MÉLI SÀNDE
& PELLÉAS

SIMONE OSBORNE
MET AUDITION WINNER
KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN
REMEMBERED

Isabel Bayrakdarian
& Russell Braun

MEASHA BRUEGGEGROSMAN
IN IDOMENEO

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A prince, Golaud, lost in a forest, finds a young woman and takes her home as his wife. This opening sequence of Claude Debussy’s operatic masterpiece *Pelléas et Mélisande* lends itself to many interpretations and hidden meanings. “The Belgian librettist Maurice Maeterlinck wrote in a symbolic style; the words have a deeper meaning, not just in face value,” said Canadian baritone Russell Braun, who will be portraying Pelléas for the 8th time, and the first time in Canada at the Canadian Opera Company. “The forest is our morality,” said Braun. “At the very beginning, Golaud says, ‘I cannot escape from this forest.’ The forest is from his thoughts and psyche. The very first sentence shows what you can expect from the rest of the opera. Every character has moments where they talk in great symbolic ways. Debussy really understood that you can get into this kind of almost-trance by listening to the images in the story.
“Mélisande [the woman Golaud discovers] is the most enigmatic character of the opera,” said Braun. “She can be a chameleon to whichever man is with her, she can be easily dominated. The very first thing she said is, ‘Don’t touch me, don’t touch me, or I’ll throw myself into the water.’ Golaud questions her about her origin, and all she said is that she has thrown her crown into the water, at the bottom of this well. As a listener, you are drawn into this wonderful psychology. What does the well represent and what was the crown? For me, it’s the most satisfying 3.5 hours of music theatre.”

Joining Braun in her first Mélisande is Canada’s four-time Juno award-winner, lyric soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian. “Mélisande is a mystery at the beginning and at the end,” said Bayrakdarian. “Someone has said that she is one of Bluebeard’s wives who has escape. Her reactions range from childlike to the profound.”

For the 42-year old Braun, playing Golaud’s younger brother Pelléas may have been pre-determined. The son of legendary Canadian baritone Victor Braun who was himself a famous Golaud, Braun remembers seeing his first Pelléas et Mélisande at age 9. It was in this opera at the 1997 Salzburg Festival, during his first year as Pelléas, where he performed with his father for the first time on the same stage. “It was wonderful to play the opposites.”

Braun’s high baritone is ideally suited for Pelléas, whose tessitura lies between tenor and baritone; at about 30 performances, this role is the one he has most frequently sung. “I understand French repertoire. You have to really adore it to perform it well. It takes commitment to understand the style and the language.” In fact, when he first auditioned for Richard Bradshaw, the first role the late maestro discussed with Braun was Pelléas. “It was Richard Bradshaw’s favourite opera. We had talked of doing this together for years.”

The intrigue in the story begins when Golaud brings Mélisande back to the kingdom of Allemonde. Pelléas has been chomping to leave the dreary and oppressive realm. “The day Mélisande lands, Pelléas says the ocean sounds different,” said Braun. “He senses her presence, and that she brings something new to this rigid society.” Bayrakdarian adds, “Mélisande says she fell in love with Pelléas when she first saw him, but we don’t have that scene. And throughout the opera, she doesn’t show it.”

At first, the relationship between Pelléas and Mélisande is quite childlike. At a fountain, Pelléas and Mélisande are playing. She tosses her wedding ring and it is lost in the fountain. “There is a subconscious trying to erase her present, to start it with her new man,” said Bayrakdarian. “You don’t throw your ring over a huge body of water. I’m still not sure how much of what she does is intentional and how much of it is fate.”

For Bayrakdarian, who has been going from success to success in more cheerful roles, Pelléas et Mélisande is quite a departure. “It’s very different, musically and dramatically, from all the roles I’ve portrayed so far. It’s almost like a chamber opera. Especially for Mélisande, it’s all conversation. It’s almost like singing Debussy’s art songs but with orchestral accompaniment, like a song cycle of 20 scenes.”

“I love how Debussy created this character through the music, dynamics and the lack of repetition of text,” said Russell. What are the challenges of singing Debussy? “It’s to find moments where you can let your passion be expressed very freely and also find moments of restraint. Treat it as very pure music. We tend to think that impressionist music is just a wash of colours and dynamics, but it is very precise and the rhythmic patterns are very closely married to the emphasis of the words. You don’t have to interpret this music, you just have to be honest. Be a little conservative and the magic of the score will come together.”

