

the WholeNote[™]



VOLUME 27 NO 6
APRIL 15 - MAY 27, 2022

MUSIC!

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Isata and Sheku Kanneh-Mason

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Christina Volpini
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Alex Pauk – conductor

Video art projections by Moira Ness
Lobby art exhibit of still shots from the videos

*World Premiere **Canadian Premiere

Act 4 Thursday June 9

Sofia Gubaidulina
*Fachwerk***
for accordion, percussion and strings

Alison Yun-Fei Jiang
*Sanctuary**

Thomas Adès
Polaris

Michael Bridge – accordion
Alex Pauk – conductor

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The WholeNote™

VOLUME 27 NO 6
APRIL 15 - MAY 27, 2022

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

subscriptions@thewholenote.com

\$64 + HST (8 issues)

single copies and back issues \$8

*international - additional postage applies

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the WholeNote

Volume 27 No 6 | April 15 - May 27, 2022

ON OUR COVER



PHOTO: JAKE TURNEY

"I think when you grow up surrounded by music, you understand it. Our house was full of so much richness in that sense. We grew up with music always there. I think it really does shape you. I feel everyone should have that - whether or not you want to grow up to be a musician, you should have music in the household."

— Isata Kanneh-Mason

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THAT CHOIR

[silence and solitude]

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MARGARET THOMPSON, KATIE THURMAN, AND BEN WRIGHT.

WORKS/ARRANGEMENTS BY: KATHLEEN ALLAN, STEPHEN BARTON,
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VOLUME 27 NO 6
APRIL 15 - MAY 27, 2022

IN THIS EDITION

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Stuart Broomer, Paul Ennis, Jennifer Parr,
David Perlman, Colin Story, Matthew Whitfield
CD Reviewers

Larry Beckwith, Stuart Broomer, Max Christie,
Sam Dickinson, Raul da Gama, Janos Gardonyi,
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David Olds, Ted Parkinson, Ivana Popovic,
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UPCOMING DATES AND DEADLINES

Weekly Online Listings Updates
6pm every Tuesday
for weekend posting

Volume 27 No. 7, May 20 - June 30, 2022

Publication Dates

Tuesday, May 17 (digital)
Friday, May 20 (print)

Print edition listings deadline

6pm Tuesday May 3, 2022

Print advertising, reservation deadline

6pm Tuesday, May 3, 2022

Classifieds deadline

6pm Saturday May 7, 2022

Printed in Canada

Couto Printing & Publishing Services

Circulation Statement - March 4, 2022
8,000 printed & distributed
Canadian Publication Product
Sales Agreement 1263846
ISSN 14888-8785
WHOLENOTE
Publications Mail Agreement
#40026682

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FOR OPENERS

Here's some of what we are looking forward to



Playoff basketball and baseball back in town: The chance just to be unabashed fans of the game, bleacher creatures cheering whenever we goddamn well feel like it – leaving the game exhilarated enough, win or lose, to grab a couple of gloves and toss a ball around, or shoot some hoops *ourselves*, dreaming “nothing but net” as the ball, oh so close!, clunks off the rim.

Bringing some of the same engagement and freedom of expression back to the concert hall: maybe even a distinction, like the one emerging between full capacity concerts for the damn-the-torpedoes” maskless and the “is it safe to come out?” masked – between “You should know that if you clap after the third movement of Tchaik 6 the program says I am allowed to kill you” versus the “whoohoo!” outbursts of some baseball-loving jazz fan.

And in either case, leaving the hall exhilarated enough to open the piano lid or dusty instrument case as we plunk or pick or blow away.

Clarity: it's not altogether clear to me what our provincial government's medical talking heads mean these days when they say they are “still following the science”: now that my beloved flip phone has bitten the digital dust, I can smartly inform you that a google search for “science of elections” (in quotes) yields 344,000 results in .64 seconds.

Music on street corners and the resumption of “Cafe TO” (street-encroachment for patios from spring to fall): not just as a pandemic-related exception to the rule but (our older and wiser sister-city Montreal has known this for decades) as part of how northern cities need to breathe in and out depending on the weather.

Not throwing the virtual baby out with the pandemic bathwater: yes, embracing the return of live musical encounters, planned and spontaneous, indoor and outdoor, intimate and spectacular, on porches and street corners and grassy banks, in backyards and parks and festivals. Using all the virtual skills we've acquired over the past couple of years, but *not just to reach the temporarily locked-down audiences who already knew us*. Instead, once music makers are throwing sounds through real air to live audiences (no matter how large or small), to *simultaneously* make it possible for audiences we don't yet know (shut in, far away, unaware, without the wherewithal) to see the backs of our heads as we listen. And to feel right there.

Trust me on this: I would sacrifice a dozen fancy cross-fades, even audio quality, for the pleasure of seeing the back of a head in the frame, even the shiny back of the head of an oldie like me – just for the pleasure of proof that what I am watching is live.

Exception to the rule (still on the topic of shiny backs of heads): Unless of course I recognized it as the back of the head of the gent in front of me who, at a big event the other night, stiffened so visibly I heard his spine crack when the person asked to “do the land acknowledgment” (I could already see his eyes rolling, right through the back of his head) uttered the words “stolen land.” Funny how we recognize it when it's happening in the present, right before our eyes but far away. Yet we won't look back in time that way, especially if it's home truth.

I am looking forward to the day when we embrace the act of acknowledging the land as effortlessly as we accept giving thanks for food around a table.

publisher@thewholenote.com

ATMA Classique

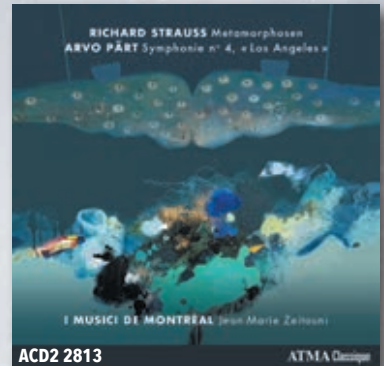


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A HOUSE FULL OF RICHNESS

Sheku and Isata Kanneh-Mason

PAUL ENNIS

The fearlessness it takes



JAKE TURNER

Cellist **Sheku Kanneh-Mason's** meteoric rise began when his passionate playing won him the 2016 BBC Young Musician Competition. Then he upped his fame quotient when he performed three short pieces at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle for an audience of more than two billion viewers. Now, he and his older sister, pianist Isata (b. 1996), both of whom are acclaimed Decca recording stars, will be making their much-anticipated Toronto debut on May 6 at Koerner Hall.

The young cellist (b. 1999) told *The Violin Channel* in November, 2016 that he has been very lucky to be surrounded by his family. "My six siblings, all of whom are also classical musicians, have been there to support me, give me advice, perform with me and generally keep me concentrating on the music. Coming from such a supportive musical family has been a great strength and has always made my approach to music a collaborative one. Although I love solo playing, I feel that it is in the interaction between soloist and accompanist, or within a chamber group, orchestra and concerto soloist that music comes alive."

"When I was offered the recording contract with Decca Classics, it was a dream come true. I have always wanted to inspire a more diverse and younger classical music audience around the world. As the first Black winner of BBC Young Musician, I hope to inspire other young people to take up classical music and, even if they don't see it as a career, to become involved and to come and listen. My involvement with Sistema, London Music Masters and Chineke! Orchestra has strengthened my belief that classical music should be for everyone." Giving a child an instrument is giving them a voice and their enthusiasm is great to see, he said.

In the fall of 2021, when *Muse*, their first recording as a duo was released, Sheku and Isata spoke with *The Big Issue* about the music that made an impression on them growing up. Sheku named Jacqueline du Pré playing Elgar (with Daniel Barenboim). As a child,



JAMES HOLE

Sheku and Isata Kanneh-Mason

he tried to imitate her movements, of course not making the same sounds. "I was moved by how directly and honestly she played," he said. In an interview from *In the Green Room* in June 2021 he said that the Elgar concerto was probably the piece of music he's listened to the most since he was a child and the piece that inspired him to play the cello. "It's one of those pieces that makes me cry every time – it's magical." (Torontonians take note: he will return here on January 20 and 21, 2023, to play the Elgar concerto with TSO conductor emeritus, Peter Oundjian.)

Bob Marley also struck a chord with him: "He seemed such a generous, warm and loving soul," Sheku says; he has recorded striking new versions of Marley's *No Woman, No Cry* and *Redemption Song*.

In the spring of 2021, Sheku was interviewed by Scottish violinist Nicola Benedetti for the Benedetti Foundation (available on YouTube). "I'm very relaxed and chill before a concert," Mason says, and she heartily agrees. They talk quite a bit about technique, the cellist saying he was grateful for being technically set up very well from the start with his early teachers. There is a nice moment in the interview, where he says he doesn't really love listening back to recordings of virtuosic passages (in his own playing), although he does admire the fearlessness it takes. Benedetti interjects: "I just want it on the record that your fast playing is very good." Sheku adds that he loved the childlike feeling he found in a recording of a trio he played in when he was about nine. "I like to return to that place even now after a period of intense playing," he said. His advice to aspiring musicians: "Always listen to as much music as possible – there is so much access to styles – so many recordings and videos to fascinate."

Deepening the colours of my game



ROBIN CLEWLEY

The WholeNote also reached out to Isata Kanneh-Mason, the eldest of the siblings, and she described the environment that led her and her brothers and sisters to become musicians.

"My parents both play the piano and there was always music in the house," she said. "From my third year I had recorder lessons and I learned



The Kanneh-Mason family. Back (l-r) Sheku, Aminata, Kadiatu, Braimah, Stuart and Jeneba. Front (l-r) Konya, Isata and Mariatu

more about music in a playful way. Not in a group, but one on one. From the age of six I took piano lessons [but] I can't really remember much about those first lessons. When I was about ten years old I was allowed to go to the Junior Academy in London to be taught by Patsy Toh. I do remember that I was quite nervous about that. But she was very sweet and told my parents that she really wanted to teach me. I studied at the Junior Academy until I was 18. I also studied violin until I was 13, after which I switched to the viola.

"But piano has always been my favourite instrument, [the one] that felt the most natural. I already knew that I wanted to be a pianist when I was eight years old, although I had no idea what that exactly entailed. If I had to force myself to play I would have hated it. I also had many other hobbies, such as running, reading, learning languages, watching movies and socializing with my siblings. I certainly wasn't glued to the piano."

The family of their father, Stuart Mason, came to the U.K. from Antigua; their mother, Kadiatu Kanneh, was born in Sierra Leone and grew up in Wales. After Isata, her parents had six more children, all of whom make music at a very high level. Did she feel the need to set an example for her younger siblings? "No, they all have their own personalities," she said. "It's really nice to have friends that you know you'll never lose, it's like a safety net that's always there."

Isata's later musical training was made possible in part by a grant from Elton John. She even played with him in his band once. "Elton John sponsors a number of students from the Royal Academy every year. A documentary was [being] made with him about young musicians and I was allowed to participate in it, that's how I met him. That documentary never materialized, but he was so enthusiastic that he paid my tuition, which was really nice."

The five eldest children have now all left the family's Nottingham home – Isata, herself, has been living in London for more than seven years. "During the first lockdown we were all suddenly back home. We thought it was just for a short time, but it turned out to be five months. It was a wonderful time in which we played together a lot. Playing chamber music is perhaps what I prefer to do."

And of course she also likes to play with other musicians. "I enjoy meeting new people musically, such as during the Highgate International Chamber Music Festival with cellist Ashok Klouda and oboist Nicholas Daniel. Very inspiring. I also go to Berlin about once a month for a class with Kirill Gerstein. I deepen the colours of my game with him and he opens my eyes to things I couldn't have seen on my own."



Penderecki String Quartet

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at 8 pm

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QUICK PICKS

She now forms a more or less official duo with Sheku. “My brother Braimah is a violinist and we sometimes play with him as a trio, but he also likes to play with his younger sisters Konya and Jeneba. Funny actually, for us our musical family life is the most normal thing in the world, there is nothing special about it. Only when Sheku was the first to become more famous did we become interested in us as a family.” Their participation in the popular TV show *Britain’s Got Talent* has also contributed to this. “We liked introducing classical music to a wider audience, I think a lot of people have seen that. But if we all make music at home, it’s really normal for us.”

Rachmaninoff is her favourite composer. “As a six-year-old I could listen to the CD with the second piano concerto [with Vladimir Ashkenazy] for hours. But I also liked to listen to Elgar’s cello concerto with Jacqueline du Pré and Beethoven’s violin concerto. And I was obsessed with *La Traviata*. I don’t go to the opera very often, but I think it’s fantastic. I like a lot of different things.”

As she told *The Big Issue* on October 18, 2021: “I think when you grow up surrounded by music, you understand it. Our house was full of so much richness in that sense. We grew up with music always there. I think it really does shape you. I feel everyone should have that – whether or not you want to grow up to be a musician, you should have music in the household.”

Sheku Kanneh-Mason and Isata Kanneh-Mason make their Toronto debut in Koerner Hall on May 6 at 8pm with a program that includes Beethoven’s *Cello Sonata No. 4 in C Major, op. 102, no. 1*; Shostakovich’s *Cello Sonata in D Minor, op. 40*; Frank Bridge’s *Sonata for Cello and Piano in D Minor*; and Britten’s *Cello Sonata in C Major, op. 65*.

Jan Lisiecki



CRISTOPHE KOSTLIN

AND BRIEFLY

Three questions for Jan Lisiecki

Jan Lisiecki has expanded his repertoire to include Prokofiev’s *Piano Concerto No.2* which TSO music director Gustavo Gimeno has paired with Tchaikovsky’s fervid *Symphony No.5*, April 22 to 24. Lisiecki was kind enough to answer three brief questions about it:

How long has Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No.2 been in your repertoire? What drew you to it? And Have you worked with Gustavo Gimeno previously?

JL: The first time I performed it was only in February of this year, and I have played it in three cities since. I am always curious to explore new musical worlds – a different “language”, so to speak – and this has been my portal to Prokofiev’s sphere. And yes: I have worked with Gustavo previously, in Luxembourg – and I am looking forward to meeting him once again in his new role!

Following his TSO appearance, on April 26, **Bravo Niagara! Festival of the Arts** hosts Lisiecki in a program titled “Jan Lisiecki: Poems of the Night” – a revelatory collection of Chopin’s *Nocturnes* and *Études Op.10*. Be prepared for some magical juxtapositions at FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, Robertson Theatre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines.

APR 28, 1:30PM: The Women’s Musical Club of Toronto’s season concludes with the Viano String Quartet, winner of the first prize in the 2019 Banff International String Quartet Competition. The program includes Borodin’s ravishing *String Quartet No.2* and Prokofiev’s *String Quartet No.2*, composed in 1942 after Prokofiev was evacuated to the southern Soviet Union, as the German army approached Moscow. Clearly stimulated by his new environment, he filled his string quartet with the exotic folk-songs, dance rhythms and harmonies of the region.

APR 28, 8PM: Music Toronto presents the Penderecki String Quartet, now in the third decade of an extraordinary career, having become one of the most celebrated chamber ensembles of their generation, performing a wide range of repertoire from classical to contemporary. Their Jane Mallett Theatre concert features works by Haydn, Mozetich, Penderecki and Dvořák.

MAY 1, 2:30PM: Versatile Canadian violinist Mark Fewer leads the Niagara Symphony Orchestra strings in Vivaldi’s beloved *The Four Seasons*. Then the full orchestra led by Bradley Thachuk takes the stage for Respighi’s *The Pines of Rome*. The world premiere of Kevin Lau’s *Concert Suite No. 2* from his ballet, *Le Petit Prince*, offers a tantalizing taste of the timeless French fable.



BO HUANG

Mark Fewer

MAY 8, 8PM: French cellist Gautier Capuçon returns to Toronto (with French pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet). This will be his third visit to the Koerner Hall stage since two previous sold-out concerts with Yuja Wang and Jérôme Ducros. The appealing program includes Schumann’s *Fantasiestücke, Op. 73*; Brahms’ *Sonata for Cello and Piano No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 38*; Debussy’s *Sonata for Cello in D Minor*; and Shostakovich’s *Sonata for Cello and Piano in D Minor, Op. 40*.

MAY 15, 7PM: INNERchamber Ensemble presents “Theme & Evolutions.” Common ground is the starting point for musical fusion. Using Bach’s *Goldberg Variations* as a starting point, the performers will tackle the theme of connection. Graham Hargrove, percussion; Daniel Ramjattan, guitar; Joe Phillips, bass; Andrew Chung, violin. Revival House, 70 Brunswick St., Stratford. Pre-show 6:30pm. A light meal is available for patrons in Stratford. LIVE & LIVESTREAM

MAY 21, 8PM: Kindred Spirits Orchestra. “Love and Turmoil.” Inspired by the 16th-century fresco by Raphael, Hindemith paints his own endearing musical picture depicting the myth of *Amor and Psyché*. Internationally renowned award-winning Spanish-Bulgarian pianist *Ludmil Angelov* takes centre stage with Rachmaninoff’s colourful and jazz-flavoured *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No.4*. Written during the years of postwar Stalinist Russia, Prokofiev’s *Symphony No.6* is a tragically ominous reflection of society and the composer’s own inner turmoil. Kristian Alexander, conductor. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. \$15-\$40. LIVE, ONLINE OR RECORDED

Paul Ennis is the managing editor of The WholeNote.



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season
2022-2023



Kristian Alexander



Bartosz Żurkowski



Michael Berec



Antonia de Wolfe



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THE FORBIDDEN SYMPHONY

Saturday, October 22, 2022 at 8 pm
Concert season opening night gala

J. Strauss Jr., *Die Fledermaus* overture
Lalo, Concerto for cello and orchestra
Grieg, Symphony in C minor

LOCOMOTIVES, BUTTERFLIES AND PUPPETS

Saturday, December 10, 2022 at 8 pm

Honegger, *Pacific 231*
Zhanhao and Gang, Violin concerto
Stravinsky, *Petrushka* (1947)

THE SPORT OF MUSIC

Saturday, February 11, 2023 at 8 pm

Honegger, *Rugby*
Stravinsky, Concerto for violin and orchestra
Shostakovich, Symphony No. 4

MATTHIAS THE PAINTER

Saturday, March 11, 2023 at 8 pm

Stravinsky, *Fireworks*
R. Strauss, *Burlesque* for piano and orchestra
Hindemith, Symphony "Mathis der Maler"

THE FOUR TEMPERAMENTS

Saturday, April 1, 2023 at 8 pm

Hindemith, *Theme and Variations*
Górecki, Concerto for harpsichord
Honegger, Symphony No. 2

FERVOR, FLAIR AND FANDANGO

Saturday, May 20, 2023 at 8 pm

Korsakov, *Capriccio Espagnol*
Tchaikovsky, Piano concerto No. 2
Bruckner, Symphony No. 2

A SCOTTISH FANTASY

Friday, June 23, 2023 at 8 pm

PROKOFIEV AND BRUCH

Saturday, June 24, 2023 at 8 pm

Prokofiev, *Russian Overture*
Bruch, *Schottische Fantasie*
Prokofiev, Symphony No. 7



Rachel Mercer



Jing Ye



Emmanuelle Sievers



Alexander Panizza



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DAVID BARBOUR

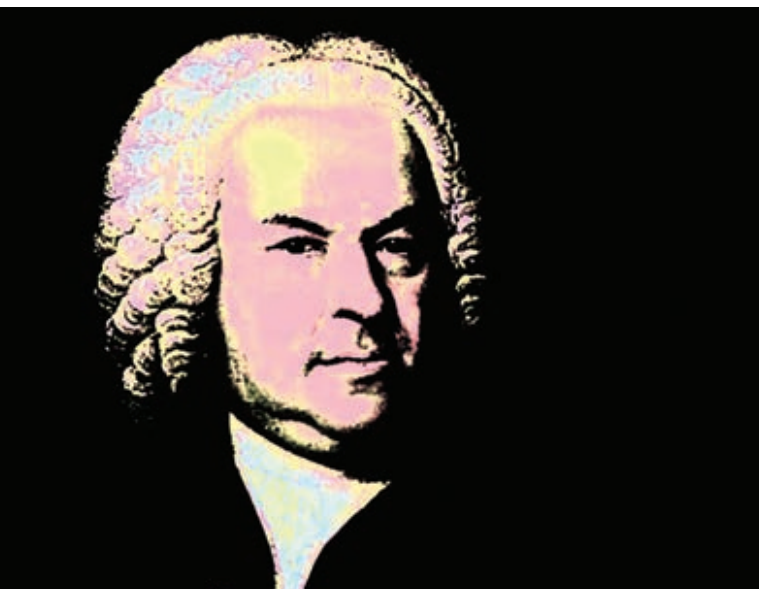
John Butt

"There are several possible strands here," John Butt contends. "One is that Bach was so influential on later composers, even if you don't immediately hear that influence." He describes Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin as successive inheritors of Bach's innovations, incorporating and expanding on Bach's musical developments. "The other side of

the coin," Butt continues, "is that Bach's attitude as a composer was to try and absorb everything he knew about music from before him [and] intuit what we now call tonality. He is there at the point at which that system, which so many musical traditions are still using, was invented."

"The final strand," Butt continues, "is that, when you hear many of Bach's pieces of music, he gives you a sense of what the norm is [...], yet he is always pushing that norm right to the edge, expressively, intellectually and physically. This inspires a sense of confidence because the system is communicated very clearly by the way he writes his music, both showing the system and trying to subvert and extend it. This gives the listener a sense of comfort, as if the music knows what it is doing, even at its most daring, in a way that no composer does."

A renowned and respected Bach scholar, Butt is the director of the Dunedin Consort, holds the Gardiner Chair of Music at the University of Glasgow, and is an extraordinarily accomplished harpsichordist, organist and clavichordist. Most notably, in the context of this story, a special visit from this legendary European performer and lecturer will be a highlight of the upcoming three-day Toronto Bach Festival as it returns to the live concert stage after two years of acknowledged worthwhile and valuable virtual performances.



As with so many other arts organizations around the world, the 2020 global pandemic necessitated myriad changes in the way that the Bach Festival operated. Nevertheless, Abberger and company persevered, demonstrating their belief that Bach's compositions are able to connect people and communities, whether virtually or in-person, and using their own love of Bach and his music to reassure us that we are not alone, to rekindle our sense of joy, and to show us the way forward.

I had the privilege of sitting down with both John Abberger and John Butt to discuss this year's Bach Festival and gain some insight into its planned performers and performances. Here's what audiences should look forward to in May.

Day 1: May 13

To celebrate the first year of in-person concerts since 2020, Abberger has crafted a set of programs that are joyful and exciting, wide-ranging in scope and scale and which provide a comprehensive overview of Bach's compositional variety. The season-opening "Brilliant Brandenburg" on May 13 contains three noteworthy works: the *Concerto for Flute, Violin and Harpsichord*; the inimitable *Brandenburg Concerto No. 1*; and, perhaps most interestingly, the *Concerto for Oboe, BWV 1056*. This concerto, which is most frequently presented with a harpsichord soloist, is itself possibly Bach's own arrangement of an earlier violin concerto and will be presented in Abberger's own arrangement with the oboe as featured instrument. "I like to joke that we've never heard 70% of what Bach wrote," Abberger says. "Part of my objective with the Toronto Bach Festival is to enrich everyone's understanding of Bach by playing both familiar and unfamiliar works." This latter piece, although unfamiliar to many, will both entice and enthrall audiences with its depth and instrumental virtuosity.

Day 2: May 14

On May 14, John Butt takes control of the superb Karl Wilhelm-built mechanical-action organ at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, located right in the heart of downtown Toronto, for a one-hour, all-Bach concert. Choosing only a small portion of Bach's enormous output for organ is a programming challenge, and Butt's approach is as comprehensive as it is concise: "I try to combine pieces which are quite well known, and pieces which are less well known, and to show the variety of genre within Bach's organ music," he says. Works for this concert include the dramatically orchestral *Prelude and Fugue in A Minor* and *Passacaglia in C Minor*, as well as the chamber-style *Trio Sonata No. 5 in C Major*, "one of the most modern, up-to-date works from Bach's own period" and a selection of chorales from the *Clavierübung* publication, an immense collection intended to engage and challenge listeners through its sincerity, beauty, and theological depth.



John Abberger

A staple of the Toronto music scene since 2016, the Toronto Bach Festival was founded by internationally-recognized Bach authority, oboist John Abberger, to perform the music of J.S. Bach through historically informed performances that engage the wide diversity of Toronto audiences, bringing together some of the world's best scholars, performers and interpreters

in an annual celebration of one of Western music's greatest musical minds. "Why is Bach's music so wonderful?" Abberger asks (rhetorically). "To me, we will never quite get to the kernel of why his music speaks to us as humans. It doesn't matter who you are, or what culture you come from – and we live in a wonderful, multicultural city here – [Bach's] music can bring us together as a community because it unites us around our common humanity."



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The Karl Wilhelm-built mechanical-action organ at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Toronto

Also on May 14 is a two-part complete performance of the *Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin*. Featuring violinists Julia Wedman, Patricia Ahern, Valerie Gordon and Cristina Zacharias, these two concerts will showcase the heights of the Baroque violin and some of its most demanding repertoire. Described by Abberger as “intense” and “heavy,” yet featuring a wide range of characters and affects, these drama-laden works are some of Bach’s most sublime and ingenious writing, demonstrating his incredible skill, not only as a contrapuntalist and dramatist, but also in his understanding of the violin and its capabilities.

Day 3: May 15

The 2022 Bach Festival experience continues May 15 with an afternoon public lecture by Butt titled “Bach the Dramatist”, in which attendees will dive deep into Bach’s dramatic writing in his oratorio settings, particularly in relation to the Easter and Ascension oratorios, which will be presented in concert later that day. Bach’s ability to develop ideas, manipulate motifs and convey intense and passionate emotions through musical means transcends time, and continues to resound with contemporary audiences. Butt’s lecture will undoubtedly give insight into the “why” and “how” that happens, via the scores that will be realized later that day.

This year’s Festival concludes with complete performances, led by Butt, of the Easter and Ascension oratorios. The *Easter Oratorio*, complete with trumpets, timpani and a joyful dance rhythm running throughout, was first presented on Easter Sunday in 1725 with an opening that pierced the dark mood of the end of the Easter Holy Week. Beginning with an overture that, according to Abberger, “is one of Bach’s greatest orchestral creations,” this large scale work will feature choir, orchestra and legendary tenor Charles Daniels. Also on the program is Bach’s *Ascension Oratorio*, a compilation of several biblical sources, free poetry and chorales, which was first performed in 1735. With expansive choral movements and enthralling instrumental writing, this pairing of works is guaranteed to excite everyone in attendance, whether they be Bach neophytes or seasoned early music veterans.

How to Listen

The Toronto Bach Festival is live and in-person this year, with all concerts and events taking place at Eastminster United Church on the Danforth. (The single exception is John Butt’s solo recital at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian, chosen for its high-quality, tracker-action pipe organ.) Tickets are available for individual events as well as comprehensive Festival passes, which provides access to all performances and the “Bach the Dramatist” lecture.

When discussing whether to take in the entire Festival or selecting individual performances, Abberger says that the Festival is designed as a comprehensive series of events. He encourages people “to take in the whole [...] Festival as a weekend experience.” This is not a mandatory requirement, of course, but by doing so, concertgoers will receive a thorough and wide-ranging overview of Bach and his music, including the explosive energy of the oratorios, the drama and range



Eastminster United Church, Toronto

of the organ works, and the incomparable beauty of the solo violin and orchestral material.

At a time when the world is slowly emerging from a prolonged period of isolation, only to find ourselves in a time fraught with global conflict, heightened stress, and individual and societal anxieties, events such as the Toronto Bach Festival, with its world-class roster of performers and opportunities for collective gathering will play a vital role in reestablishing the community, togetherness and “common humanity” characteristic of healthy city life. All worthy goals, and along the way you will be opening yourself to some of the most sublime music ever written. **O**

Matthew Whitfield is a Toronto-based harpsichordist and organist.

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WOMEN FROM SPACE

Redefining the sonic landscape

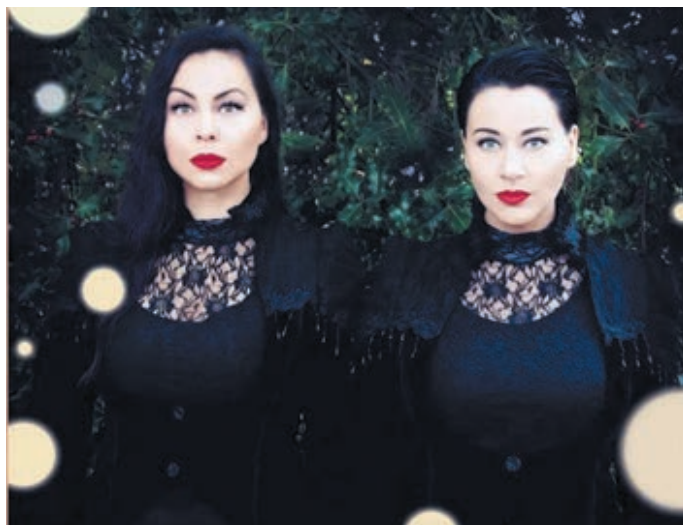
BY STUART BROOMER



Women from Space founder/organizers Bea Labikova (left) and Kayla Milmine

First launched in 2019 just a week before the COVID-19 lockdown, the event highlights many of the ways in which women are expanding and redefining the sonic landscape, shifting any remaining boundaries between genres and fusing them into new forms. Last year, in full lockdown, founder/organizers Kayla Milmine and Bea Labikova made available an innovative three-dimensional projection box that allowed home viewers

Women from Space is a very special festival, highlighting creativity across a diverse range of music and mixed-media work, often improvisatory, sometimes electronic, scheduled each year to coincide with International Women's Day weekend.



PIQSIQ

to watch the festival in a unique miniature environment. For the fourth edition, the festival is back on stage, this time in the Tranzac's main hall for three nights and then at 918 Bathurst for the finale. As with past editions there are events that will be better experienced than described. Pre-show panels and chats, presented by *Musicworks*, run from 7:00 to 7:30 with four to five performances per evening beginning at 8PM.

Thursday April 28

Montreal voice-and-movement artist Susanna Hood's past works have included explorations of sometimes subtle, sometimes visceral poets, including P.K. Page (*The Muted Note*) and the 15th-century Zen master Ikkyū (*Impossibly Happy*). Here Hood explores the saxophonist-composer Steve Lacy's *Packet* settings of poems by Judith Malina, co-founder of the Living Theatre. Hood matches Lacy's original instrumentation with two stellar Toronto improvisers, soprano saxophonist Kayla Milmine and pianist Tanya Gill. That spirit of improvisation is matched by trumpeter Nicole Rampersaud's solo performance, while the same integration of the arts is evident in vibraphonist/pianist Racha Moukalled's compositions, inspired by works of the pioneering abstract painter Hilma af Klint. Moukalled's quartet includes violinist Aline Homzy, oboist/flautist Elizabeth Brown and interdisciplinary artist Ilyse Krivel.

Friday April 29

Shadow puppeteer Kristine White, dancer Bee Pallomina and percussionist Germaine Liu combine their diverse media in an



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exploration of plant mythology; Sara Constant provides a set of solo flute; Lori Freedman and Scott Thomson, collaborators since 2010, combine the full range of clarinets and a century of jazz trombone tones with virtuosic aplomb.

The Understory Project has been a major event in Canadian improvised music during the lockdown, connecting trios of artists across the country in real-time, online interactions. Here Understory co-produces a trio performance with operatic soprano and multi-disciplinary artist Neema Bickersteth, joined online from Alberta by flutist Jessica McMann and, from Ottawa, by computer-based audio-visual artist Dot Starkey.

Saturday April 30

Saturday promises to be the most eclectic and surprising night of the festival, beginning with a co-presentation (with Coexistdance) of choreographer, dancer and poet Aisha Sasha John with multi-disciplinary artist Brenda Joy Lem whose individual works suggest they may extend connections between dance and the language of dreams.

Saxophonist Kayla Milmine and guitarist Geordie Haley perform with visual artist Peter Morin. Singer/songwriter Ronley Teper melds her songs with a myriad of musical genres, while TUSH presses the boundaries of dance-club culture.


Sunday May 1

Kathryn Merriam, Isabelle Clermont, Grace Scheele and Elysha Vorstenbosch all play harp and here present the spectacle of four people doing it at the same time. Marilyn Lerner improvises solo piano works, distilling them into a profoundly personal language with passion and precision.

PIQSIQ, the British Columbia duo of sisters Tiffany Kuliktana Ayalik and Kayley Inuksuk Mackay, have grown up in the traditions of Inuit throat singing, extending them with electronics and looping to create complex, hypnotic auditory environments that are at once mysterious and compelling. Filmmaker and musician Sook-Yin Lee closes the festival with a solo performance.



Friday highlights: Lori Freedman & Scott Thomson; Jessica McMann(below)

Women from Space runs April 28-May 1, 2022: Tranzac, 292 Brunswick Ave. April 28, 29, 30; 918 Bathurst Centre for Culture, Arts, Media and Education, May 1. For details of times, dates, venues, addresses, tickets and complete lists of performers, visit womenfrom-space.com. 



CHELSEA YANG-SMITH

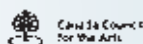
Stuart Broomer writes frequently on music (mostly improvised) and is the author of Time and Anthony Braxton. His column "Ezz-thetics" appears regularly at pointofdeparture.org.

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Language as Music as language

Orphan Song at Tarragon Theatre

JENNIFER PARR

I believe that theatre is at its most exciting when it is taking chances and pushing at the walls that define genre. Even if the risks taken don't pay off 100%. The world premiere of *Orphan Song* by Canadian playwright Sean Dixon at Tarragon Theatre is a case in point. *Orphan Song* sits in an imagined prehistory (40, 027 BCE) where a Homo sapiens couple, Mo and Gorse, take in a Neanderthal child and embark on a journey filled with danger, unexpected mayhem, and discovery.

Kaitlin Morrow



Stories set in prehistoric times are notoriously difficult to pull off without invoking nervous laughter. On opening night there was an initial hesitation from the audience in accepting the simplified, stilted, language of these early human characters, and yet this hesitation dissipated in the face of the absolute conviction of the actors who give themselves wholeheartedly to the simplicity of diction and wide brush strokes of communication necessary. Sophie Goulet's performance as Mo was superbly grounded, as was the magical work of puppet master Kaitlin Morrow, not only as the Neanderthal child Chicky, but as the creator of the stunning puppets and master teacher of the puppetry technique in the show: the excellent team of puppeteers brings compellingly to life not only the beguiling Neanderthals, but a wide range of wildlife from the small and unthreatening hedgehog to the terrifying hyenas and more.

