-showbbqandbrew.com.

● **3:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto.* Beethoven: Overture to Egmont; R. Strauss: Serenade in E-flat; Price: String Quartet No.2 - Mvt.

II; Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto. Timothy Chooi, violin; Peter Oundjian, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Nov 24-8pm, 25-8pm, 27-8pm. Also available as a live stream November 24-8pm. TSO.CA/Livestreams.

SUN 28 NOV AT 4

Advent Evensong

plus concert at 4.30
with **Paulina Derbez**



THE MYSTIC VIOLIN

Bach's *Chaconne in D Minor*
in contrast with baroque and
modern pieces from Mexico

ST. OLAVE'S
ANGLICAN CHURCH

● **4:00: St. Olave's Anglican Church.** *Advent Evensong.* St. Olave's Anglican Church, 360 Windermere Ave. 416-769-5688. Contributions appreciated. stolaves.ca. The Mystic Violin follows Evensong. LIVE & ONLINE

● **4:30: St. Olave's Anglican Church.** *The Mystic Violin.* Bach: Chaconne in d; baroque and modern pieces. Paulina Derbez, violin. St. Olave's Anglican Church, 360 Windermere Ave. 416-769-5688. Contributions appreciated. stolaves.ca. Follows Evensong service at 4pm. LIVE & ONLINE

● **5:00: Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan/Sixtrum Percussion.** *Fusion Point/Le point de fusion.* Melissa Hui: TBA; Alithéa Ripoll: Kālī; Chris Paul Harman: When Time Turns Around; Marc Duggan: La machine de l'angoisse (arr. of L'angoisse des machines by Alain Thibault). The Music Gallery, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. \$5-\$30. Also Nov 27(8pm).

Tuesday November 30

● **6:30: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music on Film Series: My Darling Vivian.* Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, 506 Bloor St. W. 416-637-3123. \$17; \$12(members); \$10(sr members); free(st members).

Wednesday December 1

● **7:30: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Rebanks Family Fellowship Concerts Series: Rebanks Family Fellowship Concert.* Mazoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. Free. Proof of vaccination required.

● **7:30: Toronto Mendelssohn Choir.** *Festival of Carols.* Respighi: Lauda per la Natività del Signore; Hyo-Won Woo: O Magnum Mysterium; Rosephanye Powell: Christus natus est; Andrew Balfour: The Wyandot's Realm; and popular Christmas carols. Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra; Matthew Larkin, organ; Jean-Sébastien Vallée, conductor;

Simon Rivard, conductor. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-598-0422 or tmchoir.org/event/festival-of-carols-2021/. \$30-\$90 (in person); \$20-\$40 (online). Proof of vaccination required. LIVE & ONLINE

Thursday December 2

- **12:10: University of Toronto Faculty of Music.** *Thursdays at Noon.* Gabriel Policarpo, percussion; Alan Hetherington & the U of T Brazilian Ensemble. Walter Hall, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park. Free. LIVE STREAMED
- **7:00: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *Imagine Online Festival: East Meets West.* Sadaf Amini, John Burge, Kingston Chamber Choir, Darrell Christie, Melos Ensemble. 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. Free. ONLINE
- **8:00: Tafelmusik.** *The Voice of Vivaldi.* Johann Bernhard Bach: *Orchestral Suite in G; J. S. Bach: "Ich esse mit Freuden"* from *Canтата 84*; Scarlatti: *Concerto Grosso in f; Vivaldi: "Lo seguitai felice"* from *L'Olimpiade*; Vivaldi: "Non ti lusinghi," from *Tito Manlio*; and other works. Krisztina Szabó, mezzo; Elisa Citterio, director. info@tafelmusik.org or 1-833-964-633. ONLINE

Friday December 3

- **12:00 noon: Music at Met.** *Friday Noon at Met Concert Series.* David Simon, organ. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. metunited.ca/live. Free. LIVE & STREAMED
- **7:00: Milton Choristers.** *Do You Hear What I Hear?* Live concert of your favourite Christmas music. Rachel Cleland, artistic director. Knox Presbyterian Church (Milton), 170 Main St. E., Milton. miltonchoristers.com. \$10. Also Dec 4.
- **7:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Home Alone: In Concert.* Film screening with live orchestra. Scott Terrell, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$55. Also Dec 4 (2pm & 7:30pm).
- **7:30: Upper Canada Choristers/Cantemos Latin Ensemble.** *From Darkness Into Light.* Bach: Christmas Oratorio - Break Forth O Beauteous Heavenly Light; Handel: Messiah (excerpts); Haydn: Canon; Lauridsen: *Sure on This Shining Night*; Rutter: *Two Christmas Carols*; and other works for Christmas, Chanukah and Kwanzaa. Laurie Evan Fraser, conductor; Hye Won Cecilia Lee, piano. Grace Church on-the-Hill, 300 Lonsdale Rd. 416-256-0510 or uppercanadachoristers.org. Limited in-person tickets at \$25. Available in advance via Eventbrite. Ages 12 and up. COVID protocols in place and proof of full vaccination required. Free streaming on YouTube and Facebook. LIVE & STREAMED
- **8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra.** *Feelin' Groovy: Simon & Garfunkel.* Jim Witter, vocals/piano; Evan Mitchell, conductor. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. \$15-\$100 per stream. Available Dec 3-8pm to Dec 5-11:59pm. Purchase 1 stream per household. ONLINE
- **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix & Canada on Stage Series: Wesli & Kobo Town.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$40-\$75. Proof of vaccination required.

Saturday December 4

- **12:15: Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* A Christmas Carol: Dramatic readings with musical interludes. Rick Phillips, Kathleen Kajioka, William Webster, Zorana Sadiq and Joe Angelo, readers; Daniel Bickle, organ; and Jordan Klapman, piano. St. Andrew's Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. standrewstontoronto.org or 416-593-5600 x231. Freewill offering. Benefit for St. Andrew's Refugee Sponsorship program. LIVE & ONLINE
- **2:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Home Alone: In Concert.* Film screening with live orchestra. Scott Terrell, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$55. Also Dec 3 & 4 (7:30pm).
- **7:00: Milton Choristers.** *Do You Hear What I Hear?* Live concert of your favourite Christmas music. Rachel Cleland, artistic director. Knox Presbyterian Church (Milton), 170 Main St. E., Milton. miltonchoristers.com. \$10. Also Dec 3.
- **7:30: Arcady.** *Messiah.* Lighthouse Festival Theatre, 247 Main Street, Port Dover. lighthousefestivaltheatre.com/off-season-events or 519-583-2221 or 1-888-779-7703. \$35.
- **7:30: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Home Alone: In Concert.* Film screening with live orchestra. Scott Terrell, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$55. Also Dec 3 (7:30pm) & 4 (2pm).
- **7:30: York Chamber Ensemble.** *Little Night Music.* Torelli: Christmas Concerto; Dvořák: Nocturne for Strings; Kalinnikov: Serenade for Strings; Vitali: Chaconne; and holiday favourites. Joyce Lai, violin. St. Paul's Anglican Church, 227 Church St., Newmarket. 416-931-7899. \$25. Limited seating live performance.
- **8:00: Orchestra Toronto.** *Great Joy II: An Indigo Christmas with the Nathaniel Dett Chorale.* Also available on demand. Nathaniel Dett Chorale; Brainerd Blyden-Taylor, music director; Corey Butler, piano. George Weston

Recital Hall, Meridian Arts Centre (formerly Toronto Centre for the Arts), 5040 Yonge St. 1-855-985-2787 or ticketmaster.ca. \$45; \$39 (sr); \$19 (OTOPus ages 13 to 29); \$15 (ages 5-12). OTOpus patrons may purchase one additional ticket at the discounted rate for a guest of any age. Pre-concert chat at 7:15pm.

● **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix Series: Bobby McFerrin.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$65-\$150. Proof of vaccination required.

Sunday December 5



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● **3:30: Edison Singers.** *Handel's Messiah.* Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate, 28 Norfolk St., Guelph. 1-226-384-3100. \$25-\$40. Limited seating. Proof of full vaccination required.

Monday December 6

- **7:00: Confluence Concerts.** *Walter Unger Salon: Ruth Crawford's Musical Imagination.* Presented by Dr. Ellie Hisama. Music curated by Ryan MacDonald. Artists to be confirmed. confluenceconcerts.ca. Premiere online Dec 13. A limited number of tickets available for in-person attendance. LIVE & ONLINE
- **7:30: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Discovery Series: Joaquín Valdepeñas Conducts.* Mozart: *Sinfonia Concertante* in E-flat K297 for four winds and orchestra; Beethoven: *Symphony No. 8* in F Op. 93. Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$20. Proof of vaccination required.

Tuesday December 7

- **7:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *Chopin & Ravel.* Charles Richard-Hamelin, piano. 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. \$10-\$39; free (online). Proof of vaccination required. LIVE & ONLINE
- **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *TSO Holiday Pops.* Ryan Silverman, vocalist; Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$56, Matinee starting at \$41. Also Dec 8 (2pm & 8pm); Dec 9 (8pm).

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Artistic Director

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Events by Date | October 27 to December 17, 2021

Wednesday December 8

- **12:30: ORGANIX Concerts.** *Imre Olah, Organ.* All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church, 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or organixconcerts.ca. Freewill offering - \$20 suggested.
- **2:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *TSO Holiday Pops.* Ryan Silverman, vocalist; Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$56, Matinee starting at \$41. Also Dec 7(8pm); Dec 8(8pm); Dec 9(8pm).

Thursday December 9

- **7:00: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *Imagine Online Festival: Kingston Jazz.* Room Tone, Chantal Thompson. 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. Free. ONLINE
- **8:00: Art of Time Ensemble.** *To All A Good Night 6.* Duke Ellington: Nutcracker Suite for Big Band; and works by Stevie Wonder, John Prine, Stephen Colbert, and Elvis Costello. Jackie Richardson, Jessica Mitchell, Liam Russell, David Wall, and Tom Wilson. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. artoftimeensemble.com or 416-408-0208. Free. In-person seating is limited. LIVE & LIVESTREAM

Music TORONTO



December 9 at 8 pm GRYPHON TRIO

with
**DAVID
HARDING**



- **8:00: Music Toronto.** *Gryphon Trio with David Harding.* Brahms: Piano Trio No.1 in B Op.8; Ryan: New Work (world premiere); Student compositions from the Earl Haig/Claude Watson program; Dvořák: Piano Quartet in E-flat Op.87. St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723. \$47.50-\$52.
- **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *TSO Holiday Pops.* Ryan Silverman, vocalist; Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$56, Matinee starting at \$41. Also Dec 7(8pm); Dec 8(2pm).

Friday December 10

- **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix & Canada on Stage Series: Ashley MacIsaac with special guest Jilly Black.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance.

- **8:00: Sinfonia Toronto.** *Beethoven @251: Happy Birthday!* Coleridge-Taylor: Fantasiestücke; Chopin: Piano Concerto No.1; Beethoven: Symphony No.8. Dmitri Levkovich, piano; Nurhan Arman, conductor. Jane Mallet Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. In person 416-366-7723; virtual 416-499-0403 or sinfoniatoronto.com. In-person: \$55.97; \$48.06(sr); \$20.96(st); Livestream: \$15. LIVE & ONLINE

Saturday December 11

- **7:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *Imagine Online Festival: Minerva by Suzanne Pasternak.* Isabel Digital Concert Hall, 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. Free. ONLINE
- **8:00: Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra.** *In Concert.* Richardson-Schulte: The Hockey Sweater; Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite; Violin Concerto. Martin MacDonald, guest conductor; Eva Lesage, violin. P.C. Ho Theatre, Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto, 5183 Sheppard Ave. E., Scarborough. 416-879-5566 or cathedralbluffs.com or cbsooffice@gmail.com. \$30-\$48; \$25-\$38(sr/st); Free(under 12).
- **8:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Jazz From Around the World Series: Alfredo Rodriguez & Pedrito Martinez Group.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$45-\$105. Proof of vaccination required.

Sunday December 12

- **Against the Grain Theatre/Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Messiah/Complex.* Performed in Arabic, Dene, English, French, Inuktitut, and Southern Tutchone. Handel: Messiah. Jonathon Adams, Loeoe Arreak, Spencer Britten, Rihab Chaieb, Deantha Edmunds, singers; Le Choeur Louisbourg; Halifax Camerata Singers; Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; University of Prince Edward Island Chamber Chorus; and other performers; Johannes Debus; conductor: Joel Ivany and Reneltta Arluk, co-directors. Register at bit.ly/messiahcomplex2021. Available until Jan 9, 2022. ONLINE
- **3:00: Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Invesco Piano Concerts & Canada on Stage Series: Jan Lisiecki.* All Chopin program: Études and Nocturnes. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$50-\$105. Proof of vaccination required.

Tuesday December 14

- **7:30: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *Preludes for Piano.* Preludes by Chopin and Burge. Philip Chiu, piano. 390 King St. W., Kingston. 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. \$10-\$39; free(online). Proof of vaccination required. LIVE & ONLINE

Wednesday December 15

- **12:30: ORGANIX Concerts.** *Hanné Becker, Organ.* Our Lady Of Sorrows Catholic Church, 3055 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or organixconcerts.ca. Freewill offering - \$20 suggested.
- **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Messiah.* Anna-Sophie Neher, soprano; Rihab Chaieb, mezzo; Spencer Britten, tenor;

Stephen Hegedus, bass-baritone; Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Simon Rivard, RBC Resident Conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$35. Also Dec 17, 18-3pm & 8 pm, 19-3pm.

Thursday December 16

- **7:00: Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts.** *Imagine Online Festival: Classical and Beyond.* Grieg: Hall of the Mountain King, Ballade in g Op.24; Bach: French Overture; Works by Bach, Mattheis and Biber. Sheng Cai, Leonid Nediak, piano; Paelnai Duo; Chloe Kim, violin; Bryn Lutek, percussion. Isabel Digital Concert Hall. 613-533-2424 or ibcpaboffice@queensu.ca. Free.
- **7:30: Bravo Niagara! Festival of the Arts.** *TD Jazz Series: Pavlo: Home For The Holidays.* Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 905-688-0722 or 289-868-9177. \$50; \$25(st/youth with id).
- **8:00: Tafelmusik.** *A Tafelmusik Christmas.* Bach: Sanctus in D; Bach: "Christum wir sollen loben schon" from Cantata 21; Bach: Kyrie, Gloria & Cum sancto from Lutheran Mass in G; Stradella: Sinfonia from Cantata per il Santissimo Natale; Charpentier: Agnus Dei from Messe de minuit; works by Berlioz, Poulenc, Pasquini, Handel; and Christmas Carols. Tafelmusik Chamber Choir, Ivars Taurins, conductor. info@tafelmusik.org or 1-833-964-633. ONLINE

Friday December 17

- **12:00 noon: Music at Met.** *Friday Noon at Met Concert Series.* Featuring guest singers and music for the holiday season. Dr. Patricia Wright, organ. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. metunited.ca/live. Free. LIVE & STREAMED
- **8:00: Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra.** *Yuletide Spectacular.* Evan Mitchell, conductor. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717.

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\$15-\$100 per stream. Available Dec 17-8pm to Dec 19-11:59pm. Purchase 1 stream per household. ONLINE

- **8:00: Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Messiah.* Anna-Sophie Neher, soprano; Rihab Chaieb, mezzo; Spencer Britten, tenor; Stephen Hegedus, bass-baritone; Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Simon Rivard, RBC Resident Conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$35. Also Dec 15, 18(3pm & 8 pm), 19(3pm).

Still Available Online

- **Arts@Home.** A vibrant hub connecting Torontonians to arts and culture. Designed to strengthen personal and societal resilience through the arts. artsathome.ca.
- **Canadian Opera Company.** *In Concert: Russell Braun and Tamara Wilson with the COC Orchestra.* Verdi: Overture to La forza del destino; Wagner: Dich, teure Halle from Tannhäuser; Verdi: Tutto è deserto... Il balen del tuo sorriso from Il trovatore; Bizet: Entr'acte to Act III of Carmen; Offenbach: Scintille, diamant from Les Contes d'Hoffmann; and other works. Russell Braun, baritone; Tamara Wilson, soprano; Canadian Opera Company Orchestra; Johannes Debus, conductor. coc.ca/watch. Free with COC digital membership. Available until March 31, 2022. ONLINE
- **Capella Regalis Men & Boys Choir.** *Choral Concerts.* A number of concerts are available at youtube.com/capellaregalis
- **Confluence Concerts.** *Bach Cello Suites: Part 2.* Bach: Cello Suites No.4 in E-flat BWV1010 & No.6 in D BWV1012. Keiran Campbell, cello; Elinor Frey, violoncello piccolo. confluenceconcerts.ca. YouTube premiere Oct 29. A limited number of tickets available for in-person attendance. ONLINE
- **Humbercrest United Church.** *If Music Be the Food of Love.* 416-767-6122 or humbercrest.ca. Free. Available on the Humbercrest website following the concert.
- **Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra.** *Parade on Bourbon Street.* Michael Kaeshammer, piano; Lucas Waldin, conductor. 519-745-4711 or 1-888-745-4717. \$15-\$100 per stream. Available until Oct 17(11:59pm). Purchase 1 stream per household. 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 for meeting times, information and registration.

Blogs, Podcasts, Streaming

- **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/kevin.barrett.165470
- **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music of My Life.* Available at royalconservatory.live/music-of-my-life. Free. ONLINE
- **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Academic Performances.* Available at royalconservatory.live/academic-performances. Free. ONLINE

In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

Burdock

1184 Bloor St. W. 416-546-4033
burdockto.com

Cameron House

408 Queen St. W. 416-703-0811
thecameron.com

Castro's Lounge

2116 Queen St. E. 416-699-8272
castroslounge.com
Oct 29 5:30pm Little Magic Sam. **Oct 30** 3pm Danie Friesen Opera Revue. **Oct 31** 3pm Jillian Bunting. **Nov 5** 5:30pm Fraser and Daley. **Nov 6** 3pm Lily Frost and Thelonious Hank, 6pm Thelonious Hank. **Nov 11** 6pm Mike Danley and Mike McKenna. **Nov 19** 5:30pm Fraser and Daley. **Nov 20** 6pm Thelonious Hank. **Dec 3** 5:30pm Fraser and Daley. **Dec 4** 3pm Lily Frost and Thelonious Hank, 6pm Thelonious Hank.

C'est What

67 Front St. E. 416-867-9499
cestwhat.com

Emmet Ray, The

924 College St. 416-792-4497
theemmetray.com
All shows at 8:00 PM, unless otherwise noted.
Oct 25 Maddie Zeidenberg Quintet.
Oct 26 Andy Sharp Series feat. David Backshell. **Oct 27** Matilda Armstrong w/ Josh Sparks. **Oct 28** Phil Tessis Series.
Oct 29 Jenna Marie Pinard. **Oct 31** Harry Bartlett Halloween Special: Music from Twin Peaks.

Grossman's Tavern

379 Spadina Ave. 416-977-7000
grossmantavern.com
Oct 27 8:30pm Action Sound Band w/ Leo Vassori and Eric Schenkman. **Oct 30** 3pm The Happy Pals. **Oct 31** 3pm New Orleans Connection All Star Band.

Hirut Cafe and Restaurant

2050 Danforth Ave. 416-551-7560
hirut.ca

Home Smith Bar – See Old Mill, The

Hugh's Room

2261 Dundas St. W 416-533-5483
hughsroom.com
Oct 27 8pm Dione Taylor Live. **Nov 6** 8pm Paul James Bob Dylan Tribute.

Jazz Bistro, The

251 Victoria St. 416-363-5299
jazzbistro.ca
Oct 26 8pm Ilana Waldston. **Oct 27** 6pm John Russon's Club 350 Jam Session, 9pm Virginia MacDonald Band. **Oct 28** 9pm James Brown Album Release. **Oct 29** 5:30pm Aleef Mehdi Ensembles. **Oct 29** 9pm Eliana Cuevas Group. **Oct 30** 9pm Ted Quinlan Quartet.

Jazz Room, The

Located in the Huether Hotel, 59 King St. N., Waterloo. 226-476-1565
kwjazzroom.com
All shows at 8:00 PM unless otherwise noted.

Oct 29 Tenor Tribute with Jakob Durst Quartet. **Oct 30** Shirantha Beddage.
Nov 5 Wapama. **Nov 6** Barry Elmes Quintet.
Nov 12 The Phoenix Jazz Band. **Nov 13** Rich Brown and the Abeng. **Nov 19** Button Factory Band. **Nov 20** Joel Haynes Quartet.
Nov 27 Elena Kapeleris. **Dec 4** Rebecca Hennessy's Makeshift Island. **Dec 10** Mary-Catherine Pazzano. **Dec 11** Pat LaBarbera Quartet.
Dec 17 Tom Nagy's Christmas Experience.
Dec 18 Jason White Christmas Special.

Lula Lounge

1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307
lula.ca
Oct 28 8pm Champeta Party with Soukustek. **Oct 29** 8pm Cuban Fridays w/ Jorge Betancourt Y To'Esta Rico. **Oct 30** 8pm Salsa Halloween w/ Sean Bellaviti and Adis Rodriguez. **Nov 11** 8pm Dominique Fils-Aimé. **Nov 20** 8pm Salsa Saturday w/ Lengai Salsa Brava. **Dec 10** 8pm Salseros with Attitude.

Manhattans Pizza Bistro & Music Club

951 Gordon St., Guelph 519-767-2440
manhattans.ca
Oct 28 6:30pm Kat Steeves. **Oct 29** 7pm Parker Wilson Duo. **Oct 30** 7pm Charlie Cooley and Stan Chang.

Mezzetta Restaurant

681 St. Clair Ave. W. 416-658-5687
mezzettarestaurant.com

Monarch Tavern

12 Clinton St. 416-531-5833
themonarchtavern.com

Nice Bistro, The

117 Brock St. N., Whitby. 905-668-8839
nicebistro.com

Old Mill, The

21 Old Mill Rd. 416-236-2641
oldmilltoronto.com
The Home Smith Bar:

Pilot Tavern, The

22 Cumberland Ave. 416-923-5716
thepilot.ca

Poetry Jazz Café

224 Augusta Ave. 416-599-5299
poetryjazzcafe.com

Reposado Bar & Lounge

136 Ossington Ave. 416-532-6474
reposadobar.com

Reservoir Lounge, The

52 Wellington St. E. 416-955-0887
reservoirlounge.com

Rex Hotel Jazz & Blues Bar, The

194 Queen St. W. 416-598-2475
therex.ca
Oct 24 5:30pm Madeleine Ertel, 8:30pm Joel Haynes Group. **Oct 25** 5:30pm U of T Student Jazz Ensembles, 8:30pm Joel Haynes Group. **Oct 26** 5:30pm Laura Hubert Band, 8:30pm Chris Gale Hosts the Classic Rex Jazz Jam. **Oct 27** 5:30pm Nathan Hiltz Quartet, 8:30pm Allison Au Quartet. **Oct 28** 5:30pm Matt Woroshyl, 8:30pm Allison Au Quartet. **Oct 29** 5:30pm Jeff Halischuk Group, 8:30pm Allison Au Quartet. **Oct 30** 5:30pm Neon

MAINLY CLUBS, MOSTLY JAZZ

Continued from page 21

Mark Kelso, in trio format, on the first two nights; and Farrugia, drummer Larnell Lewis and saxophonist Luis Deniz in quartet format on the second two evenings. From November 10 to 13, saxophonist Mike Murley appears with his quartet, featuring guitarist Reg Schwager, bassist Jim Vivian and drummer Ethan Ardelli, with special guest trumpeter Kevin Turcotte on November 12 and saxophonist Tara Davidson on November 13. From November 17 to 20, Andrew Downing's Otterville project takes the stage, with Downing on cello, Tara Davidson on saxophone, Michael Davidson on vibraphone, Paul Mathew on bass, and Nick Fraser on drums. Finally, the Carn / Davidson 9 plays from November 24 to 27, with trombonist Will Carn and saxophonist Tara Davidson joined by saxophonists Kelly Jefferson and Shirantha Beddage, trumpeters Jason Logue and Kevin Turcotte, trombonist Christian Overton, bassist Andrew Downing and drummer Ernesto Cervini.