What does Braun mean by restraint? “There are complex rhythmic structures in the score, where triplets are followed by eighth notes and sixteenth notes. It is very specific writing; if you treat them as ad-lib improvisation, the piece will lose some of its magic. Just be very true to the score.”

As the story unfolds, the passion between Pelléas and Mélisande deepens. Meanwhile, Golaud becomes very suspicious and jealous. “Golaud tears Mélisande by the hair at one point,” said Braun. “There is a very violent aspect of his character. Many directors consider the opera a dream of Golaud’s. He’s the protagonist. The opera should really be called Golaud.”

Hearing Braun speak so highly of the bully, it still comes as a surprise when the soft-speaking baritone reveals that he would wish to sing the role of Golaud next. “I don’t have him in my calendar,” said Braun, “but most colleagues who sing Pelléas yearn to sing Golaud. It’s full of extreme emotions. Pelléas is more passionate and full of love. Golaud is tender, brutal, thoughtful and grotesque. It’s an incredible rich character to play. I like to play villains. My most recent villain was Enrico in Lucia. In every villain, there is a purpose. Every villain had a mommy and daddy. You have to find sympathy in the character. I’m singing some interesting repertoire that I enjoy and that challenges me. I love Britten. I will sing the Traveller in Death in Venice in Vienna. My voice will essentially be lyrical. The colour is darkening. With it I can attempt to sing more adult characters.”

In Act 4, Pelléas, realizing that the story will end badly, plans to leave the kingdom, but seeks one last secret meeting with Mélisande. “He real-
Four months ago, Isabel Bayrakdarian was on stage at the COC singing Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* while nine months pregnant. “If there had been a sixth performance, I would have cancelled,” said Bayrakdarian. “By the fifth show, my legato was non-existent.” That bump is now a 3-month old boy name Ari, which is Armenian for “brave.” Just one month after giving birth, Bayrakdarian was back in the recording studio and also sang her first Norina in *Don Pasquale* at Opera Colorado. “During pregnancy, hormones do very, very interesting, unusual and unexpected things to the voice. All your vital organs are being crushed by the baby, so your lung capacity is significantly reduced. You don’t feel the same support as before because the sensation is different. I was advised that one way to be in touch with my support was to always be aware of the muscles that “cradle” the baby. If one hadn’t tapped into these muscles before, what the baby does is put pressure on those muscles, and one would have no choice but to feel the diaphragm and feel that support.”

“The downside is that because of the water retention, the vocal chords are swollen, and the voice can sound heavier. I had to work even harder to get the same ease with the passaggio to the high notes because it was a bigger instrument. The flip side is that this richer sound came in very handy when I was recording the Tango Notturno CD. The second session of the recording was done when I was 6 months pregnant, and to this day, when I listen to the recording, I surprise myself with the great low notes.”

How did her voice feel after giving birth? “As soon as the baby was born, it was nice to go back to normal, except normal became a different reality. As a nursing mother, the hormones still have an impact on my voice. While certain technical things are much easier, I still have to work on other aspects to make it sound like it did before. Also, I sang with this richer sound for so many months while pregnant, it is not surprising that, having fallen in love with that sound, I yearn to have it all the time.”

Bayrakdarian’s voice has always had the warmth in her timbre, suggesting a Mimi or Violetta. “I have always waited for the right time. Maybe I’m ready to do it now, in a smaller house, where it would seem like a chamber piece.” Judging by recent reviews, she is well on her way.

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THE ECLECTIC CANADIAN DIVA TACKLES HER FIRST-EVER MOZART ROLE

Joseph K. So

Tackling Measha Brueggergosman for an interview is no easy task. Not that she is some haughty diva playing hard to get – she’s just very busy, and always has been. It’s just that her schedule has been brutal lately. In the last couple of months, she made her London Symphony Orchestra and Concertgebouw debuts, sang showcases for Deutsche Grammophon to promote her new CD, *Surprise*, plus concerts in Barcelona, in a wide-ranging repertoire from *Nuit d’ete* to Glagolitic Mass to Messiaen’s *Poèmes pour Mi*, all the while trying to learn a new role. I finally snag her on the phone from Rome, where she was working with coach Leonardo Angelini. “Yeah, it’s been a ‘worky’ last couple of months,” says Measha, sounding her usual cheery self despite the gruelling schedule. How does it feel to escape the Canadian winter by spending some time in the Eternal City? “It’s actually quite stormy here, but it’s still Rome – so who cares! (laughs)"