More than anything, this is a play about developing minds and consciousness, language and thought visibly changing and growing as we see Mo and Gorse fight to survive in their harsh world. Their decision in a "lightening stroke of inspiration" to adopt the Neanderthal child in a gesture of love and longing leads to new leaps of development as they fight as a new family to better understand each other. Along the way this story of one family becomes an analogy for what is possible if we truly strive to communicate, to learn from others instead of turning away from those who are different.

Language, the tool of communication, is very much at the heart of Dixon's play. His collaboration with sound designer and music director Juliet Palmer and the cast results in a rich aural world contrasting the simple recognizable language of the early humans with the wonderfully birdlike musical language of the Neanderthals.

I was so intrigued by the levels of language creation and sound design throughout that I reached out to the playwright and sound designer to find out more about both the inspiration behind the play and the choices they made in the development and rehearsal process. Our conversation follows (edited for length).

WholeNote: What inspired you to write this play, particularly to go so far back in history to find the right setting?

Sean Dixon: I like to imagine that I was depicting the first time that a child sought to test the adults that were adopting her. And I wanted to dramatize the courage and peril of forging attachment in such a situation by setting it in an isolated wilderness among a family that was being shunned just for trying it.

What process did you follow to create the wonderful soundscape for the world of the play?

Juliet Palmer: After such a long hiatus from the theatre and concert hall, I was excited for the performers to create the sound world live



Orphan Song at the Tarragon Theatre

CYLIA VON TIEDEMANN

with their voices. (And the few places with prerecorded sounds have also been created vocally by the cast.) In rehearsal we delved into the calls and movement of the birds and animals that feature in Sean's script, as well as the ever-present ocean that the Neanderthals are walking towards. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Macaulay Library was invaluable as we channelled our inner blackbirds, pied butcherbirds and hermit thrushes. Hyenas, bears, hedgehogs, rabbits – we learned them all!

How did you approach the question of finding or creating contrasting languages that would seem authentic for the early humans and the Neanderthals?

SD: For the humans, I wanted a limited language. But I didn't want to be arbitrary about it, so I talked to a friend, Susana Béjar, who is a professor of linguistics at the University of Toronto, and she recommended that I look up a comparative linguistic tool called the Swadesh list – it's a list of 200 words that form basic ideas which would be fairly consistent across cultures. It gets used to study and compare early language forms.

For the Neanderthals, I was inspired by the Steven Mithen book, *The Singing Neanderthals*, to create the impression of a language inspired by birdsong. Again, I didn't want to be arbitrary, so I found an iPad app that rudimentarily transmuted recorded sound into sheet music and I fed a lot of birdsong into it. I used a Midi Player to listen to what I had gathered, then isolated bits that were meaningful to me, combined them with mnemonic text and pasted the musical staves into the body of the text. Finally, I put a note at the start of the play explaining this process and advising performers to interpret these impossible bits of sheet music as a point of departure to their language exploration.

JP: When I left Aotearoa/New Zealand 30 years ago it was to intern with Meredith Monk in New York. Her operas and songs often use invented language, sounds and vocables, so I had a surprising sense of coming full circle with Sean's play. In preparation for rehearsal, I read a lot about the evolution of music and language – it seems that both communities may have had some form of language at this point in time, but beyond that, our understanding wanders into speculation and the imagination.

I love the contrast Sean sets up between the prosaic and yet surprisingly poetic vocabulary of Homo sapiens and the invented sing-song language of Homo neanderthalensis. Birds and whales both sing songs with both structure and syntax, so it makes sense that the language of the Neanderthals finds inspiration in this repertoire. I also love the way Sean made his own birdcall words – birders will recognize this practice of making the strange familiar through strings of nonsense syllables.



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Settler Colonial Values in the Classical Music World (Apr 14, 7pm) Dr. Lise Vaugeois, Dwayne Trudeau.

Intro to UX and Human-Centred Design - Interactive workshop (Apr 21, 9am): Danielle Klein.

Money: Funding Systems, Donations, Nonprofits. Unicorns (Apr 26, 7pm): Vu Le, Grace Martins.

Building an Orchestra from the Ground Up: melding mental health and classical music (May 3, 10am): Caroline Whiddon. An exclusive film screening of a documentary about the Me2/Orchestra. **Orchestrating Change** compliments this session.

Surviving Sexual Assault in the Classical Music Industry (May 3, 5pm): Lara St. John.

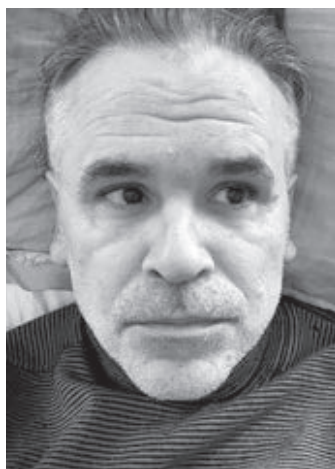
Indigenous Musical Sovereignty & the future of 'classical music' (May 5, 3pm): Andrew Balfour.

How the Western orchestra and Western classical music are problematic symbols in the era of social justice and equity (May 10, 6:30pm): Parmela Attariwala, Lucy Nesbitt.

Transgender inclusion in classical music (May 12, 1pm): Mx. Xavia A. Publius.

Empowering Deaf Artists (May 17, 2pm): Gaitrie Persaud. ASL/English interpretation provided

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Sean Dixon



MIRIAM PALMER

Juliet Palmer

CHORAL SCENE

As the Songbirds Return

DAVID PERLMAN

It might as well be spring

The WholeNote has been keeping track of the (mostly southern) Ontario choral scene for almost exactly 20 years, and during that time Ontario choirs have followed a predictable winter-to-spring ritual as predictable as swallows to Capistrano. December brings holiday fare, then it's down to serious business. Choirs gear up over the course of the spring for one last big performance for the season, often involving their most ambitious or at least newest repertoire. After which, by early June at the latest, the choral tents get folded, the slightly more dog-eared scores get carefully stored, and it's hugs all round and fond farewells until the fall.

As a small part of that predictable ritual, for over two decades, dozens and dozens of Ontario choirs have signed up for *The WholeNote's* annual "Canary Pages Directory of Choirs." First published in May 2003 as our "Focus on the Choral Scene," including just over one hundred choirs, it became an annual feature of our May print edition, eventually expanding to include year-round updates on our website. Almost immediately, choirs started using it to describe themselves to *prospective choristers*: the repertoire they like, where and how often they rehearse; audition requirements if any, and how often they perform. It became like an annual snapshot of the choral community gathered together – a reminder of how the choral community is more than the sum of its parts.

A reliable spring ritual: that is, until COVID struck, and choral music was the first casualty, going from the euphoria of drawing collective breath and turning it into music into bewildered masked isolation when the air breathed to sing together became lethal.

Granted, many choirs and their members took a deep dive into virtual congregating – re-inventing not just how they could reach their audiences but in how they could continue to gather to rehearse. But for many individual choir members, the virtual work-arounds, once the novelty wore off, only served to emphasize what had been lost.

The first to be silenced, so too choirs have been the last to return to something approximating the normal, because feeling safe to return

How much did your initial ideas change/develop over the course of rehearsals?

SD: The major change in rehearsal was that I revealed my sources to Juliet: i.e. when a bit of Neanderthal text had been derived from a common blackbird, I revealed that to her, so that she could explore those sounds on her own. Other birds that were revealed included the pied butcherbird, the hermit thrush, ivory-billed woodpecker, the Kaua'i 'ō 'ō bird and (not a bird) the humpback whale.

JP: Connecting the actors directly with the sources – field recordings of birds and animals was a huge breakthrough and much more in keeping with our roots as human listeners and sound-makers. Musical notation has its benefits, but it can be a barrier to listening to the complexity of the world around us. Another breakthrough was realizing that the audience needed to see the performers creating the sound world vocally. They're now only rarely making sound offstage. For me this underscores the act of storytelling that we're embarked upon. We're inventing a world with our voices.

Orphan Song continues in the Main Space at Tarragon Theatre until April 24. www.tarragontheatre.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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is something every individual choir member has had to make for themselves. But there are encouraging signs that it's turning round – even if not necessarily into the same predictable patterns as before.

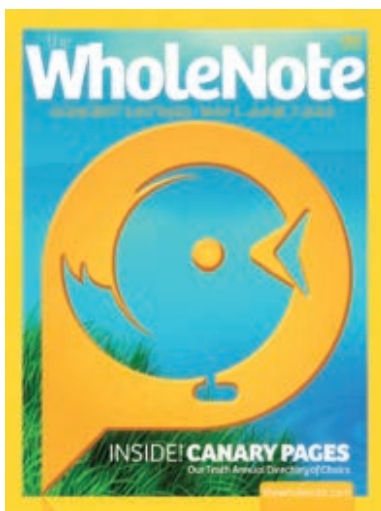
Look at the ads and listings in this issue and you will see signs of this turnaround. If one includes opera and music theatre productions that include ensemble singing and full-sized choruses, I count at least 18 choral concerts listed, which is 18 more than this time last year!

The choices choirs are making in regard to audience capacity and safety protocols are interesting. Some choirs are gratefully selling every ticket the new protocols will allow them to. Some are offering combinations of full-capacity and reduced capacity events. Several are sticking to offering only reduced capacity performances, some are sticking to saying that, no matter what the province allows, their audiences are still “requested to be fully vaccinated and masked”; some are, notably, offering free tickets for vaccinated children accompanied by an adult. The list goes on.

But whatever decisions they are making, most have one thing in common: *they are consulting with their choristers, volunteers and audiences about what they think.* And if that's the “new normal,” bring it on!

Meanwhile on our website (thewholenote.com/canary) the choirs are coming home to roost! Which for us is as hopeful as it gets.

continues



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PODIUM in town after 20 years

Beyond the impact of two lost years on individual choirs, another fundamental pillar of collective choral strength was undermined by two lost years – the opportunity for individual choristers and whole choirs from all over to gather together, to share and compare, and to celebrate the range and diversity in this most elemental and accessible of the musical arts.

Perhaps the hardest hit of these gatherings, in a Canadian context, was PODIUM – a bilingual, conference and festival of choral music that has, in one form or another, been held, uninterrupted, since 1982 in Kingston; since then, moving across the country from town to town. Well, *almost* uninterrupted. The May 2020 PODIUM, scheduled for Montréal for the first time in the event's history, heartbreakingly had to be cancelled – too early in the pandemic for virtual and hybrid conferencing formats to have taken hold.)

Two years on, the welcome news is that not only is PODIUM back, May 19 to 23, but *back in Toronto*, for the first time in 20 years, with Choirs Ontario as the co-host. Once again, the 40-year-strong gathering will, as the PODIUM website describes it, “bring together choral practitioners, researchers, administrators, students, representatives from the music industry, choristers, composers and other members of the choral community from across the country and beyond for professional development, the sharing and proliferation of ideas and research in choral music, performance, networking, and to celebrate Canada’s choral communities.”



Podium 2022 co-chairs: Mark Ramsay and Elaine Choi

“Reimagine, Rebuild, Reconnect” is this year’s conference theme and it’s hard to imagine a more succinct summary of the task at hand in post-pandemic times. But it’s a conference *and* festival, and it’s the festival aspect of the event where the proof of the pudding will be. The festival invites delegates and local audiences to meet and mingle, with choral concerts across downtown Toronto, featuring choirs and other singing groups from across the country and beyond. Among them will be a number of groups that would have sung at the ill-fated 2020 Montréal event – a small but significant way to acknowledge the broken link in the 40-year Podium chain.

The virtual and digital tools the choral community has learned to use during the past two years of isolation will also come into play. Podium 2022 will be a hybrid event, carrying its message of determination far beyond the host city. 🎵

David Perlman can be reached at publisher@thewholenote.com.

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MUSIC THEATRE

Music shines transformative light on three kinds of thematic darkness

JENNIFER PARR

Live theatre is back and breaking down the walls of convention in every direction. George F. Walker’s *Orphans of the Czar* at Crow’s Theatre is an uncannily apt combination of an iconic Canadian voice and the state of Russia just before the revolution, bringing new insights from that time that apply to ours through strong performances, inspired in some cases with a physical theatre/clown style. Over at Tarragon Theatre, Sean Dixon’s new prehistoric fable of family, adoption and the communication between species, *Orphan Song*, draws on the twin disciplines of magical puppetry and music as language to share important universal truths – and the season is just getting started.

One of the things I enjoy most about covering this Music Theatre beat is how much territory is encompassed in that title. From the most classic of classical ballet in the transcendent performances by Harrison James and Heather Ogden as Prince Florimund and Princess Aurora in Nureyev’s version of *The Sleeping Beauty* for The National Ballet of Canada’s recent revival in March, to traditional Broadway-style musicals such as those now in previews at the Shaw Festival (*Damn Yankees*) and the Stratford Festival (*Chicago*) – and from traditional opera to experimental amalgamations of unlikely elements that somehow cohere to make something that unmistakably fits the category. This spring experimental music theatre is popping up everywhere and in widely varying formats: interestingly, the three very different shows that I look at here, choose to explore very dark themes, using a tool kit in which music is an essential, integral, ingredient.

Room

At the Princess of Wales Theatre on April 7, Emma Donoghue’s *Room*, based on her novel of the same name, made its Toronto debut after its Canadian premiere at London’s Grand Theatre earlier this month. As those familiar with the novel and the film based upon it will know, the story of *Room* is a dark one, though leavened with hope. At first advertised as a musical, it is now being marketed as a “play with songs” which is much more accurate. The story is the same – the long captivity of a young woman – Ma – and her son Jack – in a single room by an abusive captor – and their subsequent escape. The story is hard to bear, but the stagecraft is wonderful, from the whimsical drawings that appear projected on the walls of the room to the



SANDRICK MATHURIN

Italian Mime Suicide: Rose Tuong, Rob Feetham, Adam Paolozza, Nicholas Eddie.

use of songs – songs that occur only in those moments when Ma and Jack – through his alter ego Super Jack – are at the utmost limits of their endurance and find release singing directly to the audience about their inner trauma. Director and co-songwriter Cora Bissett writes in her program notes that from her very first reading of the novel she could “hear songs: aching songs of desperation and hope; songs of survival” and immediately “bashed out some sketches.” The songs, even though the lyrics were not completely audible on opening night, add a rich emotional layer to the storytelling.

Room continues at the Princess of Wales Theatre until May 8. www.mirvish.com

Italian Mime Suicide

Music is even more essential to *Italian Mime Suicide* coming up at The Theatre Centre on April 21. Inspired by a 2003 newspaper headline, “Italian mime jumps off building claiming no one appreciates his art,” theatre company Bad New Days has married the art of the mime to multimedia projections and an original score that incorporates a small amount of spoken word to explore the “possibility of levity within tragedy.” To anyone familiar with the aesthetic of mime, commedia dell’arte, or circus clowns, that combination of melancholy and humour is iconographic, as is the interweaving of music and movement. What promises to take this now full-length production into new territory is the Persian-influenced score (originally created by three-piece live-band Zuze (led by Arif Mirabdolbaghi) which will now be re-played live by turntablist SlowPitchSound (Cheldon Paterson) interactively with the cast’s performance.

April 21 – May 1 www.theatrecentre.org.

Crypto

Crypto, a new multimedia dance work by dancer and choreographer Guillaume Côté is, he says, “the culmination of the many threads (he) has been experimenting with in (his) work going back to *Frame by Frame*” with the National Ballet of Canada.


While he loves “pure dance and has worked in pure dance for 25 years” as a leading principal dancer with the NBC and with companies around the world, Côté has an increasing presence and reputation in the world of multimedia creation as a choreographer and leader of multi-disciplinary teams, who is constantly pushing the boundaries of what this form of dance can be.

Frame by Frame with the NBC (2018) was groundbreaking in its use of film projection and animation. *Touch*, which played at the TO Live space at One Yonge Street last fall, broke new ground with 360-projections cued by the dancers’ movements in the space. This new work, *Crypto*, goes beyond those experiments by not only including spoken word, but in being based – for the first time for Côté – on a libretto, a new, darkly bizarre fable written by Pulitzer Prize-winning Canadian librettist Royce Vavrek.

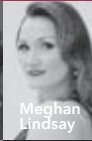
May 22 | 2022 | 2:30pm
St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts

THE MOTHER OF US ALL

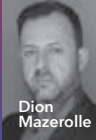
By Virgil Thomson



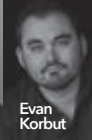
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Guillaume Cote and Greta Hodgkinson in *CRYPTO*

The project began with Côté's desire to "tackle a fairy tale of some kind. I love the original darker tales that have deeper meanings about our lives and coming of age," he told me. While this is not going to be a story ballet with a clear straightforward narrative, the bare bones of the story will be clear. "There is a couple who are very clearly unhappy. The wife sends the husband out to find a mythical creature which will solve all their problems and make them happy again. He goes out and finds the creature, but they cannot tame it and so turn to a surgeon to morph it into a human being; and then everything goes wrong. The action," he says, "is very clear, but the intentions and meaning behind all of the intentions are very abstract." There are three actors voicing the recorded text but, as Côté explained, "I needed the text to be a way of enhancing the already abstract action, as opposed to giving it a direction, so often what the text will do is give you imagery in words that adds to the imagery you will see in the dancing, but it is not as if the characters are talking to each other or as if we are dancing on top of the text."

From the beginning of the creation process in Banff, every element played a part. A specific choreographic language for each character was developed to existing music by composer Mikael Karlsson, who then took those experiments away and wrote the score as the work developed, incorporating the spoken words. "We began," Côté says, "with the obvious ideas of music and movement but very quickly we decided why not start with poetry in some moments, multimedia in other moments? We were aiming to fuse all the elements, making the whole experience something greater than the parts, rather than trying to reduce it to one art form." A dark look at humanity's attempt to subvert nature, *Crypto* promises to be a shining evening of music theatre at its risk-taking best.

May 5-7, www.canadianstage.com/shows-events/season/crypto

QUICK PICK

APR 19, 8PM (To MAY 29): *Boy Falls From The Sky* This one-man autobiographical musical was a sellout hit at the Fringe in 2019, as well as a great deal of fun. Not only is it a story of "local boy makes good" but the show itself is switching venues from the originally scheduled intimate CAA Theatre to the larger and more elegant setting of the Royal Alexandra. Jake Epstein has the charisma to fill the new space, and I look forward to seeing the new incarnation. www.mirvish.com/shows/boy-falls-from-the-sky 

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.

MAINLY CLUBS, MOSTLY JAZZ

Serious Bandleading and DROM's "Safe Journey"

COLIN STORY

There are many pleasant aspects to writing this column: going to cool shows, getting to think about jazz professionally, having an editor who excises my most egregiously constructed jokes. One of the most pleasant, however, is developing an ongoing knowledge of the ever-changing activities of musicians who comprise Toronto's vibrant jazz scene. New names start to become familiar as you see them pop up as side people with a few different bandleaders; established musicians start to play in different styles and their distinctive sound starts to grow in exciting new ways; veteran players undertake new projects and begin to collaborate earnestly with younger generations. A scene, as much as any individual performance, band, or song, is a multifaceted cultural text that invites spirited engagement, appreciation and criticism; one of the joys of Ontario's reopening has been watching the local scene reconstitute itself.

Ewen Farncombe: to those readers who regularly attend live jazz shows in Toronto, is a name that will likely be familiar. A pianist and keyboardist, Farncombe won a prestigious DownBeat Jazz Instrumental Soloist award in the Undergraduate category when he was still a second-year student in the music program at Humber College. At Humber, Farncombe studied with the celebrated pianist Brian Dickinson, who characterized him as "definitely among the finest" pianists to have passed through the program during Dickinson's tenure as head of the school's piano department.



Ewen Farncombe



Sarah Thawer Trio - with
Caleb Klager bass & Ewen
Farncombe keyboards



Since his time in school, Farncombe has quickly become an invaluable part of the Toronto jazz scene. Audiences are as likely to see him playing in fusion settings with artists such as Sarah Thawer as they are to see him in more conventionally traditional jazz settings, as with the crooner Alex Bird. (He has become a great favourite of singers, and can regularly be found in duo settings throughout the city.) Through it all, Farncombe has cultivated a confident, musical approach to the piano, which feels simultaneously personal and deeply communicative. Though he is a highly accomplished technician, his playing remains rooted in elegant phrase-building, even at the fastest of tempos.

In March, I had the opportunity to see Farncombe play live at The Rex, during a weekly residency. It was one of the first times that I've seen him leading a band, which, on the evening I attended, included the trumpeter Kae Murphy, saxophonist Ted Crosby, bassist Ben Dwyer, and drummer Davide Corazza. Farncombe "wanted to play with these guys," as he told me, "primarily because there is a previously established understanding between all of us on the energy we want to bring and present in performance."

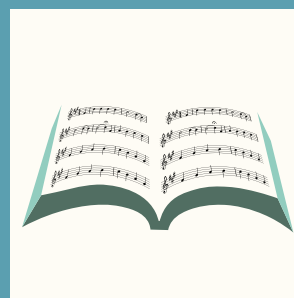
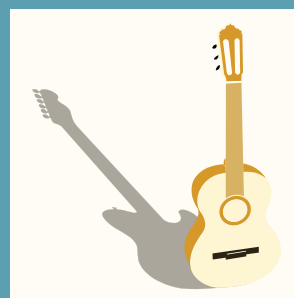
"This residency is," he continued, "a vehicle for us to try out different material, play some of our favourite music as well as some of my own compositions, and get comfortable with each other and see how we work together in these different formats. I love being able to put different people together to make some music, especially folks who don't know each other who I know will just vibe well. It's one of the great pleasures of being a bandleader."

Bandleading is an activity that Farncombe takes seriously. It is generally recognized that being an effective sideman requires a set of skills that are no less challenging than being an effective bandleader. To be a good bandleader, however, requires having an intimate understanding of how to work with other musicians; in a style of music as improvisatory as jazz, in which individual musical voices are privileged, having a solid connection to your fellow musicians is of paramount importance. "As a bandleader," Farncombe said, "your energy is, by the very nature of the job, infectious. In general, people you hire will try to fulfill your vision and follow step and that inspires me to be the best I can be. It's a more important role in a band and it comes with a lot more responsibility." His own experiences working as a sideman has led him to a unique understanding of this process; throughout his career thus far, he has had "the chance to experience many different band-leading styles and it's taught me a lot about how I want to lead and what is important to side-musicians."

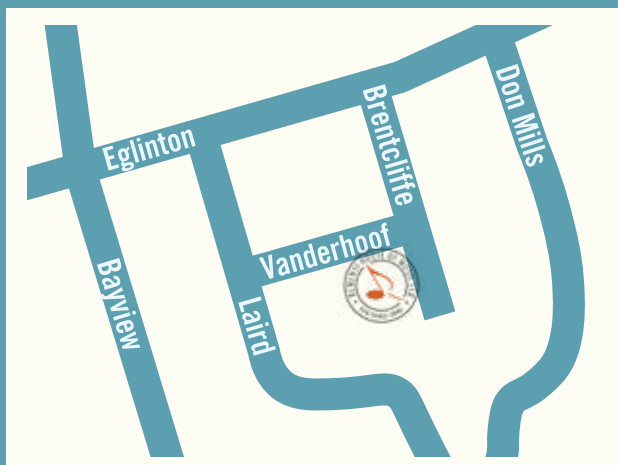
"Drom's Safe Journey," page 34



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

This issue contains event listings from April 15 to May 27, 2022.

THERE ARE TWO LISTINGS SECTIONS IN THIS ISSUE

• Section 1: Live and/or Livestreamed Events, Apr 15 – May 27

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: In the clubs (Mostly Jazz)

“Clubs” is a loose catch-all for a wide range of informal listening rooms where food and/or drink may be part of the mix, but listening to the music is the primary focus. “Mostly jazz” describes venues we’ve built relationships with over the years, but it’s not a rule! If you think you belong, based on this description, you probably do, so get in touch.

How to List

1. Use the convenient online form at thewholenote.com/applylistings OR
2. Email listings to listings@thewholenote.com. Please note, we do not take listings over the phone.

Deadlines

Weekly: Eligible listings received by **6pm Tuesday, each week**, will be included in **The WholeNote WEEKLY LISTINGS UPDATE** e-letter sent to registered readers the following Sunday. Listings received for the Weekly Listings Update are simultaneously posted to JUST ASK, our searchable online listings database. The weekly listings update looks five to six weeks into the future on an ongoing basis.

Print: Our next print issue, Volume 27 no.7 covers May and June 2022. The print submission deadline for new listings is **6pm Tuesday May 3.**

Readers are encouraged to register for the Weekly Listings update, or to check our online listings regularly for new listings or updates to listings previously submitted. Each weekly update looks 5-6 weeks into the future.

Register for the weekly updates at
thewholenote.com/newsletter

Deadlines

Weekly online updates: submission deadline is 6pm Tuesday of the week prior to the event in question, for weekend posting.

Live or Live Streamed | April 15 to May 27, 2022

Friday April 15

- 11:00am: **Humbercrest United Church.** *Rutter: Requiem.* For mixed chorus and orchestra. Sinead White, soprano; Chancel Choir of Humbercrest United Church; Melvin J. Hurst, music director. 16 Baby Point Rd. 416-767-6122. Free. Religious service.
- 4:00: **The Edison Singers.** *Fauré & Duruflé Requiems.* Fauré: Requiem in d Op.48; Duruflé: Requiem Op.9. Michael Bloss, organ; Mary-Katherine Finch, cello; Dr. Noel Edison, conductor. Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate, 28 Norfolk St., **Guelph.** 226-384-3100. \$40; \$25(st). Also Apr 16(St. Catharines).
- 7:30: **Music at Met.** *Behold, He Carried Our Sorrows: Bach and Buxtehude for Good Friday.* Bach: Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn (You True God and Son of David), Cantata No.23 BWV223; St. John Passion (selections); and other works. Choir, soloists and orchestra; Dr. Patricia Wright, conductor. Metropolitan United Church (Toronto), 56 Queen St. E. www.metunited.ca/live. \$15-\$25. LIVE & STREAMED.
- 7:30: **Toronto Mendelssohn Choir.** *Sacred Music for a Sacred Space.* Rachmaninoff: All-Night Vigil; Dett: Don't You Weep No More, Mary; Dett: Go Not Far From Me, O God; Robinson (arr.): Steal Away; Hailstork: Crucifixion. Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Nathaniel Dett Chorale. Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, 1585 Yonge St. 416-408-0208 or www.tmchoir.org/event/sacred-music-for-a-sacred-space-2022-2/. \$30-\$90; \$20-\$40(online tickets).

Saturday April 16

- 11:00am: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Peter, The Wolf & The Kiwi (Relaxed Concert).* Emilie Lebel: Kiwis Can't Play the Violin; Bach: Movement 1 from Concerto in d for Two Violins; Prokofiev: Peter and the Wolf Op.67. Djennie Laguerre host/narrator; Jonathan Crow, Lincoln Haggart-Ives, violin; Daniel Bartholomew-Powser, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$23. Also Regular Concerts at 2pm & 4pm.
- 4:00: **The Edison Singers.** *Fauré & Duruflé Requiems.* Fauré: Requiem in d Op.48; Duruflé: Requiem Op.9. Michael Bloss, organ; Mary-Katherine Finch, cello; Dr. Noel Edison, conductor. Silver Spire United Church, 366 St. Paul St., **St. Catharines.** 226-384-3100. \$40; \$25(st). Also Apr 15(Guelph).
- 4:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Peter, The Wolf & The Kiwi.* Emilie Lebel: Kiwis Can't Play the Violin; Bach: Movement 1 from Concerto in d for Two Violins; Prokofiev: Peter and the Wolf Op.67. Djennie Laguerre host/narrator; Jonathan Crow, Lincoln Haggart-Ives, violin; Daniel Bartholomew-Powser, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$23. Also Relaxed Concert(11am) & Regular Concert(2pm).
- 7:30: **Niagara Symphony Orchestra.** *Brass Transit: The Music of Chicago.* Brass Transit; Bradley Thachuk, conductor. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., **St. Catharines.** www.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). Also Apr 17(2:30pm).

- 8:00: **Music Gallery.** *You in Mind: The Robot Orchestra.* Danny Shaddick. The Music Gallery, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080. \$5-\$15. WARNING: Strobe lights.

Sunday April 17

- 2:30: **Niagara Symphony Orchestra.** *Brass Transit: The Music of Chicago.* Brass Transit; Bradley Thachuk, conductor. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., **St. Catharines.** www.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). Also Apr 16(7:30pm).
- 4:30: **Opera Revue.** *Opera Revue at The Emmet Ray.* Mozart: Selections from Don Giovanni; Weill: Selections; Guettel: Migratory V. Danie Friesen, soprano; Alexander Hajek, baritone; Claire Harris, piano. The Emmet Ray, 924 College St. 647-637-7749 or www.operarevue.com. \$10.

Monday April 18

- 6:00: **TD Niagara Jazz Festival.** *Twilight Jazz and Blooz Series: Jim Clayton Trio.* Jim Clayton, piano; Steve Lucas, bass; Jeff Halischuk, drums. Spirit in Niagara Distillery, 458 Lakeshore Rd., **Niagara-on-the-Lake.** 1-844-548-5299. \$49; \$39(adv); \$19(musicians/arts workers/st).

Tuesday April 19

- 12:10: **Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.** *Lunchtime Chamber Music: Rising Stars Recital.* Featuring students from the Glenn Gould School. 1585 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. Free admission. Donations welcome.
- 7:00: **Waterloo Public Library.** *Musical Comedy Duo: All About Accordion and Clarinet.* Handel: Baroque Suite; “Rock Bach” based on the Prelude from Bach's Cello Suite No.1; French jazz ballad; and a polka medley/rhapsody in blues mash-up. Bridge &

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Wolac (Michael Bridge, accordion; Kornel Wolac, clarinet). www.calendar.wpl.ca/event/6353261 or 519-886-1310 X129. Free. Registration is required. A Q & A session will follow the presentation. ONLINE.

● 8:00: **Folk Under the Clock.** *Bruce Cockburn: 50th Anniversary Concert.* Showplace Performance Centre, 290 George St. N., **Peterborough.** 705-742-7469 or www.showplace.org. \$60-\$65.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Power Corporation of Canada Vocal Concerts Series: Joyce DiDonato - Eden.* Ives: The Unanswered Question; Portman: new commission; Cavalli: "Pianta ombrose: from La Calisto; Handel: "As With Rosy Steps the Morn" from Theodora; Purcell: "Music for Awhile"; Gluck: "Misera, dove son... Ah non son io" from Ezio and others. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$60-\$130.

Wednesday April 20

● 12:30: **ORGANIX Concerts.** *Organ Concert.* Nicholas Wanstall, organ. Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, 3055 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or www.organixconcerts.ca. Suggested freewill offering of \$20.

● 8:00: **Esprit Orchestra.** *Esprit Live 2022! Act 2.* Eugene Astapov: A Still Life; Keiko Devaux: Excavated Sound; Unsuk Chin: Mannequin; Žibuoklė Martinaitytė: Saudade. Shannon Mercer, mezzo; Eugene Astapov, guest conductor; Alex Pauk, conductor. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. \$25-\$65.

● 8:00: **Rose Theatre.** *Drivewire.* 1 Theatre Ln., **Brampton.** www.tickets.brampton.ca or 905-874-2800. \$15.

Thursday April 21

● 7:00: **COSA Canada.** *Canadian Songscapes.* Works by Matthew Emery, John Estacio, Katerina Gimón, John Greer, Morris Surdin and Robert Ursan. Alexandra Delle Donne, Skylar Cameron, Nansee Hughes, Chelsea Kolic, Caitlin McCaughey and Dijle Yukselir. . . . Also Apr 22, 23, 24. ONLINE.

● 8:00: **Flato Markham Theatre.** *Kellylee Evans.* 171 Town Centre Blvd., **Markham.** www.flatomarkhamtheatre.ca or 905-305-7469 or boxoffice@markham.ca. \$15-\$60; \$18(livestream). LIVE & LIVESTREAM.

● 8:00: **Rose's Distillery.** *Gin & Jazz at Reid's Distillery: Big Smoke Brass Band.* 32 Logan Ave. 416-465-4444. \$5.

Friday April 22

● 12:10: **Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* Works by Beethoven & Schumann. Cathy Yang, piano. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. www.standrewstoronto.org/events/music-at-standrews-2/. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.

● 7:00: **COSA Canada.** *Canadian Songscapes.* Works by Matthew Emery, John Estacio, Katerina Gimón, John Greer, Morris Surdin and Robert Ursan. Alexandra Delle Donne, Skylar Cameron, Nansee Hughes, Chelsea Kolic, Caitlin McCaughey and Dijle Yukselir. Also Apr 21, 23, 24. ONLINE.

● 7:00: **Environmental Defence Canada.** *Sultans of String Earth Day Virtual Benefit Concert.* Tim Gray; Indigenous Elder Dr. Duke Redbird; Donne Roberts; Yukiko Tsutsui; Padideh Ahrarnejad; and others. www.environmentaldefence.ca/page/102351/petition/1?ea.tracking.id=SOS. Proceeds support the work of Environmental Defence Canada to protect Ontario's environment. ONLINE.

● 7:30: **Opera by Request.** *Liederabend.* Works by Mahler, Strauss, Brahms and Dvořák. Danie Friesen and Annie Ramos, sopranos; Alexandra Beley and Lillian Brooks, mezzos; John Holland and Michael Robert-Broder, baritones. College St. United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. \$20.

● 7:30: **Opera by Request.** *Liederabend.* Works by Mahler, Strauss, Brahms and Dvořák. Danie Friesen and Annie Ramos, sopranos; Alexandra Beley and Lillian Brooks, mezzos; John Holland and Michael Robert-Broder, baritones. College St. United Church, 452 College St. 416-455-2365. \$20.



GIMENO, LISIECKI & TCHAIKOVSKY 5
Apr 22-24



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● 7:30: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Gimeno, Lisiecki & Tchaikovsky 5.* Shostakovich: Overture on Russian and Kirghiz Folk Themes (TSO and TSYO Side-by-Side); Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No.2 in g Op.16; Cris Derksen: Parkdale - Celebration Prelude (World Premiere); Tchaikovsky: Symphony No.5 in e Op.64. Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra; Jan Lisiecki, piano; Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Apr 23(8pm); 24(3pm).

● 8:00: **Richmond Hill Performing Arts Centre.** *David Wilcox.* Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St., **Richmond Hill.** 905-787-8811 or www.RHCentre.ca. \$44.50.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix Series: Redman-Mehldau-McBride-Blade: A MoodSwing Reunion.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$65-\$135.