The Rex (2): In addition to the Juno Series, whose time slots are primarily occupied by older, more established musicians, The Rex has returned to the convention of booking once-a-week monthly series, which are mostly filled by younger, early-to-mid-career artists. One of the most exciting of these is saxophonist/vocalist Emily Steinwall, who has created a niche for herself in Canada's jazz and creative music scene as a powerful saxophonist, compelling vocalist and masterful performer. In March 2021, Steinwall released the album *Welcome to the Garden*, a beautiful, evocative collection of original music. In November – on Tuesdays at 5:30pm – she switches gears, returning to her jazz roots with pianist Ewen Farncombe, bassist Roberto Occhipinti, drummer Mark Kelso and a few special guests: guitarist Jocelyn Gould, on November 2 and 16; clarinetist Virginia MacDonald, on November 23; and drummer Eric West, on November 9. As Steinwall puts it, the group is “going to be playing a lot of standard repertoire that everyone involved has been playing on for many years, so it will mostly be an arena for us to explore, have fun and take some risks.” The Rex will provide “a place to push ourselves, in that moment of spontaneous creative impulse, all while grooving and having tons of fun.”



LA PITTE PHOTOGRAPHIE

Dominique Fils-Aimé

Lula Lounge: On Thursday, November 11, the Montreal-based singer Dominique Fils-Aimé will play at Lula Lounge. Fils-Aimé – whose album *Stay Tuned!* won the 2020 Vocal Jazz Album of the Year – has a compelling, nuanced vocal presence, and has been steadily gaining a following both in Canada and internationally. Her most recent album, *Three Little Words*, made the short list for the Polaris Prize (always a marker of serious crossover potential) and has been mentioned in major journals such as *The New Yorker*, drawing equally from soul, R&B and jazz influences. The show at Lula Lounge follows an October European tour, with stops in France, Norway and Sweden. For fans and for the uninitiated curious, the show should be a good opportunity to experience her work. Lula Lounge will offer assigned seating, making use of its large space to ensure that guests are distanced and that all COVID-19 protocols are followed – a good live show for those who are not yet quite ready for the shoulder-to-shoulder experience of a smaller venue! 🎧

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

In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

Eagle, 8:30pm Allison Au Quartet. **Oct 31** 5:30pm Madeleine Ertel, 8:30pm Anthony D'Alessandro Trio. **Nov 1** 5:30pm U of T student Jazz Ensembles. **Nov 2** 5:30pm Emily Steinwall Quartet. **Nov 3** 5:30pm Chris Gale B3 Trio, 8:30pm Roberto Occhipinti Album Release. **Nov 4** 5:30pm Worst Pop Band Ever, 8:30pm Roberto Occhipinti Album Release. **Nov 5** 5:30pm JV's Boogaloo Squad, 8:30pm Roberto Occhipinti Album Release. **Nov 6** 5:30pm Justin Bacchus, 8:30pm Roberto Occhipinti Album Release. **Nov 7** 5:30pm Noam Lemish Quartet, 8:30pm Eric West. **Nov 8** 5:30pm U of T Student Jazz Ensembles,

8:30pm Eric West. **Nov 9** 5:30pm Emily Steinwall Quartet. **Nov 10** 5:30pm Chris Gale B3 Trio, 8:30pm Mike Murley Quartet. **Nov 11** 5:30pm Worst Pop Band Ever, 8:30pm Mike Murley Quartet. **Nov 12** 5:30pm JV's Boogaloo Squad, 8:30pm Mike Murley Quartet. **Nov 13** 5:30pm Emily Schultz, 8:30pm Mike Murley Quartet. **Nov 14** 5:30pm Noam Lemish Quartet. **Nov 15** 5:30pm U of T Student Jazz Ensembles. **Nov 16** 5:30pm Emily Steinwall Quartet. **Nov 17** 5:30pm Chris Gale B3 Trio, 8:30pm Andrew Downing's Otterville. **Nov 18** 5:30pm Worst Pop Band Ever, 8:30pm Andrew Downing's Otterville.

Nov 19 5:30pm JV's Boogaloo Squad, 8:30pm Andrew Downing's Otterville. **Nov 20** 8:30pm Andrew Downing's Otterville. **Nov 21** 5:30pm Noam Lemish Quartet, 8:30pm Matt Newton. **Nov 22** 5:30pm U of T Student Jazz Ensembles, 8:30pm Matt Newton. **Nov 23** 5:30pm Emily Steinwall Quartet. **Nov 24** 5:30pm Chris Gale B3 Trio, 8:30pm Carn / Davidson 9. **Nov 25** 5:30pm Worst Pop Band Ever, 8:30pm Carn / Davidson 9. **Nov 26** 5:30pm JV's Boogaloo Squad, 8:30pm Carn / Davidson 9. **Nov 27** 5:30pm Emily Schultz, 8:30pm Carn / Davidson 9. **Nov 28** 5:30pm Noam Lemish Quartet, 8:30pm Virginia MacDonald. **Nov 29** 8:30pm Virginia MacDonald. **Nov 30** 5:30pm

Emily Steinwall Quartet.

Sauce on Danforth

1376 Danforth Ave. 647-748-1376
sauceondanforth.com

The Senator Winebar

249 Victoria St 416 364-7517
thesenator.com

Tranzac

292 Brunswick Ave. 416-923-8137
tranzac.org

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thank a music teacher.
(Skip the hug.)

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THE WHOLENOTE ONLINE DIRECTORIES INDEX

Under the tab **WHO'S WHO** at THEWHOLENOTE.COM, you'll find our four directories containing detailed profiles about active participants in four areas of community life. In our **Blue Pages** you can read about music makers and presenters; in our **Canary Pages** you'll find the riches of choral activity all across southern Ontario. You can also find information about summer music performance in our **Green Pages**, and about seasonal learning opportunities in Summer **Music Education**.

Traditionally we published a single annual print supplement for each of these: *The Blue Pages* in the fall, *Summer Music Education* in late winter, *The Canary Pages* in May, and *The Green Pages* in early summer.) But these days it's more useful to allow for rolling deadlines for all concerned, so we've moved these directories entirely online. This means that directory participants a) can wait till their plans for the season have taken shape, and b) revise them as frequently as necessary, as restrictions governing venues and live performance continue to adjust, hopefully for the better!

So what follows here is an up-to-the-moment list (as of October 26, 2021) of whom you will currently find in *The Blue Pages* and *The*

Canary Pages – currently the most active of the four areas. Profiles are being added or, as importantly, are being updated on a weekly basis. And while most of the *Green Pages* and *Summer Music Education* participants' activities have ended for this year, we'll keep their 2021 profiles online for your awareness and future planning, until they are updated in the new year.

This index in our print edition serves two distinct purposes.

It tells you who is sufficiently far along in their planning to have joined the directories, and it offers you a handy way to window-shop their websites directly – via the website addresses that accompany every name in the index.

This is particularly easy to do – just with a “click” if you explore these pages while reading *The WholeNote* in our online flipthrough edition, accessible via kiosk.thewholenote.com.

So happy browsing! If you have any questions about the directories, either as a reader or prospective directory member, contact me at karen@thewholenote.com

Karen Ages, directory and member services



BLUE PAGES DIRECTORY OF MUSIC MAKERS 2021-22

● = **NEW!**

● Aga Khan Museum
www.agakhanmuseum.org

● **Art of Time Ensemble**
www.artoftimeensemble.com

● Azrieli Foundation
www.azrielifoundation.org/amp

● Barrie Concert Association
www.barrieconcerts.org

● Barrie Concert Band
www.barrieconcertband.org

● Canadian Opera Company
www.coc.ca

● Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra
www.cathedralbluffs.com

● **Chorus Niagara**
www.chorusniagara.org

● Church of St. Mary Magdalene
www.stmarymagdalene.ca

● Counterpoint Community Orchestra
www.ccorchestra.org

● DaCapo Chamber Choir
www.dacapochamberchoir.ca

● Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western U
music.uwo.ca

● Edison Singers
www.theedisonsingers.com

● **Ensemble Vivant**
www.ensemblevivant.com

● Estonian Studies Centre
www.vemu.ca

● Etobicoke Community Concert Band
www.eccb.ca

● Etobicoke Philharmonic Orchestra
www.eorporchestra.ca

● **Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan**
www.evergreenclubgamelan.com

● **Glionna Mansell Corporation**
www.glionnamansell.com

● Hannaford Street Silver Band
www.hssb.ca

● INNERchamber Inc.
www.innerchamber.ca

● Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts
www.queensu.ca/theisabel

● Jubilate Singers
www.jubilatesingers.ca

● Ken Page Memorial Trust
www.kenpagememorialtrust.com

● Kindred Spirits Orchestra
www.KSOchestra.ca

● **Koerner Hall at the Royal Conservatory of Music**
www.rcmusic.com/performance

● Mississauga Chamber Singers
www.mississaugachambersingers.ca

● Mississauga Symphony Orchestra
www.mississaugasympphony.ca

● **MOSAIC Canadian Vocal Ensemble**
mosaic-vocalensemble.ca

● Music at Metropolitan
www.metunited.ca

● Music at St. Andrew's
www.standrewstoronto.org

● Music in the Afternoon (Women's Musical Club of Toronto)
www.wmct.on.ca

● Music Gallery
www.musicgallery.org

● Music Toronto
www.music-toronto.com

● **New Music Concerts**
www.newmusicconcerts.com

● **Nocturnes in the City**
www.nocturnesinthecity.com

● **Off Centre Music Salon**
www.offcentremusic.com

● Opera Atelier
www.operaatelier.com

● Orchestra Toronto
www.orchestratoronto.ca

● **ORGANIX Concerts**
www.organixconcerts.ca

● Pax Christi Chorale
www.paxchristichorale.org

● Peterborough Singers
www.peterboroughsingers.com

● **Royal Canadian College of Organists, Toronto Centre**
www.rcco.ca/Toronto

● Sine Nomine Ensemble for Medieval Music
www.pims.ca/article/sine-nomine/

● SoundCrowd
www.soundcrowd.ca

● Soundstreams
www.soundstreams.ca

● **St. Michael's Choir School**
www.smcs.on.ca

● Tafelmusik
www.tafelmusik.org

● **Tapestry Opera**
www.tapestryopera.com

● **That Choir**
www.thatchoir.com

● Toronto Chamber Choir
www.torontochamberchoir.ca

● **Toronto Choral Society**
www.torontochoralsociety.org

● **Toronto Classical Singers**
www.torontoclassicalsingers.ca

● Toronto Mendelssohn Choir
www.tmchoir.org

● Toronto Mozart Players
www.mozartproject.ca

● **Toronto Operetta Theatre**
www.torontooperetta.com

● **Trio Arkel**
www.trioarkel.com

● **University of Toronto Faculty of Music**
music.utoronto.ca

● Upper Canada Choristers
www.uppercanadachoristers.org

● **Vesnivka Choir**
www.vesnivka.com

● **VOCA Chorus of Toronto**
www.vocachorus.ca

● **Voicebox: Opera in Concert**
www.operainconcert.com

● Wychwood Clarinet Choir
www.wychwoodclarinetchoir.ca

Arts Services

● Eric Alper Public Relations
www.thatericalper.com

● International Resource Centre for Performing Artists
www.ircpa.net

● Linda Litwack Publicity
www.facebook.com/Linda-Litwack-Publicity-1174901622575289

WHO'S WHO,
continues on page 32

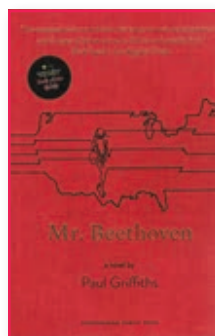


Directory of Choirs

- Achill Choral Society
www.achill.ca
- Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto
www.amadeuschoir.com
- Annex Singers
www.annexsingers.com
- Bel Canto Singers
www.belcantosingers.ca
- Canadian Celtic Choir
www.celticchoir.ca
- Cantabile Chamber Singers
www.cantabilechambersingers.com
- Chorus Niagara
www.chorusniagara.org
- Chorus York
www.chorusyork.ca
- City Choir
www.citychoir.ca
- Cumber Avenue United Church Choir
www.cummeravenueuc.ca
- Echo Women's Choir
www.echo womenschoir.ca
- Ensemble vocal Les voix du cœur
www.lesvoixducoeur.com
- Etobicoke Centennial Choir
www.etobicokecentennialchoir.ca
- Exultate Chamber Singers
www.exultate.net
- Georgetown Choral Society
www.georgetownchoral.ca
- Harbourfront Chorus
www.facebook.com/harbourfrontchorus
- Jubilate Singers
www.jubilatesingers.ca
- King Edward Choir
www.kingedwardchoir.ca
- Leaside United Church Choirs
www.leasideunited.org
- Men of Note
www.menofnote.com
- Milton Choristers
www.miltonchoristers.com
- Mississauga Chamber Singers
www.mississaugachambersingers.ca
- Novi Singers Toronto
www.novisingerstoronto.ca
- Oasis Vocal Jazz
www.oasisvocaljazz.com
- Oriana Choir
www.orianachoir.com
- Pax Christi Chorale
www.paxchristichorale.org
- Peterborough Singers
www.peterboroughsingers.com
- Serenata Singers
www.serenatasingers.ca
- Society of Singers
www.societyofsingers.ca
- Tempus Choral Society
www.tempuschoralsociety.com
- Toronto Chamber Choir
www.torontochamberchoir.ca
- Toronto Children's Chorus
www.torontochildrenschorus.com
- Toronto Classical Singers
www.torontoclassicalsingings.com
- Toronto Concert Choir
www.torontoconcertchoir.ca
- Toronto Welsh Male Voice Choir
www.welshchoir.ca
- Upper Canada Choristers
www.uppercanadachoristers.org
- Vesnivka Choir
www.vesnivka.com
- Village Voices Community Choir
www.villagevoices.ca
- VIVA Singers Toronto
www.vivayouthsingers.com
- VOCA Chorus of Toronto
www.vocachorus.ca
- West Toronto Community Choir
www.facebook.com/groups/westtorontocommunitychoir
- Windsor Classic Chorale
www.windsorclassicchorale.org

Editor's Corner

DAVID OLDS



Back in February I mentioned what a joy it was to read the latest from Welsh novelist, musicologist and librettist **Paul Griffiths** titled **Mr. Beethoven**. In it, Griffiths imagines Beethoven's life beyond his purported death in 1827, his visit to Boston and the oratorio he wrote on commission from the Handel and Haydn Society in 1833. I had received an inscribed copy of the small press UK edition (pictured here in red, the small black circle with the gold star declaring it a Republic of Consciousness Prize for Small Presses "Book of the Month") sent just before Christmas by the author. At his request I deferred

writing about the book until the North American publication date this past month. *Mr. Beethoven* is now available in Canada published by **The New York Review of Books** (ISBN 9781681375809) and I have taken the occasion to revisit this marvellous novel. In a season when many of my favourite authors have published new books (Richard Powers, Wayne Johnston, Tomson Highway, Karl Ove Knausgaard, Guy Vanderhaeghe, Jonathan Franzen and David Grossman, to name a few) it might have seemed an imposition to have to put them off for a book so recently enjoyed, but I'm pleased to report that, if anything, *Mr. Beethoven* is even more satisfying the second time around and I know those other books will wait patiently on my To Read shelf.

As is my wont, I made a point of listening to the music mentioned in the book, at least as far as I was able. The challenge of course was that much of the music discussed, and particularly *Job: The Oratorio* which is featured so prominently, is imaginary, dating from Beethoven's fanciful "fourth" (i.e. posthumous) period. Various chamber works are described, including a "Quincy" string quartet, a "Fifths" piano sonata, a clarinet quintet, and even plans for an "Indian Operetta" on indigenous themes using early poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. But there are actual works included as well, such as the antepenultimate – now there's a word that was new to me – *Piano Sonata No.30 in E Major Op.109* and the *String Quartet No.15 in A Minor Op.132*. But more curiously, other works which would foreshadow the mythical oratorio are mentioned because they would not yet have been performed in Boston at the time, such as the *Missa Solemnis Op.123* and the "*Choral*" *Symphony No.9 Op.125* and were therefore unknown to the characters in the novel.

Griffiths has drawn on his skills as a researcher, as well as his imagination and his command of the German language, to produce a hybrid work of pseudo-scholarly biographical/speculative fiction. His conceit that Beethoven, deaf for many years at this point, would have been able to communicate using sign language with the aid of a young amanuensis from Martha's Vineyard is based on the fact that there was indeed a community there that had developed a system that predated and was later subsumed by American Sign Language. Thankful, the young woman who becomes Beethoven's voice, interprets for him discretely, leaving out much of the bluster and non-essential verbiage of his interlocutors, enabling him to communicate with those whom he could neither hear nor understand their language. Beethoven's speech is stilted as a result of this translation process, but Griffiths has ingeniously crafted his dialogue from excerpts of letters and other documents actually written by the composer, as documented in the copious end notes. The characters Beethoven interacts with are fictitious, but also predominantly historical figures, culled from censuses and directories of the time and from the archives of the Handel and Haydn Society. These include the grand landholder John Quincy with whose family the composer spends a summer vacation, and members

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of the Chickering and Mason households whose descendants would become famous piano manufacturers.

Perhaps most impressive is the description of the mythical oratorio itself, based on the biblical story of Job, and the libretto that is included on facing pages in the final chapters of the book. The details are almost mind-boggling, including notes on orchestration, vocal ranges, staging and interpretation. There is even an authentic notated melody for the boy soprano's aria, which originated in a sketchbook of Beethoven's dated 1810.

First published, and first read by me, in 2020 the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth – here are two more words that were new to me (and my spell checker): semiquincentennial and sestercentennial – it seems especially fitting that while reading *Mr. Beethoven* I immersed myself in the music of that master. Some of it was mentioned in the book, but other works came as a result of new recordings released to coincide with the auspicious year.



For *Op.109* there were numerous choices. Young pianists eager to make their mark with this fabled work included **Haiou Zhang** and **Uriel Pascucci**. **Zhang's My 2020 (Hänssler Classic HC20079 naxosdirect.com/search/hc20079)** begins with *Piano Sonata No.30* followed by the final *Sonata No.32* and also includes Bach transcriptions by Feinberg and Lipatti, with two

bonus tracks: a cadenza from Beethoven's fourth piano concerto and the familiar bagatelle *Für Elise*. In the booklet, Zhang explains the meaning of the disc's title, referencing COVID-19 and reflecting on having made his Rachmaninoff *Piano Concerto No.3* debut in Wuhan, and giving masterclasses there, shortly before the outbreak. He goes on to speak about why the Beethoven sonatas have meant so much to him for so long and says that every Sunday morning the Bach transcriptions are part of his "confession." The performances are equally moving.



While Zhang has already recorded a number of discs for Hänssler in his young career, **Pascucci's Solo Piano – Beethoven; Pascucci; Mussorgsky (IMD-Classics urielpascucci.com/copy-of-discografia)** appears to be his recording debut. Pascucci has chosen to bookend his own *Prelude, Tango and Fugue* with Beethoven's *Sonata Op.109* and Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an*

Exhibition. I am a bit discomfited by a couple of abrupt transitions in the third movement of the Beethoven which I attribute to unfortunate edits, but otherwise it is a thoughtful and sensitive performance. The Mussorgsky is powerful and well-balanced, occasional surprises in the use of rubato and syncopation notwithstanding. His own composition shows him at his most comfortable, its contrasting movements each bringing a different mood to the fore. The rhythmic tango, with its pounding chords growing to a near *perpetuo mobile* ostinato climax is a highlight.



My go-to reference for Beethoven sonatas is Toronto's own **Anton Kuerti**. My basement is currently under renovation and the bulk of my vinyl collection is inaccessible at the moment, so I was unable to pull out his original recordings of the entire cycle of 32 on Aquitaine from 1977. Fortunately Kuerti recorded the final five sonatas for **Analekta** in 2004, released on two CDs: Nos.28,

Op.101 and 29, *Op.106* (FL 2 3187) and *The Final Sonatas, Nos.30, 31 and 32* (FL 2 3182 **analekta.com/en**). It was to the latter I turned for comparison's sake, and I must say, to my ears Kuerti just cannot be beat when it comes to this repertoire.

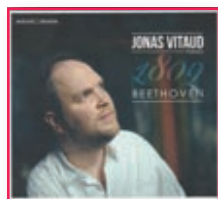
That being said, my piano explorations did not end there. Two mid-career artists also released Beethoven discs recently, **Pierre-Laurent**

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naxosdirect.com/search/ptc5186724). He is obviously as at home with 200-year-old repertoire as with the music of his own time.



Testament de Heiligenstadt (Mirare MIR562 mirare.fr/catalogue) begins with those flamboyant variations and includes *Seven Bagatelles Op.33* and *Six Variations Op.34* bookending the *Piano*

Aimard and Jonas Vitaud. Aimard, perhaps best known for his interpretations of contemporary repertoire – especially Messiaen and Ligeti whose *Piano Concerto* he performed with New Music Concerts here in Toronto early in his career in 1990 – marked the anniversary year with **Beethoven: Hammerklavier Sonata and Eroica Variations** (PentaTone PTC 5186 724

The *Eroica Variations* date from the year 1802 and Vitaud has chosen to centre his disc around that year in which Beethoven realized he was becoming irreversibly deaf, contemplated suicide and wrote the “Heiligenstadt Testament” to his brothers Carl and Johann. He would overcome his depression and go on to write some of his most powerful works. **1802 – Beethoven**

Sonata Op.31/2 “Tempest” with its undying despair. Vitaud suggests this arc as a depiction of Beethoven’s journey toward hope.



gleam, or divine spark) featuring the mother-and-daughter team of **Eliane Rodrigues and Nina Smeets** (navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6382). In the liner notes Rodrigues says; “During the COVID-19 pandemic, I’ve seen so much sadness and pain that I wanted to share a moment of joy, love, and friendship. The only thing that came to mind and heart was Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, in a version for two pianos with my daughter, Nina. My arrangement is not a literal transcription of the orchestral score. Rather, it’s based on what I hear and feel when listening to the orchestral music and Franz Liszt’s arrangement. The main goal was to follow in Beethoven’s footsteps and connect his work to the present day; to achieve what he would have wanted: to unite all people with just one simple melody.” I believe that

STRINGS ATTACHED

TERRY ROBBINS

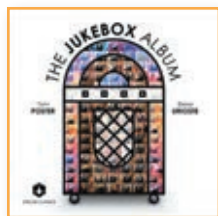


Jack Liebeck Ysaÿe sees the outstanding English violinist finally recording Ysaÿe’s *Six Sonatas for Solo Violin Op.27*, works which have long fascinated him (**Orchid Classics ORC100179** jackliebeck.com).

“I always knew I would have to climb this mountain,” says Liebeck, and the recent COVID lockdowns provided the right moment. He describes Ysaÿe’s style

as monumental, with gothic themes, drama and poignancy, and the music as the pinnacle of harmonic and technical challenge, which nevertheless fits a violinist’s hand like a glove.

Liebeck is joined by pianist **Daniel Grimwood** in the rhapsodic *Poème élégiaque in D Minor Op.12*, and as always draws a sumptuous tone from his 1785 J. B. Guadagnini violin in superlative performances.



In March 2020 violinist **Elena Urioste** and pianist **Tom Poster** decided to record and share one music video for every day spent in isolation. The expected two to three weeks of their #UriPosteJukeBox project turned into 88 days – one for each piano key. The resulting studio CD **The Jukebox Album** is simply one of the most heart-melting and breathtakingly beautiful discs

you could imagine (**Orchid Classics ORC100173** orchidclassics.com/releases/jukebox).

From the opening *Look for the Silver Lining* through a program including standards like *La vie en rose*, *Begin the Beguine*, *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* and *Send in the Clowns*, all in

superb arrangements by Poster and with occasional sumptuous multi-tracking by Urioste, to Kreisler arrangements, pieces by Carlos Gardel, Lili Boulanger, Fauré and six new pieces commissioned for the project, the standard never drops for a moment.