Brueggergosman was taking time out from performing to prepare Elettra in *Idomeneo* in Rome. It will be quite a change of pace for her, who last sang opera in summer 2006 as Juno in Joseph Martin Krauss’ *Aeneas in Kathargo* for Stuttgart Opera. And she hasn’t sung an operatic role in Canada since Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* for Vancouver way back in 2005. But things are about to change. She has signed an exclusive contract with DG, the prestigious “Yellow Label”, a coveted prize given to ambassador for African medical and research foundation – not too shabby for a girl from Fredericton, eh? Signed to IMG, a high power agency that manages some of the biggest names in the business, her career is being carefully built by her management in conjunction with her record label. Already plans are underway for a second CD – “possibly a disc of songs by women composers or songs inspired by women, like *Frauenliebe und Leben* or *Wesendonck Lieder*.”

Given her remarkable physical transformation, opera would appear to have an natural evolution. “I am really excited to be singing Elettra in Toronto, especially now that I am more comfortable with my Italian!” Warming to the subject of operas from Baroque to 20th century, all the way up to *Mourning Becomes Electra* by Martin David Levy. “Elettra is motivated by her emotions – Mozart’s orchestration and compositional language reflect the storm that rages within her. You don’t always get that in Mozart and you sometimes have to create more than what is on the page. Elettra is ferocious but she is still a woman, that’s what makes one relate to her. She’s got the humanity that she tries not to show, but in trying not to show it, she reveals it all the more.” And of course Elettra has the spectacular, scene-chewing “D’orèste d’Ajace.” "With the storm raging in the orchestra, you can get carried away so quickly – the whole idea is to stay calm!” laughs Measha. Staying calm and saving her voice will be key, since the gruelling schedule means singing six performances in eight days: “there’s going to be a lot of nothing around these performances! Don’t anybody call or invite me out, I’ll be doing nothing, complete silence!” (hearty laugh)

After *Idomeneo*, more juicy roles are beckoning. She just got engaged to sing her first-ever Valentine, in a concert Les Huguenots for New York City Opera and Gerard Mortier. Then comes a reprise of Sister Rose in *Dead Man Walking* in 2009, followed by Elisabetta in *Don Carlo* in 2010, both for Houston Grand Opera – “that’s my dream season! For me, these three men – Mortier, Pynkoski and Patrick Summers in Houston – I know I can trust them; their vision is their final word.” Of course it begs the question – Mortier, Pynkoski and Patrick Summers in Houston – I know I can trust them; their vision is their final word.” Of course it begs the question whether there are plans to sing for the COC? “No, not as yet…I am very open around these performances! Don’t anybody call or invite me out, I’ll be doing nothing, complete silence!” (hearty laugh)

To be sure, opera is essential in building a traditional classical career, but then Brueggergosman is never one to be limited by tradition. She’s already a “hot property” in popular culture. A high profile gig is hosting as well as performing at the Saturday Night Juno Gala on April 6. “It’s very exciting – let’s hope the COC won’t dawdle too long.

Idomeneo runs for six performances at Toronto’s historic Elgin Theatre (189 Yonge Street): April 26, 27, 29, May 1, 2 and 3, operaatelier.com
How does it feel to be 21 and on top of the world? Ask Simone Osborne. The Vancouver soprano has just won the highly coveted Metropolitan Opera Auditions. There have been young Met winners before — Canadian soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian comes to mind. But the last time it was won by someone as young as 21 it was the great Teresa Stratas in 1959 almost half a century ago. Interestingly the music that likely clinched Osborne’s win was Mafienka’s aria, sung in impeccable Czech, from The Bartered Bride, one of Stratas’ greatest roles. “People say to me ‘I guess you are the new Stratas’,” says Osborne over the phone from Vancouver. “Like her I’m small and have brown hair, and I’ll probably end up having the same voice type.” While it is great to be in such company, Osborne is much too smart to let lofty comparisons go to her head. On the phone and in radio interviews, Osborne comes across as warm and down-to-earth, articulate, remarkably mature, sensible and level headed, just the right combination of talent and smarts that will serve her well.