Saturday April 23

● 4:00: **University Settlement Music & Arts School.** *USMAS 100 Alumni Concert featuring Vivid Ma.* Beethoven: Piano Sonata No.30 in E Op.109; Lowell Libermann: Gargoyles Op.29; Schumann: Fantasiestücke Op.12; Liszt: Liebeslied (Widmung by Robert Schumann) S566. Vivid Ma, piano. St. George by the Grange Church, 30 Stephanie St. 416-598-3444. PWYC.

● 5:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *The Canadian Jazz Master Awards Presentation and Performance (Music Mix).* Temerty Theatre, Telus Centre, 273 Bloor St. W.

416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$65.

● 7:00: **Annette Studios Chapel.** *George Crotty Trio.* George Crotty, cello; Jonathan Chapman, bass; Matias Recharte, drums. 566 Annette St. 647-573-2961. \$20.

● 7:00: **COSA Canada.** *Canadian Songscapes.* Works by Matthew Emery, John Estacio, Katerina Gimón, John Greer, Morris Surdin and Robert Ursan. Alexandra Delle Donne, Skylar Cameron, Nansee Hughes, Chelsea Kolic, Caitlin McCaughey and Dijle Yukselir. Also Apr 21, 22, 24. ONLINE.

● 7:30: **Canadian Opera Company.** *La traviata.* Music by Giuseppe Verdi. Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave. Amina Edris, soprano (Violetta Valery); Matthew Polenzani, tenor (Alfredo Germont); Canadian Opera Company Orchestra & Chorus; Johannes Debus, conductor; Arin Arbus, director. Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, 145 Queen St. W. 416-363-8231 or 1-800-250-4653. \$22-\$350. Also May 1(2pm); 3, 7(4:30pm), 12, 18, 20. At 7:30 unless otherwise noted.

● 7:30: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Discovery Series: Glenn Gould School Piano Showcase.* Mazzoleni Concert Hall, Royal Conservatory, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$20.

● 8:00: **Acoustic Harvest.** *Garnet Rogers.* St. Paul's United Church, 200 McIntosh St., **Scarborough.** www.acousticsharvest.ca. \$30(advance only).

● 8:00: **Georgetown Bach Chorale.** *Mozart's Requiem.* Mozart: Requiem in d K626; Piano Concerto No.23 in A K488. Chamber Choir & Orchestra; Ron Greidanus, piano & conductor. Holy Cross Catholic Church, 14400 Argyle Rd., **Georgetown.** 905-873-9909. \$45; \$10(st under 18).

● 8:00: **Music Gallery.** *You in Mind: Sanctuary Concert.* Anh Phung, flute; Christina Smith, vocals; Empara, vocals; Maxh, vocals; Pothound, synths & bass; and others. The Music Gallery, 918 Bathurst St. 416-204-1080 or www.musicgallery.org. LIVE & LIVESTREAM. WARNING! Strobe lights.

● 8:00: **Rose Theatre/Brampton Concert Band.** *A Tribute to the Greatest Song Writers of All Time.* Rose Theatre, 1 Theatre Ln., **Brampton.** www.tickets.brampton.ca or 905-874-2800. From \$19.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Jazz From Around the World Series: Makoto Ozone Trio & Youn Sun Nah.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$45-\$100.

● 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Gimeno, Lisiecki & Tchaikovsky 5.* Shostakovich: Overture on Russian and Kirghiz Folk Themes (TSO and TSYO Side-by-Side); Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No.2 in g Op.16; Cris Derksen: Parkdale - Celebration Prelude (World Premiere); Tchaikovsky: Symphony No.5 in e Op.64. Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra; Jan Lisiecki, piano; Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Apr 22(7:30pm); 24(3pm).

● 8:00: **Westben.** *Digital Concert: Sammy Jackson.* An intimate evening around the Westben Campfire. Sammy Jackson, vocals; Tom Fleming, guitar. 877-883-5777 or www.westbendigitalvenue.ca. Free or by donation at www.westben.ca/donate. ONLINE.

Sunday April 24

● 2:00: **Peter Margolian and Friends.** *Chamber Music Concert.* Music by Italian composers for voice, strings, brass, winds and piano. Works by Peri, Rendana, Pettrassi, Casella, Dalla Piccola, and others. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. Pre-register at 647-980-5475 or peter.margolian@gmail.com. Free.

Toronto Mandolin Orchestra



Sunday April 24, 2pm



Standing in solidarity with the people of Ukraine

● 2:00: **VPAN.** *Toronto Mandolin Orchestra.* Newroads Performing Arts Centre (formerly Newmarket Theatre), 505 Pickering Cres., **Newmarket.** 905-953-5122 or www.newtix.ca or www.vpan.ca. \$30; \$25(sr); \$10(st).

● 3:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Invesco Piano Concerts Series: Ivo Pogorelič.* Chopin: Barcarolle in F-sharp Op.60, Piano Sonata No.3 in b Op.58, Fantaisie in f Op.49, Berceuse in D-flat Op.57, Polonaise-fantaisie in A-flat Op.61. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$50-\$110.

● 3:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Gimeno, Lisiecki & Tchaikovsky 5.* Shostakovich: Overture on Russian and Kirghiz Folk Themes (TSO and TSYO Side-by-Side); Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No.2 in g Op.16; Cris Derksen: Parkdale - Celebration Prelude (World Premiere); Tchaikovsky: Symphony No.5 in e Op.64. Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra; Jan Lisiecki, piano; Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Apr 22(7:30pm); 23(8pm).

● 7:00: **COSA Canada.** *Canadian Songscapes.* Works by Matthew Emery, John Estacio, Katerina Gimón, John Greer, Morris Surdin and Robert Ursan. Alexandra Delle Donne, Skylar Cameron, Nansee Hughes, Chelsea Kolic, Caitlin McCaughey and Dijle Yukselir. Also Apr 21, 22, 23. ONLINE.

Tuesday April 26

● 12:00 noon: **Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.** *Lunchtime Chamber Music: Clarinet Quintet.* 1585 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. Free admission. Donations welcome.

● 7:00: **Bravo Niagara! Festival of the Arts.** *Jan Lisiecki: Poems of the Night.* Chopin: Nocturnes and Études. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, Robertson Theatre, 250 St.



GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL
MESSIAH
 Saturday, April 30, 2022 at 7 p.m.
 SMSV Cultural Centre | 3300 HWY 7, Markham
Kristian Alexander | conductor

KINDRED SPIRITS ORCHESTRA
VOICES CHAMBER CHOIR

Tickets: \$20-\$30
KSOOrchestra.ca
 905.604.8339

in-person, streamed and recorded

Ontario  Canada 




VOCA
 Chorus of Toronto

Star Songs

An eclectic celebration of stars & the night sky, featuring a world premiere by renowned Cree composer Andrew Balfour


Jenny Crober, Artistic Director
 Elizabeth Acker, Accompanist

Colleen Allen, sax Shawn Grenke, organ
 Jamie Drake, percussion

Saturday, April 30, 2022 * 7:30 pm

Eastminster United Church,
 310 Danforth Ave. (Chester subway), Toronto
 \$30 General Admission; \$15 Students
 416-947-8487; www.vocachorus.ca

Live or Live Streamed | April 15 to May 27, 2022



Jan Lisiecki
 APRIL 26, 2022 - 7 PM
www.bravoniagara.org

Paul St., St. Catharines. 289-868-9177. \$50;
 \$25(st/youth).

Wednesday April 27

- 12:30: **ORGANIX Concerts.** Organ Concert. Aaron James, organ. All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church, 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or www.organixconcerts.ca. Suggested freewill offering of \$20.
- 8:00: **Reid's Distillery.** *Fuat Tuac Live @ Reid's Distillery.* 32 Logan Ave. 416-465-4444.
- 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Gimeno & Dvořák's "New World"*. Luis Ramirez: Mi Piñata - Celebration Prelude (World Premiere); Martinů: The Rock; Hans Abrahamsen: Concerto for Horn & Orchestra (North American Premiere); Dvořák: Symphony No.9 in e Op.95 "From the New World". Stefan Dohr, horn; Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also Apr 28, 30.
- 8:30: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Lights the Way.* Gary K. Thomas: The Cat and Mouse Tango; Gary K. Thomas: Flip Flops; Traditional: A Moonlight Night on the Spring River (arr. Edward Jiang); and other works. Stewart Goodyear, piano; Angela Hewitt, piano; Lang Lang, piano; Jan Lisiecki, piano; Tony Yike Yang, piano; and others. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. RSVP: www.rcmusic.com/celebrate. Info: www.rcmusic.com/piano. LIVE & LIVESTREAM.

Thursday April 28

- 1:30: **Music in the Afternoon.** Chamber Music Concert. Works by Borodin, Prokofiev, and Jessie Montgomery. Viano String Quartet (Lucy Wang, violin; Hao Zhou, violin; Aiden Kane, viola; Tate Zawadiuk, cello). Grace Church on-the-Hill, 300 Lonsdale Rd. wmct.on.ca or 416-923-7052. \$45(live); \$25(online). LIVE & ONLINE.
- 7:00: **Magisterra at the Museum/Museum London.** *First Ladies.* Bacewicz: String Quartet No.3; Auerbach: T'filah; Zwillich: Romance; Pejakevic: Piano Quintet. Museum London, 421 Ridout St. N., London. eventbrite.ca/e/magisterra-at-the-museum-first-ladies-tickets-168951734185. \$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.
 ● 7:30: **Attila Glatz Concert Productions/TO Live.** *United for Ukraine.* Benefit concert for Canada-Ukraine Foundation. Performances by Vasyl Popadiuk; Sonia Rodriguez and Principal Dancers of The National Ballet of Canada; Red Sky Performance; Vesnivka Ukrainian Women's Choir; Lara Ciekiwicz, soprano; Natalya Gennadi, soprano; James McLennan, tenor; Barvinok Ukrainian Dance School. Meridian Hall, 1 Front Street, Toronto. TOLive.com or 416-366-7723 \$28.75-\$176. Ticket purchase offers an opportunity for a further donation



Music TORONTO

April 28 at 8 pm
PENDERCKI
STRING QUARTET

- 8:00: **Music Toronto.** *Pendercki String Quartet.* Haydn: String Quartet in f Op.20 No.5; Marjan Mozetich: Lament in the Trampled Garden; Pendercki: Quartet No.4; Dvořák: Quartet in A-flat Op.105. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723 or www.music-toronto.com. \$47.50-\$52.
- 8:00: **Soundstreams/Signal Theatre/National Arts Centre.** *A Love Song to Toronto.* Claude Vivier: Love Songs; Shiraz; Cinq Chansons pour percussion; Christopher



WOMEN'S MUSICAL CLUB OF TORONTO

MUSIC
 IN THE
AFTERNOON

APRIL 28 | 1.30 PM

VIANO STRING QUARTET

416-923-7052
wmct.on.ca

Mayo: *Oceano Nox*. Ryan Scott, percussion; Michael Greyyes, choreographer. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 73 Simcoe St. www.rcmusic.com/tickets/seats/218801. \$33.25-\$88.75.

● 8:00: **TD Sunfest/Wolf Performance Hall.** *Tanika Charles*. Wolf Performance Hall, 251 Dundas St., London. www.sunfest.on.ca. \$33; \$28(adv).

● 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Gimeno & Dvořák's "New World"*. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. See Apr 27 for details.

Friday April 29

● 12:10: **Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital*. Holst: *The Planets* (transcr. Millar) and works by Gougeon, Debussy, and Wagner. Gregory Millar, piano. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 73 Simcoe St. www.standrewstoronto.org/events/music-at-standrews-2/. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.

● 7:30: **Annette Studios.** *Nocturnes*. Sean Clarke: *New Work* (premiere); Anna Höstman: *New Work* (premiere); and works by Satie, Linda Catlin Smith, and Jonathan Bailey Holland. Cheryl Duvall, piano. 566 Annette St. Annettestudios@gmail.com. \$30; \$25(arts workers/st/st); \$10(livestream). LIVE & ONLINE.

● 8:00: **Rose Theatre.** *Dwayne Gretzky*. 1 Theatre Ln., Brampton. www.tickets.brampton.ca or 905-874-2800. From \$19.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Royal Conservatory Orchestra Series: Johannes Debus Conducts the Royal Conservatory Orchestra.* Brahms: *Violin Concerto in D Op.77*; Haydn: *Symphony No.88 in G Hob.188*; Bartók: *The Miraculous Mandarin Op.19a BB82 Sz73a* (suite from pantomime). Ji Soo Choi, violin. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$25-\$60.

Saturday April 30

● Apr 30: **Leaside United Church.** *Virtual Variety Show 2022.* A variety of virtual acts: song, instrumental, humour, drama, athletic, hobby, etc. www.leasideunited.com or virtualvariety2022@gmail.com. All ages welcome! ONLINE.

● 3:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra Spring Concert.* Shostakovich: *Overture on Russian and Kyrgyz Folk Themes*; Ustvolskaya: *Symphonic Poem No.2*; Prokofiev: *Symphony No.5 in B-flat*. Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra; Simon Rivard, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769 or www.TSO.ca. Starting at \$22.

● 7:30: **Bravo Niagara! Festival of the Arts.** *International Jazz Day: The Music of Oscar Peterson.* Curated by Céline Peterson. Jeff Hamilton, drums; Ulf Wakenius, guitar; Dave Young, bass; Robi Botos, piano. FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, Cairns Recital Hall, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. 289-868-9177. \$50; \$25(st/youth).

● 7:30: **Korean Canadian Symphony Orchestra.** *Keeping Promises Festival: Spring Into Summer.* Mozart: *Quintet in E-flat for Piano and Winds K452*; and works by Vivaldi and Piazzolla for strings. Sharon Lee, conductor. St. George Anglican Church, 5350 Yonge St. www.kcso.ca. \$15-\$30.

● 7:30: **Mississauga Chamber Singers.** *Gloria.* Vivaldi: *Gloria RV589*; Vivaldi: *Kyrie in G*; Bach: *Missa in F BWV233*. Jennifer Krabbe, soprano; Rachel Miller, alto; Matthew Cassils, bass; Mississauga Chamber Singers; Chamber Orchestra. Christ First United Church, 151 Lakeshore Rd. W., Mississauga. 905-456-3441. \$25; \$12(under 18). Limited tickets will be sold in order to maintain social distancing.

● 7:30: **Rose Orchestra.** *A Grand Decade.* Rachmaninoff: *Piano Concerto No.3 in d*; Wagner: *Overture to Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; Wagner: *Siegfried's Rhine Journey from Götterdämmerung*. The Rose Orchestra; Ron Greidanus, piano; Samuel

Tam, conductor. Rose Theatre, 1 Theatre Ln., Brampton. www.tickets.brampton.ca or 905-874-2800. \$35.

● 7:30: **Voca Chorus of Toronto.** *Star Songs.* A celebration of stars and the night sky. World premiere by Cree composer Andrew Balfour and works by Eleanor Daley, Morten Lauridsen, Kurt Weill, Paul Halley and others. Jenny Crober, conductor; Elizabeth Acker, collaborative pianist; Colleen Allen, sax; Shawn Grenke, organ; Jamie Drake, percussion. Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. www.vocachorus.ca. \$30; \$15.

● 8:00: **Kindred Spirits Orchestra.** *Händel's Messiah.* Sara Schabas, soprano; Kathleen Promane, alto; Adam Luther, tenor; Johnathon Kirby, bass; Voices Chamber Choir; Ron Cheung, choral director; Kristian Alexander, conductor; Michael Berec, host. SMSV Cultural Centre, 3300 Hwy 7, Markham. 905-604-8339 or KSOchestra.ca. \$20-\$30. LIVE, ONLINE OR RECORDED.

● 8:00: **Mississauga Symphony Orchestra.** *The Best of MSO Opera.* Opera excerpts. Bizet: *Carmen*; Puccini: *La bohème*; Verdi: *La traviata*. Cristina Pisani, soprano; Romulo Delgado, tenor; Christopher Dunham, baritone. Living Arts Centre, 4141 Living Arts Dr., Mississauga. mississaugasymphony.ca. \$40-\$64; \$36-\$58(sr); \$30(ages 16-26); \$25(ages 15 and under).

● 8:00: **New Music Concerts.** *Swara Sutras: A Toronto Śabdagatitāra.* The crossing over (tāra) of methods of making (gati) sound (śabda). Juro Kim Feliz: *New Work*; Sandeep Bhagwati: *New works by the Swara Sutra Ensemble*. Sandeep Bhagwati, creator; Juro Kim Feliz, composer. The Music Gallery, 918 Bathurst St. www.newmusicconcerts.com or 416-961-9594. Introduction at 7:15pm.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Power Corporation of Canada Vocal Concerts Series.* Sir Bryn Terfel, baritone; Natalia Kayukova, piano. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$50-\$135.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.**

Songbird North Series. Temerty Theatre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$40.

● 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Gimeno & Dvořák's "New World"*. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. See Apr 27 for details.

Sunday May 1

● 2:00: **Canadian Opera Company.** *La traviata.* See Apr 23. Also May 3, 7(4:30pm), 12, 18, 20. At 7:30 unless otherwise noted.

● 2:30: **Niagara Symphony Orchestra.** *Fewer Plays Vivaldi.* Vivaldi: *The Four Seasons*; Kevin Lau: *Le Petit Prince, Concert Suite No.2* (World premiere); Respighi: *The Pines of Rome*. Mark Fewer, leader & violin; Bradley Thachuk, conductor. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. www.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).

● 3:00: **North York Concert Orchestra.** *Dvořák Cello Concerto.* Joseph Johnson, cello. Pan Pacific Ballroom, 900 York Mills Rd., North York. 1-888-687-6926. \$15-\$30.

● 3:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Taylor Academy Concerts Series: Academy Chamber Orchestra.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. Free. Proof of vaccination required.

● 4:00: **Toronto Children's Chorus.** *On the Horizon.* Chamber Choir & Toronto Youth Choir. Ismaili Centre, 49 Wynford Drive. www.torontochildrenchorus.com.

● 7:00: **Nagata Shachu.** *Kazé (Wind).* Toki Tatara, shinobue (bamboo flute); Nagata Shachu (Kiyoshi Nagata, Aki Takahashi, Naoya Kobayashi, Andrew Siu, Kevin Xi-Zhao He, Briana Lee, and Marie Gavin). Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, 6 Garamond Ct. www.ticketweb.ca/event/kaz-wind-by-nagata-shachu-japanese-canadian-cultural-centre-tickets/11612525. \$43; \$38(JCCC member).



toronto children's chorus



22/23 Season Auditions

New chorister auditions have opened!

May 28th & 29th | June 11th & 12th

More information at torontochildrenchorus.com



THE ISMAILI CENTRE
TORONTO

On the Horizon

May 1st | 4:00PM

The Ismaili Centre Toronto

Chamber Choir & Toronto Youth Choir



NAGATA SHACHU (Taiko)
TOKI TATARU
(Bamboo Flute)
KAZÉ
(wind)
May 1 @ 7 pm
www.nagatashachu.com

● 8:00: **Solidaridad Tango.** *Tango: A Concert.* Luis Ramirez: Immigration Suite; and works by Julián Peralta, Diego Schissi, Katharina Deissler, and others. Solidaridad Tango; Luis Ramirez Quintet. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. 416-912-9298. \$30.

Monday May 2

● 7:00: **Peterborough Singers.** *The Music of Paul Simon.* Beau Dixon, Barry Haggarty, guitar; Andrew Affleck, bass; Steve McCracken, saxophone; Rob Phillips, keyboard; Curtis Cronkwright, drums; Doug Sutherland, trumpet; Syd Birrell, conductor. Emmanuel United Church, 534 George St. N., **Peterborough**. 705-745-1820 or www.peterboroughsingers.com. \$10-\$35.

● 7:30: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Discovery Series: Glenn Gould School New Music Ensemble.* Frehner: Sometimes the Devil Plays Fate for mezzo and chamber orchestra (world premiere); Works by Bhagwati. Brian Current, conductor. Temerty Theatre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. Free. Proof of vaccination required.

Tuesday May 3

● 12:10: **Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.** *Lunchtime Chamber Music: Theresa Rudolph & John Rudolph, Viola & Percussion.* 1585 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. Free admission. Donations welcome.

● 7:30: **Canadian Opera Company.** *La traviata.* See Apr 23. Also May 7(4:30pm), 12, 18, 20. At 7:30 unless otherwise noted.

Wednesday May 4

● 7:00: **John Dupuis.** *Piano Evening with John Dupuis.* Schubert: Moments musicaux; Liszt/Schubert: Hark, Hark! the Lark!; Ravel: Jeux d'eau; Morel: Deux Études de sonorité; Schubert: Sonata in B-flat. Heliconian Hall, 35 Hazelton Ave. www.eventbrite.com/e/john-dupuis-piano-evening-toronto-tickets-273791877877. \$35(adv through Eventbrite); \$40(at door); \$30(st at door only).

Thursday May 5

● 7:30: **Mightier Productions.** *Conan and the Stone of Kelior.* Music by Mozart, Wagner, Tchaikovsky, Puccini, Rimsky-Korsakov, Verdi, and Rachmaninoff. Book by Kyle McDonald. Kyle McDonald, bass (Conan the Cimmerian); Lynn Isnar, soprano (Harapshili, Queen of Koth); Corey Arnold, tenor (Qidan, a thief); Robert De Vrij, bass (Kelior, a wizard); Patrick Burton, baritone (Thoth-Amon, a wizard); and other performers; Diana DiMauro, conductor; Kyle McDonald, stage director. Alumnae Theatre, 70 Berkeley St. www.mightierproductions.com. In person: \$40(cash at door); \$35(online); \$20(st for students. Livestream: \$35; \$20(st). Also May 7, 8(4pm), 11, 13, 15(4pm). Start time is 7:30pm unless otherwise noted. Livestreamed on May 7 & 8.

● 7:30: **Tafelmusik.** *Bach: Mass in B Minor.* Joanne Lunn, soprano; Tim Mead, counter-tenor; Thomas Hobbs, tenor; Jonathan Adams, baritone; Tafelmusik Chamber Choir; Masaaki Suzuki, conductor. Massey Hall,



Bach B-Minor Mass

Live concert
May 5, 7:30pm
Massey Hall

Digital concert
(LIVESTREAM)
May 6, 7:30pm
Online concert hall

tafelmusik.org



178 Victoria St. info@tafelmusik.org or 1-833-964-633. \$52.90-\$149. Also May 6(online).

● 7:30: **TO Live/Attila Glatz Concert Productions.** *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part One.* Alexandre Desplat: Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part One (Film with Live Orchestra). Toronto Symphony Orchestra; Evan Mitchell, conductor. Meridian Hall, 1 Front St. E. www.ticketmaster.ca. Starting at \$55. Also May 6 & 7.

● 8:00: **Canadian Stage/TO Live.** *Crypto.* Guillaume Côté, Greta Hodgkinson, Natasha Poon Woo, and Casia Vengoechea, dancers. Bluma Appel Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-368-3110. \$49-\$109.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *21C Music Festival Series: ARC Ensemble: Marc Neikrug's A Song by Mahler.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance.

● 8:00: **Toronto Operetta Theatre.** *A Northern Lights Dream.* Music and libretto by Michael Rose. Christine Haldane, soprano (Helen); Lauren Pearl, soprano (Robin); Gregory Finney, baritone (Taylor); Ian Backstrom (Nick); Karen Bojti (Mrs. Duke); Kate Carver, conductor; Guillermo Silva-Marin, stage director. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-7654 or www.tolive.com. \$32-\$56. Also May 6, 7(3pm).

Friday May 6

● 12:10: **Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* The Ezra Duo: Jacob Clewell, viola; TBA, piano. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. www.standrewstoronto.org/events/music-at-standrews-2/. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.

● 7:30: **Tafelmusik.** *Bach: Mass in B Minor.* Joanne Lunn, soprano; Tim Mead, counter-tenor; Thomas Hobbs, tenor; Jonathan Adams, baritone; Tafelmusik Chamber Choir; Masaaki Suzuki, conductor. info@tafelmusik.org or 1-833-964-633. Performed in the newly revitalized Massey Hall. Also May 5(in person). ONLINE.

● 7:30: **The Gordon Jeffery Music Foundation.** *The Jeffery Concerts: The Penderecki*

String Quartet. Haydn: String Quartet in f Op.20 No.5; Mozetich: Lament in the Trampled Garden; Penderecki: String Quartet No.4; Dvořák: String Quartet No.14 in A-flat Op.105. Wolf Performance Hall, 251 Dundas St., **London.** 519-672-8800 or www.grandtheatre.com. \$40.

● 7:30: **TO Live/Attila Glatz Concert Productions.** *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part One.* Alexandre Desplat: Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part One (Film with Live Orchestra). Toronto Symphony Orchestra; Evan Mitchell, conductor. Meridian Hall, 1 Front St. E. www.ticketmaster.ca. Starting at \$55. Also May 5 & 7.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *String Concert Series: Sheku Kanneh Mason with Isata Kanneh Mason.* Beethoven: Cello Sonata No.4 in C Op.102 No.1; Shostakovich: Cello Sonata in d H.125; Bridge: Sonata for Cello and Piano in d H.125; Britten: Cello Sonata in C Op.65. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$45-\$100. Proof of vaccination required.

● 8:00: **Toronto Operetta Theatre.** *A Northern Lights Dream.* Music and libretto by Michael Rose. Christine Haldane, soprano (Helen); Lauren Pearl, soprano (Robin); Gregory Finney, baritone (Taylor); Ian Backstrom (Nick); Karen Bojti (Mrs. Duke); Kate Carver, conductor; Guillermo Silva-Marin, stage director. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. 416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-7654 or www.tolive.com. \$32-\$56. Also May 5, 7(3pm).

Saturday May 7

● 4:30: **Canadian Opera Company.** *La traviata.* See Apr 23. Also May 12, 18, 20. At 7:30 unless otherwise noted.

● 7:30: **Etobicoke Centennial Choir.** *With Heart, In Hope.* Beethoven: Mass in C; Steve Dobrogosz: Mass; Mascagni: Selections from Cavalleria rusticana. Érika Wood, soprano; Mélissa Danis, mezzo; Lauren Halasz, alto; J. Rigzin Tute, tenor; Adam Wicks, tenor; David Finneran, baritone; Nicholas Wanstall, baritone; Carl Steinhauer, organ; String Orchestra. Humber Valley United Church,

NOON AT MET: "SOLID SILVER"

quintet from The Metropolitan Silver Band
FREE (in-person & livestream)

FRIDAY, MAY 6 AT 12PM

A "sterling" array of Renaissance Dances, folk melodies, well-loved classics & movie music!

56 Queen St. E.

metunited.ca

Tango

A joint concert by
Solidaridad Tango //
Luis Ramirez Quintet

Contemporary tangos featuring
the world premiere of Ramirez's
Immigration Suite

The Heliconian Club
35 Hazelton Ave, Toronto
8pm, May 1 2022
\$30, tickets at:
bit.ly/tangoconcert



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

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Canada Council
for the Arts
Conseil des arts
du Canada



ETOBICOKE CENTENNIAL CHOIR

WITH HEART & HOPE

Our long-awaited return to live performance!

Saturday, May 7
7:30pm

etobicokecentennialchoir.ca

76 Anglesey Blvd., ETOBICOKE. 416-779-2258 or www.etobicokecentennialchoir.ca. \$30.

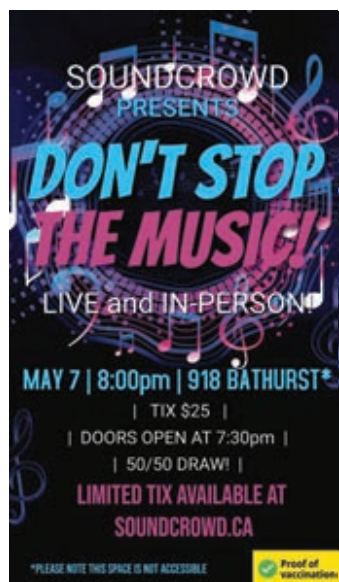
● 7:30: **Mightier Productions.** *Conan and the Stone of Kelior.* See May 5. Also May 8(4pm), 11, 13, 15(4pm). Start time is 7:30pm unless otherwise noted. Livestreamed on May 7 & 8.

● 7:30: **TO Live/Atila Glatz Concert Productions.** *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part One.* Alexandre Desplat: Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part One (Film with Live Orchestra). Toronto Symphony Orchestra; Evan Mitchell, conductor. Meridian Hall, 1 Front St. E. www.ticketmaster.ca. Starting at \$55. Also May 5 & 6.

● 8:00: **Paradise Theatre.** *Isn't He Lovely: The Music of Stevie Wonder.* Tony Nolasco, vocalist; 9-piece backup group. 1006 Bloor St. W. www.eventbrite.ca/e/the-music-of-stevie-wonder-tickets-215370056637. \$40(Main Floor); \$50(Balcony).

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix & Recovered Concerts Series: Meow Meow.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$40-\$85. CURRENTLY AT CAPACITY.

● 8:00: **SoundCrowd.** *Don't Stop the Music!* Arrangements of songs by Elton John, Rihanna, Dua Lipa, George Michael, and Kiki Dee. SoundCrowd, a cappella ensemble. Music



SOUNDCROWD PRESENTS
DON'T STOP THE MUSIC!
LIVE and IN-PERSON
MAY 7 | 8:00pm | 918 BATHURST*
| TIX \$25 |
| DOORS OPEN AT 7:30pm |
| 50/50 DRAW! |
LIMITED TIX AVAILABLE AT
SOUNDCROWD.CA
*PLEASE NOTE THIS SPACE IS NOT ACCESSIBLE

Gallery at 918 Bathurst, 918 Bathurst St. 647-970-1397. \$25.

● 8:00: **Sinfonia Toronto.** *Schubert & Shostakovich: Glancing Back, Forging Ahead.* Stanley Grill: "1918" for voice and orchestra (world premiere); Shostakovich: Chamber Symphony Op.49a; Falla: Seven Popular Spanish Songs; Saman Shahi: Suspended Doorways; Schubert: Sinfonia in g (String Quartet No.9). Beste Kalender, mezzo; Nurhan Arman, conductor. George Weston Recital Hall, Meridian Arts Centre, 5040 Yonge St. In person 416-366-7723; virtual 416-499-0403 or www.sinfoniatoronto.com. In-person: \$55, \$7, \$48.06(sr); \$20.96(st); Livestream: \$15. LIVE & ONLINE.

Sunday May 8

● 2:00: **Hamilton Conservatory for the Arts.** *Performing Arts Sunday Series: Janina Fialkowska in Recital.* Janina Fialkowska, piano. 126 James St. S, **Hamilton.** www.hcarts.ca/pass or 905-528-4020. \$30; \$25(sr/st).

● 3:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *String Concerts Series: Gautier Capuçon with Jean-Yves Thibaudet.* Schumann: Fantasiestücke Op.73; Brahms: Sonata for Cello and Piano No.1 in e Op.38; Debussy: Sonata for Cello in d L.135; Shostakovich: Sonata for Cello and Piano in d Op.40. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$50-\$115.

● 4:00: **Mightier Productions.** *Conan and the Stone of Kelior.* See May 5. Also May 11, 13, 15(4pm). Start time is 7:30pm unless otherwise noted. Livestreamed on May 7 & 8.

Tuesday May 10

● 12:10: **Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.** *Lunchtime Chamber Music: Clarinet Quintet.* 1585 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. Free admission. Donations welcome.

● 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *The Best of John Williams.* Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$56(eve); \$41(mat). Also May 11(2 & 8pm), 13(8pm).

Wednesday May 11

● 12:30: **ORGANIX Concerts.** *Organ Concert.* Mark Himmelman, organ. All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church, 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or www.organixconcerts.ca. Suggested freewill offering of \$20.

● 2:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *The Best of John Williams.* Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$56(eve); \$41(mat). Also May 10(8pm), 11(8pm), 13(8pm).

● 7:30: **Mightier Productions.** *Conan and the Stone of Kelior.* See May 5. Also May 13, 15(4pm). Start time is 7:30pm unless otherwise noted. Livestreamed on May 7 & 8.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Music Mix Series: Marcus Roberts with the Modern Jazz Generation.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$45-\$95. Proof of vaccination required.

● 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *The Best of John Williams.* Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$56(eve); \$41(mat). Also May 10(8pm), 11(2pm), 13(8pm).

Thursday May 12

● 7:30: **Canadian Opera Company.** *La traviata.* See Apr 23. Also May 18, 20. At 7:30 unless otherwise noted.

● 8:00: **Art of Time Ensemble/Harbourfront Centre/Writers Collective of Canada.** *Who Is We: Voices Across the Divides.* A Concert of Question and Hope. Kan Cheung, Paul Eng, Dee Hope, Marta McIlroy, Ellise Ramos, and other performers; Daniel MacIvor, stage director; Andrew Burashko, music director. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-973-4000 or www.my.harbourfrontcentre.com/overview/37925. From \$19. Also May 13 & 14. Livestream on May 14.



Claude Vivier's
Orion
appears again
with Esprit

ESPRIT LIVE 2022! Act 3
May 12 at Koerner Hall
espritorchestra.com

● 8:00: **Esprit Orchestra.** *Esprit Live 2022! Act 3.* Claude Vivier: Orion; Stephanie Orlando: riptide; Julia Mermelstein: in water suspended; Christina Volpini: waves, breaking, reflecting light. Alex Pauk, conductor. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208. \$25-\$65.

Friday May 13

● 12:10: **Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* Brian Hsu, piano. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 73 Simcoe St. www.standrewstoronto.org/events/music-at-standrews-2/. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.

● 7:30: **Mightier Productions.** *Conan and the Stone of Kelior.* See May 5. Also May 15(4pm). Start time is 7:30pm unless otherwise noted. Livestreamed on May 7 & 8.

● 7:30: **Upper Canada Choristers.** *The French Connection.* Lysenko: Prayer for Ukraine; Fauré: Cantique de Jean Racine; Requiem Op.48; Franck: Panis angelicus; Saint-Saëns: La Calme des nuits (Stillness of the Nights); and other works. Upper Canada Choristers; Cantemos; Bradley Christensen, baritone; Hye Won (Cecilia) Lee, piano; Laurie Evan Fraser, conductor. Grace Church on-the-Hill, 300 Lonsdale Rd. www.uppercanadachoristers.org or 416-256-0510 or www.ucc-french-connection-faure-requiem-tickets.eventbrite.ca. Live: \$25; Free tickets for vaccinated children under 16 if

accompanied by an adult. In-person tickets must be obtained in advance. Streaming: Free(donations accepted). LIVE & STREAMED. YouTube link www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQttIHAq4ss&feature=emb_imp_woyt.

● 8:00: **Art of Time Ensemble/Harbourfront Centre/Writers Collective of Canada.** *Who Is We: Voices Across the Divides.* A Concert of Question and Hope. Kan Cheung, Paul Eng, Dee Hope, Marta McIlroy, Ellise Ramos, and other performers; Daniel MacIvor, stage director; Andrew Burashko, music director. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-973-4000 or www.my.harbourfrontcentre.com/overview/37925. From \$19. Also May 12 & 14. Livestream on May 14.