“This is the music we’ve loved our whole lives,” says Poster, and it shows in every note of an absolutely gorgeous CD.

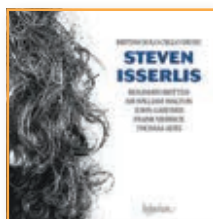


Cellist **Daniel Müller-Schott** is in superb form on **Four Visions of France – French Cello Concertos** with the **Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin** under **Alexandre Bloch** (Orfeo C988211 naxos-direct.com/search/c988211).

Saint-Saëns is represented by his 1872 *Cello Concerto No.1 in A Minor Op.33* and the *Romance in F Major Op.36*. Honegger’s

fascinating 1929 *Cello Concerto* and Lalo’s 1877 *Cello Concerto in D Minor* are the other two major works, with Fauré’s *Élégie in C Minor Op.24* in the 1901 orchestral version completing the disc.

A lovely recorded ambience captures the luminous textures and sensual orchestral colours typical of French music, on an outstanding CD.



British Solo Cello Music features the always-wonderful **Steven Isserlis** (Hyperion CDA68373 hyperion-records.co.uk/dc.asp?dc=D_CDA68373).

Britten’s *Tema ‘Sacher’* and *Cello Suite No.3 Op.87* open the disc, with Isserlis being joined by pianist **Mishka Rushdie Momen** for the three Tchaikovsky settings of the folk-song themes used in the Suite.

Other works are Walton’s *Theme for a Prince* and *Passacaglia*, John Gardner’s *Coranto pizzicato*, Frank Merrick’s *Suite in the eighteenth-century style* and the brief *Sola* by Thomas Adès.

As always, Isserlis’ booklet essay is erudite and fascinating, with its personal reminiscences of John Gardner (1917–2011) and – in particular – the astonishing Frank Merrick (1886–1981) an absolute delight.

Violinist **Patricia Kopatchinskaja** and cellist **Sol Gabetta** celebrate 20 years of friendship on **Sol & Pat**, a recital of duos for violin and cello built around two 20th-century masterpieces (ALPHA757

Rodrigues has succeeded admirably. The semi-improvised sections are not at all jarring, and the result is very satisfying. The overall effect is uplifting, in spite of the absence of Schiller's anthemic words. Just what we need in these troubled times.

Well that's a lot of piano indeed, but I'm none the worse for wear. I did add cello to the mix with **Yo-Yo Ma** and **Emmanuel Ax's Hope Amid Tears – Beethoven Cello Sonatas** (sonyclassical.com/releases), a three-CD set that includes the five sonatas and the three sets of variations. I found my personal favourites, *Sonata No.3 in A Major, Op.69* and the *Variations on Handel's "Hail the Conquering Hero"* to be particularly satisfying. For the record I also listened to the penultimate string quartet, and full orchestral versions of the *Ninth Symphony* and the *Missa Solemnis*. For *String Quartet No.15 in A Minor Op.132*, I chose two recordings from my archives, one by the **Tokyo String Quartet** recorded when Canadian Peter Oundjian was a member of the group (**RCA Red Seal Masters 88691975782**), and the other by Canada's **Alcan Quartet** (**ATMA ACD2 2493**). Both are taken from complete cycles of all 16 quartets and I'd be hard pressed to pick a favourite. For *Symphony No.9* it was **Mariss Jansons** conducting a live performance for Bavarian Radio in 2007 whose soloists included Canadian tenor Michael Schade (**BRK90015 naxosdirect.com/search/brk90015**), and for the *Missa Solemnis*, it was **Leonard Bernstein** conducting the New York Philharmonic with the Westminster Choir and soloists Eileen

Farrell, Carol Smith, Richard Lewis and Kim Borg from 1961, reissued on *Leonard Bernstein The Royal Edition* in 1992 (**Sony Classical SM2K 47522**). I must say I found Borg's performance put me in mind of the description of the wonderful bass who sang the lead role in the imaginary *Job: The Oratorio*. It's a shame it was all in Griffiths' mind, and of course, in the pages of his marvellous book!

Although Beethoven did not write an oratorio, he did compose one opera, *Fidelio*. You may read Pamela Margles' review of the latest recording further on in these pages, and Raul da Gama's take on the original 1805 version, *Leonore*, in Volume 26 No.6 of *The WholeNote* published in March this year.

(Full disclosure, I did not put all of my other reading on hold for the sake of this article. I actually read Grossman's *More Than I Love My Life* before starting this column and will read the final 15 pages of Powers' *Bewilderment* as soon I finish.) ●

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*David Olds, DISCoveries Editor
discoveries@thewholenote.com*



naxosdirect.com/search/alpha757).

Ravel's *Sonata* and, in particular, Kodaly's *Duo Op.7* draw terrific playing from the duo, with shorter pieces ranging from the dazzling opening gypsy dance of Leclair's *Tambourin: Presto* through a pizzicato C.P.E. Bach *Presto* to the J. S. Bach keyboard *Prelude No.15 in G Major*, with brief contemporary works by Jörg Widmann,

Francisco Coll, Marcin Markowicz, Xenakis and Ligeti.

An unexpected gem, though, is *La Fête au village Op.9*, a 1947 affectionate depiction of Swiss National Day by Swiss composer Julien-François Zbinden, who was still alive and emailing the performers in 2018 aged 101.

On his new CD **Hope** violinist **Daniel Hope** presents a personal collection of classics featuring music largely based on songs or sung melodies that he describes as "an attempt to send out a ray of hope and to provide people with a sense of support and perhaps even consolation" (**DGG 28948605415 deutschegrammophon.com/en/artists/danielhope**).



He is joined by an array of artists including the **Zürcher Kammerorchester**, the vocal ensemble **Amarcord** and baritone **Thomas Hampson** in a program that opens with Ariel Ramírez's beautiful *Misa Criolla* and travels through pieces by Dowland, Schubert, Giazotto, El-Khoury, Pärt, Elgar and Stephen Foster to *Danny Boy*, *Dream a Little Dream* and *Amazing Grace*.

As always with *Hope* and friends, the standard of arrangements and performances is of the highest level.



Baroque, the new CD from violinist **Nicola Benedetti** marks her first Baroque recording with period set-up and gut strings. She is joined by the **Benedetti Baroque Orchestra**, a new ensemble of freelance Baroque musicians that she assembled and directs (**Decca Classics B0034187-2 nicolabenedetti.co.uk**).

Geminiani's *Concerto grosso in D Minor H143 "La Folia"*, a transcription of Corelli's

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"Stimme aus der Ferne" - A Voice From the Distance
Andrea Botticelli
Her debut album: works for piano by Schubert, Czerny, Clara Schumann, and Robert Schumann on a replica 1830's Viennese fortepiano, owned by the Banff Centre.



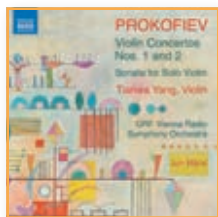
Sound Visionaries
Christina Petrowska Quilico
Unearthing modernity, impressionism, and mysticism, Petrowska Quilico proves that despite all difficulties, finding common ground between Debussy, Messiaen, and Boulez can be done spectacularly.



Retro Americana
Christina Petrowska Quilico
Petrowska Quilico embarks on a journey through time, splendidly showcasing the gamut of North American piano music, a long-neglected genre seldom heard in such magnificence.

Violin Sonata Op.5 No.12, opens an otherwise all-Vivaldi program of the Violin Concertos in D Major RV211, E-flat Major RV257, B Minor RV386 and the Andante middle movement from the Concerto in B-flat Major RV583.

The 1717 Gariel Stradivarius that Benedetti has played since 2012 sounds warm and bright, with top-notch performances from all concerned, contributing to a lovely CD.



With violinist **Tianwa Yang** you can always count on a mixture of dazzling technique, colour, tone and musical intelligence, and so it proves again on **Prokofiev Violin Concertos Nos.1 and 2**, her latest release on the **Naxos Classics** label with the **ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra** under **Jun Märkl** (8.574107 naxosdirect.com/search/8574107).

Performances of the *Concertos No.1 in D Major Op.19* and *No.2 in G Minor Op.63* are both particularly strong on the lyrical aspects of the works, with some beautifully expansive playing. The *Sonata for Solo Violin in D Major Op.115* completes an excellent disc.



Violinist **Renaud Capuçon** recently became artistic director of the **Orchestre de chambre de Lausanne**, and **Arvo Pärt Tabula Rasa** is his first recording as soloist and conductor of the ensemble (**Erato 9029502957** warnerclassics.com/release/tabula-rasa).

The seven works here are: the double concerto *Tabula Rasa*; the 1992 version of *Fratres* for violin, string orchestra and percussion; *Summa* and *Silouan's Song*, both for string orchestra; *Darf ich...* (*May I*); *Spiegel im Spiegel* (with piano); and *For Lennart in memoriam*.

Capuçon says that the music takes us from darkness to light, but there's very little change of mood across the CD. Still, the playing is first class, and if you love Pärt's music you'll love this disc.



Andreas Brantelid is the cellist on **Times of Transition**, a CD of three cello concertos from the second half of the 18th century, when Baroque polyphony and fugue were giving way to the early classical *galant* style of melody with accompaniment. **Lars Ulrik Mortensen** conducts the **Concerto Copenhagen** (**Naxos Denmark 8.574365** naxosdirect.com/search/8574365).

C.P.E. Bach's *Concerto in A Major Wq.172* with its familiar finale dates from 1753. Haydn's *Concertos in C Major Hob. VIIb:1* from 1761-65 and the purely classical *D Major Hob. VIIb:2* from 1783 are the only two indisputably by him, the finale of the C major work drawing particularly fine playing from Brantelid, who for this disc plays an Emil Hjort, Copenhagen cello from 1887 with gut strings.



He's not a composer you readily associate with violin sonatas, but on **Heitor Villa-Lobos Complete Violin Sonatas**, the new CD from **Naxos Classics** in their *Music of Brazil* series violinist **Emmanuele Baldini** and pianist **Pablo Rossi** present three delightful pieces which should be much better known (8.574310 naxosdirect.com/search/8574310).

The works – the single-movement *Sonata No.1 Fantasia "Désespérance"* and the three-movement *Sonatas No.2 Fantasia* and *No.3* – were written between 1912 and 1920, a key period in Villa-Lobos' career in which he was maturing as a composer, establishing a personal style and achieving his first professional successes.

There's influence of French late-Romanticism here (especially Debussy in No.3) and a wealth of melodic invention, with excellent performances making for a delightful disc.



Jurgis Karnavičius String Quartets Nos.3 & 4 is the final volume in the complete string quartets by the Lithuanian composer, in world-premiere recordings by the **Vilnius String Quartet** (**Ondine ODE1387-2** naxos-direct.com/search/761195138724).

These quartets are more expressive and modern in nature than Nos.1 & 2, warmly reviewed here in May/June of this year, and

were composed in St. Petersburg in 1922 and 1925 before Karnavičius returned to Lithuania in 1927. After their premieres they were not heard again until 1969 and the 1980s respectively, with No.4 still unpublished. It's hard to understand why – described as a stylistic link between the quartets of Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich and as a "chromatically saturated musical fabric" they're outstanding works given wonderfully rich and empathetic performances by the Lithuanian ensemble.



The string quartets of Samuel Barber and Charles Ives are featured on **Barber – Ives** in excellent performances by the **Escher String Quartet** (**BIS-2360 bis.se**).

Barber's *String Quartet Op.11* features the original inception of his *Adagio for Strings* as its central movement, beautifully played here. The original third movement, discarded by Barber in favour of a shorter

ending, is also included for reference.

Ives' two quartets have various composition and revision dates from 1897 to 1915. His *String Quartet No.1 "From the Salvation Army" (A Revival Service)* is played with the reinstated first movement, discarded by Ives but re-attached – and not to everyone's approval – by Ives scholar John Kirkpatrick after the composer's death. His *String Quartet No.2* is more dissonant and atonal, but makes similar use of American hymns and folk tunes. The spiky *Scherzo: Holding Your Own* from 1903-04 completes a terrific disc.



Joseph Haydn The Last Three String Quartets Op.77 & Op.103 is the new CD from the Czech **Pražák Quartet** (**Praga PRD250420** pragadigitals.com).

In 1799 Haydn started a projected set of six quartets dedicated to Prince Lobkowitz but completed only two – Op.77 Nos.1 and 2. In 1802/03 he wrote two middle movements for an unfinished third quartet; these

are now known as Op.103. The Op.77 quartets in particular, described here as "bold and full of wit" make a fitting farewell to a musical form that Haydn had almost single-handedly established and developed.

The performances are full-blooded but insightful and sensitive, putting one – if you are old enough – in mind of the great Czech quartet ensembles of the 1960s Supraphon LP recordings.



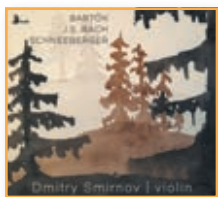
Ciaconna is Russian violinist **Ilya Gringolts'** first solo recording of music of his own time with a tribute to its inspiration – Johann Sebastian Bach (**BIS-2525 bis.se**).

Heinz Holliger's brief *Drei kleine Szenen* intertwines Gringolts' voice in the *Ciaconina* first movement. Roberto Gerhard's *Chaconne*, inspired by Bach's *D-Minor Chaconne* is a 12-tone work of 12

short movements, but with highly individual use and adaptation of the basic tone row.

The major work here is *Kontrapartita* by the French composer Brice Pauset, its seven movements – *Preludio*, *Allemande*, *Corrente*, *Sarabande*, *Loure*, *Giga* and *Ciaconna* – interspersed with the seven Bach movements from the three *Partitas* that inspired them.

The *D-Minor Chaconne* also turns up on **Bartók, J. S. Bach, Schneeberger**, a recital CD from the Russian violinist **Dmitry Smirnov**



featuring Bartók's *Sonata for Solo Violin*, Bach's *Partita No.2 in D Minor* and the 1942 *Sonata for Solo Violin* by the Swiss violinist Hansheinz Schneeberger, who

died two years ago at the age of 93 (**First Hand Recordings FHR117** firsthandrecords.com).

There are some interesting ornamentation choices in the Bach (especially in the *Sarabande*), but the Bartók and – in particular – the Schneeberger are given convincing performances. **O**

VOCAL

Handel – Rodelinda

Lucy Crowe; Iestyn Davies; Joshua Ellicott; Tim Mead; Brandon Cedel; Jess Dandy; The English Concert; Harry Bicket
Linn Records CKD 658 (naxosdirect.com/search/ckd658)



► Success is a funny thing – sometimes it finds you, and sometimes you create it for yourself. This latter circumstance is the one in which Handel found himself in

1711 after bringing Italian opera to London with his *Rinaldo* and achieving tremendous success as a result. Over a decade later, Handel would revisit Italian opera in London through three separate works: *Giulio Cesare*, *Tamerlano* and *Rodelinda*.

Regarded as one of Handel's greatest works, *Rodelinda* was first performed in London in 1725 but did not receive a permanent place in the modern opera repertoire until the Baroque revival movement in the 1960s. Since

then, it has been staged in major opera houses across the globe and featured on numerous recordings, not the least of which is this stellar essay featuring the English Concert led by Harry Bicket.

From the opening notes, it is apparent that this performance of Handel's masterpiece is well worth the time spent listening. The French overture has the requisite gravitas and agility, delightfully shaped and exquisitely performed, and it only gets better from there. Throughout this two-disc set it is immensely satisfying to hear such well-paced and thoughtfully performed interpretations, never ranging to extremes either in tempo or dynamic, always feeling that the singer and orchestra are collaborating comfortably, and allowing the singers themselves to express the dramatic intricacies of Handel's vocal writing in a measured yet fluid manner.

Whether unfamiliar with Handel's operas or a seasoned expert, this recording is a magnificent addition to any collection and an utter delight to listen to from beginning to end.

Matthew Whitfield

Beethoven – Fidelio

Lise Davidsen; Christian Elsner; Georg Zeppenfeld; Dresdner Philharmonie; Marek Janowski
Pentatone PTC 5186 880 (naxosdirect.com/search/ptc5186880)



► Beethoven named his only opera after a young man who doesn't actually exist, even in the opera. He's a character that the heroic Leonore uses as a

disguise to rescue her husband Florestan from prison. Leonore is a complex role, as challenging dramatically as vocally. Yet it often gets less attention than the role of Florestan,

who doesn't even appear until well over halfway through.

Here, a commanding performance from the young Norwegian soprano Lise Davidsen puts the spotlight unquestionably on Leonore. Davidsen's combination of power, virtuosity and beauty, which makes her Act I aria, *Abscheulicher!* (You monster!) so moving, is rare and wonderful.

Davidsen is supported by a largely terrific cast. In particular, I love how Georg Zeppenfeld brings out Rocco's humanity, compromised though he may be. Johannes Kränzle makes a satisfyingly nasty Pizarro, and Christina Landshamer is an affecting Marzelline. But Christian Elsner's ragged, effortful Florestan is a letdown.

The exquisite Dresden Philharmonic plays with the agility of a chamber ensemble, while the MDR Leipzig Radio Choir is inspired, soaring in the rapturous *O welche Lust* (Oh what joy). Conductor Marek Janowski propels things forward with buoyant vitality.

Fortunately, the dialogue has been retained, though it has been judiciously pared down. The singers speak their own lines – no actors or narrators are brought in, as is done too often. Unsurprisingly, this makes for natural, seamless transitions between dialogue and music. Special kudos to Pentatone for including the full text and English translation in the booklet.

Pamela Margles

Liszt – Freudvoll und Leidvoll

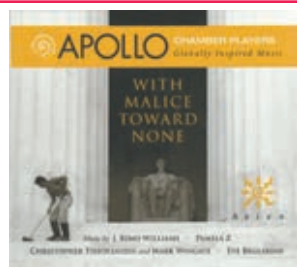
Jonas Kaufmann
Sony Classical (jonaskaufmann.com/en)



► Just looking at the photography in the booklet that comes with this wonderful new release from Sony Classical, I was immediately struck by the jolly good

What we're listening to this month:

thewholenote.com/listening



With Malice Toward None
Apollo Chamber Players
Multicultural new music by Kimo Williams, Pamela Z, Christopher Theofanidis and Eve Beglarian inspired by Beethoven, Lincoln, Joni Mitchell, Armenia and the poetry of Samuel Beckett.



The Planets & Humanity
Piano Reflections
Tanya Ekanayaka
Eight new works for piano also inspired by traditional musics of Earth's six continents composed & performed by Sri Lankan-British virtuoso composer-pianist Tanya Ekanayaka



Off the Carousel
June Garber
Some of June's very favourite compositions that reflect upon her life's ride thus far, on roads both rough and smooth.



A Prayer For Lester Bowie
David Sanford Big Band
The composer's 20-piece band performs six kaleidoscopic originals, an arrangement of Dizzy Gillespie's "Dizzy Atmosphere," and the moving title composition by trumpeter Hugh Ragin.

mood, *frölichkeit* and friendliness between the two artists, world-famous German heldentenor Jonas Kaufmann and his accompanist Helmut Deutsch, pianist, Liszt expert and aficionado. This good spirit translates into a happy collaboration shining throughout this record.

Liszt wrote some 90 songs that are difficult to sing, as Liszt treated the voice as he treated the piano: mercilessly extending it to two octaves, sudden fortissimo outbursts, key changes and the like. Kaufmann selected 20 for this release with a coherent title – *Freudvoll und Liedvoll* meaning joyful and sorrowful – referring mainly to love, because love is indeed sometimes very happy and sometimes very sad as anyone who's ever been in love knows. And indeed, the most beautiful song, I think, is *O lieb, solange du lieben kannst* (Love as long as you can) with the famous melody of *Liebstraum* No.3. Kaufmann's voice is amazingly flexible to cope with mood changes: from heroic fortissimo to soft and sweet intonation, like the way he caresses the words *Freudvoll und Leidvoll*.

The spirit of love is indeed manifest in the centrepiece of this collection, the three *Petrarch Sonnets*. These are written in Italian as opposed to all the other songs which are in German, with unparalleled melodic richness.

A joyful moment for me, and a nice surprise, was the sudden outburst of a glorious Hungarian melody in the song: *Die drei Zigeuner*, played with gusto by Helmut Deutsch. He is marvellous throughout, playing with ease Liszt's very difficult accompaniments.

Janos Gardonyi

Offenbach – Barbe-Bleue

Soloists; Orchestra and Chorus of Opera de Lyon; Michele Spotti
Opus Arte OA1336D (naxosdirect.com/search/oa1336d)



► Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, the librettists of Bizet's *Carmen*, also created the texts for ten Offenbach operettas, including this one. Their madcap take on the malevolent, much-married Bluebeard merrily mixed earthy peasants, young lovers

with concealed identities, a bawdy rustic seductress, a nutty king, fawning courtiers, a duel and Bluebeard's five ex-wives who, thanks to a resourceful alchemist, survived Bluebeard's poisonous plots.

It all ends joyfully – the young lovers are reunited, the ex-wives are paired off into happy matrimony with five newly escaped, previously condemned courtiers, all disguised as Gypsy singers, while Bluebeard receives his

well-deserved comeuppance.

The large contingent of vocally and physically invigorated soloists and choristers are led by soprano Jennifer Courcier ("Fleurette," actually Princess Hermia), mezzo Héloïse Mas (the scene-stealing sexpot Boulotte) and tenors Carl Ghazarossian (Prince Saphir) and Yann Beuron (Barbe-bleue). Conductor Michele Spotti deftly propels the Opéra de Lyon Orchestra in its headlong whirl in this 2019 production, marred only by the pedestrian, modern-day sets and costumes, so at odds with the zany scenario and rollicking music.

The two-hour operetta is augmented by an hour-long documentary, *Tales of Offenbach*, depicting the composer's roots in Jewish klezmer and liturgical music, his embrace of libretti parodying political leaders and the upper classes while championing the powers of liberated women and, of course, his ever-effervescent music that influenced Johann Strauss Jr., Lehár and, ultimately, Broadway. It's a very worthwhile bonus to the very worthwhile main attraction.

Michael Schulman

Bizet – Carmen

Anna Caterina Antonacci; Andrew Richards; Anne-Catherine Gillet; Nicolas Cavallier; Monteverdi Choir; Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique; Sir John Eliot Gardiner

Naxos 2.110685-86 (naxosdirect.com/search/2110685-86)



► Although *Les pêcheurs de perles* launched Georges Bizet's memorable career as an operatic composer, it was *Carmen*, composed in 1875, which left his indelible stamp on the world. Its premiere so shocked the conservative audi-

ence of opéra comique of the day that it almost discontinued its run. Yet the seductive magic that worked through the charm of its melodies, Spanish exoticism of its score and strength of its characters has made it one of the greatest, most enduring operas of all time.

This DVD, (of the 2009 film) could not have come at a better time, when most of the world's opera houses still remain closed due to an unrelenting pandemic. What makes it all the more enduring is the fact that it is a production stage-directed by Adrian Noble, with the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique and the Monteverdi Choir conducted by the great Sir John Eliot Gardiner. Of course, you couldn't ask for a better cast than soprano Anna Caterina Antonacci as the rebellious cigarette girl, Carmen, and tenor Andrew Richards as the honourable corporal in the dragoons,

Don José. Or for that matter soprano Anne-Catherine Gillet as the peasant girl Micaëla and bass-baritone Nicholas Cavallier as Escamillo.

The rich colour of the choruses and orchestration plays a central role. But while Don José, Escamillo and Micaëla have fine arias, Antonacci's Carmen is the diva of this opera, nowhere more brilliantly expressed than in her Act One *Habanera*.

Raul da Gama

Korngold – Der Tote Stadt

Jonas Kaufmann; Marlis Petersen; Bayerische Staatsoper; Kirill Petrenko
Bayerische Stattpoper BSOREC1001
(naxosdirect.com/search/bsorec1001)



► This release from the Bavarian State Opera launches their new label for in-house video recordings in grand style. Erich Korngold was just 23 in 1920, when he wrote *Die Tote Stadt* – both the music, and, with his father, music critic

Julius Korngold, the libretto (under the pen name Paul Schott). It's based on a melancholy, dream-suffused novel, *Bruges-la-Morte*, written almost 30 years earlier by Georges Rodenbach. But there are significant changes, especially to the ending. Now Korngold's opulent Vienna prevails over Rodenbach's claustrophobic Bruges.