The Vancouverite Osborne does not come from a musical family. “My father is a trial lawyer and my mother a physiology professor at UBC. There’s no musician in my family — I have a great aunt who plays the piano and that’s about it!” But Osborne gravitated to music early, always singing and humming to herself as a toddler. The young Simone was accepted into two choirs, including the Vancouver Bach Children’s Choir — “I thought I was a tenor! I’d sit with the boys, belting. I didn’t know how to use my head voice and didn’t sound like the rest of the girls.” At 16, she got a part-time job at Dairy Queen to pay for her singing lessons, later entering the opera program at UBC, where she is in her last year of undergraduate studies. Asked to describe her own voice, Osborne replies: “It’s a funny question… everybody in New York was asking me what I thought I was. I think the best answer is that I’m 21! I have an upper extension, so for a few years I was singing as a coloratura because my teacher wanted me to keep up with the high register and so that I didn’t sing too heavy. I’ve always loved Puccini and Verdi — my idol is Mirella Freni. My teacher wouldn’t let me touch the stuff… she’s right of course. I have a joke — when people ask me about my voice, I tell them I’m 21 and I don’t know what the fach I am!” (gales of laughter).

Osborne has already amassed an impressive resume for someone so young — the complete role of Mafienka at Opera Nuova, a summer program in Edmonton, and Susanna in Marriage of Figaro, which she sang in Europe when she was all of 19. Her affinity to the Czech language and culture sprang from having spent six months in the Czech Republic, performing and absorbing the culture. That Czech experience paid off last November when she won the 9th International Czech and Slovakian Montreal Music Competition organized by the Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques.

Osborne pays tribute to many people for their support and encouragement. Top on the list is her teacher Nancy Hermiston who flew to New York to be with her — “my teacher is at the heart and soul of it all”, her coaches Timothy Cheek, Milos Repicky and Carol Isaac who trained her in the intricacies of the Czech language, and established singers like Judith Forst, who sent her notes of encouragement at every stage of the Met competition. “When I won in Seattle, she called and said — don’t try to fill the (Met) hall… it’s a huge house. Just sing with your voice and you’ll be heard.” It turned out to be great advice, as her well-focused, crystalline tone impressed the judges and audience alike. Even though Osborne kept her nerves under control by pretending that it was just another show, the experience of singing on the Met stage was overwhelming: “When I think of all the greats who have sung on that stage! At 21, you don’t really feel worthy to be on that stage. When they announced I had won, I came through the back to go out front and looked at the audience and the theatre… I don’t think I will ever forget that moment. It makes me want to work for the rest of my career to maybe step out there again.”

With her Met success, already there are agents and managers offering to represent her. Several conservatories in the U.S. have expressed interest in having her while letting her do professional work on the side. Osborne has the good sense to know what she needs to work on, and that it’s best to wait and look at the offers in terms of learning experience, and how to become a better singer. For now, her $15000 prize money goes into a savings account. “It’s important to use it the best way I can, for career development, for expenses like when I go the Academy of the West this summer. This career path is so unpredictable, I’d like to make sure I have a little safety net.” Work is definitely in the cards for Osborne, as are more competitions. She has already been accepted into the Palm Beach Opera Competition for young singers 23 and under in April, vying for part of the $85,000 prize money; and she’d love to try her hand at future Operalia, Neue Stimmen and Montreal Vocal Competitions. “Winning the Met doesn’t determine whether you are going to be successful. For me everything is a learning experience. At 21 I don’t think it’s smart to do too much performing. It’s better to learn and hone my craft. It’s good to have something to strive for. The prize money is wonderful, but at the end of the day, it’s not about winning… it’s all about the audience. If I can touch somebody with the music, I have done my job, and being true to the art form I love so much.”

PROFILE: SOPRANO

SIMONE OSBORNE

MET AUDITIONS WINNER

PHOTO: MARTY SOHL

Joseph K. So
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n December 5th, 2007, the world of twentieth-century classical music was hit with the news that one of its brightest stars had passed away at the age of 79. Reaction was swift, with blogs popping up in droves voicing tributes, odes and eloquent memories. One need only read one or two of the hundreds of tributes to understand the legacy that this 20th-century master left behind.