● 8:00: **Exultate Chamber Singers.** *Home in the Six: A Concert in Celebration of Toronto Composers.* World premieres of commissions by Tracy Wong, Katharine Petkovski, and Stephanie Martin and choral works by other Toronto composers. Exultate Chamber Singers; Mark Ramsay, artistic director; Mira Jung, piano. Calvin Presbyterian Church, 26 Delisle Ave. 416-971-9229 or www.exultate.net/tickets. PWYC: \$5, \$20, \$40, \$100 (\$60 tax receipt) or \$150 (\$110 tax receipt).

● 8:00: **Flato Markham Theatre.** *6 Guitars.* 171 Town Centre Blvd., **Markham.** www.flatomarkhamtheatre.ca or 905-305-7469 or boxoffice@markham.ca. \$15-\$55.

● 8:00: **rbi productions/TO Live.** *Jesse Cook.* Jesse Cook, guitar & composer. Meridian Hall, 1 Front St. E. 416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-6754 or www.tolive.com. \$77-\$89.

● 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *World Music Series: Las Cafeteras & Patricia Cano.* Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or www.rcmusic.com/performance. \$40-\$85. Proof of vaccination required.

● 8:00: **Sellers & Newell Literary Society.** *George Crotty Trio.* George Crotty, cello; Jonathan Chapman, bass; Matias Recharte,

HOME IN THE Six

EXULTATE CHAMBER SINGERS

A CONCERT IN
CELEBRATION OF
TORONTO COMPOSERS

FRIDAY, MAY 13TH
8:00 P.M.

WWW.EXULTATE.NET

drums. Sellers and Newell, 672 College St. 647-778-6345. \$20.



BRILLIANT BRANDENBURG

May 13th at 8 pm

TORONTOBACHFESTIVAL.ORG

- 8:00: **Toronto Bach Festival. Brilliant Brandenburg.** Bach: Concerto for oboe BWV1056; Concerto for flute, violin & harpsichord BWV1094; Brandenburg Concerto No.1 BWV1046. Grégoire Jeay, flute; Julia Wedman, violin; Christopher Bagan, harpsichord; John Abberger, oboe. Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. www.torontobachfestival.org/single-tickets. \$45.
- 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra. The Best of John Williams.** Steven Reineke, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$56(eve); \$41(mat). Also May 10(8pm), 11(2 & 8pm), 13(8pm).

Saturday May 14



NOON RECITAL

May 14th at noon

COMPLETE SONATAS & PARTITAS

May 14th at 4 & 8 pm

TORONTOBACHFESTIVAL.ORG

- 12:00 noon: **Toronto Bach Festival. Noon Organ Recital.** Bach: Prelude & Fugue in a BWV543; Trio Sonata No.5 in c BWV529; Chorales from Clavierübung. John Bott, organ. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. www.torontobachfestival.org/single-tickets. \$45.

- 4:00: **Toronto Bach Festival. The Sonatas & Partitas for Solo Violin: Part 1.** Bach: Sonata No.1 in g BWV1001; Partita No.1 in b BWV1002; Sonata No.2 in a BWV1003. Julia Wedman, Patricia Ahern, Valerie Gordon, Cristina Zacharias, violins. Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. www.torontobachfestival.org/single-tickets. \$45. Part 2 at 8pm.
- 7:30: **Durham Youth Orchestra. DY O 25th Anniversary Gala Concert.** Mozart: Mvt III (Rondeau) from Flute Quartet No.1 in D K285; Beecroft: Tre pezzi brevi; Schumann: Piano Quintet in E-flat Op.44; Mozart: Mvt II (Andantino) from Concerto for Flute, Harp and Orchestra in C K299; Bizet: Habanera from Carmen; and other works. Victor Zeyu Li, violin; Katya Poplyansky, violin; Allison Rich, cello; Meagan Turner, viola; Chelsie Vaillancourt, flute; and other soloists. Hebron Christian Reformed Church, 4240 Anderson St., **Whitby**. www.dyomusic.com/events-concerts/. \$25; Free(children in Grade 8 or under).
- 7:30: **York Chamber Ensemble. The Emperor.** Mozart: Overture to La clemenza di Tito; Beethoven: Piano Concerto No.5 in E-flat Op.73 "Emperor Concerto"; Johann Strauss II: Emperor Waltz, Op.437. Jarmin Weng, piano. St. Paul's Anglican Church, 227 Church St., **Newmarket**. 416-931-7899. \$25.
- 8:00: **Acoustic Harvest. Mike Stevens in a CD Release Celebration.** St. Paul's United Church, 200 McIntosh St., **Scarborough**. www.acousticharvest.ca. \$30(advance only).
- 8:00: **Art of Time Ensemble/Harbourfront Centre/Writers Collective of Canada. Who Is We: Voices Across the Divides.** A Concert of Question and Hope. Kan Cheung, Paul Eng, Dee Hope, Marta McIlroy, Ellise Ramos, and other performers; Daniel MacIvor, stage director; Andrew Burashko, music director. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-973-4000 or www.my.harbourfrontcentre.com/overview/37925. From \$19. Also May 12 & 13. Livestream on May 14.
- 8:00: **Flato Markham Theatre. Classic Albums Live Performs Billy Joel's The Stranger.** 171 Town Centre Blvd., **Markham**. www.flatomarkhamtheatre.ca or 905-305-7469 or boxoffice@markham.ca. \$15-\$70.
- 8:00: **Greater Toronto Philharmonic Orchestra. In Concert.** Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in e Op.95 "From the New World". Oliver Balaburski, conductor. Calvin Presbyterian Church, 26 Delisle Ave. 647-238-0015. \$20-\$30.
- 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music. Jazz From Around the World Series: Ivan Lins Quintet & Supergenerous featuring Cyro Baptista & Kevin Breit.** Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$50-\$100. Proof of vaccination required.
- 8:00: **St. Jude's Celebration of the Arts. Heather Bambrick: A Jazzy Little Kitchen Party.** Heather Bambrick Trio; Heather Bambrick, vocalist. St. Jude's Anglican Church, 160 William St., **Oakville**. 905-844-3972 or <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/heather-bambrick-a-jazzy-little-kitchen-party-tickets-306835803147?aff=ebdsbdestsearch>. \$30.
- 8:00: **TD Sunfest/Wolf Performance Hall. Las Cafeteras.** Wolf Performance Hall, 251 Dundas St., **London**. www.sunfest.on.ca. \$33; \$28(adv).

- 8:00: **Toronto Bach Festival. The Sonatas & Partitas for Solo Violin: Part 2.** Bach: Partita No.2 in d BWV1004; Sonata No.3 in C BWV1005; Partita No.3 in E BWV1006. Julia Wedman, Patricia Ahern, Valerie Gordon, Cristina Zacharias, violins. Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. www.torontobachfestival.org/single-tickets. \$45. Part 2 at 4pm.
- 8:00: **Westben. Digital Concert: Laila Biali.** Laila Biali, vocals/piano. 877-883-5777 or www.westben.ca. Free or by donation at www.westben.ca/donate. NEW DATE. ONLINE.

THAT CHOIR

[silence and solitude]

MAY 14 AT 8PM
MAY 15 AT 2PM

St. Anne's Anglican Church
(270 Gladstone Ave)

ALL TICKETS ARE
PAY WHAT YOU CAN!

www.thatchoir.com

- 8:00: **That Choir. silence and solitude.** St. Anne's Anglican Church, 270 Gladstone Ave. 416-419-1756 or info@thatchoir.com or www.thatchoir.com. PWYC. Also May 15(2pm).

Sunday May 15

- 11:00am: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Young People's Concert: mad.sad.glad (Relaxed Concert).** Bizet: Carmen, Suite No.1 - Les Toréadors (No.5); Tchaikovsky: Excerpt from Symphony No.4; John Williams: Imperial March from Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back; Beethoven: Excerpt from Coriolan Overture; Tchaikovsky: Excerpt from Mvt IV of Symphony No.6; and other works. Emad Zofaghari, viola; Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser, host & conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$23. Also 2 & 4pm.
- 1:00: **Toronto Bach Festival. Bach the Dramatist: Public Lecture.** An in-depth look at Bach's dramatic writing in oratorio settings, particularly the Easter Oratorio and Ascension Oratorio. John Bott, presenter. Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. www.torontobachfestival.org/single-tickets. Free.
- 2:00: **That Choir. silence and solitude.** St. Anne's Anglican Church, 270 Gladstone Ave. 416-419-1756 or info@thatchoir.com or www.thatchoir.com. PWYC. Also May 14(8pm).
- 2:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Young People's Concert: mad.sad.glad.** See 11am for details.
- 2:30: **Cantorei sine Nomine. Handel's Messiah.** A live performance of Messiah in Handel's original chamber version for small choir, strings, trumpets and soloists. Stu Beaudoine, conductor. Trinity United Church, 20 First

- Ave., **Uxbridge**. Free. A donation of \$25 is suggested. Audience is requested to be fully vaccinated and masked.
- 3:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music. Power Corporation of Canada Vocal Concerts Series: Anne Sofie von Otter with Christoph Berner.** Mozart: Abendempfindung K.523; Lindblad: Aftonen, Mån tro? Jo, jo!, Vaggvisa; Geijer: Gräl och allt väl and others. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$45-\$100. Proof of vaccination required.
- 4:00: **Mightier Productions. Conan and the Stone of Kelior.** See May 5.



EASTER ORATORIO

May 15th at 4 pm

TORONTOBACHFESTIVAL.ORG

- 4:00: **Toronto Bach Festival. Easter Oratorio.** Bach: Easter Oratorio BWV249; Ascension Oratorio BWV11. Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. www.torontobachfestival.org/single-tickets. \$45.
- 4:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Young People's Concert: mad.sad.glad.** See 11am for details.
- 7:00: **INNERchamber Ensemble. Theme & Evolutions.** Common ground is the starting point for musical fusion. Using Bach's Goldberg Variations as a starting point, the performers will tackle the theme of connection. Graham Hargrove, percussion; Daniel Ramjattan, guitar; Joe Phillips, bass. Revival House, 70 Brunswick St., **Stratford**. www.innerchamber.ca or tickets@innerchamber.ca. \$40; \$10-\$25 (arts workers/st). LIVE & LIVESTREAM. Pre-show 6:30pm. A light meal is available for patrons in Stratford.
- 7:00: **Vivien Fellegi. Unite for Ukraine: A Musical Benefit.** Kalyna Performing Arts Company, dancers; Quintageous Woodwind Quintet; Kalyn Dar, Ukrainian folk singers; David Kroo, vocalist and band; Lunar Bloom, folk singer ensemble; and others. St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church (Toronto), 33 Leeds St. For info email vfellegi@rogers.com. Live event tickets on eventbrite.ca. \$25; \$15(livestream tbc). LIVE & LIVESTREAM. Proceeds to Canada-Ukraine Foundation, a non-profit sending humanitarian aid to the war zone.

Tuesday May 17

- 12:10: **Yorkminster Park Baptist Church. Lunchtime Chamber Music: Rebecca Miller, Viola.** 1585 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. Free admission. Donations welcome.

Wednesday May 18

- May 18 12:30: **ORGANIX Concerts.** *Organ Concert.* Stefani Bedin, organ. Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, 3055 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or www.organixconcerts.ca. Suggested freewill offering of \$20.
- May 18 7:30: **Canadian Opera Company.** *La traviata.* See Apr 23. Also May 20. At 7:30 unless otherwise noted.

Thursday May 19

- 8:00: **TD Sunfest/Wolf Performance Hall.** *Twin Flames.* Wolf Performance Hall, 251 Dundas St., London. www.sunfest.on.ca. \$33; \$28(adv).
- 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Gimeno + Hannigan.* Julia Mermelstein: in moments, into bloom - Celebration Prelude (World Premiere); Stravinsky: Scherzo fantastique Op.3; Zosha Di Castri: In the half-light, for soprano and orchestra (World Premiere); Stravinsky: The Firebird (complete ballet, original 1910 version). Barbara Hannigan, soprano; Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also May 21.

Friday May 20

- 12:10: **Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* Matthew Li, piano; BoPeng, violin. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 73 Simcoe St. www.standrewstontoronto.org/events/music-at-standrews-2/. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.
- 7:30: **Canadian Opera Company.** *La traviata.* See Apr 23.
- 7:30: **North Wind Concerts.** *All Creatures Great and Small.* Vivaldi (arr. Chedeville): Spring from The Four Seasons; Biber: Sonata representativa; Couperin: La linote éfarouchée; Williams: Sonata in Imitation of Birds; Vivaldi: Concerto, Il Gardellino. Marco Cera, oboe; Alison Melville, recorder/flute; Cristina Zacharias, violin; Christopher Bagan, harpsichord; Kerri McGonigle, cello. Columbus Centre, 901 Lawrence Ave. W. 416-305-1732. PWYC. Suggested admission \$25. Also May 21 (St. Thomas's Anglican Church).

Saturday May 21

- 7:30: **North Wind Concerts.** *All Creatures Great and Small.* Vivaldi (arr. Chedeville): Spring from The Four Seasons; Biber: Sonata representativa; Couperin: La linote éfarouchée; Williams: Sonata in Imitation of Birds; Vivaldi: Concerto, Il Gardellino. Marco Cera, oboe; Alison Melville, recorder/flute; Cristina Zacharias, violin; Christopher Bagan, harpsichord; Kerri McGonigle, cello. St. Thomas's Anglican Church (Toronto), 383 Huron St. 416-305-1732. PWYC. Suggested admission \$25. Also May 20 (Columbus Centre).
- 8:00: **Kindred Spirits Orchestra.** *Love and Turmoil.* Hindemith: Overture to Amor and Psyche; Rachmaninov: Piano Concerto No.4 Op.40; Prokofiev: Symphony No.6 in e-flat Op.111. Ludmil Angelov, piano; Kristian Alexander, conductor. Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge St., Richmond Hill. 905-604-8339 or KSOrchestra.ca or RHCentre.ca. \$15-\$40. LIVE, ONLINE or RECORDED.
- 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Gimeno + Hannigan.* See May 19 for details.

Sunday May 22

- 2:30: **VOICEBOX: Opera in Concert.** *The Mother of Us All.* Music by Virgil Thomson. Libretto by Gertrude Stein. Meghan Lindsay, soprano; Daniela Agostino, soprano; Edward Larocque, tenor; Evan Korbut, baritone; Dion Mazerolle, baritone; Kate Carver, musical director/piano; Robert Cooper, chorus director. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 27 Front St. E. www.operainconcert.com or 416-366-7723 or 1-800-708-6754. \$38-\$50.
- 2:30: **Niagara Symphony Orchestra.** *Masterworks 2: The Stars Are Not Aligned.* Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade; Glinka: Overture to Ruslan and Lyudmila; Kevin Lau: The Stars Are Not Aligned. Michelle Colton, percussion; Bradley Thachuk, conductor. Partridge Hall, FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, 250 St. Paul St., St. Catharines. www.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).

MA

The Space

NAGATA SHACHU (Taiko)
SASHAR ZARIF (Dance)

Between Us

May 22 @ 7 pm

www.nagatashachu.com

- 7:00: **Nagata Shachu.** *Ma: The Space Between Us.* Zashar Zar, dancer/choreographer; Nagata Shachu (Kiyoshi Nagata, Aki Takahashi, Naoya Kobayashi, Andrew Siu, Kevin Xi-Zhao He, Briana Lee, and Marie Gavin). Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave. www.eventbrite.ca/e/ma-the-space-between-us-tickets-289925403687.

Tuesday May 24

- 12:10: **Yorkminster Park Baptist Church.** *Lunchtime Chamber Music:* Jordana Kleiner, Flute. 1585 Yonge St. 416-922-1167. Free admission. Donations welcome.
- 8:00: **Royal Conservatory of Music.** *Jazz From Around the World Series:* Ivan Lins Quintet & Supergenerous featuring Cyro Baptista & Kevin Breit. Koerner Hall, TELUS Centre, 273 Bloor St. W. 416-408-0208 or rcmusic.com/performance. \$50-\$110.
- 8:00: **Tapestry Opera/OCAD University.** *R.U.R. A Torrent of Light.* Music by Nicole Lizée. Libretto by Nicholas Billon. Gregory Oh, conductor; Michael Hidetoshi Mori, stage director. The Great Hall, OCAD University, Level 2, 100 McCaul St. 416-537-6066. Also May 25, 26, 28, 29(4pm), Jun 1, 2, 4, 5(4pm).

Wednesday May 25

- 12:30: **ORGANIX Concerts.** *Organ Concert.* Nicholas Capozzoli, organ. All Saints Kingsway Anglican Church, 2850 Bloor St. W. 416-571-3680 or www.organixconcerts.ca. Suggested freewill offering of \$20.
- 8:00: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Trifonov Plays "Emperor".* Afarin Mansouri: Celebration Prelude (World Premiere); Liadov: The Enchanted Lake Op.62; Samy Moussa: Symphony No.2 (World Premiere); Beethoven: Piano Concerto No.5 in E-flat Op.73 "Emperor". Daniil Trifonov, piano; Gustavo Gimeno, conductor. Roy Thomson Hall, 60 Simcoe St. 416-598-3375 or 1-855-593-7769. Starting at \$29. Also May 27(7:30pm); 28(8pm).
- 8:00: **Tapestry Opera/OCAD University.** *R.U.R. A Torrent of Light.* Music by Nicole Lizée. Libretto by Nicholas Billon. Gregory Oh, conductor; Michael Hidetoshi Mori, stage director. The Great Hall, OCAD University, Level 2, 100 McCaul St. 416-537-6066. Also May 24, 26, 28, 29(4pm), Jun 1, 2, 4, 5(4pm).

Thursday May 26

- 7:00: **Magisterra at the Museum/Museum London.** *Viola and More.* Brahms: Sonata in E-flat; Stanford: Viola Sonata; Weiner: Ballade; Thieriot: Double Concerto. Elise Desjardins, piano. Museum London, 421 Ridout St. N., London. eventbrite.ca/e/magisterra-at-the-museum-viola-and-more-tickets-168951936791. \$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: **Tapestry Opera/OCAD University.** *R.U.R. A Torrent of Light.* Music by Nicole Lizée. Libretto by Nicholas Billon. Gregory Oh,

TSO Toronto Symphony Orchestra

TRIFONOV PLAYS "EMPEROR"

May 25, 27 & 28

BMO TSO.CA

conductor; Michael Hidetoshi Mori, stage director. The Great Hall, OCAD University, Level 2, 100 McCaul St. 416-537-6066. Also May 24, 25, 28, 29(4pm), Jun 1, 2, 4, 5(4pm).

Friday May 27

- 12:10: **Music at St. Andrew's.** *Friday Noon-time Recital.* Su Jeon Higuera, piano; Jin Lee Youn, violin. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Toronto), 73 Simcoe St. www.standrewstontoronto.org/events/music-at-standrews-2/. Free. Donations welcome. LIVE & ONLINE.
- 7:30: **Toronto Symphony Orchestra.** *Trifonov Plays "Emperor".* See May 25.



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PROKOFIEV, Symphony No. 6



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conductor



Ludmil Angelov
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- **Canadian Opera Company.** *Gianni Schicchi.* Click on www.coc.ca/watch. Available until Apr 30.
- **Canadian Opera Company.** *In Winter.* Click on www.coc.ca/watch.
- **Canadian Opera Company.** *Voices of Mountains.* Click on www.coc.ca/stream. Free. Available until Jun 15.
- **Capella Regalis Men & Boys Choir.** *Choral Concerts.* Available at www.youtube.com/user/capellaregalis
- **Glenn Gould Foundation.** *Nahre Sol: Reinventing the Classical, Part I.* In this first part of an expansive interview, Nahre discusses her classical training and transition to multimedia forms of creative expression, as well as her wide range of musical influences. Listen on our website at www.glenn Gould.com
- **Kevin Barrett.** *Live from Lockdown.* Kevin Barrett does a livestreamed set of solo guitar tunes, coming directly from his Lockdown studio. Tune in to Kevin's Facebook page on Friday at 4pm at www.m.facebook.com/KevinBarrett.
- **Off Centre Music Salon.** *Shostakovich 24 Preludes, a Bechstein Piano and Boris: Telling Life Stories.* Shostakovich: 24 Preludes. Boris Zarankin, piano; Julia Zarankin, host. Click on www.offcentremusic.com/shostakovich-24-preludes. Available until June 30.

LIVE REHEARSAL OPPORTUNITIES

- **Etobicoke Community Concert Band.** Full rehearsals every Wednesday night at 7:30pm. 309 Horner Ave. Open to all who are looking for a great band to join. Text Rob Hunter at 416-878-1730.

ONGOING EVENTS

- **Mix 669.** *Beyond the B-side: Open Mic @ The Mix 669.* Adam Golding, host. 669 College St. 647-909-2109. \$5 cover. **Weekly on Wed at 7pm.**

ONLINE GROUPS

- **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. Participation is free with pre-registration. Email info@recollectiv.ca for meeting times, information and registration.

Free event listings:
listings@thewholenote.com

MAINLY CLUBS, MOSTLY JAZZ



ORI DAGAN

Robert Horvath Quartet on the Drom Patio

"Drom's Safe Journey," from page 25

Open since 2018 in the space previously occupied by Tortilla Flats, at 458 Queen St. W. – Drom Taberna has quickly become one of the city's most exciting new destinations for live music, inventive drinks and, in the warmer months, an expansive outdoor patio space. Described as a "heartfelt homage" to "the lands that stretch from the Baltic to the Balkans to the Black Sea," Drom Taberna celebrates Eastern European culture and heritage, with a special emphasis on the contributions of the Romani. (In the Romani language, "latcho drom" means "safe journey.")

Throughout pandemic lockdowns, Drom Taberna operated as a deli and was one of the first clubs to jump back on live music, first on its patio and then back inside, as restrictions allowed. Recently, on March 31, the venue hosted a belated New Year's Eve party. Yes, you've read that correctly: a New Year's Eve party, complete with multiple

In the Clubs (Mostly Jazz)

LIVE MUSIC IS BACK! As venues begin to reopen, please consult their websites and social media directly to confirm their reopening plans, COVID-19 policies, and any other pertinent information to make your visit fun, safe, and enjoyable. Please remember to be kind and patient with venues, servers, and musicians as they reorient themselves. Enjoy!

- **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
castrolounge.com
- **C'est What**
67 Front St. E. 416-867-9499
cestwhat.com
- **Drom Taberna**
458 Queen St. W. 647-748-2099
dromtaberna.com
- **Emmet Ray, The**
924 College St. 416-792-4497
theemmetray.com
- **Grossman's Tavern**
379 Spadina Ave. 416-977-7000
grossmantavern.com
- **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
- **Jazz Bistro, The**
251 Victoria St. 416-363-5299
jazzbistro.ca
- **Jazz Room, The**
Located in the Huether Hotel, 59 King St. N.,
Waterloo. 226-476-1565
kwjazzroom.com
- **Lula Lounge**
1585 Dundas St. W. 416-588-0307
lula.ca
- **Manhattans Pizza Bistro & Music Club**
951 Gordon St., Guelph 519-767-2440
manhattans.ca
- **Mezzetta Restaurant**
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mezzetrestaurant.com
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themonarchtavern.com

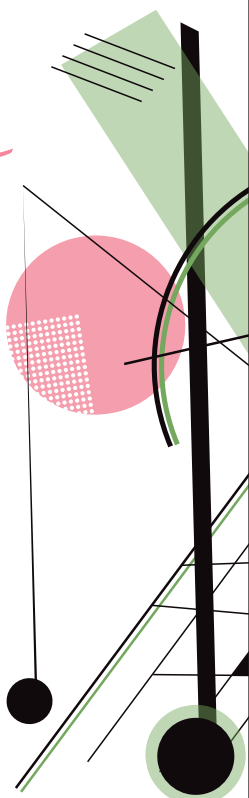
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bands, a grill operating on the patio and champagne at midnight. It was, as the venue put it, an opportunity to party, for artists to play and make money, and for patrons to “look all hot and fancy.” The vibe at Drom Taberna, as one might surmise, is decidedly fun and high energy, with an emphasis on good times, good food and drink, and good music.

Drom Taberna regularly presents jazz, world music, klezmer and many other styles of music, with a special emphasis on music of Eastern European origin. Performances in April include violinist Ed Vokurka, whose music is influenced by the 1930s Quintette du Hot Club de France, a group that included famed guitarist Django Reinhardt and violinist Stéphane Grappelli; Tara Moneka, an Arabic singer, dancer, and percussionist, originally from Iraq; and Debi Botos, a Toronto-based jazz manouche guitarist (and member of the illustrious musical Botos family) with roots in Hungary. 

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



Viper's Cloud performing at Drom Taberna

• 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

• Sauce on Danforth
1376 Danforth Ave. 647-748-1376
sauceondanforth.com

• The Senator Winebar
249 Victoria St 416 364-7517
thesenator.com

• Smokeshow BBQ and Brew
744 Mt. Pleasant Rd 416-901-7469
Smokeshowbbqandbrew.com

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

WHO'S WHO? ONLINE DIRECTORIES INDEX

The WholeNote has a wealth of information online that is not included in our print issues.

Our **Who's Who** section at thewholenote.com is where you'll find detailed profiles of **music presenters** (the **Blue Pages**), **choirs** (the **Canary Pages**) **Summer Music Education**, and **Summer Music Festivals** (the **Green Pages**). These directories are updated online as new submissions are received.

As you start to make plans for musical activities over the summer, whether for yourself, your children, as amateurs or professionals, take a look below at the submissions to our annual **Summer Music Education** directory received by time of publication of this print issue. Full profiles are available online under our Who's Who tab, and more will be added as they come in, so check back often!

thewholenote.com/whoswho

BLUE PAGES DIRECTORY 2021-22

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Aga Khan Museum
www.agakhanmuseum.org | www.cosacanada.org |
| • Amadeus Choir of Greater Toronto
www.amadeuschoir.com | • Counterpoint Community Orchestra
www.ccorchestra.org |
| • Amici Chamber Ensemble
www.amiciensemble.com | • DaCapo Chamber Choir
www.dacapochoir.ca |
| • Art of Time Ensemble
www.artoftimeensemble.com | • Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western U
music.uwo.ca |
| • Attila Glatz Concert Productions (Salute to Vienna)
www.salutetovienna.com | • Edison Singers
www.theedisonsingers.com |
| • Azrieli Foundation
www.azrielifoundation.org/amp | • Elmer Iseler Singers
www.elmerisellersingers.com |
| • Barrie Concert Association
www.barrieconcerts.org | • Ensemble Vivant
www.ensemblevivant.com |
| • Barrie Concert Band
www.barrieconcertband.org | • Estonian Studies Centre
www.vemu.ca |
| • Canadian Music Centre
www.cmccanada.org | • Etobicoke Centennial Choir
www.etobicokecentennialchoir.ca |
| • Canadian Opera Company
www.coc.ca | • Etobicoke Community Concert Band
www.eccb.ca |
| • Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra
www.cathedralbluffs.com | • Etobicoke Philharmonic Orchestra
www.eporchestra.ca |
| • Chorus Niagara
www.chorusniagara.org | • Evergreen Club Contemporary Gamelan
www.evergreenclubgamelan.com |
| • Church of St. Mary Magdalene
www.stmarymagdalene.ca | • Glionna Mansell Corporation
www.glionnamansell.com |
| • COSA Canada (Centre for Opera Studies & Appreciation) | • Hannaford Street Silver Band
www.hssb.ca |

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IS YOUR VENUE

- an informal listening room,
- where food and/or drink may be part of the mix,
- with listening to music the primary focus?

"Mostly jazz" is not a rule!

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- Jubilate Singers
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- Ken Page Memorial Trust
www.kenpagememorialtrust.com
- Kindred Spirits Orchestra
www.KSOrchestra.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
- Nine Sparrows Arts Foundation
www.9sparrowsarts.org
- Nocturnes in the City
www.nocturnesinthecity.com
- Off Centre Music Salon
www.offcentremusic.com
- Opera Atelier
www.operaatelier.com
- Orchestra Toronto
www.orchestratoronto.ca
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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
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- Tapestry Opera
www.tapestryopera.com
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- Toronto Choral Society
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- Toronto Classical Singers
www.torontoclassicalsingers.ca
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torontoconsort.org
- Toronto Mendelssohn Choir
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- Toronto Mozart Players
www.mozartproject.ca
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- Toronto Symphony Orchestra
www.TSO.CA
- Trio Arkel
www.trioarkel.com
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music.utoronto.ca
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www.uppercanadachoristers.org

- Vesnivka Choir
www.vesnivka.com
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www.vocachorus.ca
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www.operainconcert.com
- Westben Centre for Connection and Creativity Through Music
www.westben.ca
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www.wychwoodclarinetchoir.ca
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www.yorkminsterpark.com

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www.cammac.ca/en/2022-summer-programs/
- Camp Musical Tutti
www.campmusical.com
- COC Summer Opera Camps & COC Summer Opera Intensive
www.coc.ca/summerprograms
- Interprovincial Music Camp
www.campimc.ca
- Kodály Certification Program - Levels I, II and III (Western U)
music.uwo.ca/outreach/music-education/kodaly-certification-program.html
- Lake Field Music
www.lakefieldmusic.ca
- Music at Port Milford
www.musicatportmilford.org
- No Strings Theatre
www.nostringstheatre.com
- Oboe Intensive at Western University
music.uwo.ca/outreach/oboe-intensive.html
- Stratford Summer Music Jazz Academy
www.stratfordsummermusic.ca
- Stratford Summer Music Vocal Academy
www.stratfordsummermusic.ca
- Summer Music
www.summermusic.com
- Ukrainian Art Song Summer Institute 2022
www.ukrainianartsong.ca
- Vancouver Symphony Orchestral Institute
www.vancouversymphony.ca/the-vso-institute/the-vso-institute

Our next issue will feature an update on Canary Pages and Green Pages submissions.

For information on how to join any of our directories, please contact karen@thewholenote.com

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Editor's Corner

DAVID OLDS



Just as Terry Robbins' column is named "Strings Attached," this month mine could be called "Strings Galore." First up is **Matangi: Outcast – Schnittke | Silvestrov | Shostakovich (Matangi Music MTMo4 matangi.nl)**, an album devoted to "musical troublemakers and outsiders, three Soviet-Russian composers who wrote music that went dangerously against the tastes of the regime under which they lived."

The Matangi string quartet has been at the forefront of contemporary music in the Netherlands since its founding at the turn of the current century. In their own annual (Un)heard Music Festival in The Hague they present works that are rarely if ever heard in Dutch concert venues, venturing beyond the realm of traditional concert music to include jazz, dance and pop while still embracing the classical canon. A recent guest at the festival was the reclusive Ukrainian composer Valentin Silvestrov (b.1937), a polystylist whose early works ranged from serialist to pointillist, resulting in him being branded avant-garde and refused entry to the Union of Soviet Composers. He has said of his early contrarian works "composing radical music was like working with a mountain of salt that you used up completely. Now I take a handful of salt, just for the taste." Silvestrov's delicate, indeed at times barely audible, 1974 extended one-movement *String Quartet No.1* provides a gentle bridge between the more familiar works by Schnittke and Shostakovich on this disc, which opens with the former's *String Quartet No.3*. Schnittke was also influenced by a plethora of styles, often rooted in Western culture, and likewise deemed unacceptable by the Soviet powers that be. He often incorporated what he called "forgeries" of other compositions and his quartet opens with quotes from Orlando di Lasso, Beethoven and Shostakovich which reappear throughout the quartet. Of particular note is the *Agitato* second movement that layers a ghostly hint of Lasso's *Stabat Mater* into an angular waltz often interrupted by strident echoes of Shostakovich's eighth string quartet. It is this latter work that concludes the disc. The *Quartet in C Minor, Op.110* was sketched in three days in 1960 in Dresden where the composer was deeply affected by the ruins left by the Allies' firebombing of the city during the late days of the Second World War. It is one of Shostakovich's darkest works, opening with a *Largo* movement although, as mentioned, it also has strident moments in the *Allegro molto* second, and features a lilting waltz third movement, before returning to the glacial pace of the first in the final two *Largo* movements. The Matangi give outstanding performances of all three works on this particularly timely release.



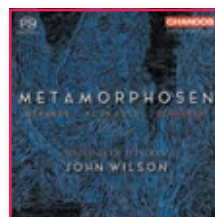
Russian/American pianist **Olga Kern** is featured with the **Dali Quartet** on **Brahms & Shostakovich Piano Quintets (Delos DE 3587 delosmusic.com)**. In an impassioned statement accompanying the release Moscow-born Kern, whose grandfather was Ukrainian and great-grandmother an opera singer in Kharkiv, says "I defy war. It's heartbreaking to witness the tragedy that is unfolding before our very eyes in Ukraine. It's ugly and brutal beyond words and it also brings us together in the face of injustice. [...] Please stop this madness! Please say NO to war!"

Unlike the later string quartet discussed above, Shostakovich's *Piano Quintet in G Minor, Op.57*, is a sunny work. It was composed in 1940, before Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, "a time of deceptive optimism among the Russian people [when] even the despair-prone

Shostakovich was hopeful that he could maintain his [newfound] status as [a] favoured composer." This work did indeed prove popular with the public and even won Shostakovich the inaugural Stalin Prize. In homage to Bach, the quintet opens with a *Prelude* introduced by the piano, followed by a second movement *Fugue* in which the strings intertwine until about the two-minute mark when the piano joins in. The contemplative spirit of the opening movements is interrupted by a truly joyous, ebullient *Scherzo* lasting a brief three minutes. A languorous *Intermezzo* follows before a playful and melodious *Finale* brings this beloved half-hour work to an end.

It seems to have been Robert Schumann who first combined solo piano with string quartet, giving birth to the genre of piano quintet in 1842. Some 20 years later Brahms, by then a familiar member of the Schumann household, composed his own *Piano Quintet in F Minor* but in this instance opting for two cellos. The work was not well received and he went on to make a two-piano version that was equally unsuccessful before finally settling on the more usual arrangement of piano, two violins, viola and cello, which became the lush and lyrical work we now know as *Op.34*.

Known for its championing of Latin American repertoire – the quartet members hail from Venezuela, Puerto Rico and the United States and the group received the Atlanta Symphony's Aspire Award for accomplished African American and Latino musicians – the Dali Quartet shows itself here to be just as thoroughly at home with European repertoire in these sparkling performances. Kern, among whose awards is a Gold Medal from the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, shines throughout.