The inventive staging by Simon Stone takes full advantage of Ralph Myers' magically transforming, exquisitely detailed set. Kirill Petrenko leads the splendid BSO orchestra and chorus with a probing intensity that takes us directly to the emotional pulse of Korngold's sumptuous, turbulent opera. Nostalgic romanticism confronts expressionist modernism.

Tenor Jonas Kaufmann inhabits the role of volatile, tormented Paul as though it had been written for him. Soprano Marlis Peterson matches Kaufmann for gorgeous singing and convincing acting as Marietta, a free-spirited dancer who reminds Paul of his dead wife. Peterson's rapport with Kaufmann in the exquisite duet, *Glück, das mir verblieb* (Joy, that near to me remained) is irresistible.

Baritone Andrzej Filończyk serenades Marietta with a tender *Mein Sehnen, mein Wähnen* (My yearning, my dreaming) as he leads her in a waltz. The whole time, he's pushing her around in a shopping cart. It's one of the many treasurable moments from this brilliant production that stay with me.

Pamela Margles

**Infinity
VOCES8
Decca Classics B0034074-02 (voces8.com)**



▶ Trailblazing comforting online choral video performances at the outset of the current pandemic, VOCES8 presents *Infinity*, a new disc with a soothing, medita-

tive space-inspired theme. Evocatively dubbed "the Rolls-Royce of British a-cappella ensembles," this eight-voice choir with a 15-year international career enjoys transcending genres. On this record they render the scores of composers of alternative, film, electronic and contemporary classical music.

The 15-track program includes arranged excerpts from film scores interspersed with a medieval song and eight commissioned works. Collectively, the music admirably showcases VOCES8's clean, well-controlled, precision English vocal ensemble sound, yet one with character, personality and not without warmth.

Jóhann Jóhannsson's *A Pile of Dust* is an example of what one can expect on the album. Driven by the ensemble's vocal pacing, its climactic middle section miraculously builds relentlessly higher and higher before just as relentlessly slowly resolving, settling down in quiet half notes. Other highlights include *In the Shining Blackness* (2016), London composer Benjamin Rimmer's searching, challenging-to-sing double-SATB score. In keeping with the outer space theme, Nainita Desai's tonal *My Mind is Still*, for voices, solo violin, piano and bowed vibraphone, is apparently sprinkled with fragments of recorded sound from Sputnik, humanity's first satellite.

I found singer-songwriter and electronic producer Kelly Lee Owens and Sebastian Plano's *Find Our Way*, skillfully arranged by Jim Clements, particularly moving.

Exquisitely sung by VOCES8, it was so reassuring after a rough day that it required a third listen.

Andrew Timar

**Duo della Luna: Mangetsu
Susan Botti; Airi Yoshioka
New Focus Recordings FCR 305
(newfocusrecordings.com)**



▶ A rare ensemble combination of voice and violin, Duo della Luna presents an album that is sonically beautiful and contextually adven-

turous. *Mangetsu* is dreamy and poetic yet cutting edge and experimental. The thread that connects a variety of compositions on this album is the unique ensemble sound throughout: deep, eloquent, potent. Susan Botti (voice/composer) and Airi Yoshioka (violin) venture into themes of life and creation, imagination, female power and love with a magical artistic rapport.

The album opens with Botti's dreamlike multi-movement title work. The wordless sections ("mangetsu") are nested in between the movements with poems describing the moon and the ethereal world of childhood (Shikibu, Yeats, de Saint-Exupéry). The result is music that is willowy and sensual, a luring mystery. Botti explores the possibilities of voice and violin interactions to a great degree but always in the service of the poetry. Yoshioka's violin playing is simply gorgeous, the colours and the precision equally alluring.

The rest of the album consists of Botti's innovative arrangements of selected Bartók *Duos for Two Violins*, followed by Kaija Saariaho's intimate *Changing Light*. Linda Dusman's *Triptych of Gossips*, incorporating a fancifully rhythmical poem by Serena Hilsinger, is a chamber of curiosities of extended techniques and a great sonic adventure.

There is a certain kind of magic that happens when the music is expressed in so few voices. The sound becomes unadorned and pure, and these two performers take full advantage of it.

Ivana Popovic

CLASSICAL AND BEYOND

Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges – Symphonies Concertantes, Opp.9, 10 & Op.11, No.1

**Pavla Honsová; Michael Halász; Yuriy Revich; Czech Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra Pardubice; Libor Ježek
Naxos 8574306 (naxosdirect.com/search/+8574306)**



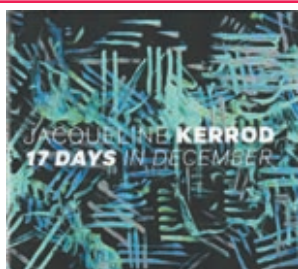
▶ An émigré to France, he was a brilliant swordsman, an accomplished musician and reputedly handsome – how could the French music-loving public

not embrace such a well-rounded individual? Joseph Boulogne Chevalier de Saint-Georges was born in Guadeloupe in 1739, the son of a wealthy French landowner and a Black servant. He was taken to Paris at the age of ten where he studied with Gossec and by age 30, he was leader of the musical organization Le Concert des Amateurs. Saint-Georges was also a fine composer, and among his prolific output are several *symphonies concertantes* – concertos for more than one instrument. Four of them, Opp.9 and 10 scored for two violins (plus a viola in the Op.10) and orchestra are presented on this splendid Naxos recording featuring the Czech Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra Pardubice conducted by Michael Halász.

In style, this music owes much to Haydn and typically, these works have only two movements – a spirited *allegro* followed

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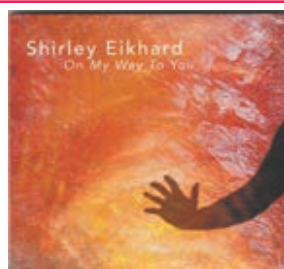
**17 Days in December
Jacqueline Kerrod**

"Anything but a collection of soothing pastoral harp settings" Textura "... fearless improviser and experimentalist" Avant Music News "virtuosic and sensitive harpist" Classical Source



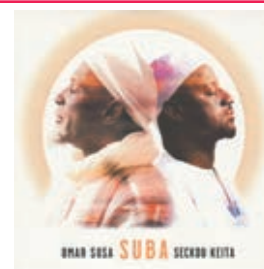
**Baked Cafe
Glenn Chatten**

The Whitehorse, Yukon based singer-songwriter and guitarist has crafted a heartfelt seventh album of folk songs, blues, and masterfully finger-picked acoustic guitar instrumentals



**On My Way to You
Shirley Eikhard**

A riveting highly intimate CD of songs from one of Canada's finest singer/songwriters.



SUBA

Omar Sosa & Seckou Keita SUBA is the second album from the collaboration between Cuba's Jazz Artists, pianist Omar Sosa, and Senegalese kora master Seckou Keita. Available at Grigorian.com

by a gracious *rondeau*. All of them contain attractive thematic material and ample opportunity for the soloists to display their technical ability. The two violinists – Russian-born Yury Revich, playing on a 1709 Stradivarius, and Libor Ježek, deputy leader of the Czech Chamber Orchestra – are joined by violist Pavla Honsová and together they comprise a formidable trio, delivering polished and assured performances in solid partnership with the CPCO.

The *Symphony Op.11/1* is the first in a pair of symphonies first published in Paris in 1779. Again, the spirit of Haydn is ever-present – this could almost be a precursor to the “Paris” symphonies, and the performance – like the music itself – is refined and elegant.

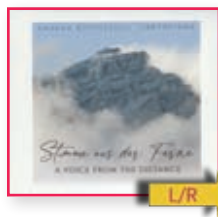
A delightful recording of music deserving greater attention – Marie Antoinette would surely have approved!

Richard Haskell

Stimme aus der Ferne – A Voice from the Distance

Andrea Botticelli

Independent 01 (andrea-botticelli.com)



▶ Canadian pianist Andrea Botticelli developed an interest in historical instruments early on, and since then, has been the recipient of numerous awards

and grants for her work and research into early performance practices. In this recording, titled *A Voice from the Distance*, she again opens the door to the past, presenting works by Schubert, Czerny and Schumann on a replica of an 1830s Viennese pianoforte.

The disc opens with Schubert's *Sonata in A Major D664*, music composed during the summer of 1819 when he was all of 22. This genial score is clearly that of a youthful composer and Botticelli displays particular warmth of tone and a fluid sense of rhythm and pacing. The music of Czerny is not often encountered today, but during his lifetime, he was renowned as a composer and pedagogue. His *Variations on a Theme by Rode Op.33* is a fine example of his creative ability, the five variations a true study in contrasts and certainly not without considerable technical challenges. Schumann's charming suite, *Papillons Op.2* from 1831, is intended as a musical depiction of a masked ball. Once again, Botticelli demonstrates a real affinity for the music and throughout the listener is struck with the robust and full sound she achieves on the instrument. Added bonuses are Clara Schumann's *Notturmo* from her *Soirées musicales Op.6* and the eighth movement from Schumann's *Novelletten Op.21* which bring the CD to a fitting conclusion.

This disc is a delight. Not only does Botticelli deliver a compelling performance – breathing new life into traditional repertoire

– but she proves without a doubt that Romantic-period repertoire is as satisfying to the ear when played on an early pianoforte as it is on a modern concert grand.

Richard Haskell

Chopin – Complete Nocturnes

Jan Lisiecki

Deutsche Grammophon 4860761

(deutschegrammophon.com/en/catalogue/products/chopin-complete-nocturnes-lisiecki-12377)



▶ Recently I watched an orchestral concert from Zurich recorded some years ago. The soloist was Jan Lisiecki. He played an encore, Chopin's *Nocturne*

Op.48 No.1 in C Minor. The piece begins with a deceptively simple pianissimo melody, but soon another melody in a major key insinuates itself in the bass line, barely noticeable at first, but keeps mounting with tremendous chords. The pace quickens with a formidable crescendo masterfully controlled and developed into fortissimo. At that point the piano roars and seems to explode and Lisiecki becomes a lion, a total master of the instrument. When it was over, the audience, the orchestra and the conductor were spellbound, the applause deafening and for me Lisiecki then became one of my piano heroes.

Lisiecki was a teenager at that time, a lanky boy from Calgary, very tall with bushy hair. Now he is literally conquering Europe. Deutsche Grammophon picked him out very quickly at age 15 and this is his eighth recording for the Gesellschaft, having already recorded the *Concertos* and the *Etudes* of Chopin. Now he turns to the *Nocturnes*, the composer's most intimate and some of the most beautiful and best-loved pieces ever written for solo piano. Perhaps his Polish origins give Lisiecki a natural affinity to Chopin; with his youthful energy, impeccable technique, exquisite touch and profound insight he certainly does justice to these masterworks.

Some highlights are of course the famous and popular *Op.9 No.2 in E-flat Major*, the *Op.15 No.2 in F-sharp Major* with its haunting, chromatic melody and agitated mid-section, the tremendous *Op.27 No.2, in D-flat Major* with a grand melody and passionate outbursts, and the wistful, yearning *Op.37 No.2 in G Major* with its barcarolle-like mid-section and more. Happy listening!

Janos Gardonyi

Brahms – Piano Concerto No.1; 16 Waltzes
Emmanuel Despax; Miho Kawashima; BBC Symphony Orchestra; Andrew Litton
Signum Classics SIGCD666
(signumrecords.com)



▶ Brahms's *Piano Concerto No.1* is a renowned masterpiece, frequently performed by orchestras and soloists since its premiere in 1859. Expansive and

majestic, this work combines classical-period form with distinctly Romantic harmonies and progressions to create a captivating and large-scale concerto that ranks among the finest works of its time.

This recording, featuring the BBC Symphony Orchestra and pianist Emmanuel Despax, acknowledges the weightiness of Brahms' writing, choosing an approach to tempo and style that accentuates the depth and density of the concerto's progressions and development. For example, the first movement, marked *Maestoso*, is performed in 24'28", a minute or two slower than many modern recordings (but faster than Glenn Gould's infamous 25'37" performance of the same with Leonard Bernstein), while the following two movements fit within the slower averages.

Rather than coming across as drab and dull, however, the melodiousness that is revealed by this slightly lugubrious opening tempo is captivating and made utterly logical by the clarity revealed in the fleeting piano part towards the middle of this first movement – every keystroke is audible, resulting in gestures made up of distinct yet rapid notes rather than a murky approximation of the notated score. Expression is paramount in late-Romantic music, and Despax's pacing allows for great clarity and sincerity in his interpretation.

Despax is joined by pianist Miho Kawashima for the *16 Waltzes*, presented here in their original version for piano four hands. These are short works, the longest lasting only 2'01", yet their beauty is remarkable. An essay in compositional dexterity, the diversity present in these 16 pieces, all based on the same form, is a delight for the listener; it is difficult to take in only one of these charming, bite-size pieces at a time.

Covering both the orchestral immensity of the *Piano Concerto No.1* and the levity of the *16 Waltzes*, this disc is highly recommended to anyone who appreciates Brahms' music and the pluralities present therein: joyful solemnity and tragic sweetness.

Matthew Whitfield

Moritz Moszkowski – Complete Music for Solo Piano Volume One
Ian Hobson
Toccata Classics TOCC 0572
(toccataclassics.com)



► Moritz Moszkowski composed in all genres, but he's remembered today, if at all, for his 250-plus piano pieces, still occasionally sourced for recital encores. This

CD, the first in a projected comprehensive compilation, presents Moszkowski's earliest piano works, all dating from 1874-1877, when the composer was in his early 20s.

The playful opening *Conservatoristen-Polka*, humorously labelled "Op. ½," and identified as composed by "Anton Notenquetscher" (Note-Squeezer), references a much-reprinted satiric poem by Moszkowski's older brother Alexander.

Among the disc's other 13 pieces, three are fairly substantial, at over nine minutes each. *Fantaisie (Hommage à Schumann)*, Op.5, successfully echoes Schumann's style and its extremes of assertiveness and tenderness, with lyricism prevailing. In *Fantaisie-Improptu*, Op.6, warm, gently rippling melodies slowly build to a fortissimo climax, marked *grandioso*. *Humoresque*, Op.14, is a buoyantly cheerful, virtuosic essay in dotted rhythms and rapid runs.

Of the shorter pieces, I particularly enjoyed the reflective, Schumannesque *Albumblatt*, Op.2, the sentiment-laden *Melodie* (the first of the *Skizzen*, *Vier kleine Stücke*, Op.10) and, most of all, *Con moto* (the second of *Trois Moments Musicaux*, Op.7), in which episodes of urgent plaintiveness are offset by beautiful, serene, hymn-like reassurances.

Ian Hobson's many recordings include all of Beethoven's *Piano Sonatas* and Chopin's complete piano works. He also conducted Moszkowski's orchestral music on the fine CD I reviewed in the December 2020/January 2021 edition of *The WholeNote*. In Hobson's very capable hands, future Moszkowski CDs promise many more hours of enjoyable discoveries.

Michael Schulman

Ravel & Saint-Saëns – Piano Trios
Sitkovetsky Trio
Bis BIS-2219 SACD (bis.se)



► The subtle colours and evanescent textures of Ravel's piano music are often compared to those of his older contemporary Debussy, but, in fact, Ravel got there

first. Like in *Jeux d'eau* from 1902, his *Piano Trio in A Minor* (1914) which features rippling liquid arpeggiated figurations derived from Liszt, is imbued with a singular new delicacy. The four wistful movements of the trio seek to convey an increasingly wide range of vivid sensations, aural and visual to create what is, in effect, a miniature tone poem.

In one of their best recordings, the Sitkovetsky Trio interpret this piece with idiosyncratic brilliance. The variety of touch and the extraordinary control of dynamics that violinist Alexander Sitkovetsky, cellist Isang Enders and pianist Wu Qian bring to this performance balance limpid tonal clarity and questing energy.

The other work on this scintillating album is Camille Saint-Saëns' *Piano Trio No.2 in E Minor Op.92*. A child prodigy with Mozartian potential, the composer remarked that he lived in music "like a fish in water." That is eminently clear from this *Piano Trio*, which, like his concertos, is pleasant on the ear but murder on the fingers. Like their Ravel, the Sitkovetsky Trio's Saint-Saëns sounds startlingly fresh. Qian's enthusiastic pianism displays great technical assurance and a sense of tremendous forward momentum. Sitkovetsky's and Enders' playing is sinewy and dramatic. Together the trio also give this work a spirited reading.

Raul da Gama

Sibelius – Luonnotar; Tapiola; Spring Song
Lise Davidsen; Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra; Edward Gardner
Chandos CHSA 5217 (naxosdirect.com/search/chsa5217)



► Jean Sibelius – together with Grieg and Dvořák – was largely responsible for the late-19th-century upsurge of musical nationalism. Sibelius' greatest achieve-

ments were to reassert the Finnish ethos as something distinct from both Russia and Sweden – something that made him a cultural figurehead in Finland. This could be attributed to his splendid compositional technique, and a special skill that enabled him to unite the heroic imagery of the Finnish epic *Kalevala* and the sounds that characterized Scandinavia with the influences of the greater European tradition.

Though Sibelius' output is dominated by his seven symphonies, by the time he had written the first of these he had already honed his craft with a series of orchestral pieces on national themes written during the 1890s. This album includes two of these: *Rakastava (The Lover) Op.14* and the tone poem *Värsång (Spring Song) Op.16*. It also includes two other tone poems, *Luonnotar Op. 70* and, arguably Sibelius' greatest tone poem

– *Tapiola Op.112, Finlandia* notwithstanding.

The Bergen Philharmonic and Edward Gardner's account of these works has a truly magisterial authority; Gardner's control of the imagery of the works – in fine gradations of mood and colour – is utterly convincing. Lise Davidsen's luminous soprano is heard on *Luonnotar* and the album's longest work *Pelléas och Mélisande* – incidental music for Maurice Maeterlinck's play. Orchestra and soprano have rarely sounded so beautiful and profoundly absorbed as in these stellar works. An album to die for.

Raul da Gama

this is home
Brian Wendel
Independent (brianwendelmusic.com)



► For Brian Wendel, principal trombonist of the Vancouver Symphony and a faculty member at the University of British Columbia, the concept of

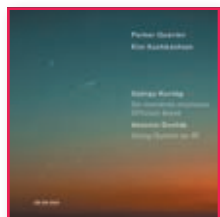
"home" is as much spatial and geographic (now residing on Canada's West Coast after having grown up in Massachusetts and having lived in New York City as a Juilliard student) as it is metaphoric (identifying repertoire so familiar and comfortable to be thought of as a musical home in which one is capable of expression, creativity and a mature statement of identity). For Wendel, *This is Home*, is just that: a thoughtful collection of music that includes J.S. Bach, Prokofiev, Enrique Crespo's *Improvisation* and Scriabin.

United not by era, theme or even tunefulness, the pieces chosen instead put forth a compelling statement of where Wendel draws inspiration and gives voice. Often presented in duo format with pianist Carter Johnson, Wendel also plays solo on the Bach and Crespo selections, a format that I do not associate with "classical" music (instead, the albums by George Lewis and Albert Mangelsdorff come to mind here), but would be intrigued to hear more of from this extremely capable and fine musician.

Although a thorny and difficult instrument, in the right hands (such as Wendel's) the trombone ranks among the most expressive instruments in music, underscoring and highlighting sublime passages of music heard many times before (such as Bach's Cello Suites) while giving a unique voice and perspective to both the new and the less familiar.

Andrew Scott

Kurtág – Six moments musicaux; Officium breve; Dvořák – String Quintet No.3
Parker Quartet; Kim Kashkashian
ECM New Series 2649
(ecmrecords.com/shop)



► In a program of contrasts, the musically sensitive Boston-based Parker Quartet plays the music of György Kurtág with virtuoso panache, and are joined by

their mentor, violist Kim Kashkashian, in an Antonín Dvořák work in their ECM New Series debut. Czech composer Dvořák's easy-going late American period *String Quintet No.3* is bookended by two of Kurtág's tightly wound quartets. The latter's *Six moments musicaux* (2005) and the *Officium breve in memoriam Andree Szervánszky* (1988/89) glitter jewel-like in their neo-expressionistic refinement.

Composed in three days in Spillville, Iowa in 1893, Dvořák's lyrical work differs from his other quintets in his use of two violas and also in its formal straightforwardness: there's little development of thematic material and extensive repetition. The Parker Quartet's feeling for instrumental colour, texture and attention to detailed ensemble work is evident from the first measure.

The same can be said about the quartet's performance insights into Kurtág's scores, developed through extensive work with the senior Hungarian composer. I was particularly moved by the Parker's riveting rendering of Kurtág's brilliantly intense 15-section *Officium Breve in Memoriam...* Even as they mirror the concision of each miniature movement, paradoxically the music becomes even more static, timeless – and elegiac.

A perceptive reviewer once wrote that his music was “like opening a trapdoor in your floor and dropping for a moment into the infinity of the cosmos.” Kurtág's notes often seem unmoored from conventional function, freed to resonate in a much larger musical and emotional space.

Andrew Timar

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

Varèse, Ligeti, Lutosławski, Baldini
Miranda Cuckson; Maximilian Haft,
Münchner Rundfunkorchester; UC Davis
Symphony Orchestra; Christian Baldini
Centaur Records CRC3879
(naxosdirect.com/search/crc3879)



► What to do when the music stops? If you're Christian Baldini, music director of the University of California at Davis Symphony since 2009, you rummage through your

archives, choose your best performances from the past and publish them with the caveat “unedited live recordings.” There are some real collegiate gems to be heard here, notably two of the finest violin concertos to have been composed in the late-20th century.

Ligeti's *Violin Concerto* from 1994 can be a challenge for all involved, but for the marvelous soloist Miranda Cuckson it's a piece of cake. Most of these difficulties occur in the bizarre third movement, where the horns must do their best to perform solely on the overtone series (i.e. without the use of valves) and the wind players are compelled to hoot away on a quartet of decidedly screechy quarter-tone ocarinas. Fear not though, as the stylistic range of this five-movement work is captivating enough to appeal to many tastes. The concerto concludes with the insertion of a lengthy solo cadenza of unacknowledged origin; I for one would like to know its author (possibly Thomas Adès?) and, while we're at it, the identity of the jackass whose hard-heeled footsteps break its magic spell on stage.

Though Lutosławski's 1985 violin concerto is clearly less technically demanding than Ligeti's, Maximilian Haft's pugnacious performance of *Chain 2* is nonetheless commanding and stylish and the orchestra is clearly much more comfortable and capable in this music. Two purely orchestral works are also on offer. A performance of Varèse's 1927 version of his brutalist tone poem *Amérique*, while decidedly short on nuance, displays a youthful enthusiasm for the volcanic eruptions that pervade the work, though the 2015 pick-up of the gargantuan, screaming orchestra is lacking in depth and detail. It also has something unique going for it: midway through the printed score there is a trombone solo marked with the lyrics “Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha!”; here, that text is shouted through a megaphone! No other recording I know observes this detail.

A short work from Baldini's own hand, *Elapsing Twilight Shades*, opens the disc with a rambling essay characterized by loud orchestral outbursts followed by

quasi-improvised noodling and percussive rumblings in a performance by the very adult Munich Radio Orchestra at the Salzburg Festival in 2012.

Daniel Foley

Sound Visionaries
Christina Petrowska Quilico
Navona Records nv6358
(navonarecords.com)

Retro Americana
Christina Petrowska Quilico
Navona Records nv6361
(navonarecords.com)



► With over 50 recordings and a storied record of critical acclaim, veteran piano virtuoso Christina Petrowska Quilico delivers yet another reason why she is regarded as

one of the most celebrated interpreters of 20th-century music. The listener is treated to surprisingly original interpretations of frequently recorded selections such as Debussy's second book of *Preludes* and Messiaen's *Vingt regards sur l'enfant-Jésus*. The pianist's attention to detail and delicate approach to phrasing are unparalleled.

The piano sonatas of Pierre Boulez are considered among the most difficult among the solo piano repertoire of the 20th century. In Petrowska Quilico's recordings of the first and third sonatas of Boulez, the virtuoso's dynamic command over this highly demanding music produces an assertiveness that undoubtedly will become compulsory atop the list of many recordings of this music. Incidentally, Petrowska Quilico was coached by Boulez before her performance of the first sonata at the presentation of the Glenn Gould Prize to Boulez in November 2002.



On her most recent release, Petrowska Quilico brilliantly tackles solo American repertoire from throughout the 20th century. With some rarely performed selections such as

Henry Cowell's *Six Ings* and Bill Westcott's *Suite* combined with some more recognizable titles by Rzewski, Tatum and Gershwin, Petrowska Quilico is able to provide an impressive recital highlighting her technical command over varying styles.

There are four selections by composer Meredith Monk – each unfolding as the true gems on the disc. These four pieces reveal the highly compelling originality of the composer – a voice that seems to lend itself to Petrowska Quilico's performance sensibilities

with a bewildering ease and effortlessness – an expressive attribute that will enchant the listener.

This release is yet another statement from a restless virtuoso who has a seemingly inexhaustible ability to provide gripping interpretations of the music of our time.

Adam Scime

Frank Horvat – Project Dovetail
Frank Horvat; Edwin Huizinga; Elixir Baroque Ensemble; TorQ Percussion Quartet; et al.
Independent (frankhorvat.com/discography)



► Toronto composer-pianist Frank Horvat “has carved a niche for himself among today’s composers, wearing his fragile heart on his sleeve,”

observed CBC music critic Robert Rowat. *Project Dovetail*, Horvat’s final release in an album trilogy spanning 2021, follows that emotional thread. Featuring some of Canada’s top chamber musicians, *Project Dovetail* has an intriguing synesthetic twist. Horvat has taken the art and artists that have inspired him and “dovetailed” aspects of them into his music. Among others, the works of two Canadian artists are featured: best-selling author Suzanne Desrochers and master printmaker Lorna Livey.

Lorna’s Metamorphosis is a good example of the composer’s synesthetic dovetailing. In it, Livey speaks candidly about her passion for butterflies and the environment. Remarkably, Horvat has accurately scored the rhythms of her voice and then composed a dynamic instrumental counterpoint to it for vibraphone, two marimbas, piano and tympani. The composer notes that “it captures the Lorna I know: determined, honest and kind... compliment[ing] her driving, forward-thinking personality.”

The Sad Life of Laure Beauséjour for two violins, viola da gamba and harpsichord takes its cue from scenes in the novel *Bride of New France* by Desrochers. Horvat depicts the protagonist’s many hardships in music, choosing period instruments to evoke the novel’s 1670s setting. *The Sad Life*’s four slow movements are all intentionally similar in key, their melancholy melodies receiving straightforward accompaniments. In his program notes Horvat invokes the musical influence of Erik Satie’s *Gymnopédies* and *Gnossiennes* in this work, and I can feel the emotional throughlines spanning a century and a third.

Andrew Timar

Newfoundout
Nick Storrington
Mappa Editions MZP027
(nickstorrington.bandcamp.com)



► Toronto Composer Nick Storrington is a prolific artist. As a composer, writer, musician and arts curator he seems to be everywhere, and yet he managed to touch down long

enough to complete his seventh solo album. Consistently surprising us with his dexterous layering and technology skills, *Newfoundout* is a perfect blend of Storrington’s musical ear for raw audio beauty and his skillful sound assembly. A completely acoustic layering of curiosities – is that a vuvuzela in harmony? – the compositions are so deftly complete you will forget to keep asking what you are hearing. From the first track *Dome*, a full 12’41” piece that could have been presented in a concert hall, it’s nearly impossible to find the distinction between what might have been improvised and what might be composed. Each track is intentionally directed, spare and transparent, blissfully curious at times and at others suspended in outer space, swirling in dust and light. Storrington ensures that there is nothing superfluous to cloud the beauty of the found sounds; drums dance, dog whistles sing, and the final mix is perfect. One is reminded of the phrase “truth is stranger than fiction.”

The album flows superbly as a whole. Never aimless, each piece weaves intentionally between composed sections and exquisitely layered psychedelia, anchored with an assortment of undefined instruments, plucked strings, pianos and drum rhythms. It’s like witnessing the mysteries of life on Earth. With tracks named after Ontario ghost towns, *Newfoundout* is a sublimely delicious curiosity. I lost track of the beginnings and ends of each piece and just enjoyed the entire album start to finish.

Cheryl Ockrant

Felipe Téllez – Songs of Longing
TakeFive Ensemble
Centrediscs CMCCD 28721
(cmccanada.org/shop/cd-cmccd-28721)



► The TakeFive Ensemble (comprised of violinists Lynn Kuo and Csaba Koczó, violist Carolyn Blackwell, cellist Emmanuelle Beaulieu Bergeron and pianist

Shoshana Telner) have recorded two substantial works by Colombian-Canadian composer Felipe Téllez. The first – in three movements

– titled *Fate*, is rather traditional in its language and form. This music cycles through a tempestuous first movement into a tender and lyrical second movement and finishes with a dramatic and sorrowful third and final movement. The composer describes fate as taking on many contrasting characteristics that may or may not be within our control. With the cheery punctuation heard in the final measures of this work, it is clear that fate has delivered a happy ending in this case.

The second work is a collection of songs without words in five movements that adopts a less classical treatment than the first piece on the disc. Titled *Colombian Songs*, it utilizes colourful gestures and clever twists of mood to provide a pleasing reaction to some traditional Colombian song sources. The musicians in TakeFive execute Téllez’s music with a shimmering brilliance. The expressive quality permeating from each instrument in the ensemble is at once individually impressive but also blends into an exquisite whole. Bravo to TakeFive on some superb performances – an ensemble I hope to hear much more from in the future.

Adam Scime

Philip Glass – The Complete Piano Etudes
Leslie Dala
Redshift Records (redshiftmusicsociety.bandcamp.com/album/philip-glass-the-complete-piano-etudes)



► Continuing the tradition established by Chopin, Debussy and Ligeti, piano etudes by Philip Glass have been loved by many concert pianists. Although most

etudes are created for the purpose of pursuing a specific harmonic or technical preoccupation related to the instrument, Glass’ carry a particular element of beauty and depth. Melancholy is mixed with sweetness, rhythmic drive with unique harmonic language; one senses an arc of the composer’s personal relationship with the piano in this music.

The new recording by Leslie Dala, a conductor and pianist based in Vancouver, brings in a solitary air of an artist who has found stillness. Dala has a natural pianistic affinity for Glass’ compositional language. He experiments with a wealth of colours found in these etudes but never strays away from the classical pianistic tradition. A strong percussive touch accentuates the fluid motion of the music. The result is an album that is refined and rich, natural in its expression.

Hearing the 20 etudes in succession makes for the best listening experience. Each etude has its own character and atmosphere but it is the flow, the longer narrative and the observation of correlational aspects and the morphing of Glass’ compositional and Dala’s interpretative ideas that gives the listener

deeper understanding of this music. By the time the last etude is played, gentle and unassuming, the sonic space becomes clear. And when the sound blends with silence at the very end, one is granted the sense of closure.

Ivana Popovic

Maya Beiser x Philip Glass
Maya Beiser
Islandia Music Records
(islandiamusic.com)



▶ Talking Heads front person David Byrne, in his 1999 essay “I Hate World Music” that predates his excellent book, *How Music Works*, describes

so-called “world music” as “a name for a bin in the record store signifying stuff that doesn’t belong anywhere else in the store.” In 2021, as bins, record stores and, to a lesser extent, musical genres and meaningless categorizations in terms of the way that sound is captured and assembled (and marketed) fades into the rear view, there remain vestiges of (to artificially demarcate things historically) the pre-streaming playlist-driven genre tribalism of the “Before Times.”

I say all of this to push back on the characterization that I have read of Maya Beiser – the exceptionally talented American cellist who has released an evocative and wonderful retrospective of Philip Glass’ music on her own Islandia Music Records label – as “avant-garde.” This recent recording offers, simply put, beautiful music (it’s Glass after all!), played exceptionally well by an expressive and emotive artist who has much that is new and insightful to say on these largely familiar Glass pieces.

Captured in beautiful fidelity at the Hudson Opera House and, through the studio wizardry of multi-tracking, looping cello parts and the creation of what she calls a “sonic cello kaleidoscope,” Beiser puts forth meaningful arrangements on this fine recording that defy every categorization other than good! It is little wonder why Beiser has such insight into Glass’ music: she was the cellist chosen (by Glass) to be part of the Philip Glass Ensemble on the worldwide tour of his Qatsi trilogy in 2005 and she brings this familiarity, creativity and attention to detail to the fore on *Maya Beiser x Philip Glass*.

Andrew Scott

Amends
Matt Magerkurth
People Places Records PPR 023
(peopleplacesrecords.bandcamp.com)



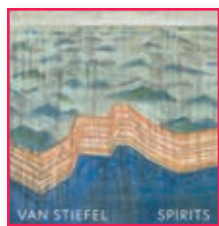
▶ *Amends*, the debut album of pieces for solo cello from American cellist and composer Matt Magerkurth, presents as a contemplation of isolation

and experimentation. Recorded in Bixby, Oklahoma’s Closet Studios, the album is composed of pieces in skeletal form to be played semi-improvisatorially. The seven pieces are introspective self-examinations and seem to highlight the loneliness experienced by so many artists during the current pandemic.

Met with the occasional accompaniment of layered effects and occasional oceanic basslines by producer Scott Bell, Magerkurth traverses the cello in arpeggiated gestures, making use of the overtones by playing with a light bow technique, often to beautiful effect, expressive and colourful. The overall experience is one of longing and reflection.

Cheryl Ockrant

Van Stiefel – Spirits
Van Stiefel
Panoramic Recordings PAN21
(newfocusrecordings.com)



▶ Renowned contemporary guitarist and composer Van Stiefel set out on a mission to thoroughly compose, perform and record his own album from top to bottom;

his latest release is the worthy result of that endeavour. Taking inspiration from favourites of his such as Les Paul, Chet Atkins and Glen Campbell, Stiefel puts his own twist on the concept of the studio-instrumental album by expertly using a recording and editing technique called “layered guitar.” The record is a journey through moments, thoughts and experiences in the guitarist’s life through a fascinating and immersive soundscape of sonorous snippets.

Stiefel describes the pieces as being almost like “journal entries that hint at secrets, idiosyncrasies, and personal rituals.” Each tune is completely different from the last, calling forth a mood or image into the listener’s mind. *King of Cups* begins the album with a slightly country-flavoured piece over which a haunting processed melody is overlaid. *Memory Jug* is a unique and explorative piece with its striking dissonance and computer-generated sounds in the background creating

a futuristic and robotic tune. *Acquiescence* – as well as a few other pieces – captivate due to the technique of “cutting and pasting” fragments of melody to create a new whole. This is an album that would be a great fit for anyone looking to expand their auditory palette.

Kati Kiillaspea

With Malice Toward None
Apollo Chamber Players
Azica ACD-71340
(apollochamberplayers.org/media)



▶ The Apollo Chamber Players have embraced a mission toward the championing of globally inspired programming and commissioning. The new works on their

latest release, *With Malice Toward None*, are part of a larger commissioning project titled 20x2020 – an effort to support the creation of 20 new works from multicultural composers by the end of 2020.

The ensemble’s passion for new music and impressive virtuosity is on full display on this new disc as the listener is treated to an inspired assemblage of repertoire. The title track (referencing a phrase uttered by Abraham Lincoln) – for electric violin and string quartet – composed by J. Kimo Williams features Tracy Silverman on electric violin. This work speaks to certain contemporary socio-political issues and the electric violin soaring over the string quartet creates a dramatic and compelling atmosphere. Some clever Hendrix quotes emerge as an unexpected contrast.

Pamela Z’s *The Unraveling* is a brilliant reworking of American folk songs from the 1960s and 70s. This work, in four movements, shows Pamela Z’s unparalleled talent to create highly original sound worlds using sampling, looping and fragmentation of the familiar. *Themes of Armenian Folksongs*, originally composed by the Armenian composer known as Komitas and later arranged by members of Apollo and the Komitas Quartet, originates from ten Armenian folk songs that were collected by Komitas. This bright and euphoric music reveals the world-class musicianship of the quartet players. Lastly, Eve Beglarian’s *We Will Sing One Song* is a wonderfully ethereal and expressive work that paints at once a disturbing and welcoming landscape with the duduk instrument providing a subdued allure – the perfect bookend to this superbly recorded release.

Adam Scime

The Planets & Humanity – Piano Reflections
Tanya Ekanayaka
Grand Piano GP879 (naxosdirect.com/search/gp879)



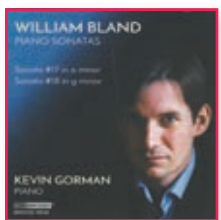
► Award-winning Sri Lankan-British pianist and composer Tanya Ekanayaka delivers a recording of original compositions which correspond to the eight planets that inhabit

our solar system and the seven continents on Earth. Many of the selections utilize echoes of traditional melodies supported by a decidedly Romantic-era harmonic sensibility.

Composed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, this cycle for solo piano represents Ekanayaka's interest in the expressive connections between past and present. The eight movements combine to create a potpourri of moods through which Ekanayaka is able to showcase a confident and precise technical command of the piano.

Adam Scime

William Bland – Piano Sonatas
Kevin Gorman
Bridge Records 9556 (bridgerecords.com)



► Born in West Virginia in 1947 and trained at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, William Bland is a prolific composer of solo, chamber and

orchestral music, including 24 piano sonatas. Conceived as a cycle similar to Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, with one work in each of the major and minor keys, Bland's compositional versatility and creativity is astonishing, especially when one considers the inherent constraints of writing 24 unique pieces for the same instrument, each over 20 minutes in length!

This recording showcases Bland's 17th and 18th sonatas, performed by pianist Kevin Gorman in his recording debut. Gorman is a lively and compelling player, able to reign in Bland's eclectic, and occasionally eccentric, musical sensibilities in a way that feels entirely organic and logical. When there are moments requiring brash attacks, he does so ably, but Gorman also conveys intense sweetness and sincerity, particularly in instances where the textures are lush and melodious.

Bland's writing is difficult to classify, encompassing a swath of influences and styles ranging from pop and jazz to atonality, with a bit of everything in between. At one moment you may be listening to a beautiful, Schumann-esque bit of melody, the next a bit of extension-inspired jazz, finishing with

a spot of Schoenberg. Does this all come together? Absolutely. I don't know how, but it certainly does, like a chef grabbing everything within arm's reach and somehow producing a delicious and savoury meal.

It is often a simple task to recommend a recording to a particular group of auditors but, as they do in so many other ways, Bland's sonatas defy such simple classification. What I can recommend, however, is that *everyone* give this music a try, for there is something in these works that is sure to captivate every listener, regardless of their usual preferences and proclivities.

Matthew Whitfield

Paul Lansky – Angles
Various Artists
Bridge Records 9532 (bridgerecords.com)



► The sound of augmented intervals on acoustic guitar brings Joni Mitchell to mind at the immediate opening of *Slow Train* – the first movement of *Four's Company* –

on this disc of Paul Lansky's chamber pieces. I don't hear a slow train, but I can imagine travelling on one through the countryside, enjoying an impromptu performance in one of the compartments. *Pseudo Pavanne* continues the genial mood. Movement four is *Vivaldiana*, LOL. Brief, truly modest liner notes incline me to like and respect this composer; his satisfying harmonic palette and calm textures refresh the spirit, his dry sense of humour is a wink and a nod. The Curtis Institute Guitar Quartet look like a bunch of kids, but they can play!

The title track is a work for piano trio in four movements as well. The titles give further proof that Lansky doesn't take life too seriously, while writing effective and fresh-sounding music. *With Pluck* dances along in a happy minimalist vein; *Take a Bow* revisits the same kind of open-string harmonies featured in *Four's Company*, approaching a mood of introspection if not melancholy. *About a Minute* Waltz flips past as a scherzo movement, and *A Sad Song* is just that. Find your own words, weep if you will, but there's a quickening that consoles about two minutes in.

Springs is what a conversation among small mechanical clocks might sound like, until the heavies show up to get us all up dancing. So Percussion keep things bopping along hypnotically. *Color Codas*, for piano four hands (Quattro Mani: Steven Beck and Susan Grace), provides kinaesthetic takes on three linked colours: *In the Red*, *Purple Passion* and *Out of the Blue*.

Max Christie

David Fulmer – Sky's Acetylene
New York Philharmonic; Jeffrey Milarsky
New Focus Recordings FRC306 (newfocusrecordings.com)



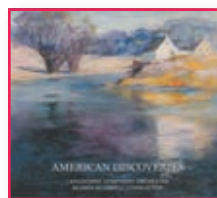
► At 14 minutes, *Sky's Acetylene* is either a short EP or a long single, featuring flute (bass, soprano and piccolo), harp, double bass, piano and percussion

soloists. Composer David Fulmer has won an Academy Award, but don't expect typical movie score tropes here; this is legitimately avant-garde, atmospheric and even spectral. Flutist Mindy Kaufman has the most notes to play, followed closely by harpist Nancy Allen. The other three (Eric Huebner, piano; percussionist Daniel Druckman; Max Zeugner on bass) provide support for the ravings and ramblings of the flute. Kaufman has formidable command of the broad range she navigates on all three pipes, huffing, bending and scurrying through her solos with conviction.

Commissioned to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the New York Philharmonic, it seems curious to present a chamber concerto as a landmark. Four of the players are principals with the Phil; conductor Jeffery Milarsky is a frequent guest. Worth hearing for the solid performances.

Max Christie

American Discoveries
Lansdowne Symphony Orchestra; Reuben Blundell
New Focus Recordings FCR 286 (newfocusrecordings.com)



► So gratifying listening to the Lansdowne Symphony, a community orchestra conducted by Reuben Blundell, performing three American female

composers' previously unrecorded orchestral works. *City Trees* (1928) by Priscilla Alden Beach (1902-1970) is an under five-minute work in ABA ternary form. This is a tonal walk through the woods, with romantic and impressionistic genre, lush orchestral harmonies and outer sections enveloping a louder intense winds section. Many of Beach's works have been lost, so thanks to editor Clinton Nieweg and the Philadelphia Free Library Fleisher Collection for producing this new orchestral edition.

Linda Robbins Coleman's *For a Beautiful Land* (1996) pays homage to her Iowa home state in three episodes. Love the very dramatic and contrasting playful sonorities such as the percussion roll opening and closing crash, first episode waltz's quiet bird-like wind

instrument twitters, faster 6/8 section flute duet, and happy rhythmic repeated melodies building to an unexpected silent pause.

Behemoth, in five short movements (1976) by Alexandra Pierce is a unique modern tone poem inspired by the Book of Job from the Old Testament, and by humanity's struggle with existence. The opening more-atonal, full-orchestral scary movement repeats snare "pops/clicks" throughout. The second movement is bouncy and delicate with contrasting temple blocks. Colour change in the fourth, mainly featuring the percussion section, which leads to a fun final movement with a jazz-tinged full orchestra build with closing horns.

Blundell leads the orchestra to top-notch performances. Short (30'22" minutes in length) but sweet!

Tiina Kilik

Joan Tower – Strike Zones
Evelyn Glennie; Blair McMillen; Albany Symphony; David Alan Miller
Naxos 8.559902 (naxosdirect.com/search/8559902)



► Joan Tower is considered one of the most prominent living American composers. In this Naxos release we hear three world premiere recordings featuring the

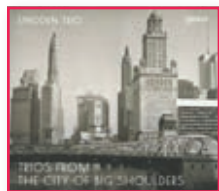
eminent percussion virtuoso Evelyn Glennie, pianist Blair McMillen and the Albany Symphony Orchestra.

The title track, *Strike Zones*, is a concerto for percussion and orchestra where Glennie's masterful technique is able to come alive with a dazzling display of fireworks. Whether it is an impressive solo on the high hats or a dramatic build-up on the drums, Glennie's performance is able to shine above the enchanting accompaniment in the orchestra. The piece *Small*, for solo percussion, is a meditative, almost ritualistic work that evokes a misty woodland scene at dusk. Next, the piano concerto, *Still/Rapids*, is aptly titled as its two movements depict the dramatic duality inherent in water for its ability to achieve both calm and violent characteristics. Lastly, the solo piano work, *Ivory and Ebony*, is a high-energy yet elegant piece with moods shifting from agitated to triumphant.

The performances on this release are top notch, and Tower seems to know the abilities of her performers in a profound way. For a vibrant and exciting display of technical wizardry, give this disc a listen.

Adam Scime

Trios from The City of Big Shoulders
Lincoln Trio
Cedille CDR 90000 203
(cedillerecords.org)



► This CD's press release calls them "revered Chicago composers," although Chicago-born Ernst Bacon (1898–1990) lived nearly all his life composing and teaching elsewhere. Conversely, Michigan-native Leo Sowerby (1895–1968) spent most of his life as an organist-choirmaster in the "City of the Big Shoulders" (a line from Carl Sandburg's poem *Chicago*).

Bacon's 31-minute *Piano Trio No.2* (1987) begins with a gloomy, wandering *Lento*. In *Deliberate March Time* sounds like an old-fashioned hiking song. The sauntering strings and shimmering piano runs of *In an easy walk* are briefly interrupted by sudden, stormy dissonances. *Gravely expressive* is a rumination for cello, marked "as if quietly singing," over piquant piano chords, followed by *Allegro*, a syncopated foot-stomper with country fiddling and bar-room piano strides and riffs. *Commodo* provides a gentle interlude before the final *Vivace, ma non presto* based on the folksong *Green Mountain*. It's really quite a trip!

Sowerby's three-movement, 37-minute *Piano Trio* (1953) is made of much sterner stuff. *Slow and Solemn* is granitic-ally ponderous, despite a not-"slow," not-"solemn" middle section. *Quiet and serene* paints a misty cityscape with a daydreaming piano and tender violin until the movement's title is belied by markedly increasing tension and volume. *Fast; with broad sweep* lives up to its name – it's a *perpetuum mobile* of heavily rhythmic melodies culminating in a powerful, final *accelerando*.

The internationally acclaimed, Chicago-based Lincoln Trio delivers everything these disparate works could ask for, including vivid colours, dramatic expressivity and sensational virtuosity.

Michael Schulman

Leo Sowerby – The Paul Whiteman Commissions & Other Early Works
Andy Baker Orchestra; Avalon String Quartet
Cedille CDR 90000 205
(cedillerecords.org)



► In 1946, Leo Sowerby, dubbed "Dean of American Church Music," received the Pulitzer Prize for his oratorio *The Canticle of the Sun*, one of his large body of

religious-themed compositions. He also composed many secular orchestral and chamber works.

While still in his 20s, Sowerby, already a much-performed composer, created two jazz-infused works for bandleader Paul Whiteman's Revolutionary Concerts. The 11-minute *Synconata* premiered in New York in December 1924, just one month after the debut of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, another Whiteman commission. The enthusiastically received, colourfully scored music – downbeat, upbeat and raucous – prompted Whiteman to commission Sowerby for a second, much more ambitious work.

The grin-inducing music of the four-movement, 25-minute *Symphony for Jazz Orchestra "Monotony"* (1925) depicts the eponymous status seeker of Sinclair Lewis' satirical novel *Babbitt* at the theatre (*Nights Out*), an illegal Prohibition-era cocktail party (*Fridays at Five*), church (*Sermons*) and a concert (*Critics*). It's great fun, tuneful and rhythmically vivacious. Yet both works, awkward fits for standard symphony orchestras, disappeared. (*Rhapsody in Blue* required re-orchestration for symphonic performances.) For these world-premiere recordings, Chicago music-theatre and classical instrumentalists were recruited to form the Andy Baker Orchestra, with Baker conducting.