Speaking of lush, a work Glenn Gould once called "the most moving piece of the 20th century" gives the title to the next disc: **Metamorphosen – Strauss | Korngold | Schreker** featuring **Sinfonia of London** under **John Wilson (Chandos CHSA 5292 naxosdirect.com/search/chsa5292)**. Of course Gould also referred to *Metamorphosen* as "23 wayward strings in search of a cadence" or some such pithy phrase, but he does seem to have had great admiration for Richard Strauss' 1945 study for 23 solo strings. Wilson leads his ensemble flawlessly through the meandering journey which lasts 28 minutes, negotiating the waves of *sturm und*

What we're listening to this month:



Outcast
Matangi Quartet
The top String Quartet in the Netherlands present "Outcast" - quartets by Schnittke, Silvestrov and Shostakovich - all critics of Soviet Russia



Viola Borealis
Marina Thibeault
Violist Marina Thibeault explores musical links between northern cultures: Latvian composer Peteris Vasks; Anishinaabe composer Melody McKiver; the very first viola concerto by Telemann.

drang – at times reminiscent of Schoenberg's *Transfigured Night* – without ever losing the thread or floundering into troubled waters. It's a truly transcendent voyage.

Hans Schreker's brief and lyrical *Intermezzo, Op.8* from 1900 lightens the mood and sets the stage for Erich Wolfgang Korngold's *Symphonic Serenade for String Orchestra Op.39* (1947-48). If we thought that the 23 strings of the Strauss were sufficient, Korngold disagreed. He scored his serenade for 16 each of first and second violins, 12 violas, 12 cellos and 8 double basses. Somehow Wilson manages to keep these 64 string instruments from turning into an indecipherable wash of sound, even in the densest passages. The sprightly pizzicato second movement provides welcome contrast to the lyrical opening and the languorous third, but it is the hold-on-to-your-hats rollercoaster finale that is the icing on the cake; a flourishing finish to a thoroughly satisfying disc.



After immersing myself in the dense, lush – I keep wanting to say “at times lugubrious,” but that’s not right, they are simply thick, rich and gorgeous – textures of Brahms and Strauss, I found I needed a palette cleanser. A new **Analekta** release, **Early Italian Cello Concertos** featuring **Elinor Frey** and **Rosa Barocca** under **Claude Lapalme** (AN2 9163 analekta.com/en), proved just the thing.

In her extensive and informative booklet notes Frey discusses the development of the violoncello, describing it as actually a family of instruments originating with the *violone*, a small type of bass violin current in the 17th century. “Only beginning in the 1720s did a sort of ideal compromise instrument, of a size halfway between the smallish Baroque *violoncello* and the larger *violone*, establish itself as our current standard cello. The term *violoncello piccolo*, often used today to denote the typical Baroque *violoncello*, is in part a modern invention – an anachronistic misnomer [...which] only makes sense when used in comparison with our larger modern instrument.” She also discusses the differences between four- and five-string versions of the cello.

For this recording – which includes works by Sammartini (1700-1775), Vivaldi (1678-1741), Tartini (1692-1770) and Leonardo Leo (1694-1744) – Frey uses two different instruments, the smaller Baroque size in the Sammartini and Tartini, and the modern size for Vivaldi and Leo. These latter she says “have inspired quite a few modern-day cellists to perform on a five-string instrument, in part because of the fiendishly difficult passagework that ascends into the upper register. [...] Over time I came to view these works as demanding and thrillingly virtuosic concertos that belonged to the larger four-string cello repertoire.” Thrilling virtuosity is especially true of Leo's *Concerto No.2 in D Major*, which I first encountered in

Anner Bylsma's recording with Tafelmusik back in my days at CJRT-FM; it became a favourite and I programmed it frequently, both on *Music Before 1800* with Peter Keigh and during regular morning broadcasts with Alex Baran. As seminal as that recording was in my developing an interest in Baroque music, I must say that Frey and Rosa Barocca, a Montreal ensemble of which I was not previously aware, surpass this forerunner in terms of crispness, energy and articulation. From start to finish this disc is enthralling; my only quibble is the choice to end the recital with a minor key *Andante cantabile* movement from a violin sonata by Tartini, one of two Frey transcriptions to grace the disc. I would have preferred it to end with a bang, not a whimper, lovely though it is.



Palette cleansed, I returned to our current century with **Nicolas Altstaedt's** performance of **Esa-Pekka Salonen's Cello Concerto** with the **Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra** under **Dima Slobodeniouk** (Alpha ALPHA627 naxosdirect.com/search/alpha627). This riveting 2017 work was co-commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Barbican Centre (London) and the Elbphilharmonie (Hamburg)

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Inspirations:
New Music for Solo Guitar
Daniel Ramjattan

This debut album features six works by diverse living composers for classical guitar, ranging from the philosophical and mindful to the virtuosic and unbridled.



Resurrexi!
Choir of Keble College, Oxford;
Instruments of Time & Truth;
Paul Brough

Celebrating Easter – a mass sequence based around Mozart's Spaurmesse, interspersed with plainchant and a treasury of Viennese classical sacred music by the Haydn brothers

for cellist Yo-Yo Ma to whom it is dedicated. Altstaedt, who was in London at the time of the British premiere, attended the rehearsal and performance by Yo-Yo Ma and was later invited to give the Finnish premiere under the composer's direction at the Helsinki Festival. He says "Performing with the composer himself is always a special moment. Burning full of questions you have always wanted to ask, there is also a magic space of nonverbal communication that needs to take place. Not to mention I was a bit starstruck in this situation, Esa-Pekka made it extremely easy for me; the week of rehearsals and the performance were pure joy. Joking about his quotation of Tchaikovsky's 4th Symphony's Scherzo 'I should [only] compose when I am sober,' gave me a glimpse into a composer's life as well as his description of the beginning of the piece: 'I always wanted to compose something like the opening of Alban Berg's *Altenberg Lieder*.'"

In his own notes, Salonen tells us "Some of the ideas for my *Cello Concerto* can be traced back at least three decades, but the actual material for the piece was mostly developed in the summer of 2015 when I decided to spend a few months researching for new kinds of textures without a concrete plan how to use them. I decided to use some phrases from my 2010 solo cello work *...knock, breathe, shine...* in the second and third movements as I always felt that the music of the solo piece was almost orchestral in its scope and character, and would function well within an orchestral environment. [...] I happen to like the concept of a virtuoso operating at the very limits of what is physically (and sometimes mentally) possible. I have learnt, however, that virtuosity doesn't limit itself to the mechanics of playing an instrument. A true virtuoso can also capture the beauty and expression in the quietest moments, to fill near-stasis with life through a musician's imagination and ability to communicate." Altstaedt rises to all the challenges thrown at him throughout the 36-minute work, holding his own against incredibly dense orchestral textures, sensitively realizing the most quiet passages, which include seagull-like glissandi, and a flamboyant extended cadenza shared with bongo drums and woodblocks. The result is exhilarating.

The recording includes a striking performance of Ravel's *Sonata for Violin and Cello* with Pekka Kuusisto. I spoke earlier about the denseness of the string writing in Brahms and Strauss. Ravel's *Duo* (its original name) is so dense it would be easy to think you were hearing a string quartet. So dense in fact that Roland Manuel once joked about making a "reduced version for orchestra." Altstaedt states "Working with [Kuusisto] on this piece felt like coming home, although differently — it felt like a place that I knew but never visited before. [...] Pekka had fresh ideas each time we picked up the piece, connecting every gesture in the music to an experience from real life. He never repeated himself; rehearsing with him was not only infinitely inspiring but also very entertaining. 'Let's create the sound of a vacuum cleaner' might sound criminal to some musicians, but Ravel's own description of the theme of the last movement as 'like a mechanical rabbit' or 'clownesque improvisation' in the second movement, puts other ideas firmly in their place.

Random accidents became virtues, (at least from our perspective) and led us to discover the character that we had actually sought." Evidently Ravel expressed fears of "being assassinated by amateurs." He need not have worried in this instance. Altstaedt and Kuusisto are consummate professionals, fearless of risk taking, who ask us to open our ears to a new approach to this familiar music, one which Ravel would have evidently approved.



And this just in: As I was up against the deadline writing this column, I found in my inbox a very timely release from recorder virtuoso **Michala Petri** that I simply must share with you: **Galina Grigorjeva – Lament (Our Recordings 9.70894 ourrecordings.com)**. I will let the press release speak for itself.

"As we all know the world has changed since February the 24th. What is going on with Putin's atrocities against the free people of an independent nation is beyond our imagination. War is the antithesis of art and music and anathema to everything we represent and hold sacred – and it is difficult to find a way to respond to such a disaster. Everyone involved suffers on both sides – and the consequences affect the whole world – especially the most vulnerable. Since that tragic day Michala Petri has featured a very special work on all her concerts, *Lament* for recorder solo by the Ukrainian-born composer Galina Grigorjeva – and for the duration of this atrocity, she will continue to do so!

"Born in Crimea, Ukraine, Grigorjeva (b.1962) is one of the most original composers on the contemporary soundscape, creating timeless, ethereal music whose roots lay deep within Slavonic and Western sacred music traditions. *Lament*, for solo tenor recorder (2000), is a remarkable work, wonderfully engaging with a definite Slavic quality evoking the sounds of the Ukrainian overtone flute, the kalyuka. Beginning with an octave-and-a-half cry of anguish, wisps of melody become increasingly passionate and frantic [...] before retreating in resignation and acceptance."

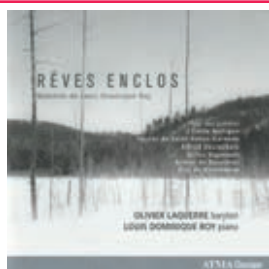
I encourage you to seek out this stunning work, and to support artistic contributions to Ukraine's struggle wherever you encounter them. All involved in the recording worked for free; no expenses were incurred producing this moving digital release and all proceeds from the sale of *Lament* will be donated to the Kyiv Contemporary Music Days Foundation. 🐼

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

David Olds, DIScoveries Editor
discoveries@thewholenote.com

What we're listening to this month:

thewholenote.com/listening



Rêves Enclos

Louis Dominique Roy, Louis-Philippe Marsolais, Olivier Laquerre, Sébastien Lépine
Pianist-composer Roy's original songs are set to poems by some of Québec's greatest poets. A first airing in this new recording with baritone Olivier Laquerre.



Gabriel Pierné, Feuille d'album
Antoine Laporte

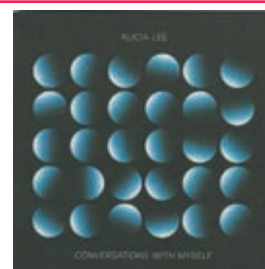
A double album of works for piano by Gabriel Pierné (1863-1937), a contemporary of Debussy and Fauré. Some world premieres. English and French booklets with notes



lumena

The Topaz Duo

Harpist Angela Schwarzkopf and flutist Kaili Maimets release an album of four works by living North American composers.



Conversations with Myself
Alicia Lee

A dynamic collection of works for solo clarinet with and without electronics, chronicling a year of artistic activity in isolation.

STRINGS ATTACHED

TERRY ROBBINS



On **Viola Borealis** the outstanding violinist **Marina Thibeault** explores musical links between several northern cultures. **Nicolas Ellis** conducts Montreal's **Orchestre de l'Agora** (ATMA Classique ACD2 2811 atma-classique.com/en).

The main work here is the striking 2016 *Viola Concerto* by Lithuanian composer Peteris Vasks. Thibeault gave the North American premiere in 2019, Vasks calling

her playing "truly excellent – she has captured my message." High praise indeed, and fully warranted.

Reckoning was originally a series of six improvisations for violin with pedal effects by the Anishinaabe composer Melody McKiver. Two brief sections from a transcription for solo viola are included here, with harmonics and bowing techniques replacing the electronic effects.

A spirited performance of Telemann's *Viola Concerto in G Major*, generally considered to be the first ever written for the instrument, completes a fine CD.



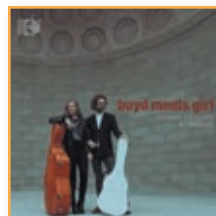
On **Inspirations: New Music for Solo Guitar** the Toronto-based classical guitarist **Daniel Ramjattan** presents a recital of works by composers based in Canada, played on a seven-string left-handed guitar (danielramjattan.bandcamp.com).

Patrick Roux's lovely *Valse Vertigo* is from 1994, but the other five works were all written between 2012 and 2020. John Gordon Armstrong's *Five Inspirations* from

2018 opens the disc, and is one of three premiere recordings here, the others being Stephanie Orlando's *Soon* (2020) and Luis Ramirez's *Singularity* (for guitar and audio) from 2019. The *Gamelan Suite* was written by Ramjattan's wife Naoko Tsujita in 2019; the CD closes with the really attractive four-movement *Catharsis*, written by cellist/

composer Raphael Weinroth-Browne in 2012.

There's beautifully clean playing from Ramjattan, perfectly captured at The Church of St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto, by guitarist Drew Henderson, whose recording, mixing and mastering is, as always, simply as good as it gets.



boyd meets girl: Songs of Love & Despair is the second duo album from the husband-and-wife team of American cellist **Laura Metcalf** and Australian guitarist **Rupert Boyd**; the first was reviewed here in September 2017 (**Sono Luminus DSL-92255 sonoluminus.com**).

It's another project born in the COVID-19 lockdown, and includes five of their own arrangements: Debussy's *Arabesque No.1*; Florence Price's *The Deserted Garden*; Beyoncé's *Pray You Catch Me* (with vocalise); Radiohead's *Daydreaming* (with extended techniques); and Paul McCartney's *Blackbird*. *Eleanor Rigby* is here too, as are Schubert's *Gretchen am Spinnrade* (with lovely guitar work) and Boccherini's *Sonata in A Major*.

Robert Beaser's *Mountain Songs* features four of his set of eight Appalachian folk tunes, and there are world-premiere recordings of two terrific new works – Marián Budoš' *A New York Minute* and Paul Brantley's *Filles de l'Élysée*. Messiaen's *Praise to the Eternity of Jesus*, from his *Quatuor de la fin du temps*, completes another delightful disc, full of warmth and top-notch playing.



The electrifying duo of violinist **Alina Ibragimova** and pianist **Cédric Tiberghien** is back with another superb recital on **Mendelssohn Violin Sonatas** (Hyperion CDA68322 hyperion-records.co.uk/dc.asp?dc=D_CDA68322).

While only the Beethoven-influenced *Sonata in F Minor Op.4* from 1823 was published, three others remained in manuscript: the *Sonata in F Major* BWV Q7 from 1820; the single-movement fragment *Sonata in D* BWV Q18 from the late 1820s; and the substantial *Sonata in F Major* BWV Q26 from 1838, intended for Ferdinand David. Mendelssohn left an unfinished revision of the first movement of the latter work, with the 2009 bicentenary published edition containing both versions; the original is used here.

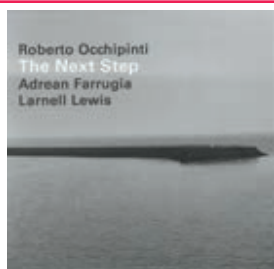
Mendelssohn was an excellent violinist, so it is no surprise that these are much more than merely competent works. Ibragimova and Tiberghien are as good as ever, with terrific ensemble playing and technical brilliance, especially in the typically dazzling scherzo-like finales.

What we're listening to this month:

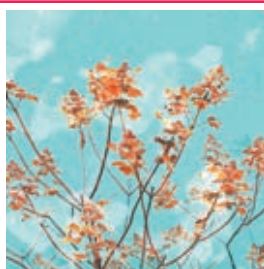
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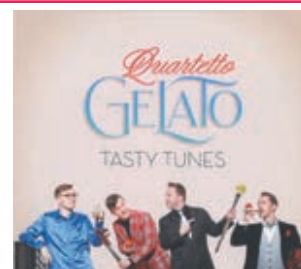
Celestial Forms and Stories
John Aylward & Klangforum
Inspired by the stories of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, composer John Aylward's five-piece suite of atmospheric chamber music features the acclaimed Viennese ensemble Klangforum Wien.



The Next Step
Roberto Occipinti
The award-winning bassist's new trio recording – with pianist Adrean Farrugia and drummer Larnell Lewis – blends his many musical interests in a tight nine-track jazz format.



Of Glow & Abandon
Radia
CBC Music's 30 Under 30 violist Ryan Davis aka Radia releases debut EP of original compositions, *Of Glow & Abandon*, now available on all platforms.



Tasty Tunes
Quartetto Gelato
Tasty Tunes is fun, refreshing and brand new. Enjoy all the different flavours today!

ELINOR FREY

Cellist, gambist and researcher,
Elinor Frey loves to explore the cello's history.



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On **The Death of Juliet and Other Tales: Music of Prokofiev** violinist **Yevgeny Kutik** presents a recital inspired by his teacher Roman Totenberg's story of a chance encounter with Prokofiev in a Paris nightclub, and reflecting Kutik's belief that Russian folklore imbues all of Prokofiev's music. The pianist is **Anna Polonsky** (**Marquis MAR623 marquisclassics.com/index.html**).

Arrangements of five Russian folk melodies commissioned specifically for the album – three for solo violin (including *Kalinka*) and two with piano (including *Song of the Volga Boatmen*) – are built around two Prokofiev works: the exquisite *Parting Scene and Death of Juliet* from *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Sonata in D Major for Solo Violin Op.115*, the latter given a fascinating reading with a much freer opening *Moderato* than you normally hear. The *Violin Sonata No.2 in D Major Op.94bis* closes the disc.

Kutik has a gorgeous tone and a great feel for line and phrase, and is ably supported by Polonsky.



Gottfried van der Goltz is the violinist on **Johann Sebastian Bach Sonatas for Violin and Continuo**, with excellent support from cellist **Annekatrik Beller** and harpsichordist **Torsten Johann** (**Aparte AP276 apartemusic.com/?lang=en**).

Note: these are not the six sonatas for violin and keyboard, but works from what Goltz calls the "grey area" of Bach's catalogue – compositions, sometimes difficult to authenticate, that were described in vague terms and mostly scattered after Bach's death.

Four works here are presented as authentic, although it looks as if the *Gavotte in G Minor* should also have been: the *Sonata in G Major BWV1021*, preserved in a score written by Bach and his wife Anna Magdalena; the *Sonata in E Minor BWV1023*; the *Sonata in C Minor BWV1024* (although the attribution is disputed); and the *Fugue in G Minor BWV1026*. The *Sonata in A Major BWV Anh.II 153* is almost certainly by Georg Philipp Telemann, and the *Sonata in C Minor* from around 1720 is listed as "Anonymous."

The question of authenticity, however, never detracts from a quite superb and beautifully recorded recital of terrific Baroque music.



On **Daniel Hope – America** the violinist explores America's musical heritage in new arrangements by Paul Bateman (**Deutsche Grammophon140049 deutschegrammophon.com/en/artists/danielhope**).

Most of the tracks are for violin and string orchestra, featuring the **Zürcher Kammerorchester** in the five-piece Gershwin *Song Suite*, selections from

Bernstein's *West Side Story*, Florence Price's *Adoration*, Copland's *Long Time Ago*, *At the River* and *Hoedown*, Kurt Weill's *September Song*, *My Ship*, *Speak Low* and *Mack the Knife*, Duke Ellington's *Come Sunday* and Samuel Ward's *America the Beautiful*. The Marcus Roberts jazz piano trio joins Hope for the Gershwin, and jazz singer Joy Denalone and pianist Sylvia Thereza are the collaborators on Sam Cooke's *A Change Is Gonna Come*.

The effectiveness of the arrangements varies, but as usual Hope is in great form and perfectly at ease in this style of music.



The young Norwegian violinist **Johan Dalene**, winner of the 2019 Carl Nielsen Competition follows up last year's first recital disc with an outstanding concerto CD with **Sibelius Nielsen Violin Concertos**, with the **Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra** under **John Storgårds** (**BIS-2620 bis.se**).

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THE TOPAZ DUO
Angela Schwarzkopf
Kaiti Maimets

The composers were both born in 1865 and were excellent violinists, but their concertos, while written within seven years of each other, are markedly different in style. The Sibelius *Concerto in D Minor Op.47* from 1904 is in the traditional three-movement form, while Nielsen's *Concerto Op.33* from 1911 is in two movements, each with slow and fast sections.

Dalene has a bright but not huge tone and technique to burn, and puts a quite individual stamp on both works, always sensitive in the Nielsen and simply dancing through the upper register challenges in the Sibelius.



The final four orchestral works of Finnish composer **Einojuhani Rautavaara** (1928-2016) are presented on **Lost Landscapes: Works for Violin and Orchestra**, a really sumptuous CD featuring violinist **Simone Lamsma** and the **Malmö Symphony Orchestra** under **Robert Trevino** (Ondine ODE 1405-2 naxosdirect.com/search/ode+1405-2).

The beautiful *Fantasia* from 2015 was written for violinist Anne Akiko Meyers. *Deux Sérénades* was written in 2016 at the request of Hilary Hahn; the second movement was left unfinished at the composer's death, with the orchestration completed by Rautavaara's 1970s student Kalevi Aho in 2018.

The four-movement *Lost Landscapes*, a revisiting of locations that were important to the composer in his youth was originally a 2005 violin and piano work for Midori, adapted by Rautavaara for violin and string orchestra in 2013-14. Simone Lamsma was the soloist at the full premiere in Malmö in 2021. *Lost Landscapes* is a world-premiere recording, as is the short orchestral piece *In the Beginning* from 2015.



The modern concert harp weighs about 40 kilos, has 47 strings and seven pedals used to raise their pitch, and requires foot as well as manual dexterity, all of which makes the beautifully nuanced and virtuosic performances by **Magdalena Hoffmann** on **Nightscales for Harp**, her debut album on the DG label, all the more remarkable (Deutsche Grammophon 4861724 deutschegrammophon.com/en/artists/magdalena-hoffmann).

Both original works and piano pieces transcribed by Hoffmann are featured in a delightful recital. Britten's *Suite in C Major Op.83* with its *Notturmo* middle movement is the central work in a program that includes *Notturmo* movements by Respighi and Clara Schumann, two *Nocturnes* by John Field, a *Nocturne* and three *Waltzes* by Chopin, Pizzetti's *Sogno* and the *Nocturne for Left Hand Alone* by the American jazz pianist Fred Hersch.

For pure wow factor, though, the *Danse des Lutins* by the French harpist Henriette Renié, Marcel Tournier's *La danse du Moujik* and Jean-Michel Damase's *Fantaisie on Tales of Hoffmann* are simply stunning.



Schubert wrote string quartets for almost his entire life, with 15 surviving works composed between 1810 or 1811, when he was 13 or 14, and 1826, less than two years before his death; at least another four or five are lost. The complete canon is available in a new 5CD box set of **Schubert – The String Quartets** in immensely satisfying performances by the **Quatuor Modigliani** (Mirare

MIR588 mirare.fr/catalogue).

The quartets are creatively grouped in threes with a common thread, the five volumes being labelled *Harmony*, *The Art of Song*, *The Classical Spirit*, *Sentiments of the Soul* and *Light and Shadow*. Melissa Khong's excellent booklet essay and the generous spacing between the tracks add to an excellent release.



The Spanish composer Ruperto Chapí (1851-1909), known essentially as a composer of zarzuelas, only became interested in chamber music late in life, starting his four string quartets in 1903. The last two of them are featured in performances by the **Cuarteto Latinoamericano** on **Ruperto Chapí String Quartets 3 & 4** (Sono Luminus DSL-92254 sonoluminus.com).

There had been virtually no Spanish string quartet music, ensembles or societies in the 75 years preceding 1901, when the Sociedad Filarmónica and the Cuarteto Francés were both founded in Madrid. Chapí's third and fourth quartets were premiered by the Cuarteto Francés in 1905 and 1907 respectively.

Described as brilliantly funnelling the colour of the zarzuela into the string quartet genre, they are attractive, substantial and well-written works that present frequent technical challenges to the performers. The Cuarteto Latinoamericano, founded in Mexico in 1982, is in its element here in full-blooded performances.



On his second volume of **20th Century Music for Cello** cellist **Benjamin Whitcomb** gives solid performances of four works for the solo instrument (MSR Classics MA 1798 msrcd.com).

The works are Hindemith's 1922 *Cello Sonata Op.25 No.3*, Ernest Bloch's 1956 *Suite No.1*, Gaspar Cassadó's 1926 *Suite for Solo Cello* and Britten's *Suite No.2 Op.80*

from 1967.

Whitcomb has a broad, rather strident tone that tends to lack warmth at times in these competent readings, although there's the occasional moment – especially in the Cassadó – where the intonation seems somewhat less than secure. 🍷

VOCAL

Heinrich Schütz – David & Salomon
Les Cris de Paris; Geoffroy Jourdain
Harmonia Mundi HMM905346 (store.harmoniamundi.com)

▶ One of the great German Baroque composers, Heinrich Schütz's output of sacred music is remarkable for both its quantity and quality. By incorporating Italian techniques and methods and applying them to German-language religious texts, Schütz influenced the future of German music in the sacred and secular realms and is often regarded as the most important German composer before Johann Sebastian Bach.

Schütz lived until the age of 87 and, with over 500 surviving works, any recording of his material needs a specific focus or organizing principle. For the program featured on *David & Salomon*, Schütz's two trips to Italy – taken 16 years apart from each other – serve as book-ends, with every piece of music on this disc composed between 1612 and 1628.

From 1609 to 1612 Schütz studied with Giovanni Gabrieli in Venice, and it is this influence that is most clearly apparent on *David & Salomon*, as the tremendously vital and energetic nature of Italianate polychoral writing is synthesized so effectively with Luther-translated scriptural excerpts throughout. With the first notes of *Alleluja! Lobet den Herren*, we quickly understand that both the composer and performers are masters of their craft, as the rhythmically demanding score is executed with precision, thoughtfulness and joy.

Not everything on this disc is unending exaltation, but Schütz's expressions of grief, angst and solemnity are as successfully executed, if not more so, than their exuberant counterparts. *Vulnerasti cor*



meum, a setting of text from the *Song of Solomon*, is a masterful display of chromatic part-writing, while *An den Wassern zu Babel* uses polychoral techniques to great effect, made even more so through the antiphonal panning present in the audio itself.

A magnificent ensemble with an equally gifted director, Les Cris de Paris and Geoffroy Jourdain are in fine form on *David & Salomon*, which is highly recommended to Schütz aficionados everywhere.

Matthew Whitfield

Resurrexi! – Easter in Vienna with Mozart and the Haydn Brothers
The Choir of Keble College Oxford;
Instruments of Time & Truth; Paul Brough
CRD Records CR 3539 (keble.ox.ac.uk/about/music)



► It has been suggested that Mozart may have written sacred music to remain in favour with his patrons. This is unlikely, but even if it is true it makes no difference to

the meaning of the music, for the music of *Resurrexi* – the Easter mass – expresses a deep, childlike and unquestioning faith, while being quintessentially Mozart: questing and pious, yet at the same time, irresistibly joyful. Director Paul Brough has added two additional pieces to this full mass: a *Sequenza* by Michael Haydn celebrating the paschal lamb which includes the plainchant; and the heartfelt and passionate *Te Deum* by the great Joseph Haydn that is, in every measure, as celebratory and full of nervous energy as the Mozart.

Brough espouses that this recording is an object lesson in the music of liturgy. Indeed there is a profound depth and beauty in the exemplary declamation of chants such as *Vidi aquam* and the *Pater Noster*, and fervent and thrilling singing through the *Sequenza* to the *Te Deum*, by the Choir of Keble College, Oxford.

The choir has mastered sustained, seamless legato singing; complemented with sensitive accompaniments by the Instruments of Time and Truth, the music is revelatory and rewarding. Voices, brass and reeds, timpani and strings inhabit this Latin liturgy with unaffected brilliance striking gold from the opening *Regina Coeli* by Mozart to the fervent account of Haydn's *Te Deum* at closing.

Raul da Gama

Riccardo Zandonai – Francesca da Rimini
Sara Jakubiak; Jonathan Tetelman; Ivan Inverardi; Charles Workman; Deutsche Oper Berlin; Carlo Rizzi
Naxos 2.110711 (naxosdirect.com/search/2110711)



► In *The Divine Comedy*'s circle of Hell reserved for "carnal sinners," Dante encounters Francesca and Paolo, historical 13th-century lovers murdered by Francesca's husband, Paolo's brother Gianciotto. Their story, which

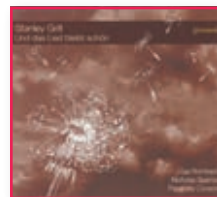
left Dante "overcome with pity," has inspired numerous composers, including Liszt, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff, none more persuasively than Riccardo Zandonai, whose melody-soaked, intensely dramatic 1914 opera deserves much greater renown. (In 1984 the Metropolitan Opera, with stars Renata Scotto and Plácido Domingo, brought it to Toronto's International Festival; the DVD of this vocally and visually resplendent production is still available.)

Unlike the Met's historically appropriate medieval splendour, this 2021 Deutsche Oper Berlin production is senselessly updated to the early 20th century, with Guelfs and Ghibellines somehow still at war, absurdly still fighting with crossbows. Silent actors wander around without apparent function or purpose; the chorus, due to COVID restrictions, sings offstage.

In contrast to the misconceived staging, this production's musical values are superlative. Soprano Sara Jakubiak, the radiant Heliane in the Deutsche Oper DVD of Korngold's *Das Wunder der Heliane*, is electrifying as the tormented Francesca. Jonathan Tetelman's gleaming, clarion tenor and tall-dark-and-handsome looks make him an ideal Paolo, known as "Il Bello" (the Handsome). Heavy-set baritone Ivan Inverardi's Gianciotto is suitably coarse in voice and appearance, though neither "crippled" nor "demonic" as described in the libretto. They and the other 12 fine soloists, together with Carlo Rizzi's urgent, surging conducting of Zandonai's impassioned score, deliver immensely rewarding operatic pleasures.

Michael Schulman

Stanley Grill – Und das Lied bleibt schön
Lisa Rombach; Nicholas Spanos; Pandolfis Consort
Gramola 90254 (stangrillcomposer.com)



► "I sometimes feel I was born 500 years too late," says New York native Stanley Grill (b.1953), alluding to his "passion" for the medieval and Renaissance music

that imbues his melodies and the sonorities of the Vienna-based Pandolfis Consort's four period instruments – viola d'amore, viola, cello and theorbo.

Predominantly slow, melancholy songs, composed between 2009 and 2020, traverse memory, mysticism, love, suffering and death. Viennese soprano Lisa Rombach brings poignant, expressive vibrato to settings of eight poems by Rainer Maria Rilke and three poems by Jewish women – Rose Ausländer (1901-1988), who survived the Holocaust and Selma Meerbaum-Eisinger (1924-1942), who didn't (note her dates).

Greek countertenor Nicholas Spanos hauntingly evokes a medieval troubadour in *Les Fugitifs* (Rilke) while projecting a more Romantic sensibility in settings of Heinrich Heine's *Mit deinen blauen Augen* and *Ich wandle unter Blumen*.

I most enjoyed seven songs in which Grill favours more contemporary melodic contours over early-music modality: *Eingang* and *Klage* (Rilke), *Schnee* and *In jenen Jahren* (Ausländer), the two Heine songs and *Ein Schlaflied für dich* (Meerbaum-Eisinger).

Grill channels Renaissance vibes in his three-movement instrumental *Lieder ohne Worte* (2009), its central *Moderato* providing one of the CD's rare bits of energy. The prevailing moodiness makes this a disc best suited for dipping into. I would have welcomed some more up-tempo music and a clearer acoustic; perhaps the heavy reverb was intended to simulate the ambience of a medieval cathedral. Texts and translations are included.

Michael Schulman

Rèves Enclos – Mélodies de Louis Dominique Roy
Olivier Laquerre; Louis Dominique Roy
ATMA ACD2 2817 (atmaclassique.com/en)

► Cégep de Saint-Laurent piano professor/pianist/composer Louis Dominique Roy set the poetry of numerous Quebec poets to create an accessible outstanding repertoire of vocal works from Quebec. As he writes in the liner notes, after realizing its need as a university vocal coach and accompanist, he composed over 60 works for all voices over nearly 25 years. Here, baritone Olivier Laquerre sings a number of these Québécois melodies to Roy's piano accompaniment,



with special guests cellist Sébastien Lépine and horn-player Louis-Philippe Marsolais on select tracks. Roy's musical settings of poems by Émile Nelligan, Éloi de Grandmont,

Alfred Desrochers, Arthur de Bussières, Hector de Saint-Denys-Garneau and Gilles Vigneault, as well as three Scandinavian poems about death translated into French, are included.

Roy respectfully sets the texts with masterful musical vocal lines and varying piano accompaniments. Nelligan's *Amour immaculé* is Romantic flavoured, featuring a build to louder fuller piano chords under lower pitched quasi operatic vocals. Roy set three Grandmont poems for all four musicians especially for this recording. Held horn and vocal notes blend perfectly above detached piano chords, with closing movement adding cello plucks in *L'âge des rêves*. Lépine composed his own cello part to Roy's setting of five Vigneault poems. *Aubes* is uplifting with lower vocals/piano contrasted by higher cello sounds. Great to hear Roy perform two of his solo piano works, especially the pianistic imagery of moving sea waves in *Vol des oiseaux au-dessus de la mer*.

All performances and compositions shine with literary and musical excitement.

Tiina Kiik

CLASSICAL AND BEYOND

Sopra La Spagna

La Spagna; Alejandro Marías
Lukos Records 5451CRE201665
(laspagna.es)



► Ambitious is perhaps the best word to describe this CD. The mass *Agnus Dei* was set to many tunes. One of them was the already very well-known *Basse Danse*

La Spagna which subsequently became a setting for *Agnus Dei* throughout Europe. The ensemble on this CD has even taken *La Spagna* as its own name. In addition, it has sought to record here as many versions of *La Spagna* as it can find.

Sometimes the settings are complex. It needs a composer of the calibre of Francesco Canova da Milano to write a complex lute variant, and yet sometimes there is a lively – very lively – simplicity, as in Francisco de la Torre's version. In the latter all but one of *La Spagna*'s seven musicians perform, accompanied not least by the pronounced percussion-playing of Daniel Garay.

This contrast between the intense and the spirited is borne out in the suite of six *Recercadas sobre la Spagna* by Diego Ortiz. Alejandro Marías digs deep into his command of the viola da gamba to interpret these demanding settings.

La Spagna have been painstaking in their research. They have even uncovered *A Spanish Humour*, set by Tobias Hume. Hume must have been highly skillful in his talents; he had to be in one of them as he served as a mercenary! Which might account for the explosive introductory bars of his variation...

It is very difficult to decide which setting of *La Spagna* is the most thoughtful or the most uplifting. If I had to choose, it would be that by de la Torre, with its loyalty to the intense quality of this sacred composition.