The Illinois-based Avalon String Quartet contributes three works imbued with the ingratiating spirit of folk music: the nine-minute *Serenade for String Quartet* (1917), the 29-minute *String Quartet in D Minor* (1923) and, with Canadian pianist Winston Choi and bassist Alexander Hanna, the brief *Tramping Tune* (1917).

A thoroughly delightful disc!

Michael Schulman

Pēteris Vasks – Oboe Concerto; Vestijums; Lauda
Albrecht Mayer; Latvian National Symphony Orchestra; Andris Poga
Online ODE 1355-2 (naxosdirect.com/search/ode+1355-2)



► The newly released album of music by Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks features the first recording of his oboe concerto written for the

centenary celebrations of Latvia's independence in 2018 and performed by one of the today's leading oboe soloists, Albrecht Mayer.

Accompanied by the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Andris Poga, Mayer dazzles with his technical facility as well as his beautiful interpretive phrasing, bringing this programmatic work to life. With a familiar feel akin to the rhapsodic Vaughan Williams concerto for oboe and string orchestra, this pastoral concerto

uses contrasting textures ranging from long lyrical phrases to light and sparkling gestures, inducing a symphonic dialogue between the solo oboe and woodwinds in the orchestra. Modelled after the experience of human life, the first movement *morning pastorale* depicts the bright, fresh naïveté of youth before gradually maturing through the *scherzando* second movement and finally evolving with the inevitable celestial ascent in the *evening pastorale*.

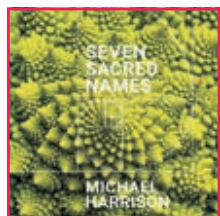
Also on this album are two earlier nationalistic orchestral works from the 1980s; *Vestījums* (The Message) for two pianos, strings and percussion and *Lauda*, originally written for the 150th anniversary of Latvian folklorist Krišjānis Barons. These works manifested the final years of the Soviet Union and Latvia's struggle to regain its independence.

Melissa Scott

Michael Harrison – Seven Sacred Names Various Artists

Cantaloupe Music CA21157

(naxosdirect.com/search/ca21157)



▶ American composer/pianist Michael Harrison was an early protégé of the minimalist pioneer LaMonte Young and is a winner of many prizes including

a 2018/19 Guggenheim Fellowship. His creations include not only a long series of compositions and recordings, but also innovative piano tunings and the Harmonic Piano, a grand piano with 24 keys per octave. The new CD *Seven Sacred Names* is a companion to the book *Nature's Hidden Dimension* by W.H.S. Gebel. Based in Sufi mysticism, it strikes me as a crossroads of music and spirituality created by Harrison and associates, where the Seven Names denote stages of an awakening self.

The Prologue – simple and triadic, reminiscent of Philip Glass – comes back much varied in the Epilogue (Name No.7). The Names then proceed as titles to the music. Referring to existence, self-awareness and will, each one has more complex music: No.1: piano and overtone series; No.2: addition of melody along with vocal, violin and electronic tanpura (tamboura) drones; No.3: rhythms and cross-rhythms, polyphony, and tabla – associated with “will,” this last one seems stiff and too long. From here are Names that I appreciate more: No.4 (“desire”), whose piano and expressive violin reminds me of certain lucid French compositions; No.5, the delightful syllabic vocal/electronic piece “The Acoustic Constellation” sung by Roomful of Teeth; and No.6 featuring the sustained, constantly transforming tones of Harrison's Harmonic Piano. A unique, enriching experience.

Roger Knox

The Space in Which to See Borderlands Ensemble New Focus Recordings FCR299 (newfocusrecordings.com)



▶ The Tucson, Arizona-based Borderlands Ensemble is oriented towards diverse communities. This CD explores Arizona-Mexico musical connections, featuring four premieres from 2019. Participants include artistic director-hornist Johanna Lundy, violinist Ellen Chamberlain and other string chamber musicians, plus cross-disciplinary collaborators. Performances are excellent: Lundy's versatile mastery and the able string players (with guitar sometimes) produce a unique, compelling recording. Anne Leilehua Lanzilotti's title composition carries expressive power. Its four sections explore aspects of Indigenous identity and place. Especially striking are opening string drones with crescendos and silences, and percussive or pitched strings plus vocal breathing around clarion horn notes in the following part.

Charles Daniels' *Dream Machine* gathers diverse material into a convincing, well-timed three-part work. Perpetual motion sections, frame a pensive centre. Still chords close this beautiful work. The longer *Ometéotl* – named for the Aztec creation god – by Mexican Alejandro Vera brings a variety of musical material both more ancient and more modern than this disc's other works. *Passing Ships* by Jay Vosk is intended to represent the experience of migration, often setting the horn (i.e. ship) against the string quartet. The piece made me compare land migration experiences in the Borderlands to those by sea of my own ancestors. *Songs and Arias* by noted American composer Vivian Fine (1913-2000) is clever but I found it dated. Attractive arrangements of three well-known Mexican songs complete the recording.

Roger Knox

Echos Dahveed Behrooz; Thomas Morgan; Billy Mintz Sunnyside Communications SSC 1618 (dahveedbehrooz.com)



▶ Pianist Dahveed Behrooz is a San Francisco Bay Area-based jazz/classical/new music musician/composer/improviser/teacher. In this, his second release, he joins

forces with New York improvisers, bassist Thomas Morgan and drummer Billy Mintz, to record at Mount Vernon, New York's Oktaven

Audio. The full resonating audio sound reflects their playing on the studio floor with no isolation. We the listeners hear what musicians hear when playing!

Behrooz explains he composed the tracks out of improvising at home but took only sketches to the session which the others sight read/played for the first time. This adds to the free-flowing ambiance of the music.

Imagery has an almost Romantic classical feel with calm piano opening, drum entry washes and bass melodic colours. Two takes of *Chimes* are included on separate tracks. The first has an atonal contemporary sound while the second features intense, fuller, well-controlled instrumentals combining new music and new jazz styles. Cymbal crashes add colour to the lower-pitched sections. *Royal Star* is a slow and moody piano jazz tune showcasing the musicians' close concentrated listening with contrasting silent spaces and well-chosen minimalist sounds. Loud percussion crashing opens and closes *Sendoff*. Subsequent piano entry crash and chords are more jazz influenced as the bass keeps the “beat.” Closing track *TDB* has a relaxing piano “singing” a sweet emotional sad reflective tune with carefully articulated piano tones ringing against lower bass sounds.

Outstanding performances by all three musicians raise Behrooz's music to new heights.

Tiina Kiik

Unsnared Drum Michael Compitello New Focus Recordings FRC310 (newfocusrecordings.com)



▶ All my musical doubts and questionings about the snare drum's credibility as a solo instrument immediately vanished with a

crash as I listened to American percussionist/teacher Michael Compitello perform the compositions he commissioned for his solo snare drum project.

Compitello provided each invited composer a snare drum, sticks, mallets and “other implements” to explore the instrument's extended musical capabilities while working in close collaboration with him. Nina C. Young's *Heart.throb* (2019) opens with an attention-grabbing roll and crescendo. Young's added transducers feature electronic tonal/dynamic held notes against constant snare and brush hits which emulate heart throbs until a final “classic” loud snare drum build to a closing solo electronic held note. Hannah Lash's *Start* (2018) is scored for snare only and various stick types. Fascinating diverse sounds from loud to soft and short/crisp to quieter vibrating, tell a mood-changing, pulsating story. Amy Beth Kirsten's *Ghost in the Machine* (2019) is hypnotic, with

more pulses, clicks, washes and brief high-pitched rings and conversational effects aided by such added snare sound-creating “implementations” as triangle and shot glasses. Tonia Ko’s *Negative Magic* (2019) opens with snares turned off, as resounding deep sounds alternate with rim shots. Musical sections include drops to almost inaudibility and to more mysterious sounds. Midpiece, the snare is abruptly turned on for welcome short hits, rolls and clicks. Snares off again as rolls and scratches lead to silence.

Compitello performs these solo snare drum compositional explorations with precision, dedication, control and phenomenal musicality.

Tiina Kiik

JAZZ AND IMPROVISED

demiLAN
Nicholas Adema
Independent (nickadema.com)



▶ Toronto-based composer/trombonist Nick Adema’s latest offering is teeming with originality and confidence from front to back.

Everything from the writing to the execution feels like the product of an artist who is conscious of their identity.

One aspect that immediately jumps out is Adema’s astounding attention to detail. Each of his compositions contains a myriad of ideas, gradually revealing themselves over time and yet all coming together to form a satisfying whole. His melodies are intuitive enough to feel eerily familiar and yet elaborate enough to make anybody’s head spin. Much like the greats, Adema’s writing possesses immense beauty while also managing to zig where others would normally zag. Another trait of his that resembles top all-time composer/bandleaders is the rare ability to make full usage of his whole group. The effects of this tendency particularly shine through the kinetic rhythm section during the final climactic minutes of *Rise*, and the three-man-weave in the horn section of *demiLAN*.

Due to the nature of Adema’s band-leading, along with the sheer talent he assembled, the most memorable moments on the album consist of celestial synergy between musicians. One definitive instance was the combination of lyricist/vocalist Alyssa Giammaria’s deeply poignant prose and the reassuring warmth of bassist Evan Gratham’s tone on the intro of the stunning *Lament for the Future to Come*. Ultimately, it is due to Adema’s knack for working with these parts that the whole far exceeds the sum.

Yoshi Maclear Wall

Sommes
Le GGRIL
Tour de Bras TDB9051CD (tourdebras.com)



▶ In 2014 I wrote my first sustained account of GGRIL, Grand Groupe Régional d’Improvisation Libérée, the large-scale, Rimouski, Quebec-based

orchestra devoted to free improvisation, conduction, graphic, text-based and any other kind of score that falls into its wide purview. The article was based on hearing and talking to GGRIL members at FIMAV (Festival International de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville), and the final sentence read: “GGRIL is currently recording scores by a wide variety of composers for their next album, *Collection*, a three-CD set that includes the pieces by Robert Marcel Lepage and Jean Derome performed at FIMAV.” Though it’s taken longer than expected, that ambition is now realized with *Sommes*, a three-CD commemoration of GGRIL’s 15-year history, 11 works dated from 2013 to 2020 by Québécois, Canadian and international composers, all newly recorded in fall 2020 by an edition of GGRIL that includes 21 musicians and a guest appearance by Quatuor Bozzini.

That original Lepage work, the 14-minute *Alice*, appears on disc one, an abstracted comedy reimagining Lewis Carroll’s work as a series of jagged, pecking dialogues between individual instruments, frequently in the bass register, occasionally reshaping the scenes with rapid-fire percussion. A brief solo episode, *Chat de Cheshire*, becomes a leitmotif through the set, appearing first as a bass prelude by Luke Dawson, then twice on each succeeding CD, by classical guitarist Pascal Landry, trombonist Gabriel Rochette-Bériault, cellist Rémy Bélanger de Beauport and electric bassist Éric Normand, the GGRIL founder and firebrand whose modesty limits his credits here to electric bass and a single conducting appearance.

Fifteen years in, GGRIL’s achievement seems extraordinary, a miraculous collaboration of state arts funding, local isolation and rare vision, involving composers from across Canada and Western Europe as well as Quebec. Alison Cameron’s *In Memoriam Robert Ashley*, a work of startling evanescence, drips beauty; Martin Arnold’s *Éistphéist*, featuring Quatuor Bozzini and the composer’s banjo, turns the gestural phrases of folk music into a 25-minute dream-scape. The ensemble’s devotion to chance and the unique realization is apparent in the textural surprises of Lori Freedman’s playful *Chances Are* and in two distinct realizations of England-based saxophonist Caroline Kraabel’s *Une note n’écoutant qu’elle-même*. Other composers represented are Lisa Cay

Miller, Malcolm Goldstein, Michel F. Côté, Jean Derome (his *La courbe du moment* from 2014) and Gus Garside.

The most ambitious performance here may be the opening one, French pianist Frédéric Blondy’s *Îlots turgescents*, a work of segments (“islands”) that demonstrates the orchestra’s range and power, from sudden, airliner-like, ascending glissandi to an extended, shifting drone that might model the ultimate funerary chord, stretching out to perpetuity until it includes within it an extended, gradual upward glissando increasing in amplitude. Weird Polynesian lounge jazz follows.

Stuart Broomer

Klotski
Gordon Grdina’s Square Peg
Attaboygirl Records ABG-2
(gordongrdina.bandcamp.com)

Pendulum
Gordon Grdina
Attaboygirl Records ABG-1
(gordongrdina.bandcamp.com)



▶ Over the past decade, Vancouver-based composer/guitarist Gordon Grdina has emerged as one of Canada’s most prolific jazz musicians. He has formed

and recorded with a series of distinct bands, including New York-based ensembles – his eponymous Quartet with Oscar Noriega, Satoshi Takeishi and Russ Lossing and the trio *Nomad* with Matt Mitchell and Jim Black – and such Vancouver groups as his string-dominated Septet and the Arabic music ensemble *Haram*. All that activity has now led to Grdina’s own label, Attaboygirl Records, which launches with two releases, one introducing a new international quartet, the second a program of solo music for classical guitar and oud. Each testifies to Grdina’s remarkable capacity for growth.

With *Square Peg*, Grdina blends his electric guitar and oud with two Americans, violist Mat Maneri (a long-standing explorer of quarter-tone improvisation) and bassist Shahzad Ismaily (also making adept contributions on synthesizer) and German drummer Christian Lillinger, a rising star in Europe who brings a special animation to any ensemble of which he’s a part. *Klotski* is a 53-minute work in eight parts, modular pieces that can be introduced by any member of the group and which are linked by collective improvisations. At the core of the music is the strong rapport of Grdina and Maneri who share a fondness for nuances of pitch and subtle shifts in repeating motifs. At times the musical thought is so close that one may cease distinguishing between oud or guitar and viola, as if they’re being played by a single mind, particularly evident in the kind

of profound reverie that arises in a work like *Bacchic Barge*, in which the music's ultimate effect includes both the intertwined strings and the metallic glitter of Lillinger's snare and cymbals.



On *Pendulum*, his third solo CD, Grdina concentrates on classical guitar and oud. On guitar he creates mysterious tonal intersections out of contrasting cultural references, a quality

immediately apparent on the opening *Koen Dori*, initially written for a Japanese ensemble. The solo performance here hangs between East and West, idiomatic pentatonics and a broad vibrato on slow passages emphasizing the former within a context of richly European harmonies. The effect is not dissonant, however literally that might be applied, but concordant, similar to the quality achieved with *Square Peg*. Western harmonic conceptions strongly colour the glassy reverberating chromatic weave of *Contra*, while *Wayward*, the longest track here and one of two oud pieces, is characterized by rapidly shifting dynamics, an expressive intensity and a movement from traditional modality to increasingly complex pitch distortions and relations.

Stuart Broomer

If There Were No Opposites Nick Fraser

Independent (nickfraserthedrummer.com)



▶ Drummer/composer Nick Fraser's eponymous quartet is amongst the most distinctive Canadian bands to emerge in the past decade, maintaining consistent

personnel that includes New York saxophonist Tony Malaby as well as Fraser's long-time Toronto associates, bassist Rob Clutton and Andrew Downing, here playing cello rather than his more customary bass. *If There Were No Opposites* is the group's fourth CD since 2012, and it marks another step in their evolution, with a kind of telepathy arising in the collective handling of Fraser's compositions and sketches.

Fraser's subtle sense of form adds a special element to the program. The CD begins with *Improvisation (Part 1)*, a flurry of upper-register pizzicato, soon joined by gruff tenor saxophone and a high-pitched keening string melody; within a minute, it shifts to a somber ballad, the tenor tamed and mingled with bowed strings and cymbal washes. The CD's concluding piece, *Improvisation (Part 2)*, which begins with unaccompanied drums, is literally the continuation of the first, a clever bracketing of the composed pieces *within* the spontaneous, inverting the traditional jazz

pattern of enclosing improvisation within form-defining statements.

In between there are five Fraser compositions, each a distinct springboard for the band's often tumultuous creativity, lines and timbres constantly assembling, dissolving and reassembling in ways that are at once loose and precise, whether it's the rapid-tempo explosion of *Sketch #50* or the piquant, transformations of *The Bulldog* and *the Capricorn*. This is exceptional music making.

Stuart Broomer

Off the Carousel

June Garber

Vesuvius Music VMI-005 (junegarber.com)



▶ Luminous chanteuse and performer June Garber has just released a compelling, emotionally and musically profound recording. A deeply personal project, every track

is like a small, perfect piece of *cinéma vérité* – a journey through the commonality of the human experience through Garber's autobiographical musical lens. Musical genius Lou Pomanti produced and arranged the recording, and also performed on a variety of keyboards. As the CD was created when it was impossible (due to COVID) to record together in the studio, under the expert direction of Pomanti the tracks were created individually and remotely, and then assembled. The talented musicians here include Steve Heathcote on drums, Marc Rogers on bass, Jake Langley on guitar, Drew Jurecka on strings, William Sperandei on trumpet and Robyn Black on background vocals.

The moving opener, *He Never Mentioned Love*, sets the tone for this romantic, emotional journey of an album, where Garber acts as both muse and tour guide. Langley's soulful guitar solo moves in and out of the languid string lines of almost unbearable beauty as Garber captivates with every note and nuance. Of special, remarkable beauty and delicacy is the inspired composition of the Bergmans and Michel LeGrand, *Windmills of Your Mind*. Garber fearlessly sails through this melodically and lyrically challenging tune on the wings of a truly inspired arrangement by Pomanti.

Every track on this recording is a luscious listening experience – from Lil Hardin's sexy, bluesy *Just for a Thrill* (with special guest Jackie Richardson) to a unique, rhythmically infused take on Chick Corea's *Spain*, where Garber's rich, warm tones elicit pure joy! Of special mention is the rarely performed Johnny Mercer/Barry Manilow ballad, *When October Goes*, performed here to perfection with pristine guitar and voice. The deep emotional honesty in Garber's interpretation is nothing short of breathtaking.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

A Prayer for Lester Bowie

David Sanford Big Band featuring Hugh Ragin

Greenleaf Music GRE-CD-1086 (greenleafmusic.com)



▶ Lester Bowie, co-founder of the Art Ensemble of Chicago and one of the leading lights of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, was a legendary

trumpeter known for his adventurous and often humorous music. Beneath this veneer was his avant-garde, deeply Africanized vision for jazz.

Referencing everything that the trumpeter stood for, composer and arranger David Sanford empowers his big band to evoke the spirit of Bowie through high-octane performances on *A Prayer for Lester Bowie*. Each of eight exquisite charts is especially rewarding for the quality of the performance, advanced by stellar soloists featuring trumpeters Hugh Ragin and Brad Goode, saxophonists Anna Webber and Marc Phaneuf, trombonists Jim Messbauer and Ben Herrington among several other virtuoso musicians.

While the centrepiece of the album is the song that gives it its title, written by – and featuring – Ragin on trumpet, the other charts are equal, in the fabulous richness of orchestral texture, to the album's principal song. In fact, about three of the most miraculous minutes of the album can be heard on *popit* (also featuring Ragin) as well as the balletic *Woman in Shadows* and the dark-toned *Soldier and the CEO*. Throughout the repertoire on this recording the musical chemistry between the musicians is seamlessly intuitive. Woodwinds, brass and rhythm sections sparkle in ensemble with eloquence and vigour while judiciously placed solo movements are always poetically declaimed.

Raul da Gama

Out Here

Mary LaRose; Jeff Lederer; Tomeka Reid; Patricia Brennan; Nick Dunston; Matt Wilson)

little(i)music (littleimusic.com)



▶ After his two-year stint with Chico Hamilton's band, clarinetist, flutist and alto saxophonist Eric Dolphy rose to eminence in the iconic bands of Charles Mingus, John Coltrane and

Booker Little, becoming known as much for his forward-thinking harmonic and rhythmic conception, as for his lyrical, human-speech-like solos on bass clarinet and flute.

Mary LaRose, a remarkable artist in her own right, captures all of Dolphy's character and artistry into an eerily prescient vocal album featuring prominent – and lesser-known – repertoire from Dolphy's unique canon, adding lyrics, brilliantly executed polyphonic vocalese and singing throughout. Another striking aspect of this music is the sensuality of sonority, confirming without question that Dolphy was an absolute master of orchestral language with a subtlety of timbre.

Jeff Lederer's arrangements of the charts on *Out Here* capture the majesty of Dolphy's music revelling in its extravagance, while the group comprising cellist Tomeka Reid, vibraphonist Patricia Brennan, bassist Nick Dunston and drummer Matt Wilson deliver strongly committed, full-blooded performances.

But make no mistake, this recording is launched into the stratosphere by the high jinks and vocalistics of LaRose. Her visionary aesthetic and idiomatic performance is behind the kinetic energy of the album's most memorable songs: *Gazzelloni* and *Musica Matador*, the latter featuring trombonist Jimmy Bosch and percussionist Bobby Sanabria. *Warm Canto* – with its clarinet choir, including Isaiah Johnson and Cameron Jones, lifting aloft LaRose's contrapuntal vocals – is the album's crowning glory.

Raul da Gama

Slowly – Song for Keith Jarrett
Noah Haidu; Buster Williams; Billy Hart
Sunnyside Communications SSC 1596
(noahhaidu.com)



► Few pianists in contemporary jazz have dominated the concert grand piano like Keith Jarrett, an artist of the first order, who was riveting in solo performance

and similarly thrilling with his longstanding trio, comprising bassist Gary Peacock and drummer Jack DeJohnette. The death of Peacock and the pianist's rapidly declining health have meant that the world will be deprived of one of the greatest, most versatile performing artists in recent memory.

To pay homage to someone with such an outsize artistic personality would seem to be an enormous challenge, the task made even more daunting because of the choice to show respect for Jarrett by playing in a trio format. But not so much for the prodigious piano virtuoso Noah Haidu, who could not have picked better musicians for this venture than venerable bassist Buster Williams and drummer Billy Hart.

Haidu attempts to retain the emotional intensity and depth of characterization of Jarrett's work, without emulating his idol on the album *Slowly*. To do otherwise would

have been ill-advised given the distinctive nature of Jarrett's improvisatory playing. Rather, Haidu impresses with a more discursive style featuring idiosyncratic pitching and a tone that seems to evaporate in short transcendent phrases. The repertoire is wisely chosen and the album includes the appropriate and thematic *Air Dancing*, a balletic composition by Williams; *Lorca*, an elegiac piece by Hart; and Haidu's eloquent composition *Slowly*. The album's apogee is Jarrett's wistful composition *Rainbow*.

Raul da Gama

Piano Music
Satoko Fujii
Libra Records 201-067 (librarecords.com)



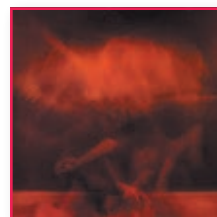
► Prolific Japanese avant-garde pianist and composer Satoko Fujii has shown yet again on her newest release that she continues to push the boundaries of jazz to new

limits. The listener is taken on a peaceful yet eerie journey through an ethereal and transcendent soundscape unlike any other. Both pieces are penned and mixed by Fujii herself, showcasing her behind-the-scenes skills as well as her thorough involvement in both the performative and editorial aspects of the record. For anyone who wants to take in a full musical experience that tells a true and almost lifelike story of its own, this album is a great pick.

The almost-19-minute-long opening track *Shiroku* is slow to unfold but allows the listener to immerse themselves fully and take on an almost meditative state, following the smooth ebbs and flows, crescendos and decrescendos of the music. What makes the compositional aspect of the record unique is the fact that both pieces are made up entirely of one-to-two-minute-long recordings on the prepared piano that have been forged together and overlaid seamlessly, creating a sonorous landscape for the ears. Fujii calls the result of this technique a "sound collage," something new to her and which she describes as making music "like building with Legos." The album closes with *Fuwarito*, a slightly livelier piece that has shorter melodic and rhythmic phrases that lend a slight note of positivity and brightness to the music.

Kati Kiillaspea

Sunday at De Ruimte
Marta Warelis; Frank Rosaly; Aaron Lumley; John Dikeman
Tracatta/Doek RAW 868
(doekraw.bandcamp.com/album)



► Maintaining its reputation as a haven for exploratory musicians is Amsterdam, where this intense but informal improvisational session was recorded.