Michael Schwartz

Handel – Winged Hands, The Eight Great Suites and Overtures

Francesco Corti
Arcana A499 (naxosdirect.com/search/a499)



► Interpretations of Handel's *Eight Great Suites* have long been popular – and frequently recorded on either piano or harpsichord. The choice of instrument was

made for Francesco Corti as his whole career has been with the latter. And it is his virtuoso playing which is showcased on this CD.

Note from the beginning of the *Gigue* in the first *Great Suite*; a *gigue* may be written off as a whimsical moment casually tacked onto a supposedly more serious set of movements but in this case Corti breathes dedication and meaning into his performance.

There are 39 movements to the *Great Suites*. Selecting those that most bring out Corti's mastery of the harpsichord is difficult. I thoroughly enjoyed his interpretation of No 6. There is a real dignity to his *Presto*, contrasted by the concluding *Gigue*.

Corti's demonstrated mastery is not confined to the suites however. The *Ouverture [largo]* to *Rodelinda* commences – and ends – with his imparting a glissando flourish which bookends Handel's *Presto* and *Adagio*, themselves played with real spirit.

Finally, Babel's *First Set in F Major* gives an all-too-tantalizing glimpse into those all-too-many composers who flourished in Handel's time but were overshadowed by him.

This is the third recording of the *Great Suites* I have reviewed for *The WholeNote*. Corti's interpretation exemplifies why I will never tire of this Handel masterpiece

Michael Schwartz

CPE Bach – Sonatas & Rondos

Marc-Andre Hamelin
Hyperion Records CDA68381 (hyperion-records.co.uk/dw.asp?dc=W22447_68381)



► “He is the father and we are the children. Anybody who knows anything at all learned it from him.” Lofty words of praise indeed coming from no less a figure than Mozart

in reference – not to JS Bach as we might assume – but to his second surviving son Carl Philipp Emanuel. Born in Weimar in 1714, CPE Bach was an accomplished composer and performer. His extensive keyboard output included 400 solo sonatas, fantasias and other works, all of it demonstrating considerable innovation and impeccable craftsmanship exemplified here in this two-disc Hyperion recording of sonatas and rondos performed by Marc-André Hamelin.

The 56 tracks – a true choice of riches – follow Bach's compositional career from 1725 to 1787 and what is particularly striking is the diversity in musical style these pieces contain, all within a classical framework. Some of them, such as the *Sonata in E Minor Wq59/1* and the *Rondo in E Major Wq58/3* show tendencies towards the north German “expressive style” with sudden changes in tempo and key signature while others like the *Arioso with Seven Variations in C Major Wq118/10* are pure *galanterie*.

Throughout, Hamelin performs with a polished assurance, his playing at all times thoughtfully nuanced. His flawless technique particularly comes to the fore in such works as the presto finale of the *Fantasia in C Major Wq61/6*.

This recording is an exemplary addition to the catalogue. Not only does it shine light on music that deserves greater recognition, but it proves – if proof is needed – that despite Hamelin's usual focus on virtuosic 19th-century repertoire, he is a master at anything he decides to approach. Excellent notes and attractive packaging are further bonuses.

Richard Haskell

Mozart; Strauss – Oboe Concertos

Cristina Gómez Godoy; West-Eastern Divan Orchestra; Daniel Barenboim
Warner Classics (warnerclassics.com/release/mozart-strauss-oboe-concertos)

► Oboist Cristina Gómez Godoy enchants listeners on *Mozart & Strauss Oboe Concertos*. Directed by Daniel Barenboim, the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra skillfully manoeuvres both works with chamber music-like sensitivity. Although these two pieces are an unusual pairing for an album, they are the staple of every oboist's musical library. Gómez Godoy chose to record these



two concertos because they are what made her fall in love with the instrument.

The Mozart *Oboe Concerto* is played in a buoyant and elegant style,

mixing in many passages from the near-identical *Flute Concerto in D Major*. Gómez Godoy has a beautiful, ringing tone and shows a sophisticated yet charming sense of musical style and phrasing.

Written in 1945, Strauss' *Oboe Concerto* was one of his last works. Often a feat of endurance for the soloist, this concerto combines long, soaring musical lines with intimate conversations with solo woodwinds. The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, where Gómez Godoy is principal oboe, shows a great understanding of supportive and chamber roles. In this beautiful rendition of she shows great control and musical maturity.

Melissa Scott

Mozart – Famous Sonatas and Fantasia for Fortepiano
Luc Beauséjour
Analekta AN 2 8931 (analekta.com/en)



► Chasing mastery in classical music performance is, undoubtedly, a life-long endeavour. Once you add in the level of required specificity of technique, musical

gesture, understanding of repertoire and the historically mediated instrumental touch demanded by an adherence to period piece performance, you end up with an important, but small collection of musicians whose dedication as both curators and custodians of the music of the past, as well individuals who contribute to a slowly, but ever growing, corpus of interpretations, variations and understandings of these canonical works, are worthy of praise, support and attention.

Quebec's Luc Beauséjour, who both administratively as the artistic director of the ensemble Clavecin en Concert, and performatively, as evidenced by his most recent Analekta release of Mozart's *Sonatas and Fantasia for Fortepiano*, numbers among this committed group. His efforts to demonstrate the continued meaningfulness and relevance of the harpsichord, organ, and here, the Italian fortepiano – Mozart's favourite – we learn in François Filiatrault's informative liner notes, are showcased in this soulful and terrific release.

Beautifully captured in Mirabel, Quebec's Saint Augustine Church, this recording is bound to be appreciated in equal parts for Beauséjour's supreme talent, the haunting clarity of this instrument – invented in

the early 18th century but effervescent and alive in Beauséjour's 2022 handling of Mozart's frozen improvisations – as well as the beautiful recorded ambiance of a simple neighbourhood cathedral that acts as an additional performer and contributes mightily to the success of this disc.

Andrew Scott

Beethoven – Violin Sonatas Opp.12/1; 24; 96
Rachel Podger; Christopher Glynn
Channel Classics CCSSA44222
(channelclassics.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/44222.pdf)



► Recorded in May, 2021 on the “Maurin” Stradivari (1718) and an Erard fortepiano, this new recording of familiar repertoire from Rachel Podger and Christopher

Glynn is full of fanciful joy, assured playing and great intelligence. Unlike Beethoven's string quartet output, which stretches across all the periods of his remarkable career, his ten sonatas for piano and violin were written in a shorter span of time – between 1797 and 1812. The three on this disc include the first, the last and the most popular, all in major keys and all given beautifully imaginative performances. *Opus 24 in F Major “Spring”* is particularly thoughtful, with exciting tempi and full of conversational, intimate ensemble playing.

In a recent feature in *The Strad* magazine, Podger and Glynn spoke about this recording project with insight, Podger commenting that “I find it fascinating to play Beethoven after having pretty much only lived with and around earlier music. What I've enjoyed so much is finding the places where he's being an 18th- and early-19th-century artist, and where and how he breaks free of those shackles.”

Indeed, both players bring a fresh approach and wide array of colours and improvisatory spirit to the performances. A recent all-Beethoven Wigmore Hall recital by Podger and Glynn is still available on YouTube and well worth experiencing.

Larry Beckwith

Night Music
Jan Lisiecki
Deutsche Grammophon
(deutschegrammophon.com/en/catalogue/products/night-music-jan-lisiecki-12595)

► Jan Lisiecki, the Calgary-born, RCM Glenn Gould School graduate and former Gramophone Young Artist of the Year, leans into his impressive touch, interpretative creativity and familiarity with the canon of elegant and imminently listenable piano music on this acoustically beautiful and well-executed capture of Mozart, Ravel,



Schumann and Paderewski. Unlike Vladimir Horowitz, who preferred to perform recitals on Sundays at 4:00 in the afternoon, Lisiecki has programmed here a

celebration of “night music,” most obviously Mozart's 12 *Variations in C Major* on “Ah, vous dirai-je Maman,” but bookending the album with the lesser-known *Miscellanea, Op.16: No.4, Nocturne in B-Flat Major* by Paderewski for a satisfying and sonically excellent album of an idealized and relaxed twilight listening experience.

Undoubtedly I am not the first observer to marvel at Lisiecki's obvious talent, depth of pianistic understanding and musical maturity while pointing to his young age (27!). That said, *Night Music*, a 2022 release on Deutsche Grammophon, does offer another welcome glimpse into an already exceptionally developed talent on today's classical concertizing stage who continues to play with the theme of night for ongoing listener delight (this release follows his two-CD set of Chopin's *Complete Nocturnes*). While the standout moments on this disc are many, it was Lisiecki's dynamic touch in the piano's lower register and fulsome exploration of the entire keyboard on Maurice Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit – Scarbo* – (all within a single nine-minute performance) that, for me, was simultaneously the tenderest, most stentorian and impressive.

Andrew Scott

Sibelius – Symphonies 2 & 4
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; Owain Arwel Hughes
Rubicon Classics RCD1072 (rubiconclassics.com/release)



► This new issue features a remarkable conductor most of us probably have never heard of – Owain Arwel Hughes. Coming from Wales, he has conducted many of

the finest orchestras of the world and is now principal associate conductor of the Royal Philharmonic, accumulating an impressive discography mainly of British, Scandinavian and Russian composers. His current project is to record all seven Sibelius symphonies with the Royal Philharmonic and this is the second issue of that set.

The *Second*, the most famous of the seven, was an overnight success at its premiere in 1902. It catapulted Sibelius into fame as one of the best composers of the 20th century, a patriot and the pride of his native Finland. It is a glorious work in the sunny key of D major. Although there are dark moments,

the finale, with two themes alternating in a long, gradual crescendo in 3/4 time ascending towards a climax when, after a long-held minor motif suddenly turns into major in *fortissimo*, is absolutely magnificent.

Symphony No.4 in A Minor is completely different. It's a deeply personal statement and the conductor must feel, indeed inhabit, its emotional climate. In the words of Sibelius, it is completely devoid of the "compositional tricks or circuses" composers use to thrill audiences. Right at the outset a deep, sad cello theme slowly develops until stopped by forceful chords on the brass and then a forlorn, echoed horn call as we enter a misty, dark, barren, somewhat frightening territory. There is some happiness, like a lovely *scherzo* second movement, but the sky quickly darkens, diminishing it into oblivion.

The overall effect is puzzling, but with repeated hearings its many hidden beauties come out and, according to some critics, it is the most beautiful of Sibelius' symphonies.

Janos Gardonyi

Bruckner 7

Gürzenich-Orchester Köln; François-Xavier Roth

Myrios MYR030 (myriosmusic.com)



► There is a cataclysmic moment in the second movement of Bruckner's *Seventh*: There are two climaxes following one another, but the second one comes

fortissimo with an Earth-shattering cymbal crash, as if the heavens would open up. The whole concert hall was filled with glorious sound. I remember the great Skrowaczewski doing it beautifully many years ago at Massey Hall with its fabulous acoustics. This is how my conversion to Bruckner started.

The *Seventh* still remains one of my favourite symphonies. This new recording is conducted by a new firebrand, François Xavier Roth who is making big waves in Europe today. He is a scholarly conductor with a no-nonsense, analytical approach, meticulous attention to detail and a natural gift to enter the composer's mind to follow the compositional process and to choose the right tempo.

Out of a near silent tremolo the symphony begins with a wondrous melody in the strings picked up by the woodwinds, an overarching theme that seems to dominate the first movement. It goes through many variations, but the solo flute crops up often chirping like the little forest bird leading Siegfried to awaken the sleeping Brunnhilde. (Wagner was much admired by Bruckner!)

After a crucial *Adagio* second movement comes an exciting *Scherzo*, with a simple theme and an underlying rigorous ostinato having a rhythmic urge that has always

reminded me of cavalry galloping through a wide open plain. The *Finale* sums it all up with a resounding peroration of the majestic brass. This recording has huge dynamic contrasts that will test your stereo equipment.

Janos Gardonyi

Bassoon Steppes

Lola Descours; Paloma Kouider

Orchid Classics ORC100190

(orchidclassics.com)



► Two questions come up when considering this recording. First: why would I listen to an album of all-Russian chamber music at this time in history and, second,

why would I listen to it played on a bassoon? The answer to both is the same: this is a spectacular recording in every way; moving, virtuosic, unpredictable and life-affirming.

Russian bassoonist Lola Descours and French pianist Paloma Kouider present a gorgeous program ranging from short pieces by Scriabin and Rimsky-Korsakov to longer works by Shostakovich and Rachmaninoff. All the works on the album are transcriptions or arrangements, some by the performers themselves, with the exception of a new work, *Air "I Walk Unseen,"* written for Descours by the Russian-born Lera Auerbach. This work is lovely, tragic and compelling. It has some pitch bending and colour trills, both used extremely effectively. But all the music on this album is so brilliantly played that you won't believe it wasn't written for the bassoon.

This is a testament to Descours' virtuosity: she's a product of the best European training available and she's the first bassoonist ever to win the Tchaikovsky Competition. Her sound is effortlessly fluid and expressive in all registers, her vibrato and phrasing always tasteful and heartfelt. And Kouider's playing moves from crystalline thrills in the Rachmaninoff *Cello Sonata* to exquisite delicacy in Glinka and Rimsky-Korsakov. The world is a troubled place right now; do something nice for yourself and listen to this album. It will make your day.

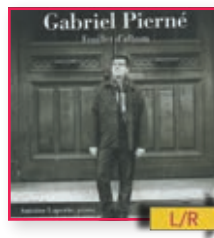
Fraser Jackson

Gabriel Pierné – Feuillet d'album

Antoine Laporte

Independent (antoinelaporte.ca/home-1?lang=en)

► The music of Gabriel Pierné is not all that well known today compared with that of his more famous contemporaries Claude Debussy and Paul Dukas. Born in Metz in 1863, he studied at the Paris Conservatoire, winning the Prix de Rome in 1882 and ultimately enjoying a successful career as a conductor, organist and composer. Included amongst his large output is a significant number of



piano compositions presented here on this two-disc recording by Quebec pianist Antoine Laporte, a prize winner at the Bradshaw & Buono International Piano Competition in New

York and the Jinji Lake International Piano Competition in Suzhou, China.

The *Quinze pièces pour le piano Op.3* from 1885 is a delightful set of character pieces, each one evoking a particular mood from the light-hearted *Coquetterie* to the rousing *Tarantelle* finale. Laporte's approach is refined and elegant, displaying fine tonal colours while aptly demonstrating Pierné's eclecticism. The *Premier Nocturne Op.31* is a languid and lyrical essay while the *Étude Op.13* concluding the first disc is a true tour de force that Laporte handles with great panache.

Disc two takes the listener into other facets of Pierné's compositional style – the *Trois Pièces Op.40*, the *Variations Op.42* and the posthumous set of *Six Pieces* which are tributes to other composers. Most striking is the degree of technical prowess demanded of the performer, found in the virtuosic first and third movements of *Op.40* and the finale of the *Variations*. Throughout, Laporte delivers a brilliant performance of this often daunting repertoire.

French-only and English-only booklets and notes are available. This is a fine recording of music deserving greater recognition.

Richard Haskell

Concert note: Antoine Laporte performs a solo recital of works by Gabriel Pierné at Espace culturel Saint-Gilles in Brownsburg, QC on May 13.

Things in Pairs

Audrey Wright; Yundu Wang

Navona Records NV6392

(navonarecords.com)



► *Things in Pairs* is an album that captures a listener's heart from the very first note. Not only is it following a clever concept of pairing music from across five centuries

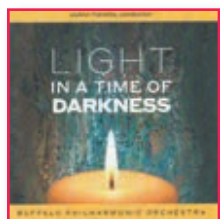
in a way that is both exciting and meaningful, but it also features performances by violinist Audrey Wright and pianist Yundu Wang that are beaming with passion and artistry.

It is easy to hear the musical narrative here and appreciate the connection between the compositions. Coupling Biber's *Passacaglia for Solo Violin* with *Balancing on the Edge of Shadows* by contemporary composer Rain Worthington is simply splendid. Biber

and Worthington, separated by centuries of musical legacy, treat the violin as the most precious voice and there is a deep sonority running throughout, a shared melancholy that underlies the subtle tension underneath the beautiful melodies. Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges' *Sonata for Two Violins in B-flat Major* and Arvo Pärt's *Fratres*, on the other hand, offer a juxtaposition of lightness and darkness in a way that emphasizes the heart of each composition. Wright, who plays both violin parts in the sonata, is equally good in brilliant passages and lightheartedness of Bologne's music as she is in conveying the power of *Fratres*. Capturing the fleeting line between a moment and eternity, and opposing forces within oneself, the violin/piano version of *Fratres* is further enhanced by the beautiful acoustics on this recording. Beethoven's *Sonata No.10 in G Major* ties all the pieces together in an elegant sway of music ideas.

Ivana Popovic

Light in a Time of Darkness
Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra; JoAnn Falletta
Beau Fleuve Records 605996-998579
(bpo.org)



► When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in early 2020, arts organizations throughout the world demonstrated their extraordinary determination and

resilience as they found ways to continue practising their craft and bringing music to their audiences, even if in a different format than before. *Light in a Time of Darkness* features works recorded live in Buffalo in 2020 and 2021 as part of the BPO *OnDemand* series, streamed to audiences during the height of the pandemic.

This disc is a journey through countries, eras and styles, as its contents encompass everything from Bach to the premiere of a new work by composer Ulysses Kay. There is a risk, in this time of hyper-specialization, that such a broad approach might result in everything sounding too similar, with not enough period-appropriate precision to pacify everyone. For those who prefer the lean, agile, period-instrument approach, for example, the Bach and Haydn selections will likely come across as rather big and bulky, lacking the finesse afforded by earlier instruments.

Where *Light In A Time Of Darkness* is most convincing is in the lush, broad textures afforded by Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* and the Kay *Pietà*, a work of richness and depth that features some beautiful moments for the strings and a striking solo for English horn.

A testament to the resiliency and innovativeness found in so many organizations

over the past two years, *Light in a Time of Darkness* is an eclectic and worthwhile release demonstrating the excellence of the Buffalo Philharmonic and conductor JoAnn Falletta.

Matthew Whitfield

Poulenc – Complete Chamber Music
Various Artists
Naxos 8.505258 (naxosdirect.com/search/8505258)



► Having recently received a treasure, in the form of digital sound files, I am compelled to offer the following advice: buy this collection. An epochal recording,

The Complete Chamber Works of Francis Poulenc is performed by a cadre of young and insanely able French musicians; nowhere else will you ever need to turn for inspiration or solace, nor for useful historic information about Poulenc, his thoughts and the context of the pieces.

The performances, grouped onto the discs in no immediately discernible order, remind us of how often Poulenc would reuse similar tropes, thrown into relief against such remarkable harmonic language. The three solo woodwind sonatas sound strangely similar, as sibling pieces perhaps, yet still strike their individual poses and stand distinct.

Disc one opens with an old friend, the *Sextuor for Piano and Woodwind Quintet*. Nothing wrong with leading from strength, and this is such a strong performance by all. Absolutely fearless in their tempo choices, as technically clean as French wind players are known to be, these six bring the notes leaping off the page. Poulenc, in his secular heaven, must be pleased to know he still speaks to and through young guns like these. The eloquence of phrasing in this one piece alone is reason enough to acquire the collection. But wait! There's more.

Of course there's more! Included are the early works, when Poulenc was 19 or 20 years old, at the end of WWI. Having tried to tackle two of these (*Duo for Two Clarinets*, and *Duo for Clarinet and Bassoon*) when I was a similar age, I now forgive the youngster his early austerity. You hear evidence of his admiration for Stravinsky more than his love of the music hall. He seemed to celebrate jagged lines and impossibly long phrases. But at least he published these! He discarded two earlier versions of his violin sonata before allowing the one played here by Graf Mourja.

It's pointless to select a favourite piece or performer; there is beyond enough to please every ear. The flute playing of Philippe Bernold is bright and crisp, and I forgive his tendency to reach just above the piano pitch. He also performs on recorder in the charming

Villanelle. Hervé Joulain makes short work of the devilishly tough French horn writing in the *Sextuor*. All of the wind playing is exceptionally good.

The project owes much to consistently excellent piano playing by Alexandre Tharaud, who performs on no fewer than 15 of the selections, if my count is correct. That's just beyond imagining. In fact there are only six pieces scattered across the five discs that do not feature Tharaud. These are the song cycles and theatre pieces that use voice accompanied by small instrumental ensembles. Among these is the charming *Story of Babar*, offered in both the original French and the translated English text. Both narrators are children, (12-year-old François Mouzaya, and 13-year-old Natasha Emerson), who seem equally professional.

For choral fans, there is disc four. Poulenc's poetry settings themselves are every bit as divergent as the switches in mood I find so beguiling. *La Balle Masquée, Cantate Profane sur les poèmes de Max Jacob*, makes merry Dadaist hay. Baritone Franck Leguérinel clearly propels the absurdist texts with a powerful controlled voice. He shares the disc with tenor Jean Delescluse.

Oh, one needn't carp, but the recording values are uneven. One wonders with the size of the project how many different venues were used, and how many different engineers and producers worked on it.

Max Christie

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

Ecology of Being
Duo Concertante
Marquis Classics MAR 81625
(duoconcertante.com)



► The fundamental task of finding one's way in the world and locating true measures of meaning can be elusive as we attempt to understand how purpose

relates to quality of existence. To create a successful recording, perhaps one way to begin understanding the immense implications of being is to commission a collection of new works for violin and piano. With six brilliant new works performed with world-class expressiveness and musicality, Newfoundland's Duo Concertante has released a powerful and deeply moving album.

The Canadian composers were asked to respond to earth's climate emergency and to consider our interconnectedness with respect to the rapidly changing environment and the future implications of our current decisions to act or to not act. Ian Cusson delivers an utterly tragic response

that is interrupted by a joyous dance, a contrast that is jarring and disturbing, in a work titled *The Garden of Earthly Delights*. Carmen Braden's dusty *The Seed Knows*, is distant ephemera beneath shocking pillars of scratchy sonic behemoths. In Randolph Peters' *Frisson*, dramatic gestures struggle toward several climactic regions that are surrounded by tender lyricism. Dawn Avery's *Onekha'shòn:a, Yakón:kwe (The Waters, the Women)* is a deeply moving three-movement work that speaks to the Indigenous understanding of the symbiotic and spiritual connections between women and water. Using the eco-poetry of Shannon Webb-Campbell throughout the piece as spoken word, Melissa Hui's *Ecology of Being* produces a solitary barren enchantment – carefully designed thin and empty landscapes surround the spoken text like precious gems, creating warmth through scarcity. Lastly, Bekah Simms' *shedding, as if sloughed* scatters darkness amid the burning vivid augmentation of sound and noise. This work is deeply expressive, producing rich manifolds of purging smoke and sunken ash. Simms' innovative sonic images hover like shadowforms as if to suggest that everything comes from fire and returns to it.

This release is a stunning collection of highly personal works wonderfully performed by the duo.

Adam Scime

**A Quinary – Canadian Concerti
Soloists; Vancouver Island Symphony;
Pierre Simard
Redshift Records TK475
(redshiftrecords.org)**



► This Redshift release of five new concerti represents the culmination of a five-year commissioning project that paired five Canadian composers with principal players of

the Vancouver Island Symphony.

Jocelyn Morlock's *Ornithomancy*, written for flute soloist Paolo Bortolussi, opens with sombre and mysterious interwoven sonorities below searching bright gestures in the solo flute part. The piece unfolds organically toward more excited materials where Bortolussi's virtuosity soars with wonderful clarity of tone.

The three movements of Dorothy Chang's *Invisible Distance* take the listener through moods of lyrical melancholy, excited drama and deep enchantment. Chang's highly imaginative orchestral scenes provide a brilliant tapestry over which cellist Ariel Barnes dazzles with soloistic fireworks.

Edward Top's *Concerto for Bass Trombone and Orchestra* is a shimmering fantasy embedded with rich bellows and sunken tones masterfully produced by soloist Scott

MacInnes. Undulating repetitive spirals, delicate resonances and playful offerings comprise the three movements of Emily Doolittle's *Sapling* where violin soloist Calvin Dyck handles the varied material with a welcomed expressiveness.

Last on the disc is Stephen Chatman's *Concertino for Horn and String Orchestra*. This work is joyous and full of life. The dance-like structures, and soloist Andrew Clark's confident performance, create excitement and ever-forward momentum. With five successful new works and five brilliant soloist performances, this release is invigorating from start to finish. Five stars.

Adam Scime

**Eldritch Priest – Omphaloskepsis
Eldritch Priest
Halocline Trance
(haloclinetrance.bandcamp.com)**



► If you're going for your debut release, a small bit of self-contemplation is cool. Although be careful, you might see yourself and like it.

These are the sediments my eyes smelled when listening to *Omphaloskepsis* by Eldritch Priest: Puzzling that an ever-changing guitar melody doesn't mind existing above happily lumbering distorted harrumphs; Sometimes there aren't screeches; A double bass, sturdy as an oak, creeps along the ground as though swallowing a whale; The frothy harmonies are so eager!; You could start a band with the amount of effects pedals used; That band name should be Cluster Gardens; I averted my emotions just in time for the fizzy notes that are like eating an orange while making love; Every time there is an interruption in the melodic material, a sonata dies.

I'm not sure if Priest will perform this music live, but if he does, I do hope the audience is supplied with enough pogo sticks. Bravo For Now.

Adam Scime (channelling Eldritch Priest)

**Lumena
Topaz Duo
Redshift Records (thetopazduo.ca)**

► Based in Toronto, in-demand flutist Kaili Maimets and Juno Award-winning harpist Angela Schwarzkopf founded Topaz Duo over a dozen years ago. In addition to playing the classics, they have increasingly been curating repertoire by living composers. Their sparkling, assured new album illustrates their focus on new works for the flute and harp with an emphasis on Canadian content.

The program begins with prominent younger-generation Estonian Canadian composer Riho Esko Maimets' five-and-a-half-minute *Lumena*. Composed in Toronto,



the work unusually combines the qualities of yearning (the composer says it's for the beauty of the peaceful Baltic landscape) and meditative stillness.

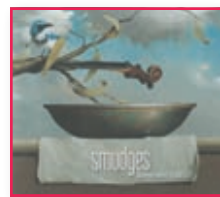
Prominent

Canadian composer Kevin Lau's four-movement *Little Feng Huang* is the next track, extensively inspired by one of his own works of fiction. Written expressly for the album, the "combination of flute and harp – delicate and wondrous – was an ideal vehicle for this particular story," writes Lau.

The virtuosic three-movement *Sonata for Harp and Flute* by Kingston Ontario composer Marjan Mozetich is my album favourite. Recorded for the BIS label by the eminent earlier Toronto duo, Robert Aitkin, flute and Erica Goodman, harp in 1985, it has since become among the most played Canadian works for these instruments. On full display is Mozetich's mature post-modern Romantic compositional style blending the traditional, popular and modern, filled with lyricism, Romantic harmonies and spirited moto perpetuo-like rhythms. This tightly structured piece avoids lapsing into banal diatonic clichés: the ideal closer for Topaz Duo's debut record.

Andrew Timar

**Song and Call
The Smudges
Crypto Gramophone CG149
(cryptogramophone.com)**



► Innovative and insightful, *Song and Call* is an album that will grow on you each time you hear it. Featuring a chamber ensemble consisting of violin and cello,

the sonic landscape on this album is somewhat symphonic and often experimental in nature. Add to that the Smudges creative use of samples and electronics on top of the classical foundation and form, and we get to hear many wonderful, intense and sometimes surprising layers of textures throughout.

Violinist Jeff Gauthier and cellist Maggie Parkins have such a strong synergy and cohesiveness of sound that it often feels as if we are hearing one instrument. Their background in new music and improvisation is at the forefront of the Smudges' performance. The album opens with *Music of Chants*, a melodiously lush composition by Guy Klucevsek and closes with the symphonic *Release* by Tom Flaherty. In between are pieces by Gauthier and ensemble improvisations, playfully varying in genres, expressions and length, and always maintaining a unique ensemble sound.

The heart of this album and the title piece, *Song and Call*, plays like a musical treatise on birds. Four attacca movements, titled after four birds (Gray Fantail, Common Starling, American Robin and Eastern Winter Wren), are a magical kingdom of slowed-down bird song samples, electronics, loops, whistling, chimes and singing bowls, in addition to electric violin and often percussive cello. The result is simply stunning.

Ivana Popovic

Aleks Schürmer – À ses derniers pas, entrant dans la boue
Grégoire Blanc; Aleks Schürmer
Centrediscs CMCCD 29221 (cmccanada.org/shop/cd-cmccd-29221)



► Invented in 1920 by Russian physicist Leon Theremin, the theremin is an early electronic musical instrument that is played without being touched. Bringing a hand

near the vertical antenna raises the pitch of the note, while bringing the other hand near the horizontal antenna changes the loudness of the tone. A captivating instrument to observe in performance, the thereminist seems to be pulling sound out of thin air and the ethereal nature of the sound produced makes it a fascinating source of musical expression.

Compared to most musical instruments, the theremin is exceedingly rare, and top-level performers are even harder to come by. Grégoire Blanc is a French solo, chamber and orchestral performer who is one of the world's few theremin virtuosos, and his work on this disc is nothing short of extraordinary.

All the music on *À ses derniers pas* is composed by Aleks Schürmer, a Canadian multi-instrumentalist, educator and artist. From the playful *Concertino en si bémol majeur* to the solemn *Four Cowboy Songs* and the miniature cycle that comprises the title track, Schürmer's music combines a wide variety of styles and ideas that, when partnered with the unique timbres of the theremin, create a truly unique auditory experience.

This disc is highly recommended as a premier example of the remarkable, innovative artists in the world today. From new compositions to a rare musical instrument, this disc will feature much that is unfamiliar to many listeners, which is a very good thing. Take this opportunity to broaden your horizons and get out of your comfort zone with *À ses derniers pas* – you won't regret it.

Matthew Whitfield

George Perle – Solos & Duos
Various Artists
Bridge Records 9546A/B
(bridgerecords.com)



► George Perle (1915–2009) might be compared to Hindemith as a composer concerned with tonal as well as motivic manipulation, highly

developed, recognizable structures and just plain beauty. Where Hindemith stayed with more consonant tonalities and clearly defined melodic structure, in a word, a classicist, Perle follows a more Romantic path, in the sense of his rhythmic and metric freedom, as well as a much more challenging tonal language.

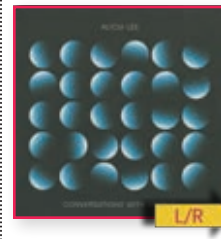
This two-disc collection, *Solos & Duos*, features works for a range of instruments, another echo of Hindemith. Perle, like Hindemith, produced effective music to exploit the instruments he wrote for. Solo works for piano, bassoon, violin, cello, contrabass and clarinet are interspersed on the discs with several works for piano with cello and one with clarinet and piano. Solo works are perhaps an acquired taste, but I find Perle's explorations via *Monody II* (1962), the double bass work played with tremendous verve by Edwin Parker, a complete treat to hear. Ditto *Bassoon Music* (2004) in an equally compelling presentation by Steven Dibner.

Every decade from the 1940s until the 'aughts is represented. Clarinetist Charles Neidich plays the *Three Sonatas for Solo Clarinet* (1943, the earliest works) as well as *Sonata quasi una fantasia* (1972), together with Michael Brown on piano. Both are performed with considerable flair. Pianists Leon Fleisher, Richard Goode and Horacio Gutiérrez, perform works written for each. *Musical Offerings* from 1988, references obliquely Fleisher's unpleasant departure from his directorship of the Tanglewood Music Festival. *Ballade*, written for Goode in 1981, allows him to explore Romanticism through a modern lens. *Nine Bagatelles* (1999) (average length/bagatelle under one minute) are wittily conveyed by Gutiérrez.

But the star among stars on this twin pack, apart from Perle himself, is cellist Jay Campbell. What a glorious rich cello voice, and what terrific agility from the bass string right up into thumb position! His selections cover the most ground on the recording, in number of works played (four), as well as total length (close to 40 minutes of the two-hour total). Perle clearly loved the instrument and Campbell seems to enjoy playing his work.

Max Christie

Conversations with Myself
Alicia Lee
New Focus Recordings FCR302
(newfocusrecordings.com/catalogue)



► I'm willing to bet the two years just past have seen a noticeable increase in the number of released CDs of solo instrumental works, prepared in the isolation of one's practise studio.

Conversations With Myself is a selection of solos for clarinet and bass clarinet, some from the years between 1983 and 2007, bookended by works composed in 2020, during the new normal. Alicia Lee writes that the pieces present her "in dialogue with myself... where I was delivering advice to anyone who cared to listen."

Dai Fujikura's *Contour for Bass Clarinet* opens the disc. Freely melodic and ranging over the low to mid-high range of the instrument, it offers Lee room to show off musicality more than flashy technique. More demanding is *Dialogue de l'Ombre Double* (the only work for B-flat clarinet) by Pierre Boulez. Two characters emerge from Lee's confident and affecting performance: the first, in the right channel, is a compulsive repeating motif that then gives way to a mercurial trilling countersubject heard on the left-hand side of the "stage." At nearly-20-minutes' length, this is a substantial undertaking, through which Lee's sound remains clean and assured. In live performance, one of the "shadows" is pre-recorded. Here the effect of "live" versus electronic is overlaid through some highly effective spatial trickery; when in isolation, why not find ways to simulate social engagement?

If *Monolog for Bass Clarinet* (1983) by Isang Yun offers advice, I'm not sure what it might be. I love the sounds Lee produces on her grumpy big brother clarinet. Unsuk Chin's *Advice for a Caterpillar* (from *Alice in Wonderland*, 2007) possibly advises poor life choices, in a seductive opium-infused siren song. Hideaki Aomori's sweetly brief *Split*, brings the conversations to a close.

Max Christie

Karl Fiorini – In the Midst of Things
Charlene Farrugia; Dimitri Ashkenazy; Rebecca Raimondi; Stefan Kropfitch
Grand Piano GP880 (naxosdirect.com/search/gp880)

► Malta, smack dab in the middle of the Mediterranean, has absorbed influences from the many varied cultures that, over millennia, have settled there. Maltese composer Karl Fiorini (b.1979) is similarly ecumenical.

In *Trio Lamina* for clarinet, violin and piano (2002), quirky, perky neoclassicism – Poulenc crossed with Stravinsky – surrounds



a slow, moody, almost jazzy nocturnal interlude. *Piano Trio* for violin, cello and piano (2005) mixes serialism, North African folk music and mathemat-

ical ratios to create intriguing night music – eerie gloom, helter-skelter jumpiness, squeaks, groans, slowly dripping water and a hectic escape.