None of the now-resident players are Dutch. Demonstrative tenor saxophonist John Dikeman and spartanly rhythmic drummer Frank Rosaly are Americans; inventive pianist Marta Warelis is Polish; and propulsive bassist Aaron Lumley is Canadian.

Alternately pensive and passionate, the quartet cannily constructs the four improvisations with fluid integration and without obdurate showiness. That means that each time the saxophonist launches a paroxysm of fragmented cries, tongue slaps and other extended tendencies, the pianist's fleet patterning and the bassist's fluid pumps decompress the exposition into sonic blends.

With Rosaly mostly limiting himself to rim shots, delicate shuffles or cymbal scratches, this contrapuntal procedure plays out throughout, most spectacularly on the lengthy *Masquerade Charade*. Resonating from atmospheric bass-string drones and single-note keyboard clips, by the track's midpoint the moderated emphasis is challenged by Dikeman's tone smears, note spears and hoarse sputters, until Lumley's stinging stops and Warelis' dynamic cascades connect each player's lines into a joyously squirming finale.

Dikeman's skill at distinctively shattering complacency with reed bites, honks and kinetic yelps is never limited by the pianist's cerebral interpretations, frequent doubling by the bassist's metronomic pulls or string sweeps, or the occasional bell clatter from Rosaly. Yet the cohesive program that arises from this constant push-pull defines the quartet's dramatically realized strategy. It also substantiates the Netherlands' appeal to foreign players.

Ken Waxman

Cool With That
East Axis
ESP-Disk 5064 (espdisk.com)



► Created by committed improvisers, this CD is one that won't frighten those who shy away from free music. While engagement is present, alienating

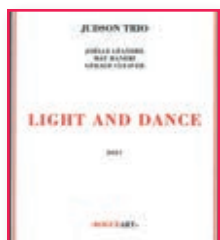
pressure is omitted. Strength isn't missing, but is so much part of the New York quartet's DNA that it doesn't need to be emphasized. Drummer Gerald Cleaver's powerful and elastic beat and pianist Matthew Shipp's spidery pecks or cultivated patterning are guiding factors here. Bassist Kevin Ray's pinpointed plucks move the program forward without demanding attention, while Allen Lowe operates in chameleonic fashion, alternately mellow or biting on tenor saxophone and smooth or raucous on alto.

Often harmonized by Lowe and Shipp, buoyed with straight-ahead rhythms from the others, themes swirl, splatter and slide as on the title track where Shipp's single-note comping moves between Basie and Monk. Similarly, Lowe channels Sonny Rollins' intensity and Lee Konitz's invention depending on his chosen horn. These bolts between staccato timbre fanning and affable tonal exposition are most obvious on the final track. At 28 minutes, almost double any other, *One* offers space for the rhythm section's only solos plus distinct transitions. Spurred by a drum backbeat, the initial metronomic swing encompassing reed bites and glosso-lalia allows everyone to trade breaks later, and in the final sequence descends to a sophisticated march with slurring saxophone lines and keyboard bounces.

Play this CD for anyone and that person will probably confirm he or she is Cool With That.

Ken Waxman

Light and Dance
Judson Trio
RogueArt ROG-0112 (roguart.com)



► Taking advantage of the unique textures available with unusual instrumentation, members of the Judson Trio stretch the connective limits during this two-CD set of one

live concert and a studio date. Following a five-year partnership, Paris-based bassist Joëlle Léandre, New York violist Matt Maneri and drummer/percussionist Gerald Cleaver can perfect searing or subdued improvisations with sonic understanding.

Except for the drummer's crunching kit-exercising on the final selection, tracks pulsate fluidly since none of the players stick to standard forms. Besides refracting creaky spiccato scratches, Maneri's pizzicato strums create mid-range continuum. Léandre's command of connective pressure is a given, but she also expresses pointillist expositions with the speed and malleability of a small fiddle. Colourist Cleaver's accompaniment is expressed with cymbal clanks, gong-like resonance, pointed ruffs or drum top spansks.

Frequently moving in three-layered

narratives or broken-octave elaboration, the trio's musical cooperation is expressed most succinctly on the live *Wild Lightness* #4. After the bassist's singular string plucks state the theme, Maneri's string scordatura counters with widened strokes. Directly transformed into squeaky below-the-bridge scratches, his unique tones intersect with Léandre's sul tasto narrative elaborations and are decorated with Cleaver's bell-tree-shaking tinctures.

Light and Dance is dedicated to exposing all the obvious, hidden and expanded textures available from the interactions of the three players' instruments during all 18 tracks. If equivalent pliable concepts were expressed by governments, irritants like trade wars and Brexit could likely be avoided.

Ken Waxman

17 Days in December – Solo Improvisations for Acoustic & Electric Harp
Jacqueline Kerrod
Orenda Records 0093
(jacquelinekerrod.com)



► Many people think of original music in a hierarchical sense, looking down on pure improvisation as something that doesn't require mastery or disci-

pline. One listen to Jacqueline Kerrod's solo harp debut will serve as an epiphany for those cynics. In fact, I found myself awestruck by Kerrod's seemingly limitless expressive range.

17 Days was recorded in the format of a musical diary, comprising one-take improvisations on consecutive days in the month of December. In the liner notes, Kerrod stresses the importance of simplicity in her approach and letting the music "be what it want[s] to be." As a result of this philosophy, each piece takes on its own distinct shape, and yet the entire tracklist is held together by Kerrod's improvisational identity. The combination of patience and inventive musical vocabulary results in a sound that is entirely unique to her and there is a consistent logic to the myriad enveloping soundscapes and intricate shapes that she creates. The music is never predictable, but even when switching from glitchy electroacoustic moments to warmer, familiar tones, it never feels disjointed or arbitrary. Kerrod's tremolos, kinetic phrasing and rhythmic jabs enable her to get incredible mileage out of even the smallest ideas. The tracks fit together beautifully, despite not being sequenced in chronological order, a testament to how fully fleshed-out these spontaneous compositions are.

Yoshi Maclear Wall

Eberhard
Lyle Mays
Independent (lylemays.com)

The Music Of Lyle Mays – Compositions, Transcriptions and Musical Transformations
Transcribed and edited by Pierre Piscitelli
(lylemays.com; pierreppiscitelli.com)



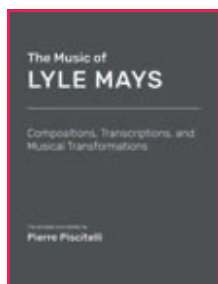
► Lyle Mays is best known for his ground-breaking work as co-composer, arranger and keyboardist with the Pat Metheny Group. During his

30-plus years at the guitarist's side, Mays co-created a new sound and language of jazz and improvised music, incorporating contemporary technology and elements drawn from classical, traditional jazz, rock and Brazilian music. Perhaps lesser known, but no less significant, is his work as a solo artist. Through his six previous releases, Mays explored different facets of his music and musicality, ranging from solo improvisation to small group and larger ensemble settings.

In the wake of his passing in the winter of 2020, we now have the gift of one final post-humous recording, *Eberhard*, a 13-minute multi-section work dedicated to his close colleague, German bassist/composer Eberhard Weber, released as a single-track album. A ruminative marimba ostinato played by Wade Culbreath opens the piece, setting the stage for Mays' reflective piano melody; he is joined in turn by Jimmy Johnson on electric bass and Aubrey Johnson with an exquisite wordless vocal. Gradually, Mays then builds a masterful solo over woodwinds and background vocals. (Bassist Steve Rodby, percussionists Alex Acuña and Jimmy Branly, guitarist Bill Frisell, keyboardist Mitchell Forman and a cello section also augment the excellent ensemble.) A riveting vocal section (Johnson plus Rosana and Gary Eckert) builds to a captivating, emotional climax that soars on Bob Sheppard's dramatic tenor saxophone solo.

A recapitulation of the introduction completes the piece, leaving the listener with the feeling of having experienced an incredible musical journey. *Eberhard* is a bold, majestic masterpiece, both a summation of a remarkable career and a glimpse into where Mays might have ventured musically in the years ahead.

Concurrently, the Lyle Mays Estate, in conjunction with editor Pierre Piscitelli, has released *The Music Of Lyle Mays*, a comprehensive songbook covering his output as a solo artist, as well as previously unpublished material that he recorded with Pat Metheny. Piscitelli, a New York-based arranger/multi-instrumentalist, worked closely with Mays to ensure that the music was represented



accurately and authentically in his transcriptions.

The reader is treated to a thorough artist biography, essays by Mays on various topics, and insights about the genesis of the compositions. One particu-

larly fascinating essay recounts how Piscitelli came to know and work with Mays on both the songbook and *Eberhard* projects. Piscitelli deserves special acknowledgement for his great work on this long-awaited volume.

Taken together, *Eberhard* and *The Music of Lyle Mays* form a vivid musical portrait of a remarkable artist whose legacy should endure for generations to come.

Barry Livingston

POT POURRI

Baked Cafe

Glenn Chatten

Independent (glennchatten.com)



► All of us who grew up in the Yukon knew it was a special place and were never surprised when “cheechakos” would arrive to work for a summer and

wind up staying for years and making a life there. Glenn Chatten waited until later in life to move to Whitehorse, and had already recorded several albums as a songwriter and fingerstyle acoustic guitarist. His “Yukon” album, *Baked Cafe*, is named after one of my favourite places to eat and hang out in Whitehorse (known as the “Wilderness City”). The title song has a grooving beat and makes “flying to Whitehorse on a Saturday” sound exciting and intense, especially if it is to meet a very special person at the Baked Cafe.

Liam’s Lyft, *Tagish Morning* and *Sima* (named after a nearby mountain that has skiing and a zip line) are three marvellous instrumentals that showcase Chatten’s fretboard dexterity. Although Chatten is a relative newcomer to the North, his lyrics show a clear appreciation for the landscape and people. In *One Land* he sings “beyond the sun dogs, and the ice fog, beyond the deep woven aspen tree, lies a quiet, part of nature, from the mountains to the Arctic Sea.” The words evocatively capture the essence of the Yukon’s territory.

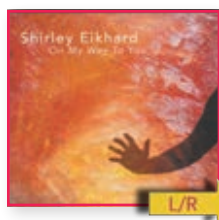
In addition to Chatten’s fine acoustic guitar and insightful lyrics, the many excellent local musicians add a spirited community vibe to this work. *Baked Cafe* is expertly engineered and mastered by Bob Hamilton who has been

part of the Yukon music scene for decades. Chatten’s album is uplifting and insightful and I hope he remains a permanent part of northern culture.

Ted Parkinson

On My Way To You Shirley Eikhard

Independent SEM2021 (shirleyeikhard.ca)



tion of 12 songs dating from 1982 to present day. This is a fabulous overview of the creative artistic output of one of Canada’s foremost musicians. Recorded in her home studio in Mono ON, Eikhard produced, arranged, recorded and performed all instruments and vocals here.

Opening track *Anything is Possible* (2020) is a positive, engaging song. Eikhard sings lead and backup vocals above repeated cadential pattern instrumental grooves and uplifting minimalistic melodies with such lyrics as “I refuse to be frightened,” and closing line “anything is possible...”, making my COVID fears miraculously vanish! Title track *On My Way to You* (2019) has a more traditional folk feel with longer phrases, guitar accompaniment and colourful sultry vocal tones.

Great contrast is *Good News* (1982) showcasing her superb keyboard skills and lyrical singing. Especially powerful are the detached piano chords and vocals to the words “I wish I could bring you good news” while in the *Good News* reprise track (also 1982) her lyrical keyboard and vocal duet is passionately tear-jerking. The so-current, pop-music-flavoured *What I Wish (For You)* (2021) features an amazing wind solo. Bound to be a giant hit, *My Final Chapter* (2020) is a rhythmic up-beat dance and singalong song with such attention-grabbing lyrics as “I am not angry anymore.”

Another all-encompassing, riveting musical masterpiece from Shirley Eikhard!

Tiina Kiik

Party for Joey – A Sweet Relief Tribute to Joey Spampinato

Various Artists

True North Records 270573

(truenorthrecords.com)

► Singer, songwriter and bassist Joey Spampinato co-founded NRBQ (New Rhythm and Blues Quartet) in 1969. Perhaps not a household name, fans appreciated this multi-genre-influenced rocking band’s and, specifically Spampinato’s, musical greatness, resulting in subsequent gigs for him. Sadly,



Spampinato was diagnosed with cancer in 2015, and has been recovering ever since. Many of the musicians here were invited by his wife Kami Lyle and producer

Sheldon Gomberg to record a Spampinato-composed song for this benefit tribute album, as well as other generous musicians, who all recorded/donated their proceeds to the Sweet Relief Musicians Fund to financially support him now.

Highlights include the opening track *You Can’t Hide* featuring former NRBQ member Al Anderson singing and playing his rock-star heart out, until a classic, crashing rock-star drum ending. Los Lobos adds accordion and sax Cajun-tinged solos to their rocky *Every Boy Every Girl* rendition. Ben Harper’s clear vocal tone and repeated short melody line keep the lyrics up front in full rocking band *Like a Locomotive* cover, which features a Keith Richards guitar solo. Unexpected free improv atonal opening and closing of *Don’t She Look Good* contrasts the rest of The Minus 5 rock performance. Touching, hopeful lyrical ballad last track, *First Crush*, has Kami Lyle and Joey sing in tight, vocal blends.

Other musicians, including Bonnie Raitt, Penn and Teller and Steve Forbert cover Spampinato strong earworm songs. Time to party with these 14 tunes, and to support a worthy cause.

Tiina Kiik

Notes for the Future

Yo-Yo Ma

Sony (yo-yoma.com)



► Renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma’s new album *Notes for the Future* is a series of intimate and heartfelt studio collaborations with singers from five continents. The album’s

nine tracks feature Ma with well-known divas and a few names new to me: Angélique Kidjo, Mashrou’ Leila, Tunde Olaniran, Jeremy Dutcher, Andrea Motis, ABAO, Lila Downs and Marlon Williams.

Ma, United Nations Messenger of Peace, writes that this album’s global musical journey explores “how culture can help us imagine and build a better world, featuring vocals in Arabic, Zapotec, Catalan, Paiwan, Spanish, Mi’kmaq, Wolastoqey, Ewe, Maori, and English.” Celebrating the “wisdom of the generations that were and the possibility of those to come,” Ma aims to express “our fears and hopes, reminding us that the future is ours to shape, together.”

Given that stirring mission statement, how does *Notes for the Future* deliver musically?

To answer, I'd like to focus on *Honor Song*, the collaboration between Ma and tenor-composer Jeremy Dutcher. Juno and Polaris Prize winner, Dutcher, a member of the Tobique First Nation in New Brunswick, describes *Honor Song* as "a Mi'kmaq anthem [...] that invokes our collective responsibility to care for the planet we share." Dutcher's soaring and emotion-filled Wolastoqey vocal is brilliantly counterpointed by Ma's lyrical bass-heavy cello and powerful chordal accompaniment.

Dutcher wrote: "This collaboration changed my life, and I'm so grateful to him for sharing his platform and allowing so many more people to hear our songs + languages!" I found the entire album a stirring journey.

Andrew Timar

Suba
Omar Sosa; Seckou Keita
Bendigidig BEND18 (grigorian.com/webstore/view.php?iid=2188258)



Every now and then the world is graced by an album that has a certain kind of gentleness – the gentleness that contains compassion for humanity and the quest for change. *Suba*, meaning sunrise in Mandinka, is a melodious microcosm of quietude and hope. There is nothing forced in the music on this album. Each song unfolds in a moment, unhurriedly, as it is just meant to be.

Omar Sosa (piano) and Seckou Keita (kora, voice) have a knack for creating music that is harmonious with the world and placatory

in its core. Both are masters of their instruments, distinguished artistic voices that bring traditions of Cuba and Senegal to the forefront. Sosa plays piano soulfully, as if he is always aware of the preciousness of the moment. On the other end of this collaboration is Keita, whose playing and singing have a beautiful lightness, subtle and captivating. *Suba* is rooted in Africa and its traditions, with the occasional spice of jazz elements. Equally divided between instrumental and vocal pieces, the album also features a fantastic team of musicians, most notably Jaques Morelenbaum on cello.

The opening vocal piece *Kharit* and the percussively driven *Allah Léo* establish the atmosphere of longing and peace that persists throughout the album. The music always moves forward and the beauty is always present. *No One Knows* concludes the album with a sonic sparseness that leaves the listener with a profound sense of peace.

Ivana Popovic

Something in the Air

Understanding Pianist Paul Bley's Musical Legacy

KEN WAXMAN

Although Paul Bley died in 2016 the extent of his legacy and associations are still being felt. That's because the pianist was one of the few jazz players who moved through several musical areas and made his mark on each. Born in Montreal on November 10, 1932, he would have been 89 this year. A piano protégé, Bley began as a teenage swing pianist in his native city. Yet he became so proficient a bopper after his move to New York in the early 1950s that he was soon playing with Charles Mingus and Charlie Parker. An encounter with Ornette Coleman allowed him to bring freer ideas to his improvising and composing during the 1960s and he worked with members of the burgeoning free jazz movement during that decade and afterwards. Later on, while continuing to play contemporary jazz with various acoustic bands, he expanded his interests into early experiments with the Moog synthesizer and when he started his own record label he made sure that visual as well as audio tracks were created. He also taught part-time at the New England Conservatory (NEC) and over the years collaborated and recorded with a cross section of international musicians. Read a more detailed view of Bley's life and career in the February 2016 issue of *The WholeNote*.



By the time *Touching & Blood Revisited* (ezz-thetics 1108 hathut.com) was recorded in 1965/1966, Bley had already perfected his mature style. The herky-jerky evolution he brought to his own compositions reflects those of his ex-wife Carla Bley plus Thelonious Monk's quirkiness. Other tracks written by Carla or his then-wife Annette Peacock delineate phraseology that moves

from animated runs on bouncy tunes to paused interludes on the slower numbers. These trio sessions also make particular use of Barry Altschul's drumming. As the pianist varies the exposition with theme repetitions and unexpected asides, powerful press rolls, cymbal pops

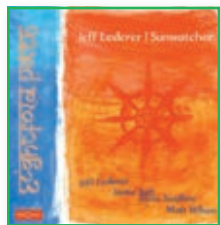
and reverb help preserve the tracks' broken-chord evolution. A gentle ballad like *Touching* gives space to bassist Kent Carter's widening plucks, with keyboard rumbles added for a dramatic interchange. Peacock's writing is most spidery on *Both*, with the narrative created as shaded keyboard tones vibrate at quicker and quicker speeds alongside overt drum ruffs. On the other hand the almost-19-minute *Blood* from a year later with Mark Levinson on bass is more overtly rhythmic as the bassist and Altschul shake and rustle alongside Bley's theme depiction. The pianist first outlines the exposition with hand pressure, adds thickening variations mirrored by drum ruffs and concludes with a dramatic keyboard flourish. Fluctuating between methodical and munificent, *Closer* and *Pablo*, two Bley originals, display the resolved contradictions in his playing and writing. Driven by single notes, the former is atmospheric and animated, working through muted expression; it swings without increasing the tempo. Just the opposite, *Pablo* rolls out a piano introduction that is as hard and heavy as Carter's caustic pizzicato stops and Altschul's smacks and tone shattering. The finale contrasts Bley's rolling narrative with Altschul's clips, rolls and ratamacues.



Although defining experiences in more energetic improvising with Sonny Rollins and others would be in the future, the introspective approach in Bley's developed style resulted from the two years he was in Jimmy Giuffre's chamber-jazz trio. With only Bley's piano and Steve Swallow's bass backing him, the clarinetist created introspective miniatures that emphasized mood

over motion. *Free Fall Clarinet 1962 Revisited* (ezz-thetics 1119 hathut.com) was the final session before the trio disbanded. Like the subsequent fame of the Velvet Underground's LPs, the Giuffre's sets were neglected in the early 1960s, but have since been recognized as the template for much subsequent free music. Giuffre projects his astringent a cappella clarinet solos with squeaks and peeps, yet his extended glissandi without pause on a track like *Dichotomy* presage circular breathing passages that are now almost commonplace. Not only did the group not include a drummer, but also (for the most part) avoided pulse and melody. Instead, eccentric harmony predominated, marked by Bley's key clips and Swallow's intermittent string pumps. Sticking to clarion or higher registers, Giuffre's flutter tonguing and splayed trills connect often enough with keyboard pressure to keep tracks linear as on *Spasmodic*. At the same time his playing is often wide bore enough to suggest tonal extensions with interludes like that on *Threewe* completed against a

backdrop of double bass plucks. Unlike Bley's agitated minimalist asides, Swallow's only solo is on *Divided Man*, and even there shares space with mid-range clarinet breaths. With those antecedents, the ten-minute *The Five Ways* seems like a swing session. Double bass bounces and low-pitched piano colouration introduce the piece which goes through numerous transitions. A piano crescendo introduces three-part modulations that lead to sprightly storytelling from Giuffrè, with the track finally climaxing with a high-pitched reed slur, almost replicating the one which began the album.



Malleability and volume may have predisposed Swallow's shift to the five-string electric bass guitar in the early 1970s, and at 81 he's still playing in a more audible, but just as tasteful fashion. On *Eightfold Path* (Little (i) music littleimusic.com) he's part of the **Sunwatcher Quartet**. Leader, tenor saxophonist **Jeff Lederer**, and the other players, organist/pianist **Jamie Saft** and drummer **Matt Wilson**, are two or three decades

younger than the bassist. No matter, Swallow's echoing frailties provide these tracks with bedrock, and all put a 21st-century sheen on soul jazz. Boisterous, where Giuffrè's sound was muted, most tracks pulsate with jumping organ runs coupled with the saxophonist's energetic cries and split tones that mate Albert Ayler and Lockjaw Davis. With the drummer's rugged shuffles or backbeats, the few piano-accompanied ballads like *Right Effort* also find Lederer flutter tonguing changes that are both mellow and barbed. More typical are tunes such as *Right Resolve* where saxophone honks and bass guitar pops glue the bottom alongside Saft's herky-jerky tremors, creating a bluesy afterimage. Add in Wilson's stop-time drumming and the image presented is of a good-time after-hours party somehow interrupted by austere free jazz multiphonics. That's also why *Right Action* stands out with post-modern insouciance. Using Swallow's continuous patterns



Eberhard, Lyle Mays' 13-minute tribute to Eberhard Weber, was recorded in the months before Mays' death in 2020 and features Lyle on piano and synthesizers along with Bill Frisell, Bob Sheppard, Steve Rodby, Jimmy Johnson, Mitchel Forman, Alex Acuña, Jimmy Branly, Wade Culbreath, Aubrey Johnson, Rosana Eckert, Gary Eckert, and more.

Composed, Arranged and Produced by
Lyle Mays

"What an incredible honour to find out that Lyle created a last masterpiece and named it "Eberhard"... It is impossible to express my thankfulness and gratitude..."

- Eberhard Weber

Available on all streaming services.
Vinyl, CDs, and digital downloads available at
www.lylemays.com

as rhythmic glue, Wilson's tambourine-on-hi-hat-splashes take on a Latin tinge while the saxophonist's extended altissimo screams seem to relate as much to pioneering rock'n'roll tenor saxist Big Jay McNeely as to free jazz proponents like Ayler.



Like Swallow, **Barry Altschul** had been germane to Bley's trio music, but over the years he's worked with numerous other advanced musicians. Now 78, **Long Tall Sunshine** (NotTwo MW 1012-2 nottwo.com) by his **3DOM Factor** features his compositions played by the drummer plus saxophonist/clarinetist **Jon Irabagon** and bassist **Joe Fonda**, whose broad woody strokes open this live set. Energy music of the highest

order, there's delicacy here as well as dissonance. These attributes also emanate from the drummer, who on the eponymous first track and especially the final, *Martin's Stew*, projects solos that thunder with taste. Pounding rim shots, clanking cymbals and bass drum rumbles cement the beat without unnecessary volume and quickly lock in with Fonda's logical pumps and arco asides. Outlining and recapping the theme here and elsewhere, Irabagon races through a compendium of staccato squawks, yelping bites and altissimo burbles. His a cappella deconstruction of the title tune with foghorn-like honks, key percussion and strangled yelps is like aural sleight of hand. Extended techniques appear almost before you realize it and they ease into a more standard playing before the finale. Irabagon's ability to source phrase after phrase and tone after tone in expanding and extended fashion is complemented by Altschul's composition. As outside as they become with reed split tones, percussion splatters and weighty string slithering, a kernel of melody is referred to on and off. Fragmented quotes from disguised modern jazz classics lurk just below the surface and are heard in the saxophonist's theme statements and asides.