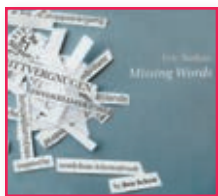
There's more perturbed darkness in *Two Piano Études* (2007–2008), composed using Fibonacci sequences, but then, writes Fiorini, after “heartlessly abiding to purely intellectual procedures... I felt I had to revisit tonality.” Jump to 2017 – the gripping *Piano Sonata* encompasses powerful, discordant percussiveness, a slow, quiet, tentatively tender ambulation and a motoric rush to the finish.

At 16 minutes, *In the Midst of Things* for clarinet, violin, cello and piano (2019) is the longest work on this CD. Its four movements juxtapose brooding melancholy with suspenseful agitation and, like all this CD's music, it's an engrossing wordless narrative, stylistically accessible yet elusively mysterious.

Maltese pianist Charlene Farrugia, New York-born clarinetist Dimitri Ashkenazy (Vladimir's son), Italian violinist Rebecca Raimondi and Austrian cellist Stefan Kropfitch made these world-premiere recordings in 2019 and 2020 with Fiorini present. Undoubtedly, he was justifiably pleased with what he heard. So was I.

Michael Schulman

Eric Nathan – Missing Words Various Artists New Focus Recordings FCR314 (newfocusrecordings.com)



▶ “The false sense of movement when, looking out from a stationary train, you see another train depart.” There's now a word for it

– “Eisenbahnscheinbewegung” (Railway-Illusion-Motion) – one of 120 German compound words invented by Ben Schott for his 2013 English-language book *Schottenfreude*, furnishing whimsical one-word terms for assorted common, disorienting experiences.

Eisenbahnscheinbewegung is also the title of the first of 23 mini-tone poems in six sets of *Missing Words*, spanning 84 minutes on two CDs. In them, multi-award-winning American composer Eric Nathan (b.1983) employs onomatopoeic sound effects, abruptly punctuated, irregular rhythms and

wildly varied instrumentation to depict many of Schott's disconcerting, often uncomfortable, psychological states.

Some examples: *Eisenbahnscheinbewegung* combines railroad noises with glissandi and shifting pulses to evoke that familiar unsettled feeling; lurching glissandi illustrate *Leertretung* (Void-Stepping) – “Stepping down heavily on a stair that isn't there;” fanfares in *Brillenbrillanz* (Spectacles-Luminosity) herald “The sudden, innervating clarity afforded by new glasses;” Beethoven's hastily scribbled drafts for his *Ninth Symphony* inspire the aggressive, motorized grumbings of *Ludwigssyndrom* (Ludwig's-Syndrome) – “Discovering an indecipherable note in your own handwriting;” halting, quiet rumination in the concluding *Rolleirückblende* (Rollei-Flashback) reflects “The flood of memory released when looking at old photos.”

Performing *Missing Words I to VI* are, respectively, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, American Brass Quintet, cello-piano duo Parry and Christopher Karp, the International Contemporary Ensemble, Neave Trio and Hub New Music. I'm sure they all had fun playing these very imaginative pieces, all fun to listen to as well.

Michael Schulman

John Aylward – Celestial Forms and Stories Members of Klangforum Wien New Focus Recordings FCR320 (newfocusrecordings.com)



▶ The composer John Aylward seems committed to the idea of pushing the language of music into uncharted territory. His work consistently suggests that only the relatively

extreme is interesting. In all of the radicalism that this soundscape suggests, Aylward also manages to remain true to bright sonorous textures evoked in vivid phrases that leap and gambol with elliptical geometry. Yet every so often the percussive impact of his work transforms its flowing character into a kaleidoscopic melee of scurrying voices which are built up layer upon layer.

His suite *Celestial Forms and Stories* reimagines characters and narratives from Ovid's classic, *Metamorphosis*. The five pieces have been arranged in the form of an atmospheric suite inspired as much by the Latin epic poem as it is by the dissertation, *Ovid and Universal Contiguity*, by Italo Calvino, itself an iconic treatise, epic in breadth and scope.

Celestial Forms and Stories begins with *Daedalus* and the darkly dramatic voyage of Icarus, its lofty melodic line ascending rhythmically into the heat of the rarefied realm. The transcendent motion of *Mercury*

exquisitely evokes the winged messenger colliding with the obdurate Battus. The suite melts into the buzzing, swooning mayfly, *Ephemera*. *Narcissus* follows, trapped in the glassy tomb with Echo. The suite climaxes in the restless drama of *Ananke* with its forceful, tumbling rhythmic changes. The remarkable musicians of Klangforum Wien perform this work with vivid orchestral colours and preeminent virtuosity.

Raul da Gama

Chasing Light & Sound – The Tuba Music of Elizabeth Raum

**Tom McCaslin; Akiko Tominaga
Centrediscs CMCCD 29422 (cmccanada.org/shop/cd-cmccd-29422)**



▶ Elizabeth Raum enjoys a reputation of being one of Canada's most prolific and accessible composers, and is celebrated by tuba players around the world for her many

compositions for “that noblest of instruments.” Many of these works were the result of her association with the late tuba virtuoso John Griffiths of the Regina Symphony where Raum played oboe. Several of these pieces are now standard repertoire and they regularly show up on international competition lists.

This recent release on CMC Centrediscs celebrates a number of these compositions and features the principal tubist of the Calgary Philharmonic, Tom McCaslin. One of Griffiths' star students, McCaslin was around for the premieres of many of these works during his formative years.

The CD begins with four works for tuba and large ensemble (heard here in tuba and well-crafted piano reduction versions). McCaslin's technical prowess and innate lyricism are on display throughout, ably supported by pianist Akiko Tominaga. The CD ends on a lighter note with a work for unaccompanied tuba, *Sweet Dances* (2002). These are four extremely clever and very idiomatic pieces, with very tongue-in-cheek titles: I'm still chuckling over the third one; *Waltzin' Matuba*!

This definitive recording is the realization of McCaslin's long-time dream to bring attention to Raum's music, and is strongly recommended. It should be a part of any serious tuba player's library.

Scott Irvine

Slow, Quiet Music – In Search of Electric Happiness
Instruments of Happiness
Redshift Records TK 497
(redshiftrecords.org)



► Formed in 2014, Instruments of Happiness is an ensemble of varying numbers of guitarists, from four to 100. Here the four electric guitarists – artistic director Tim

Brady, Jonathan Barriaault, Simon Duchesne and Francis Brunet-Turcotte – perform four commissions by Canadian composers. As the liner notes explain, each was asked to write a 14-minute piece reflecting the project concept, synchronized by stopwatches, with the performers placed far apart in a large reverberant space. Originally performed in a church, this was recorded on a large concert stage with great production quality.

Sideways, by Louise Campbell, opens with repeated notes, establishing the clear sonic sense of the widely placed guitarists. Added guitar slides produce an eerie contrast. Mid-piece intensity with sudden low pitches, faster short melodic lines, washes and electric effects return sideways to closing slow-wash fade. Rose Bolton's *Nine kinds of joy* features low-pitched held notes, washes, contrasting repeated string notes and slight subtle dynamic variability creating numerous kinds of calming musical joy. Love the unexpected next idea in Andrew Noseworthy's tightly orchestrated *Traps, taboos, tradition* in sections with extended guitar effects like slides, plucks, bangs, crashes, rubs and waah waahs separated by brief silent spaces. Lots to listen to in Andrew Staniland's *Notre Dame is burning* with the low intense held note drones building in intensity like a slow-moving fire and contrasting comforting higher notes.

Performances are superb, creating a new contemporary wall of electric guitar sounds!

Tiina Kiik

Primavera II: the rabbits
Matt Haimovitz
PentaTone Oxingale Series
(pentatonemusic.com/product/oxingale-presents-primavera-ii-the-rabbits)



► The awe-inspiring Primavera Project, co-directed by Matt Haimovitz and Dr. Jeffrianne Young, explores the influence and inspiration of music and art. Its

six-release series is comprised of 81 world premiere solo cello compositions commissioned for Haimovitz. Each composer was

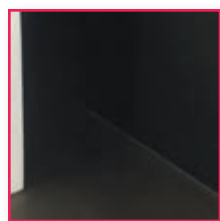
asked to respond to Sandro Botticelli's enigmatic painting, *Primavera*, and the prophetic large-scale triptych, *Primavera 2020*, by world-renowned contemporary artist Charline von Heyl. This second release *Primavera II: the rabbits* takes its name from the rabbit trilogy motive in von Heyl's visuals.

Haimovitz's arrangement of Josquin des Prez's *Kyrie* (from *Missa Hercules Dux Ferrariæ*) opens. His conversational four-part contrapuntal playing ranges from moving, to dark singing tone colour above full harmonic chords. This is followed by 13 new works, each lasting under ten minutes. It is so fascinating to hear each composer's own musical perception of the visuals. For example, Missy Mazzoli's *Beyond the Order of Things (after Josquin)* has a contemporary orchestral storytelling sound with rhythms, pitch slides, fast runs and sudden atonal held notes. Tomeka Reid's energetic *Volplaning* is an intense response to the paintings. Sudden loud single-line phrases and rhythmic detached notes add to the running and bouncing rabbit sensibility. Gordon Getty's *Spring Song* is a slow, calming Romantic-style-influenced work, clocking in under the two-minute mark. Plucks, repeated notes and upbeat rock strings have the rabbits bopping in a bar in David Balakrishnan's *Theme and Variants*.

Haimovitz understands and interprets each diverse work, playing all lines in stunningly beautiful, must-listen-to passionate performances.

Tiina Kiik

Cage
Quartetski
Ambiances Magnétiques (actuellecd.com)



► In the last years of his prolific creative life, iconic experimental composer John Cage (1912-1992) composed some 40 number pieces. For titles, he coined a

unique system in which numbers indicate the number of performers or the number of instrumental parts in each work. Superscripts were added when compositions shared the same number of performers.

Cage's notation of these pieces features two time-based categories: fixed and flexible "time brackets." Fixed-time brackets indicate when the musician/s should precisely begin and end a tonal event. Flexible-time brackets however, allow musicians choice in the matter, admitting into the performance, a) chance and b) the anarchic harmony of sounds and silences simply co-existing, two key Cagean notions.

Both works on this album belong to that corpus. *One⁷*, "For any pitched instrument able to play sustained notes," is the seventh piece in a series of compositions for one musician. Except, in this performance the

polished Montreal group Quartetski have decided to interpret the open score with all four member musicians: Isaiah Ceccarelli (percussion, synthesizer), Bernard Falaise (electric guitar), Philippe Lauzier (bass clarinet, synthesizer) and Pierre-Yves Martel (electric bass, sine waves).

Four⁶, also for unspecified forces, also lasts a leisurely half hour. The four musicians are asked to "Choose 12 different sounds with fixed characteristics (amplitude, overtone structure, etc.)" producing a mellower soundscape than the dramatic musical moments generated in *One⁷*.

Quartetski's nuanced realization of these two autumnal Cage works admirably animates the scores, imbuing individual character which belies their apparent abstract appearance. Marked by attention to timbral richness well-represented by this refined recording, the quartet displays a spirit of sonic discovery that's aurally refreshing while respecting the composer's musical aesthetics.

Andrew Timar

JAZZ AND IMPROVISED

Late Night
Sean Fife Quartet
Cellar Music CM082021 (cellarlive.com)



► New York-based Canadian pianist Sean Fife has had a passion for the piano since he was just five years old and his prolific talent is highlighted very well on

his newest release. The album is chock full of originals written by Fife himself and features talented musicians Sam Kirmayer on guitar, Adrian Vedady on bass and Andre White on drums, breathing life into each of the pieces and shining a spotlight on Fife's compositional prowess. A mellow yet energetic record that complements a relaxing night in, this would be a fantastic addition to any jazz lover's collection.

Title track *Late Night* paints a picture in the listener's mind of a smoky and dimly lit jazz club through an intriguing piano and guitar melody underpinned by a toe-tapping drum shuffle and rhythmic groove. *Little Pants* brings a bluesy flavour to the mix, featuring a stepping bass line that keeps the momentum going as well as soulful solos and riffs that truly showcase the immense musical talent of each musician in the quartet. Throughout the record, a hark back to an era of jazz classics is apparent, with Fife's style reflecting greats such as Bill Evans, Wynton Kelly and McCoy Tyner. *Validation* finishes off the album with a finger-snapping, rhythmically driven piece that perhaps serves as a tantalizing preview of what more is to come from Fife in the future.

Kati Kiillaspea

March
Tomas Fujiwara's Triple Double
Firehouse 12 Records FH12-04-01-035
(tomasfujiwara.com)



► Brooklyn-based drummer Tomas Fujiwara is known for his progressive compositions, unique rhythmic grooves and “nuanced drumming.” This

release does a formidable job at showcasing his modernistic compositional style through both the distinctive instrumental setup and captivating melodies layered on top of catchy beats. The band’s name says it all. *Triple Double* refers to the interesting instrument groupings used: two horns, two guitars and two drum kits. It’s described as “wandering through a hall of mirrors” because, depending on the listener’s interpretation, you could either hear three duos that work in tandem or pairs of instruments that explore their own melodic and rhythmic niches throughout, which makes for a truly immersive auditory experience. All pieces are penned by Fujiwara himself or in collaboration with fellow drummer Gerald Cleaver.

Pack Up, Coming for You starts off the album with a driving drum groove, soaring horn melody and bold guitar riffs that give the listener a shock of energy right off the bat. *Life Only Gets More* features elements of traditional jazz, as is heard in the more laidback shuffle beat and jazz guitar tone, mixed with modern bits such as an interpretive drum solo and dissonance within the melody. *Silhouettes in Smoke* truly gives off a hazy and mysterious vibe through a mellow and meandering cornet riff layered overtop circular guitar lines. This record is great for anyone looking to experience a well-balanced mix of the old and the new.

Kati Kiillaspea

Källtorp Sessions Volume 2
Ståhls Trio
Moserobie MMP CD 126 (moserobie.com)



► Balancing on the firm underpinning of knowing strokes from Canadian-in-Stockholm bassist Joe Williamson is this eight-track bagatelle from Swedish vibra-

phonist Mattias Ståhl’s trio. Joined by Colombian drummer Christopher Cantillo, the group-composed tracks are thoroughly contemporary, but due to the vibist’s logical progressions and airy, open swing, encompass both Lionel Hampton-style pulsations and Cal Tjader-like nuances. Even a couple of tracks where Ståhl plays silvery soprano saxophone

trills as well as vibes, and trombonist Mats Åleklint propels gutbucket slurs into the mix, the enhanced density doesn’t exceed harmonic intensity.

Williamson’s string suppleness also means that a balladic interlude like *Guldskort* is marked with expressive well-paced thumps; while faster tunes are propelled with torqued intensity that cunningly backs up free-form group improvisations such as *I-Land Du Välsignade*. Despite Cantillo wielding a thunder sheet and the vibes’ metal bars resonating at an allegro tempo during that track, the bassist’s contrapuntal andante pulse prevents any narrative imbalance. Later on, the bassist goads the other two to a harmonized finale. Occasionally introducing the themes with pressurized stops or a walking bass line, Williamson’s sly pulses comprehensively fit in with whatever drum crunches or airy vibe timbres are rolled onto the program.

Convincing in having achieved exactly what they set out to do on this disc, the Ståhls threesome also confirm the benefits of international musical cooperation. The result makes one interested in seeking out Volume One.

Ken Waxman

Celebration
Alan Silva; Itaru Oki; Makoto Sato; Richard Comte
Nunc Records Nunc.027 (nunc-nunc.com)



► A bittersweet celebration; while this 2019 Paris concert honoured the 80th birthday of U.S. expatriate keyboardist Alan Silva, it was also the final recording for

Japanese trumpeter Itaru Oki (1941-2020), who, like Silva, was a longtime member of the Gallic creative music scene. During this three-part free improvisation, Silva uses the smears, swells and echoes from his keyboard to accompany Oki’s sophisticated command of his brass instrument that ranges from strained high pitches to half-valve guttural effects, all the while preserving the tune’s melodic kernel. Percussionist Makoto Sato, another Japanese expat, adds unobtrusive clip-clop accents to the action, while French guitarist Richard Comte strums connective lines for all, when not briefly disrupting the interface with pointed string stabs or jagged power chords.

On top of the pulsating drums-tremolo keyboard continuum, Oki’s muted harmonies and portamento grace notes take up the greatest part of his expression. But sudden dog-whistle squeals, and the introduction to the improvisation’s second section, where he appears to be huffing textures from a combination of plastic trumpet and harmonica, demonstrate his blazing individuality.

Integration of that unique tone and his subsequent smeared triplets into that balanced narrative also confirm the scope of the quartet’s creative free jazz.

Silva, Sato and Comte continue making individual free music in other contexts. While Oki can’t anymore, this disc properly celebrates his reciprocal skill working with seasoned players of similar invention.

Ken Waxman

The Lights are Always On
Lynne Arriale; Jasper Somsen; E.J. Strickland
Challenge Records CR73532
(lynnearriale.com)



► With her 16th album, jazz pianist/composer/educator Lynn Arriale has once again underscored exactly why she is considered to be one of the most creative, technic-

ally skilled and emotionally facile jazz artists on the globe. All of the material here was penned by Arriale, and her inspiration was born out of the horrendous world events that have taken place during the past two years, as well as the massive contributions left by the evolved souls who have existed on our blue orb as healers, truth-tellers and defenders of human rights.

First up is *March On*, which was directly inspired by the 2017 Women’s March on Washington. The composition is loaded with dynamic, insistent chordal statements. Arriale’s powerful rhythmic integrity and innovating improvisations drive this compelling anthem. Jasper Somsen’s lyrical bass solo generates beauty and peace while E.J. Strickland’s creative and dynamic-filled drumming seals the deal.

The title track is taken from a quote by dedicated physician, Dr. Prakash Gada, and in Arriale’s words, “There is always reason to believe in that light; the inherent goodness of people...” In this performance, Arriale’s musicianship is such a conduit of pure, undiluted feelings that it’s as if she reaches out directly into one’s heart and mind. Other stellar tracks include *Sisters*, which celebrates the struggle for gender equality and *Honor*, which is dedicated to Lt. Colonel Alexander Vindman – a truth teller, whose testimony exposed some of Trump’s heinous and illegal activities. Of special beauty are *The Notorious RBG*, in honour of Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the spiritually uplifting *Walk in My Shoes*, composed in recognition of legendary Civil Rights advocate and U.S. Politician John Lewis.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

**On the Town – Pete Malinverni plays
Leonard Bernstein
Pete Malinverni
Planet Arts 302124 (petemalinverni.com)**



► Pete Malinverni is a highly respected New York City-based pianist/composer, widely known for his technical skill as well as for his swinging and lyrical inter-

pretations. It was a bit of propinquity – the kind that can only happen in New York City – that kick-started the idea for this truly exceptional recording, on which Malinverni also serves as producer. While on a gig at a prestigious private party, Malinverni met Leonard Bernstein, and he was so moved by Bernstein's passion for music, as well as by his New York City-infused compositions, that eventually this recording became fully manifest. This CD is not only a tribute to Bernstein, but it is also a love letter from Malinverni to his beloved New York City. Malinverni's collaborators here include noted jazz luminaries Ugonna Okegwo on bass and Jeff Hamilton on drums.

The cheeky opener, *New York, New York*, comes from the Broadway/film hit, *On the Town*. The trio moves like one, swinging organism and the expertly recorded instruments draw the listener into a profoundly intimate jazz experience. Malinverni's soloing is inventive, and easily segues in and out of deep grooves. Okegwo is both solid and facile and Hamilton propels everyone down the pike with his energy and skill – as only a New York drummer can do.

With a stirring percussion intro and outro by Hamilton, *Cool* from *West Side Story* is a stellar track that lends itself perfectly to a pure jazz format... which makes one wonder if Bernstein wasn't a bit of a jazz musician himself! *Simple Song* from *Mass* is presented here with such heart and soul, that it feels as though each musician was singing the lyrics in his head. I have a feeling that if Lenny were here now, he would be thrilled with this masterfully conceived and performed project.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

**The Shape of My Heart
Jami Templeton; Andy Langham; Edwin
Livingston; Charles Ruggiero; Joel Frahm
Independent (jamitempleton.bandcamp.com)**

► Los Angeles-based classically trained jazz vocalist Jami Templeton has a story to tell, and through the eclectic and emotional nature of her new recording, her story leads the listener through an auditory banquet of diverse material from the worlds of country, pop, rock, musical theatre and the Great American Song Book. Templeton's voice is compelling, moving and a delight to the ear.



Skilled producer Andy Langham also performs here on piano and melodica, along with first call L.A. musicians Edwin Livingston on bass, Charles Ruggiero on

drums and the masterful Joel Frahm on tenor saxophone.

First up is Willie Nelson's moving country ballad, *Angel Flying Too Close to the Ground*, rendered here with a swoon-worthy romantic treatment, as Langham expressively uses innovative chord substitutions and technical skill to bring forth every last drop of empathy. Templeton's voice is sumptuous, controlled and pitch perfect – reminiscent of (and technically superior to) Julie London, Chris Connor or Joanie James – perfectly capturing the mood of the arrangement.

Also of note is a singular, creative interpretation of Sting's *Shape of my Heart*, in which Templeton's evocative voice and Sting's melancholy/dystopic vision are perfectly underscored by strong arco bass lines, fine drumming and the sonic treat of Langham's melodica. Of rare beauty is Templeton's take on Tom Petty's *Room at the Top*. Her warm, mezzo voice is diaphanous and haunting, and also intuitively rhythmic, with a profound jazz sensibility. David Mann's 1950's cinema noir-ish ballad, *In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning* is a total standout, replete with Ruggiero's sensitive use of mallets, the thrilling coalescence of the trio, and the brilliant lyric, which all join together as one, wrapping themselves around Templeton's balmy, knowing, lovely pipes.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

**Late Night
Fernanda Cunha; Reg Schwager
Independent (fernandacunha.com)**



► With the release of this new recording, there can be little doubt that the creative pairing of the gifted Brazilian/Canadian vocalist Fernanda Cunha and eminent

Canadian guitarist Reg Schwager is a match made in musical heaven. All of the fine compositions here were written by Schwager, with lyrics by Cunha. Schwager (also wearing producer and arranger hats) performs on guitars and electric bass along with his equally eminent colleagues Tom Szczesniak on piano, keyboard and accordion; Allison Au on alto saxophone; Masashi Usui on tenor saxophone; Pat Collins on acoustic bass; Michel Lambert on drums and Edson Chilardi on drums and percussion.

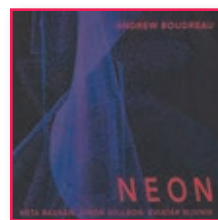
The eight superlative tracks here are luminous in their beautiful construction,

performed with breathtaking technical skill and rendered with such emotional resonance that the term "awe-inspiring" is more than apt. *Dança Do Amor* is a sensual, intimate glimpse into pure romance and Szczesniak's keyboard work is perfection itself, reminiscent of the great Manfredo Fest. Cunha's velvety alto weaves a web of eroticism and Schwager's solo is the perfect, crystalline appurtenance.

Quero só Viver em Paz is a joyous, lilting samba with intriguing chord changes and facile accordion work from Szczesniak while Cunha's rich vocal sound evokes the great Leny Andrade. The lush title track boasts a thoroughly lovely alto solo by Au, and captures what it must feel like to walk on Ipanema Beach following a transplendent night in Rio. *Novo Amor* opens with a vocal/bass intro followed by a masterful acoustic bass solo by Collins and *Vias Paralelas* has an internal, chordal and rhythmic tension that solders the genres of Brazilian music and contemporary jazz. The sumptuous closer, *October Song* features Cunha singing in English and displaying her indisputable talent for fine lyric writing and lyrical interpretation in any language.

Lesley Mitchell-Clarke

**Neon
Andrew Boudreau; Neta Raanan; Simon
Willson; Eviatar Slivnik
Fresh Sound New Talent FSNT-634
(andrewboudreau.com)**



► The liquid pianism of Andrew Boudreau is a treat for the connoisseur's inner ear. His debut disc *Neon* is launched in irrepressible fashion with vivid

original compositions that appear to come at you from very interesting, oblique harmonic and rhythmic angles. Both complementary and contrasting colours and tone textures nestle cheek by jowl. They spring from a single source: the questing mind of a young composer and pianist who thrusts his music off the beaten path.

Boudreau makes a proverbial splash on his first outing as a recording artist. He brings his prodigious musical gifts to these songs. He plays with intuition and intellect; with elegance of form, generous lyricism and tumbling fantasy. This makes the program eminently beckoning.

The tunes *Neon*, *Ghost Stories* and *Hopscotch* are extraordinarily eloquent and seductive, and the pianist, justifiably shines through them. But this riveting musicianship is not the sole purview of Boudreau. He plays with equally intriguing bedfellows. The bassist Simón Willson and drummer Eviatar Slivnik are fully attuned to the pianist's vision and artistry and – together with tenor

saxophonist Neta Raanan – these artists have formed an elegant musical relationship.

Boudreau – a talent worth watching – goes for unforced clarity rather than the nth degree of excitement. It won't matter to you that his fresh, spacious and airy interpretation of this piano-driven repertoire lacks the kind of celebratory noise that many debutants go for on their first outing on disc.

Raul da Gama

Jump

Julietta Eugenio; Matt Dwonszyk; Jonathan Barber

Greenleaf Music GRE-CD-1092 (julietta-eugenio.com)



► Many musicians today put out what may be called mixed compilation programs on their debut discs. It's almost as if they are testing the waters, so to speak; playing

in a variety of styles and personas. However, it is a healthy sign when the program makes intrinsic musical sense from start to finish, revealing not simply a mature program, but a near-fully formed musical voice. This is exactly the case with *Jump* by tenor saxophonist Julietta Eugenio.

The smoky syntax of Eugenio's music speaks to a rare kind of maturity that is rooted in a deeply reflective psyche. Her compositions seem made for a molten, meditative saxophone voice that tumbles out of the bell of her horn in parabolic glissandos forming profound melodic lines born of tender phrases ending with sensuously whispered vibrato.

Mostly original work by Eugenio fills this album – except for two standards – revealing a musician who mines her tenor for all the tonal purity that it can offer. Nothing is overly mannered; everything seems poised, balanced and intuitively right. *For You, Another Bliss, Tres*, and the exquisitely paced standard, *Crazy He Calls Me* are gleaming gems.

Finally, if trio music is an intimate conversation among friends, then Eugenio, bassist Matt Dwonszyk and drummer Jonathan Barber parlay with the familiarity of old friends. Yet their playing retains the gracious etiquette associated with musical *noblesse oblige*, which comes from being musicians of a thoroughbred sort.

Raul da Gama

The Next Step

Roberto Occhipinti; Adrean Farrugia; Larnell Lewis
Modica Music (modicamusic.com)



► The curiosity engrained in bassist Roberto Occhipinti's personality has allowed him to wear many hats in the music industry, all while avoiding the “master of

none” trap that often accompanies “jack of all trades.” Equally at home in a jazz quartet, perched on a stool in an orchestra or writing notes in the booth of a recording studio, the man does it all. This versatility kept Occhipinti busy through periods of the COVID-19 pandemic where even the most passionate of us were twiddling our thumbs. How? With his own recording studio, and Modica Music.

The Next Step was recorded there, released on Modica and features a who's who of Canadian musicians, although fewer than you might expect. Occhipinti opted for a piano trio on this release, consisting of Adrean Farrugia on piano and Larnell Lewis on drums, with the addition of vocalist Ilaria Crociani gracing the fifth track. This is the type of band one could expect to hear musical pyrotechnics from, but this recording comes off as cool and subdued instead.

“Subdued” certainly doesn't imply any lack of energy throughout the album, as the trio gives their all to even the slower and more introspective tracks. Jaco Pastorius' *Opus Pocus* and Occhipinti's *A Tynerish Swing* are both on the edgier side, the latter featuring a great bass solo after the catchy melody. The album is unified by overdubbed arco additions from Occhipinti, which makes it feel like a larger ensemble is present without taking away from the interplay of the trio.

Sam Dickinson

are you here to help?

Aaron Dolman; Sarah Rossy; Eugénie Jobin
Independent (aaronadolman.com)



► On the back cover of drummer/composer Aaron Dolman's *Are You Here to Help?* a set of brief poetic liner notes mentions “the gentle potency

of silence.” This resonated with me after several listens to the album. In the paired-down setting of vocals, drums and occasional vibraphone, artists are left with a choice to either try and fill every space, or to embrace the subtlety of the ensemble. The first option has potential for more showiness, but the second, which Dolman opts for, allows silence

and space to become a fourth member of the band.

Vocalists Sarah Rossy and Eugénie Jobin (Jobin contributes the vibraphone playing on tracks 2, 4 and 8) are not afraid of the avant-garde, but are always perfectly in tune and rhythmically confident when the music asks for it. This is no easy feat on an album largely devoid of harmonic accompaniment!

Dolman's drumming is not without its fair share of contrast to keep listeners entertained. The sections of his compositions with a steady groove are made even more poignant by the free and open improvisations that surround them. This is especially the case on the album's title track, which features a great deal of groove as a contrast to relatively abstract harmonic and melodic ideas. Juxtaposition might just be the theme of this album, as it contains enough abstraction to amuse tired ears and enough cohesion to pull in more conservative listeners. Something for everyone!

Sam Dickinson

Night's Quietest Hour

Gordon Grdina's Haram with Marc Ribot
Attaboygirl Records ABG-3

Oddly Enough – The Music of Tim Berne
Gordon Grdina
Attaboygirl Records ABG-4
(gordongrdinamusic.com)



► Guitarist/composer Gordon Grdina leads several ensembles, from home-based Vancouver bands to various international collaborations, each

representing different aspects of his broad musical interests. These two CDs on his recent Attaboygirl label may be his brightest achievements so far, the first as a bandleader, the second as a guitarist.

Among his hometown groups, Haram, formed in 2008, focuses Grdina's interest in traditional and contemporary Middle Eastern music. There are ten other musicians in the band, including Grdina's frequent rhythm section of bassist Tommy Babin and drummer Kenton Loewen with an array of other distinguished Vancouverites, among them clarinetist François Houle, trumpeter JP Carter and violinists Josh and Jesse Zubot. Expatriate Syrian singer Emad Armouch is an essential and prominent component, bringing focus and a keening intensity to the melodies in the midst of tremendous rhythmic energy. Grdina plays oud here, bringing an idiomatic mastery to the Middle Eastern lute, while featuring guitarist Marc Ribot, whose distinctively sparse, edgy lines have marked collaborations from Tom Waits to John Zorn. The compound rhythms and essentially modal underpinnings support everything from delicate dialogues



of guitar and oud and pastoral songs of longing, all of which will stretch to climactic ensembles that can merge Armouh's vocals and a choir of singing musicians,

all topped by the mercurial leads of Ribot and the other soloists, notably tenor saxophonist Christopher Kelly.

Oddly Enough is a solo guitar recording exploring the music of New York-based composer/alto saxophonist Tim Berne, a significant figure at the creative edges of jazz whose works can fuse lyricism, tradition and an expanding complexity. For the project, Grdina has created a highly distinctive palette, playing classical and acoustic guitars, oud and dobro, but most notably a hybrid midi-synth electric guitar that aids him in creating distinctive polyphonic dialogues with multiple sonic identities. The results are as apt to sound like a band as a solo guitarist, and the first sounds heard on the opening title track suggest an electronically altered drum kit rather than a guitar. That might turn off purists, but persist and one is increasingly immersed in this dense work, an almost natural path for a musician as multi-voiced as Grdina. *Enord Krad*, the most complex of the pieces with oud, voices and reverb crashes travelling against its keening electric lead, is the most compelling of the works, mingling lyricism, angst and technology in subtle ways, before concluding with a sustained virtuosic and acoustic cadenza. The extended *Snippet* and the concluding *Pliant Squids*, filled with singing acoustic detail, fuse the distinctive lyric predilections of composer and performer in what may be Grdina's most fully developed statement to date.

Stuart Broomer

Impossible Burger p2p

Country Phasers Kurt Newman

In the Same Room Doug Tielli; Nick Fraser Rat Drifting (rat-drifting.bandcamp.com)



► In the early 2000s composer/guitarist Eric Chenaux created Rat-Drifting, as imaginative and distinctive as any label might hope to be, encouraging and

embracing the most varied projects, often beyond genre. My favourite was *Blasé Kisses* by the Reveries, the trio of Chenaux, Ryan Driver and Doug Tielli who performed standards from the Great American Songbook

with mouth-speakers and a mouth-microphone, literally inside their mouths, suggesting a submerged nightclub broadcasting from deep space: mysterious, funny and somehow transcendent. Now Chenaux is back, making Rat-Drifting's brilliant and whimsical early documentation of Toronto music available again, as well as releasing new recordings, in download format. If the label has an aesthetic, it's less about performance and more about capturing rare states of mind. The first three releases embody a special quality, an infectious empathy. Each is utterly different, but each is restorative. Each might happily share a Sun Ra title: *Cosmic Tones for Mental Therapy*.



The group 2P2 includes Karen Ng playing sax, bass, kalimba, synth, guitar, static, slide and stomach grumble, with Philippe Melanson playing percussion, electronics, field recordings, voice and guitar, along with Christopher Willes on synthesizers, gated tape loops, flute, tenor recorder, text-to-speech with the Melanson Family and Robin Dann adding voices. But the room isn't crowded: it includes Toronto, Montreal, Cape Breton and Moncton. A pandemic project, it triumphs over isolation, giving its varied sounds attention, yet barely dusting them with intention, disparate and distant sounds gently joined in the ether. The liquid sounds of guitar and literal water heard on *I* are intimate, immediate, seemingly beyond authorship, while on the brief *E*, instruments are glimpsed through a wall of static.

The eponymous *Country Phasers* is a band of one, with Kurt Newman playing a just intonation harmonica, pedal steel guitar and electronics that include overdubbing, looping and percussion. It's steeped in the sounds of country music, with the singing sustains and bending tones of the steel guitar prominently featured. The repetitions and sustained drones declare affinities with Terry Riley and Bill Frisell, while the clear, high pitches suggest Andean flute music, and the looping electronic lead of *Julienne* invokes bagpipes. Though a strange digital break-up occasionally occurs near an ending, e.g., *Chiffonade*, a second's pause quickly restores the ambient order.



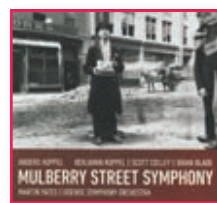
that included Chenaux, Rob Clutton and Brodie West, and which also recorded for Rat-Drifting. Active from 2003 to 2013, it was one of Canada's most creative bands. With the

Trombonist Doug Tielli and drummer (and sometime-pianist here) Nick Fraser have enjoyed a long collaboration including Drumheller, a free jazz quintet

two isolated *In the Same Room*, the emphasis is less on intense creativity than depth of feeling, mood and response. Tielli is as artful as he is vocalic, and he summons up his instrument's great jazz tradition of expressive lyricism, whether elegant or rustic, sometimes suggesting Jack Teagarden or Roswell Rudd. Fraser is an artful partner, whether creating rhythmic dialogue and momentum or subtly supportive commentary.