During Bley's 1990s tenure at the NEC, one student who stood out was Japanese pianist **Satoko Fujii**, whose first American disc in 1996 was a duo with Bley. Now involved with ensembles ranging from duos to big bands, you can sense the Canadian pianist's influence and how Fujii evolved from it when she heads a trio. **Moon on the Lake** (Libra Records 203-065 librarecords.com)

with her **Tokyo Trio** is completed by bassist/cellist **Takashi Sugawa** and drummer **Ittetsu Takemura**. Taking from both the mainstream and the avant garde, she allows ideas to squirm along the piano keys and sometimes dips inside the frame to pluck the strings for added resonance. Quick to feature her partners, she plays percussively to match Takemura's clanking rolls and whistling ruffs or slowly, chords to extract the proper colours alongside temple bell-like cymbal vibration, or the trembling pulls of Sugawa's formalist arco work. While the title – and final – tune is quiet and romantic, individual internal string plucks and a dry processional pace prevents it from sinking into sentimentality. *Keep Running*, and especially the extended *Aspiration* on the other hand, are progressively dissonant. Beginning with spinning drum top raps, then press rolls, the former tune gains its broken chord shape as the pianist pounds out kinetic patterns with one hand and relaxed fingering with the other. The narrative climaxes with rifle-shot-like pops from the drummer. *Aspiration* sums up both sides of her keyboard personality. From slow and stately her chording works up to florid impressionism and then relaxes into low-pitched shakes mated with the cello's mournful interlocation. Later, barely there cymbal shuffles and rim shots accelerate to woody thumps and pumps as Fujii's stopped piano keys unearth a spreading metronomic rhythm. Reaching a crescendo of allegro key pummeling seconded by metallic percussion rattles and rugged bass string plucks, the piece sinks back to its lento beginning framed with single piano notes.

Unlike others, there will never be a Bley school of improvisation. Yet musicians like Fujii continue to build on his ideas and guidance and many of his associates are still producing notable advanced music. 🐼

Old Wine, New Bottles

Fine Old Recordings Re-Released

BRUCE SURTEES

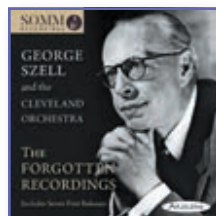


It seems so long ago that the world was introduced to **The Three Tenors**. It has been 30 years since the concert starring three great tenors of the day made entertainment history. The original concept was to have a concert of popular opera arias sung by a lone artist. How the simple idea developed into *The Three Tenors* – José Carreras, Plácido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti – singing before a capacity audience in the site of the old Roman baths of Caracalla is told here in a brilliant, informa-

tive bonus feature, supplementing the original concert footage. The documentary, *From Caracalla to the World*, lets us into the evolution of the three-man show – actually four men including conductor Zubin Mehta. After that first performance, as seen on this disc, their impresario offered the show to record companies who declined, arguing that the “songs” were too old and the public would not be interested. Only Decca saw the future and immediately signed them. The documentary is 88 minutes in duration including contemporary videos of the principals and other familiar faces and names as they were 30 years ago; also, the plans for and scenes from the subsequent 1994 concert in Los Angeles that was the most watched musical event in history. More than one and a half billion viewers watched the concert via 100 national television networks. It’s all there and more in the revealing

documentary.

In the concert itself there are 15 arias plus an extended 20-minute medley. The arias and songs are familiar or soon will be. Rather than pick and choose I listened and watched right through as each singer came and sang his heart out whether it be an aria or a song or a familiar piece and then left the stage to await his next turn. Not once was there the slightest inclination to skip ahead. Track 14 is an entertaining medley of a variety of material, romantic, sentimental, recognizable songs like *Amapola*, *O Sole Mio* and from Broadway like *Maria*, *Memory*, *Tonight*, *La vie en rose*. Each tenor and Mehta is clearly having a contagiously good time shared by those in the audience. **The Original Three Tenors in Concert, Rome 1990 plus a new documentary** (C major 758804 Blu-ray video naxosdirect.com/search/758804).



SOMM has issued a collection of eight recordings made by **George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra**. Only one of these performances has been issued previously, by Columbia, on CD. In 1946 Szell became only the fourth music director of the orchestra since its founding in 1918. He took the appointment promising to transform the orchestra, as excellent as it was, into one of the finest in the land. He succeeded. On the second disc of the two-CD set there are stirring performances of four favourites from his repertoire: Brahms’ *Academic Festival Overture* and *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* (previously released); Schumann’ *Symphony No. 4 in D Minor*; then Stravinsky’s 1919 suite from *The Firebird*. These stereo recordings were made in the Masonic Auditorium in Cleveland in October, 1955 and sound as fresh and real as yesterday – flawless and excitingly present.

The first starts off with Bach’s *Orchestral Suite No.3*, then Smetana’s *The Moldau* and from Strauss, *Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks* all

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GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL MESSIAH

Ensemble Caprice
Ensemble Vocal Arts-Québec

Karina Gauvin, soprano
Matthias Maute, conductor

FACTOR Canada

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from Christmas Eve, 1954. These are monaural recordings that are sonically a few notches down from the second disc, but still exemplary music making from the podium. The fourth work is from the same stereo sessions as all the items on the second disc, an exuberant Mozart *Symphony No.39 K543*.

The stereo recordings in this set are sonically exemplary thanks to the producer and restorer Lani Spahr, himself an oboist whose restorations are to be heard on many labels. **George Szell – The Forgotten Recordings (Ariadne 5011-2 2CDs naxosdirect.com/search/ariadne+5011-2)**



On the evening of October 12, 1986 the audience in Toronto's Roy Thomson Hall heard the **State Symphony Orchestra of USSR** conducted by **Yevgeni Svetlanov**. The highlight of that concert was surely the Brahms *Double Concerto for Violin, Cello and Orchestra*, played by the husband and wife duo of **Oleg Kagan**, violin and **Natalia Gutman**, cello. The *Double Concerto* is a

particular favourite, so I am familiar with many of the recordings and after enjoying this new release of that very concert performance it is quite clear, at least to me, that this is one of the most sensitive, where appropriate, and one of the boldest. Kagan and Gutman, two of the finest Russian musicians of all time, were wisely selected for the orchestra's international world tour. The interplay between them often has an elegance not to be heard elsewhere. Svetlanov's crack touring orchestra supports them perfectly and ever so gently where called for.

Kagan was a most highly rated and respected violinist and chamber music musician and was often heard with Sviatoslav Richter and other virtuosi. He died in Munich in 1990. Gutman plays on and is one of the world's most esteemed musicians, often referred to as "The Queen of the Cello." She is also to be heard in the other work on this CD. It is the Shostakovich *Cello Concerto No.1 in E-flat Major Op.107* played by Gutman with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alexander Lazarev. The performance is from January 26, 1980 in Amsterdam, predating the above by six years. Gutman made an amazing reputation for her performances of this concerto which she also recorded a few times. This live performance demonstrates her authority and electrifying musicality. **Legendary Treasures: Oleg Kagan & Natalia Gutman Live, Vol.1 (Doremi DHR-8120 naxosdirect.com/search/dhr-8120).**

Edmund Kurtz was one of the most accomplished cellists of the 20th century. He was born in St. Petersburg in 1908. The family moved to Germany in 1917. He debuted in Rome in 1924 and Berlin



in 1925. After solo concerts throughout Europe he became principal cellist in the Bremen Opera House then principal cellist in the Prague German Opera Orchestra under George Szell. Kurtz emigrated to the United States and became first cello in the Chicago Symphony. He was also part of the Spivakovsky Trio with brothers Tossy and Jascha. He resigned from the orchestra in

1944 to pursue a solo career. In 1945 Toscanini chose Kurtz for the Dvořák *Cello Concerto*. He made recordings with William Kapell and Artur Balsam and others and gave many premieres including the first American performance of the Khachaturian concerto under Koussevitzky. Kurtz's playing was notable for a creamy, lush sound, focused and authoritative. The very first notes out of your speakers will confirm all the above and continue to do so through these three cello sonatas: Prokofiev's *C Major Op.119* and Chopin's *G Minor, Op.65*, are both accompanied by Artur Balsam; then the infamously difficult Kodály *Sonata for Solo Cello, Op.8* that Kurtz makes sound engaging and effortless. **Legendary Treasures: Edmund Kurtz, Volume 1 (Doremi DHR-8109 naxosdirect.com/search/dhr-8109).** ●

OTHER FINE VINTAGES

From the Heart & Soul
Dianne Brooks
Panda Digital (pandadigital.com)



► Take my hand, won't you, as we journey back to a golden era in Toronto's musical history when session work was plentiful, television shows hired actual live bands and club gigs were multiple-night affairs. It's a time spoken of with misty-eyed fondness by older musicians and singers struggling to make a living in music these days. Dianne Brooks was at the centre of it all as a

first-call studio singer and versatile lead and backing vocalist. Brooks recorded and toured with a long list of top performers of the day such as Thad Jones, Count Basie, Dusty Springfield and Anne Murray and was also a member of the legendary 16-piece group, Dr. Music, led by the equally legendary keyboardist, Doug Riley.

It's the late singer's solo musical ventures in R&B and jazz, however, that are represented on this new release by producer Andrew Melzer.

New to the Listening Room

"Stimme aus der Ferne" - A Voice From the Distance
Andrea Botticelli 40

Sound Visionaries
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Christina Petrowska Quilico 42

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Read the reviews here, then visit
thewholenote.com/listening

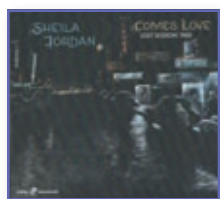
Melzer is a songwriter, musician and engineer who unearthed recordings from 1983 of Brooks' live gig at George's Spaghetti House, a hub for jazz in Toronto back in the day. Three tracks are included here – two of which are Gershwin standards – that feature Riley on piano, Tom Szczesniak on bass and Bob McLaren on drums. The first five tracks on the album were from two different sessions in L.A. from 1978 and 1980 and are very much of the era. A pop/R&B blend, they showcase the singer's strong vocals and the keyboards of Grammy Award-winner, Don Grusin. My favourite of the five is Brooks' funky take on Paul McCartney's *I'm Carrying*. If you're a fan of Brooks, or even looking for a little nostalgia trip, add *From the Heart & Soul* to your collection.

Cathy Riches

Comes Love (Lost Session 1960)

Sheila Jordan

Capri Records 74164-2 (caprirecords.com)



► At age 92, iconic jazz vocalist, composer and NEA Jazz Master, Sheila Jordan has just released a lost treasure – capturing the young artist prior to her notable 1963 Blue Note Records debut, *Portrait of Sheila*. Originally recorded on June 10, 1960 in NYC, this gem has been insightfully produced for a contemporary jazz audience by Thomas Burns. Sadly, Jordan has no clear recollec-

tion of the record date itself, or the personnel, but it's likely that it includes members of her then-trio of John Knapp or Herbie Nichols on piano, Ziggy Willman on drums and bassists Gene Perlman or Steve Swallow (with whom she later developed her trademark vocal bop and bass duo).

Throughout the recording, Jordan's warm, engaging voice resonates with youth, but is also imbued with a certain melancholy worldliness, as well as the superb vocal technique for which she would become known. On Ellington's *It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got that Swing*, Jordan bops and bobs and weaves her way through the gauntlet with tight, supple accompaniment from her trio. The inclusion of Wolf and Landesman's *Ballad of the Sad Young Men* is an eccentric choice for this collection, but Jordan more than compensates for her possible naïveté, with her incredible empathy, heart and soul.

Another treat on this fine project includes a laudable vocal jazz version of Harold Arlen and Truman Capote's *Sleeping Bee* – performed here with the original verse, segueing into a lilting, swinging arrangement. Jordan's interpretation of Rogers and Hart's

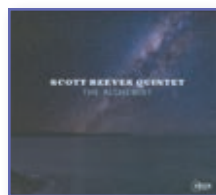
Glad to be Unhappy is also a triumph, as well as a masterclass in how to perform a ballad with integrity and creativity, while fully utilizing the colours and timbre of the vocal instrument as well as collaborating (sans ego) with the other musicians. Magnificent!

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

The Alchemist

Scott Reeves Quintet

Origin Records ORIGIN 82826 (originarts.com)



► During the COVID shutdown, highly regarded NYC-based multi-instrumentalist, composer and jazz educator, Scott Reeves, began to plumb the depths of his own archives and discovered a rare artifact – a previously un-released “live” recording featuring his never-recorded quintet, originally presented in concert at Harlem's City College of New York in May

of 2005. It was with the magic and skill of recording/mixing engineer Brian Montgomery that audio problems were solved, and this new CD (originally meant only as an archival recording) was rescued from oblivion. The album features five original compositions by Reeves, who also performs here on alto flugelhorn, the archaic alto valve trombone and electronics. The skilled quintet includes Russ Spiegel on guitar, Mike Holober on keyboards, bassist Howard Britz and drummer Andy Watson.

The opener is the sinuous, exotic *New Bamboo*. Written around an ancient Turco-Greek-inspired Phrygian vamp, this timeless composition invokes our primal emotions and also embraces contemporary spontaneity with the brilliant soloing of Holober and cosmic symmetry of all the players. The gorgeous *Shapeshifter* utilizes Gil Evans-ish, 12-tone modalities to explore the sonic relationships between the musicians, their instruments and the ensemble itself.

The title track is outstanding – a funky-cool, incendiary device, dedicated to Miles Davis, whom Reeves has dubbed “the master alchemist of space and time.” Holober and Watson shine on this very *au courant*-sounding track, that could have easily been recorded last night and Reeves' use of electronics is tasteful and musical. Especially magical is the sumptuous ballad, *Remembrances*. Reeves' work on the alto flugelhorn is absolutely stunning and incredibly evocative – as is the inspired soloing of Spiegel on guitar. A masterful jazz recording in every sense!

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke



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OPERA ATELIER'S ANGEL

WHAT: Oct 28 7:00: Opera Atelier. *Angel*. A 70-minute film fully staged and filmed at St. Lawrence Hall, with music by Edwin Huizinga, Christopher Bagan, Jean-Philippe Rameau, William Boyce, Matthew Locke, and Max Richter, and featuring Measha Brueggergosman, Mireille Asselin, Meghan Lindsay, sopranos; Colin Ainsworth, tenor; Jesse Blumberg, baritone; and others; Marshall Pynkoski, stage director; Jeannette Lajeunesse Zingg, choreographer; Artists of Atelier Ballet; Nathaniel Dett Chorale; Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra; and David Fallis, conductor. www.OperaAtelier.com.

WHEN: Single tickets went on sale Oct 1, and the production will be available until November 12.



Measha Brueggergosman and Edwin Huizinga, in September 2019, published in 2502

Versailles 2017: We've followed the gestation of *Angel* since its earliest beginnings as a piece titled *Inception*, featuring violinist and composer Edwin Huizinga and dancer Tyler Gledhill, commissioned by OA for their Versailles tour in 2017 and reprised, in an expanded version, in February 2018 in the Royal Ontario Museum's Samuel Hall Currelly Gallery.

Jennifer Parr (who had attended the Versailles performance in her capacity as Opera Atelier fight director), interviewed Huizinga and wrote about it for our February 2019 edition:

*When I tell people about Opera Atelier's ongoing **The Angel Speaks** project, I always begin with when I saw the very first performance of its first installment, in May 2017. I was sitting at the back of the Royal Chapel at the Palace of Versailles ... suddenly there appeared high up on the balcony above, the dramatic figure of what appeared to be a Viking angel playing an exquisite melody on solo violin. This beautiful mystical thread of music then seemed to bring forth, and become tangibly present in, the figure of a dancer (Tyler Gledhill) – another face of the angel – on the ground level with the singers and audience, a figure in search of something or someone...*

The work was invited back to Versailles in December 2018.



BRUCE ZINGER

Mireille Asselin as the Virgin Mary with Tyler Gledhill as the Angel Gabriel in the Royal Chapel at Versailles (December 2018) with Edwin Huizinga (left) leading the music.

October 2020: *Inception/Angel* is now part of a larger, fully staged production titled *Something Rich and Strange*, with soprano Measha Brueggergosman now on board. David Perlman interviewed Huizinga and Brueggergosman together, from Brueggergosman's Halifax home, where they were working together on Huizinga's musical setting of the Rilke poem, to be sung by Brueggergosman, that was at the heart of the latest iteration of the piece, and wrote in October issue:

I'd been wanting to talk to Huizinga and Brueggergosman for a while about [it], but had been expecting to have to speak with each of them separately, so it was an unexpected bonus to find out that he would be flying to Nova Scotia on the Monday "to finish a project with our amazing fearless Canadian soprano Measha Brueggergosman." "Finish the project" sounds optimistic to me. For one thing, Huizinga and Opera Atelier (OA) have been exploring the 24-line poem at the heart of the project ("Annunciation to Mary" by Bohemian/Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke) for well over two years.

Which brings us to now: Each iteration of *Angel* so far has been coloured and shaped by obstacles transformed into opportunities – choices of medium dictated by shifting pandemic-related circumstances. Intriguingly, with social distancing requirements and public health guidelines having shifted again, OA has an opportunity to add yet another dimension to the shape-shifting show: simultaneously with the 7pm October 28 launch of the stream, there will be a movie presentation of the stream at the TIFF Lightbox, turning the evening, for those attending, into the kind of live, collective event we are all so hungry for.

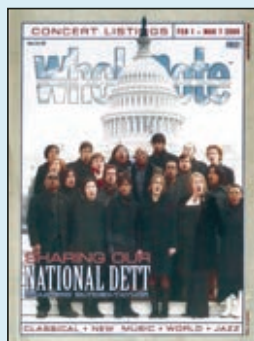
Angel is dedicated to the memory of Tafelmusik's founder, Jeanne Lamon.

Jack Buell

"Glad to see
you back,"
someone said.
But we don't
subscribe to that
because ...



BRAINERD BLYDEN-TAYLOR and The NATHANIEL DETT CHORALE



Funny how an ensemble can slip off one's radar for a while, then, all of a sudden seem to show up in several unrelated contexts all at once, when really they never went away.

Front and centre on our February 2009 cover, The Nathaniel Dett Chorale performs on the steps of the Canadian Embassy overlooking the beginning of U.S. President Barack Obama's Inaugural parade. The choir's founder and conductor, Brainerd Blyden-Taylor talked about

the founding of the Chorale in the story: *"The idea was to do more than just sing notes well. There was also a social component to it – to build bridges of caring, understanding and appreciation through the medium of music. And we wanted to do that within what is perceived to be the larger black community. When I started it, I decided that I didn't want to name the group after myself – I wanted a name that would honour black Canadian heritage somehow."*

In our February 2019 edition in a story titled *Celebrating Jessye Norman | 12th Glenn Gould Prize Laureate* we reported that the Nathaniel Dett Chorale would perform three pieces at the gala concert in Norman's honour, and chatted with Blyden-Taylor (for whom Norman had long been part of his inspirational musical frame of reference:

"My consciousness of her goes back to my youth in Barbados in the mid-60s" he says, "and even more so after I came to Toronto in 1973 to be musical director at my uncle's church. She was an ongoing part of my listening in terms of a sound ideal in terms of performance of spirituals, in my work with the Orpheus Choir, and workshops I was asked to do across the country, helping other choirs with interpretation of spirituals. You'd have to say she was one of those voices that were pivotal in terms of reading of the spirituals."

Now, "all of a sudden"

- as noted above The Chorale features ("heard but not seen") in Opera Atelier's *Angel*;
- Nathaniel Dett's *The Chariot Jubilee* is one of two major works on the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir's season-opening concert, and Brainerd Blyden-Taylor, with the Chorale returns to TMC in April for the third concert of the TMC season;
- Icing on the cake: December 4 at 8pm Orchestra Toronto presents *Great Joy II: An Indigo Christmas with the Nathaniel Dett Chorale*. Blyden-Taylor directs, with Corey Butler on piano. Available on demand, but also live at George Weston Recital Hall, in the Meridian Arts Centre (formerly Toronto Centre for the Arts).

David Perlman



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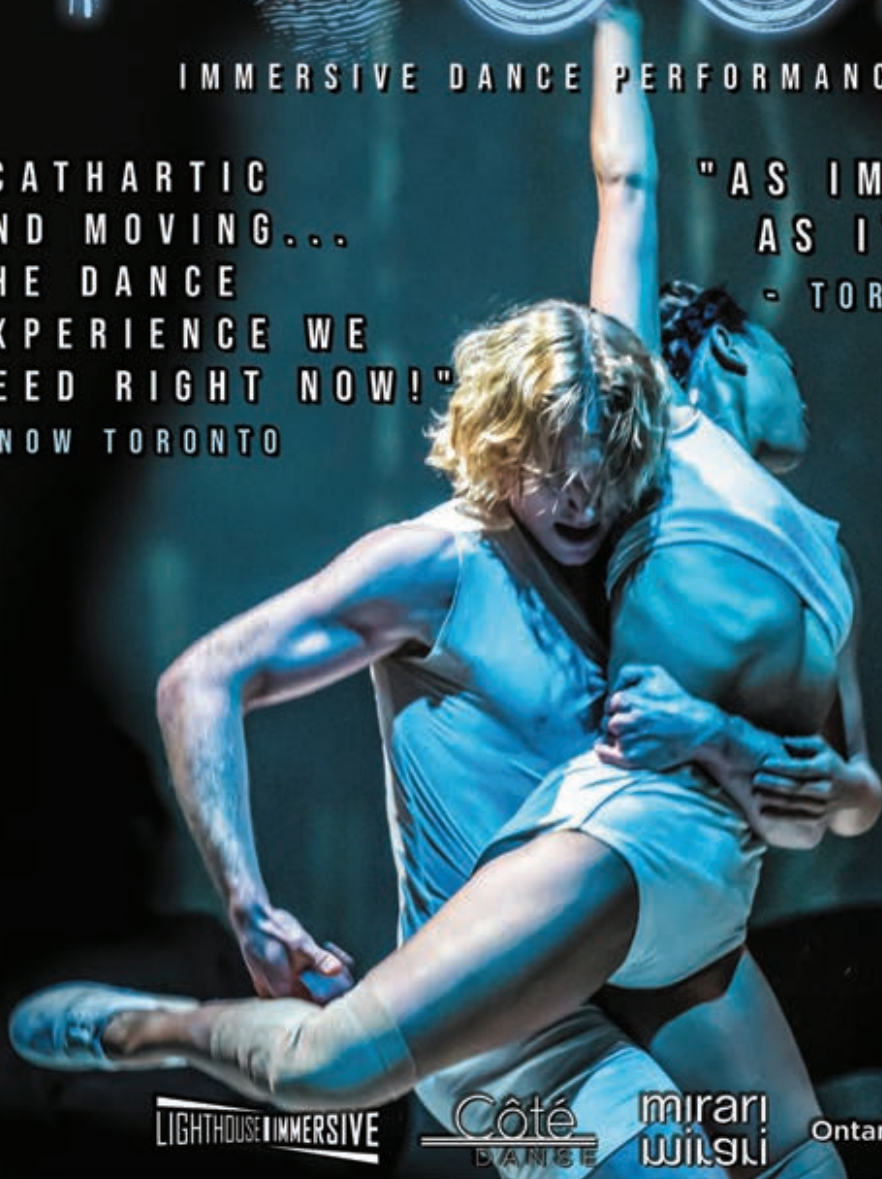
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