Stuart Broomer

Anders Koppel – Mulberry Street Symphony Benjamin Koppel; Scott Colley; Brian Blade; Odense Symphony Orchestra; Martin Yates Unit Records (unitrecords.com/releases)



► *Mulberry Street Symphony* is Danish rock musician and composer Anders Koppel's fascinating musical take on 19th-century New

York with its huge immigrant population. So many newcomers were pushed into crowded tenements and worked in sweatshops for low wages. Seven of the eight pieces on this double CD were inspired by the photographs of the "crusading photojournalist and social reformer, Jacob Riis." The booklet that accompanies the set allows us to view the poignant and sombre photographs including *Stranded in the City*, *Minding the Baby*, *The Last Mulberry* and *Bandit's Roost*.

Just as the immigrants had diverse origins, the *Mulberry Street Symphony* combines a classical orchestra with a jazz trio of bass, drums and Benjamin Koppel (son of Anders) on alto saxophone. The orchestra and jazz ensemble play back and forth with Koppel's saxophone weaving between these two forces with a clean and energetic sound. *Tommy the Shoeshine Boy* is a 20-minute piece which moves through many phases and we can imagine busy street scenes, the bustle of commerce and then a few short languid sections (perhaps Tommy gets to nap?) which emphasize the strings. By contrast, *Blind Man* is a delicate adagio piece with eloquent saxophone lines that weave between the orchestra's strings and woodwinds. *Mulberry Street Symphony* is a complex and memorable reimagining of an important time and place.

Ted Parkinson

Louise
Emile Parisien Sextet
ACT 9943-2 (actmusic.com)



► Although Emile Parisien is French, and *Louise* was created featuring musicians from Europe and the USA, there is a small Canadian

connection: *Louise* is inspired by the well-known French/American artist Louise Bourgeois who created *Maman*, the rather large spider located next to the National Gallery in Ottawa. However, the main reason to enjoy this album is its gorgeous, enveloping and at times almost languorous jazz grooves.

There are sounds and surprises throughout, like a clean and efficient guitar solo from Manu Codjia that, suddenly and unexpectedly, has some fuzz attached to it and veers off in a different direction. Roberto Negro plays a whimsical yet focused piano solo for the first half of *Memento Pt. II* which moves into an almost cacophonous percussion section.

This is Parisien's 11th album and he wrote five of the nine tunes. His soprano sax playing is delicious, with a touch of Steve Lacey and an ability to hop lightly through one piece or turn a corner and play some serious lines in another such as *Jojo*, a scorching bop tune. To use an old school analogy, wherever you let the needle drop in this album, you will be entranced by the atmosphere and intensity created by this quintet of superb musicians.

Ted Parkinson

Sonne l'image
Ensemble SuperMusique
Ambiances Magnétique AM 266 CD
(ambiances-magnetiques.bandcamp.com)



► Sometimes, the smallest tidbit of context can make a world of difference when it comes to interpreting art. One illustrative example that comes to mind

is the powerful 1997 Derek Bailey and Min Tanaka *Music and Dance* album, where the listener is primarily attuned to Bailey's guitar playing but even just a working knowledge of Tanaka's presence helps establish a real-world setting in the mind of the listener.

Similarly, Ensemble SuperMusique's 2019 Montreal *Sonne l'image* performance is also one of a multidisciplinary nature, and there is something about that framing that feels critical. Even if one doesn't get their hands on a CD where the visual scores themselves are provided, the music takes on a new shape when the imagination can vaguely infer the imagery that is being responded to. This phenomenon speaks to a desire the spectator

has to feel connected to the process itself, where the stage almost seems to disappear and the hierarchy of a concert hall vanishes. But what happens when one chooses to listen ignorantly, fixating on what we've been given rather than extrapolating?

The music itself has a definite determinate sway to it in terms of duration and select composed passages, but this is an inspiring display of collective improvisation. Throughout three movements, all individual elements are interwoven but there is never overt disruption. Everyone breathes together, and nobody takes a solo. Communal contributions take precedence over individual objectives. Patience and timing ensures fluidity.

Yoshi Maclear Wall

Future Moons
Adams, Dunn & Haas
Ansible Editions 002

727 / 16
High Alpine Hut Network
Ansible Editions 001 (ansibleeditions.com)



► As one of three brilliant (and radically different) recorded collections of improvised sonic experimentation released to kickstart the new Ansible Editions

label, *Future Moons* sets itself apart by being a truly profound headphone experience. Due to the nature of the deep textural well the trio is drawing from, the abundance of information demands to be rigorously curated and Jeff McMurrich's strikingly intimate mix captures the holistic picture with astounding clarity. The left and right channels are in sustained dialogue, and this exemplary balance gives the impression that one is becoming increasingly enveloped in the band's shifting evocations of colour. The pieces traverse through so many contrasting spaces, that the urge to distinguish between starting point and landing place gets completely eviscerated. The track *Soft Nebula* (to me, a microcosm of this entire project) makes one's head spin; the mind keeping pace with the curveballs it throws feels like an impossibility despite clocking in at less than two minutes. The jarring timing of that initial fade-in implies that the session commenced long before the spectator sauntered into the studio. Kieran Adams (percussion), Matthew Dunn (soundscapes) and Andy Haas (woodwinds) promptly alternate setting their own infernos, in the order I named them. The final second feels like a fourth-wall break; it's an indelible event. Depending on how one chooses to approach this work, *Future Moons* can be filled with those instances.

Elsewhere (in an adjacent galaxy), you have *727/16*, a relatively brief dizzying flurry, consisting of several dizzying flurries.



Structurally, it's everywhere at once in a given moment but it never feels disjointed in its focus or intent; in fact, quite the contrary. It takes the concept of "fusion"

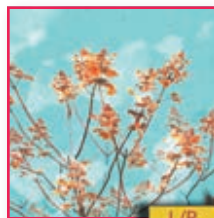
as a loose genre-descriptor and runs the length of the globe with it. Jazz-house-ambient-noise-progressive-funk-dub is my best attempt at coining a suitable term for what I'm hearing, which just goes to show how comically obsolete this compartmentalization process can be when an ensemble draws from such a wide array of influences. High Alpine Hut Network was founded by Christopher Shannon and Benjamin Pullia with the original intent on experimenting with house music, but the personnel of the band subsequently quadrupled in size, and by extension so did the stylistic scope of the project.

727/16 clocks in at 20 minutes, with enough ingenuity and exploration to warrant about three times that length. The way it manages to cover the amount of ground it does with such staggering efficiency is with steady, unrelenting forward motion at a breakneck pace. If the listener so much as blinks, they'll miss a handful of sections, especially during the erratic opening track. *727* starts the way *16* ends, with a pulsating drone that eventually reveals an ethereal synth ostinato, patiently panning left and right as the listener gradually becomes aware of its presence. This moment of tranquility is particularly striking when contextualized within the glorious storm it bookends.

Yoshi Maclear Wall

POT POURRI

Of Glow and Abandon
Radia
Independent (ryandavisviola.com)



► Viola is one of those instruments that is loved by many but remains somewhat under-represented in a variety of musical contexts. Ryan Davis aka Radia puts a glowing spot-

light on it here, showcasing multitudes of colours and possibilities, and does so with much skill and imagination. The whole world is wrapped up within 16 minutes of music, a world so engaging that the listener is left wishing for more.

Radia is a one-man band – Davis plays his viola with abandon but he also does electronics, looping and beats, creating music that crosses genres easily. The blend of classical, electronics, folk and hip-hop elements

creates a unique and accessible voice. Davis' tone is dark and beautiful, sweet, resonant. His compositions are flowing from one to another meaningfully, as if he is leading us through some secret passageway.

Of Glow & Abandon opens with the sorrowful and poetic *Dreaming, After All*. There are neither electronics nor beats here, only the purity of sound and expression, the lone viola voice that pleads and sings and dreams. It segues into *Blood Orange* seamlessly and the mood lightens up with viola pizzicatos and beats. Davis continues building up the sound and energy, adding more beats and more soaring melodies in *Colour You Like*, and the mood grows into a dancing joy. *Set a Fire In My Snow* concludes this musical narrative in a cinematic ambience.

Of Glow & Abandon is a glorious ode to the viola and a showcase of one man's creativity.

Ivana Popovic

Tasty Tunes

Quartetto Gelato

Independent QGPI 011 (quartettoigelato.ca)



► I first experienced Quartetto Gelato (QG) in its original incarnation well over 25 years ago. It was on Salt Spring Island, BC and the group blew the roof off of that small island hall

with their (now signature) dazzling virtuosity, eclectic repertoire, masterful musicianship, infectious energy and great sense of fun. Despite the many intervening years and personnel changes, they've still got it! *Tasty Tunes*, the quartet's tenth album, is yet another celebration of all those signature qualities enumerated above that make QG unique, exciting and wholly entertaining!

QG's current incarnation of world-class musicians comprises oboist Colin Maier (also on saw, vocals and bongos); cellist Kirk Starkey; violinist/vocalist Konstantin Popović; and Matti Pulkki on the accordion. Charles Cozens, a QG former accordion player, performs on three tracks, while his brilliant, inventive arrangements are heard throughout the album.

From an astonishing Cuban version of Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique* and the sizzling "Gypsy-funk" of *Cigano No Baiao*, to Piazzolla's poignant *Tanti Anni Prima*, with Maier's haunting and heart-achingly beautiful turn on the saw, and the whimsical *Cartoon Fantasy* (with guest appearances by the Flintstones and Pink Panther), along with *Spaghetti Roads'* delightful nod to John Denver and *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*, and Popović's magnificent vocals and stirring violin on *Mesecina*, this delicious album exudes pure joy!

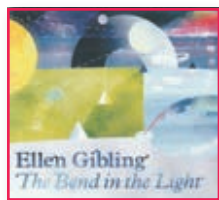
In what could be subtitled "Mozart Meets Minnie the Moocher," Quartetto Gelato's *Tasty Tunes* will leave a smile plastered on your face.

Sharna Searle

The Bend in the Light

Ellen Gibling

Independent (ellengibling.ca)



► Nova Scotia-based harpist Ellen Gibling expertly performs in wide-ranging styles. Her McGill classical harp training helped establish her as a gifted clas-

sical/experimental music solo and ensemble performer. Her interest in Irish traditional music led her to the University of Limerick's Master's Program in Irish Traditional Music, graduating in 2019 and now, this release. Gibling performs her solo harp arrangements and co-arrangements of Irish traditional tunes, plus originals composed by Gibling and others with detailed eloquence, careful phrasing and colourful, wide pitches

Gibling's choice of pieces makes for fun listening. Opening track *Hop Jigs* comprises

three traditional Irish harp jigs she learned in Limerick, colourfully played with steady beats and singalong melodies. Second track is three Irish polkas with faster melodic lines and lower countermelody chords holding them together. Gibling's performance of the Irish traditional slow *Air: Lament for the Death of Staker Wallace* wallows in her shining sad musicality and technical expertise. Gibling's friend Karen Iny composed *Waltz & Reel: Maya's Waltz/Forty*. *Maya's Waltz* is Irish-flavoured yet calming with a slight classical musical feel leading to the slightly faster *Forty* celebratory birthday reel. Gibling's composition, *Jigs: Side by Each*, consists of two jigs commissioned by her friends about the two dogs in their lives. These dogs must be happy since joyous traditional grounded dancing sounds are played with ascending and descending lines to closing high-pitched slowing strings.

Gibling's immaculate understanding of centuries-spanning harp styles, compositions and Irish music results in music all her own!

Tiina Kiik

Something in the Air

Creative Music reissues, expansions and rediscoveries lead to wider historical knowledge

KEN WAXMAN

Historical gap filling, bringing back into circulation almost unknown sessions or offering new audiences a chance to experience classics, the appearance of improvised music reissues and rediscoveries continues unabated. Some sessions include additional material or entire programs which were thought to never have been recorded. This 1960s and 1970s selection offers instances of all of these things.



The most important semi-reissue is **The Complete, Legendary, Live Return Concert** (Oblivion Records OD-o8 oblivionrecords.co), which marked pianist **Cecil Taylor**'s return to performance after five years in academia. The date, which featured Taylor with regular associates, alto saxophonist Jimmy Lyons, drummer Andrew Cyrille and bassist Sirone, was celebrated when released as a limited edition LP. **Complete** is just that, however, for besides offering the nearly 38-minute solo and quartet music that made up the initial *Spring of Two Blue-J's*, this

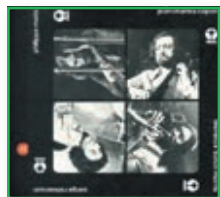
two-CD set adds an 88-minute quartet performance of *Autumn/Parade* from the concert. It's impossible to add superlatives to describe the original. The mature Taylor style had crystalized and throughout his solo excursion, he works every part of the piano, with forceful hammering on the lowest-pitched keys all the way up to responsive glissandi in the upper registers. Even as he's creating mountains of notes, his emphasized dynamics manage to be Impressionistic, linear and true to the initial theme. Narrative reflections abound on the supple interface that was the original quartet track. Starting slowly, upward and downward piano flourishes are accompanied by fluid double bass pacing and resounding drum pops. Meanwhile Lyons picks up the theme and gradually repeats it, with each pass becoming more vigorous, as multiphonics, flattement, tongue stops and altissimo runs are added. When his distinct meld of freebop and energy music are crammed into a heavily vibrating climax, the others join with similar intensity only to downshift to responsive vibrations following a decisive Sirone string pluck. This, plus an intense free music elaboration, is expressed during the new section. Working off Cyrille's pops and Sirone's pumps, Taylor repeatedly shatters the infrastructure, with continuous affiliations, cleanly articulating the introduction as Lyons gathers strength with Woody Woodpecker-like bites and split-tone cries. Percussive piano jabs spur the saxophonist to clarion screeches, expressing yearning

as well as power. Each time, contrasting piano dynamics or interjections from the others threaten to fragment the narrative, thematic motifs, usually from Taylor, reappear and confirm horizontal movement. Eye-blink transitions are commonplace, with interludes of unexpectedly gentle runs preventing overall murkiness. Rhythm isn't neglected either, as cymbal crashes or string pops suggest backend power. By mid-point spectacular asides, detours and flourishes affirm Taylor's stylistic singleness, yet these rugged cascades also energetically extend the theme. Taylor's galloping prestissimo asides at the three-quarter mark encourage Lyons to ascend to the sopranissimo range. The concluding section is studded with note flurries from the piano as Sirone's careful string stops and Cyrille's drum ruffs centre the proceedings. With Lyons back for rugged tongue slaps, Taylor broadens the interface with theme repetitions before a high-energy finale.



While they're also important building blocks in the Taylor oeuvre, by the standards of 1973, the sessions from 1961 and 1966 collected as **Cecil Taylor Mixed To Unit Structures Revisited (ezz-thetics 1110 hathut.com)** aren't shatteringly intense. While thought radical for the times there are points during the three 1961 tracks where the combination of walking bass, piano vamps and Lyons'

soloing with Charlie Parker-like contours could describe a bebop session. As a septet, the group opens up on the concluding *Mixed*. Its slackened pace with Ellington-like voicings contrasts floating smears from trombonist Roswell Rudd and trumpeter Ted Curson with split tone vamps from Lyons and tenor saxophonist Archie Shepp. Even Taylor's flowing pianism is more pastel than percussive. With a different septet, the mature Taylor archetype with dynamic shudders and unexpected turns comes into focus by 1966. As three horns screech, smear and scoop and the two basses buzz, the pianist's vigorous runs are continuously present. A rare sidebar to Taylor's composing, *Enter, Evening (Soft Line Structure)* features an unexpected jazz-world music suggestion with Ken McIntyre's oboe and Henry Grimes or Alan Silva's bass producing ney-like and oud-like textures. Improv wins out with trumpeter Eddie Gale's shakes and the saxophonists' smeared playing elevated pitches. The title track oscillates between freebop and free jazz with the horn parts leaping from call-and-response riffs to encircling cawing vibrations with brassy triplets pushing the energy still higher. Tellingly though, the pianist's dynamic stop-time crunches and stride in his duet with Cyrille on the concluding *Tales (8 Whisps)* is a mirror image of how the two would play in 1973.



Free jazz had become part of global musical language by the mid-1970s. Yet, as it was being diffused, non-Americans were making their own additions to its spread. Case in point is this reissue of the eponymous recording **Jean-Charles Capon/Philippe Maté/Lawrence "Butch" Morris/Serge Rahoerson (Souffle Continu Records FFL072 soufflecontinuarecords.com)**, from 1976 that

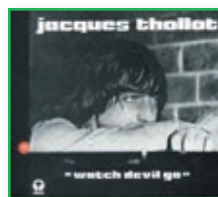
succinctly highlights some of the music's future directions. American cornetist Morris was part of the free jazz fraternity and his plunger tone, mercurial obbligatos and rhythmic asides confirm that. With deep digging solos, tenor saxophonist Maté adds French free music. But Gallic cellist Capon was part of the Baroque Jazz Trio, a studio habitué and had played in Madagascar with local Malagasy musicians, including drummer Rahoerson, who is featured here. Not only can one sense the strands of jazz-world music suggested by Taylor's *Unit Structures* being woven, but since the rhythm section was recorded first with the horn players' sounds added later, future studio sound design is also in use. Despite the separation, cleavage is practically non-existent. The drummer's shuffles, slides and cymbal accents fit perfectly, and throughout Capon uses his cello to create the determined pulse of a double bass line. With overdubbing, his pinpointed cello strokes add force to the narratives as he creates spiccato lines as facile as if he were playing violin. Other times, most prominently on *Mode De Fa*, Capon's his light

pizzicato finesse adds guitar-like sounds to the front line. There's even a hint of electronic oscillations on *Orly-Ivato*. Fanciful in parts, funky in others, the disc is more than a blueprint for future musical fusion trends. It's also a fine contemporary sounding program.



No advance remains static and by 1979, when **Braids (NoBusiness NBCD 138 nobusiness-records.com)**, this newly discovered Hamburg concert by the **Sam Rivers Quartet** was recorded, modification to vigorous improvising had been adopted. Not only is one member of the otherwise American band British, but Dave Holland plays both bass and cello. This matches Rivers' solos on tenor and

soprano saxophones, flute and piano. Furthermore, while Thurman Barker plays standard drum kit, the group's fourth member is Joe Daley, whose sophisticated dexterity on tuba and euphonium means he takes both accompanying and frontline roles. The first part of the concert resembles 1960s energy music as the saxophonist propels split-tone screams and bugling reed bites, backed by thick drum resonations and a fluid bass pulse. Soon a tuba obbligato signals a shift as the tempo balances between allegro and andante, with Rivers' triple tonguing complemented by the tubist's portamento effects, finally climax with stretched reed tones and brass grace notes. What elsewhere would be a standard drum solo in pseudo-march tempo actually serves as an introduction to a piano interlude, expressed with contrasting dynamics and varied tempos. Piano patterning squirms forward until speedy rips from Daley change the narrative course. Playing with the swift facility of a valve trombonist, Daley bounces from treble sheets of sound to guttural scoops. Holland's subsequent strums and ascending string plucks make way for an Arcadian but tough duet between Daley's tuba puffs and Rivers' flute peeps. Except for forays into screech mode, the remainder of the flute section opens the narrative to out-and-out swing. Holland's cello plucks and Barker's concise small cymbal pings confirm the motion. Kept from any suggestion of prettiness however, the concluding tremolo flute flutters are in sync with Daley's tuba burbles as rhythmic groove and sound exploration are simultaneously affirmed.



Iconoclastic French drummer **Jacques Thollot (1946-2014)**, a mainstay of the jazz/improv scene, always searched for new forms and styles. That's what makes some of the 16 (!) tracks on **Watch Devil Go (Souffle Continu Records FFL071 soufflecontinuarecords.com)** fascinating. Together with tenor saxophonist/flutist François Jeanneau and bassist Jean-François Jenny-Clark, the drummer

and sometime pianist create free-wheeling and unique energy music on several of these 1974/1975 tracks. Yet Thollot and Jeanneau also play synthesizers. Those forays into wave form shudders can't seem to decide whether they should be used to add rhythmic impetus with electronic algorithms or mix Baroque-like washes as New Age ambient music. A complete outlier, the title tune adds synthesizer and string quartet vibrations to a simple vocal from Charline Scott that touches more on California folk rock than free jazz. *In Extensio* and *La Dynastie des Wittelsbach* are standouts for cutting-edge improv, with Jeanneau's saxophone piling vibrating scoops and split-tone smears into his solos as Jenny-Clark's constant pumps and Thollot's vigorous paradiddles and cymbal clashes move the tempo ever faster, but without loss of control. As for the electronica-oriented tracks, the memorable ones are those like *Entre Java et Tombok* where the synthesizer's orchestral qualities are put to use creating multiple sound layers in tandem with the flute's lowest pitches. With the machines able to replicate many timbres, some of the other notable tracks emphasize the meld of ethereal reed tones and powerful riffs that could swell from an embedded church pump organ. *Eleven* even sets up a call-and-response between the two synths.

The value of these sessions is that they fill gaps in the history of experiments that created free-flowing contemporary sounds. **●**

Old Wine, New Bottles

Fine Old Recordings Re-Released

BRUCE SURTEES



Fans of Polish violinist **Ida Haendel** (1928–2020) will be very pleased with the four-CD set of reissues of live concerts with the **Radio-Sinfonieorchester-Stuttgart** conducted by **Hans Müller-Kray** recorded between 1953 and 1967 (SWR Classic **SWR19427CD** naxosdirect.com/search/swr19427cd). These were well received upon their initial issue and are more than appreciated

now by those hearing the superb and characteristic playing so happily recognized by those who knew Haendel and her unique presence.

The first disc is the Brahms and I must confess, upon hearing just the opening, to feeling quite nostalgic. Her playing shows such affection for the music, it's positively heartwarming. Although this is a mono recording, we can hear every nuance from both the soloist and the orchestra. This is about listening to the music and Haendel's playing, not the way it was recorded. She's so present that you can hear every note.

After the Brahms, we would not be surprised to hear the Mendelssohn *E Minor* played with such delicate balance between the soloist and winds. The recordings include six composers in all, each with a different tempo and style; Haendel's playing in every instance is flawless.

Haendel played the Tchaikovsky to great acclaim starting from when she was a young prodigy in the late 1930s and throughout her career. By the time of this recording, she was recognized as playing this piece with incredible skill and interpretation. Known for her "impeccable intonation," critics' praise has always been unequivocal.

As a five-year-old it is reported that Haendel played her first Dvořák, one of the *Slavonic Dances*. By the time she was 13, she played the *Violin Concerto* before thousands for Dvořák's 100th anniversary celebration. She made a recording of it in 1947, but this live performance from 1965 highlights the great strides and development in her playing.

Khachaturian wrote "I cannot write anything other than Armenian Music." He did it rather well. The famous *Sabre Dance* became a universal hit. His *Violin Concerto in D Minor* is also a first-rate work. The first movement *Allegro con fermezza* is to Western ears both exotic and Romantic. The second *Andante sostenuto* is another fine dance tempo and the third is *Allegro vivace*; a colourful and joyful celebration with the violin. You can recognize immediately that it is Haendel playing, her signature evident throughout these jaunty rhythms.

The final work is Bartók's *Violin Concerto No.2*. It is quintessential Bartók and is brought to life in this performance. The composer described the first movement as a typical 12-tone theme with a decisively tonal leaning. The original version did not have a virtuoso part for the soloist but Bartók was persuaded by violinist Zoltán Székely and conductor Willem Mengelberg to include such a part. We are grateful that he did and Haendel really does it justice.

The performances in this little box are a tribute to both the soloist and composers and of course the orchestra. The SWR as usual delivers effortless reproduction of these truly classic works.

As her many admirers may probably know, the DOREMI label has released four volumes of live Ida Haendel solo and chamber performances recorded in concert by the CBC while she was in Canada.



DOREMI also has some interesting new releases. Firstly, we have **Leon Fleisher** (1928–2020) in a live recording of the **Brahms Piano Concerto No.1** with **Pierre Monteux** conducting the **Concertgebouw Orchestra** (**Leon Fleisher Live Volume 2**, DOREMI DHR-8160 naxosdirect.com/items/leon-fleisher-live-vol.2-579037).

This was recorded on May 14, 1962. Fleisher identified this piece as his "talisman." In his autobiography, *My Nine Lives*, he writes that his parents gave him a recording of the concerto performed by his teacher Artur Schnabel, conducted by George Szell and he wrote that "for weeks, I ate, slept and breathed that piece." He began learning it and eventually played it in 1944 at his debut with the New York Philharmonic conducted by Monteux. Happily, he eventually recorded it with Szell as well. In this DOREMI recording we have a live performance recorded with the Concertgebouw Orchestra. The world-renowned acoustics of the hall in Amsterdam where this live recording took place are unique. In my opinion, shared by many, this is one of the best recordings of this Brahms concerto ever! It should be noted that both the sound quality and the execution are both perfection in this live recording.

This was recorded before any hint of the soon-to-come issues with focal dystonia that Fleisher experienced in his right hand in 1964. This condition necessitated a break in two-hand playing and the beginning of a 60-year career as a teacher at the Peabody Institute at Johns Hopkins University, and various other teaching venues including the RCM in Toronto where he gave master classes over a period of three decades. He was eventually able to return to two-hand playing in 1995.

The second piece on this recording is Mozart's *Piano Concerto No.23* recorded live with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Bruno Walter, the legendary Mozart conductor, at the Hollywood Bowl on June 12, 1959. Fleisher's playing is sensitive and compassionate. What a combination, Fleisher, Walter and Mozart!



Another very impressive release from DOREMI is **Rudolf Serkin Live Volume 1** (DHR-8161/2 naxosdirect.com/search/dhr-8161-2), featuring the **Brahms Piano Concertos Nos.1 and 2**.

Serkin is considered one of the finest pianist scholars of the German tradition. This muscular and authoritative playing is perfect for Brahms and Serkin has played the repertoire hundreds of times to rave reviews. Comparing live performances to studio recordings, the difference is quite tangible. If possible, the live performances are even more exciting; his playing vibrates with energy.

George Szell (1897–1970) is one of the most admired conductors in history and is regarded, even 50 years after his death as one of the most influential and revered conductors both by music lovers and critics alike. Szell was known to have been a perfectionist when it came to his recordings and he would definitely have approved of this one featuring Serkin with the Cleveland Orchestra in the *Piano Concerto No.1* recorded in Severance Hall on April 18, 1968.

Leonard Bernstein brings a very different sensibility to the *Piano Concerto No.2*. As an accomplished musician, philosopher, composer

and conductor, this was one of his favourite concert pieces and it shows here in this performance with Serkin and the New York Philharmonic from January 25, 1966.

As a welcome added bonus, not mentioned on the CD cover, we have Brahms' *Four Pieces for Piano* and Schubert's *Wanderer Fantasy in C Major*, in live solo performances from Massey Hall, Toronto in 1974. **O**

ANOTHER FINE VINTAGE

Mingus – The Lost Album from Ronnie Scott's
Charles Mingus Sextet
Resonance Records HCD-2063 (resonancerecords.org)



► Between 1956 and 1965, composer and bassist Charles Mingus stretched the range of jazz composition with the tumult and keening lyricism of LPs like *Pithecanthropus Erectus*, *Mingus Ah Um* and *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*, simultaneously putting the civil rights movement on the jazz-club stage. This three-

CD set presents him a few years later, leading his sextet on the last two nights of a two-week run at Ronnie Scott's eponymous London club in 1972. Originally intended for release on Columbia, that possibility died with the label's 1973 purge of acoustic jazz greats: Mingus, Bill Evans, Keith Jarrett and Ornette Coleman.

1972 wasn't Mingus' happiest hour. He had been concentrating on extended compositions, including a string quartet and the massive orchestral work that would become *Epitaph*, during an era dominated by the knotty creativity of free jazz and the commercial juggernaut of fusion; however, the band here still pulses with life when reworking Mingus' earlier masterworks, stretching them to a half-hour and beyond: the dense, yearning harmonies of *Orange Was the Color of Her Dress, Then Blue Silk*, extends Duke Ellington's influence into a new expressionism; *Fables of Faubus* adds fresh dissonances while remaining a seething yet comic refutation of segregation. Two new works have similar dimension: *Mind-Readers' Convention in Milano* (AKA *Number 29*) is kaleidoscopic, while *The Man Who Never Sleeps* is imbued with a lustrous lyricism by trumpeter Jon Faddis, then a brilliant teenager. Alto saxophonist Charles McPherson is consistently good, improvising fleet and fluid lines across Mingus' insistent shifting rhythms. Bobby Jones, another regular, was a journeyman saxophonist who could stretch toward greatness on those turbulent undercurrents.

For all of Mingus' raging assaults on the bar culture of jazz (he once began a *studio* recording, *Charles Mingus Presents Charles Mingus*, by admonishing imaginary waitstaff and customers to cease glass clinking, cash register clanging, etc.), he was (even in that double-edged comedy) an *entertaining* jazz musician (he began his career as sideman to Ellington and Louis Armstrong), but one who had brought uncomfortable truths to the stage. Some of the humour here is satiric, like the bass solo that concludes *Fables of Faubus* by collaging minstrel songs and anthems, including *Turkey in the Straw*, *Dixie*, *My Old Kentucky Home* and the *Star-Spangled Banner*, but there's also low musical humour. Pianist John Foster, otherwise unmemorable, contributes clichéd blues vocals and an imitation of Louis Armstrong on *Pops*. Roy Brooks, the drummer, plays an extended solo on musical saw. One leaves with an uneasy sense that in his later years, Mingus' art, designed to make audiences uncomfortable, might backfire, making the audience comfortable and Mingus the opposite. In history's hall of mirrors, that might again make a contemporary audience uncomfortable.

Stuart Broomer

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Read the reviews here, then visit
thewholenote.com/listening

BACK IN FOCUS

Previously covered in
The WholeNote,
and topical again

Remembering Boris Brott (1944–2022)

We were already deep in production on this edition when Boris Brott was killed in a hit-and-run accident, steps away from his home in Hamilton. The disbelief, shock and dismay from the arts community and beyond has been followed by a wave of affectionate stories on television, in mainstream print media and digital/social media – expressions of admiration and gratitude, reflecting Brott's lifetime of enthusiasm and commitment, energetically making many kinds of great music accessible to all kinds of people.

In light of this – with very little time and space before publishing – rather than dilute, in re-telling, what is now being said, so eloquently, by so many, in the wake of his death, we thought we would share with you some things from a past issue of *The WholeNote* that gives a taste of how he spoke and lived life.

The year 2007 was the Brott Summer Music Festival's 20th anniversary, and they had some pretty special events planned, including Boris Brott conducting a performance of Mahler's *Symphony of a Thousand*, a massive tour-de force dedicated to the nearly 1,000 students the National Academy Orchestra had graduated to date. Just imagine how many more there have been since then!

So in May of that year Boris Brott agreed to be the "Mystery Child" in our regular contest, "We Are All Music's Children". Brott had provided two different photos of himself, but playfully asserted that we should run the one with the violin rather than the baton, so that people would have to "put their thinking caps on" – not instantly know that mystery child grew up to be a conductor.

The clues we ran with the photo went like this:

This little fellow's mother used to dress up his teddy bears with bow ties for an audience.

He would later become known for his fondness for bow ties, and currently owns 64 of them.

Apparently the reference was a no-brainer, because we had a record number of correct responses, and were able to offer some fine prizes – tickets and recordings – to a few lucky readers.

In the June edition we revealed Brott's identity, along with a brief profile based on a phone interview. As per usual, as the contest's writer, I asked some questions about childhood musical experiences, and vividly remember the pleasure and pain of having to transcribe and boil down a generous and engaging 45 minute conversation into a half-page of print. Here's an excerpt:

Born in Montreal (1944), Boris Brott studied violin first with his father, Alexander Brott, and performed at the age of five with the orchestra of Le concerts symphoniques de Montréal (MSO) at a young people's matinee.



BOB HATCHER



"My earliest musical memory," he said, "is standing in a crib watching my parents rehearse a string quartet. We lived in a room in my grandparents' house. I'd have been 18 months or two years old. My cellist mother encouraged me to enjoy performing. To this day when I look at an audience, there's some part of me that sees a whole bunch of friendly teddy bears wearing bow-ties."

"I was always in the company of accomplished musical people. It was a very enriched childhood. But at nine or ten I became aware that I had little or no communication with my peers, and I stopped playing violin for about a year. I learned hockey and football. I also learned that it was not really my thing (hey .. I really am a nerd!), redoubled my efforts with the violin, and never looked back."

If you could time-travel – meet face-to-face with the little boy in that photo, is there anything you would like to tell him?

"Yes! I'd tell him to really enjoy kindergarten and spend time learning to relate to people of his own age. I was around adults so much – this cost me dearly later on. The little boy in the photo was allowed to be creative and I am so grateful to my parents for that. But everything I needed to learn I should have learned in kindergarten – interactive skills. Musicians tend to be loners as learners. We tend to be insecure, introverted. Often we learn to hide insecurity by being overly assertive."

"So I'd tell little Boris to stick around. Get along with the other children in the playground."

I'd say make the extra effort to get to know them, let them get to know you, and in so doing you will get to know yourself."

Our musical playground is a richer place because he took his own very good advice. 🐼

MJ (Jack) Buell

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BENEFIT FOR CANADA-UKRAINE FOUNDATION

THURS APRIL 28 • 7:30 PM • MERIDIAN HALL, TORONTO

TICKETS: [TOLIVE.COM](https://tolive.com) OR 416-366-7723

With Performances by **Vasyl Popadiuk** // **Sonia Rodriguez** and Principal Dancers of The National Ballet of Canada **Guillaume Côté**, **Heather Ogden**, **Svetlana Lunkina**, **Brendan Saye**, **Jurgita Dronina**, **Harrison James**, and **Spencer Hack** // Red Sky Performance // Vesnivka Ukrainian Women's Choir // **Lara Ciekiewicz**, Soprano // **Natalya Gennadi**, Soprano // **James McLennan**, Tenor // Barvinok Ukrainian Dance School

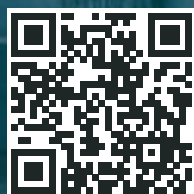
CONCEIVED AND CURATED BY: SONIA RODRIGUEZ, HEATHER OGDEN, EVELYN HART, AND ATTILA GLATZ
PRESENTED BY: ATTILA GLATZ CONCERT PRODUCTIONS AND TO LIVE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE EMBASSY OF UKRAINE

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