Karlheinz Stockhausen composed more than 300 individual works during his lifetime and was best known for his pioneering work with electronic music in the 1950s and 70s. His bold approach to composition helped earn him reverence among some of the most significant 20th-century composers such as John Cage, Wolfgang Rihm, Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock and Frank Zappa. The Beatles paid tribute to Stockhausen by putting his picture, along with other icons, on the cover of “Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band.” Popular musicians such as Sonic Youth, Kraftwerk and Björk have also cited him as a major musical influence.

Stockhausen’s earliest musical influence was Hermann Hesse’s The Glass Bead Game, which led towards his belief that the highest calling in life was that of a musician. This Wagnerian view gave him a way out of his troubled experiences as a youth growing up in war-ravaged Cologne, Germany. In December 1932, his mother had a nervous breakdown and was institutionalized as a result. Two months later, his youngest brother died. During this time, he began studying piano. At the age of 14, Stockhausen’s father remarried, leading to an unpleasant relationship with his new stepmother, resulting in his leaving home and boarding at a teachers’ training college in Xanten, Germany. There, he continued to study piano and learned to play the oboe and violin. It was at this time that he discovered music and the fate of his mother who, after being treated at the asylum, became a victim of the Nazi policy of euthanasia for “useless eaters.” (Stockhausen would later dramatize his mother’s death in his opera Donnerstag aus Licht)

In 1944, a young Stockhausen was conscripted into the army and worked for a short time as a stretcher-bearer. During this time, his father became a Nazi protégé and went to war on the eastern front, where he went missing and was presumed dead in battle. Now an orphan at 16, Karlheinz Stockhausen moved back to Cologne to attend the Musikhochschule, where he met his first wife, Doris. There he delved into the music of Bartók, Hindemith and Stravinsky and read the works of Rilke and Hesse. His progress was rapid and he gained the support of the critic Herbert Eimert, and made the acquaintance of Olivier Messiaen. This early period produced his notable Kreuzspiel (Crossplay) for oboe, bass clarinet, piano and percussion. Though routinely described as a “serial” composition, it uses constant reordering of the twelve-tone scale, and novel means by which to control pitch, duration, dynamics and register. Its precocious precision of direction, intent and expression – real, full-blooded expression – set the tone for his vast and varied oeuvre. Through his patron Eimert, Stockhausen was given access to the Cologne Radio studio, which led to the creation of his first masterpiece, famous for its mixture of electronic music and the human voice: Gesang der Jünglinge (1954).

Stockhausen works can best be described as genre defying and groundbreaking. He was one of the first composers to create both electronic and instrumental works. His early electronic works included his Electronic Studies 1 & 2 (1953 & 1954) and his Hymnen (1966-69), the latter of which uses electronically manipulated national anthems. He also composed his famous Tele-musik (1968), in many ways perfecting his grander epic vision affecting many works yet to come. Stockhausen described the process used to compose this work as the “…intermodulation between old ‘found’ objects and new sound events which I made using modern electronic means – a higher unity is reached: a universality of past, present and future, of distant places and spaces: Tele-musik.”

Stockhausen was also interested in bridging the space between acoustic and electronic composition, through works such as Gesang der Jünglinge (1955-56), Kontakte (1958-60) and Mixtur (1964/67/2003). Both elements are seamlessly combined via tape manipulation techniques to create an extraordinary balance between acoustic and synthetic sounds. He showed us that musique concrete need not be a soulless collection of abstraction and could be humanised by including elements such as a child’s voice.

Considering the labour-intensive technology and cumbersome editing equipment available at the time, Stockhausen’s music becomes all the more astounding when heard today. He embraced the technologies of the day and pushed the boundaries to conjure up real and beautiful harmony from the most unlikely of media. His work sparked a new approach to composition, helping to pave the way for the development of electroacoustics, and mixed live and pre-recorded sound.

Stockhausen never stopped producing even when he was older. Relatively recent works include the truly outrageous Helicopter String Quartet (1993), which features four different helicopters flying around outside the concert venue and played live via a video feed inside the concert hall. But his most monumental work was Licht, a cycle of seven operas, 29 hours in duration based on each day of the week. Sadly, 26 years in the making, Stockhausen never had the chance to see his Wagnerian vision unfold. The Licht cycle is scheduled to receive its first full staging in 2011, in northern Germany. Only time will tell whether Stockhausen’s achievement lives up to its all-encompassing ambition.

In one of his last public interviews, Stockhausen fatefully reflected upon his legacy. “My life is extremely one-sided: what counts are the works as scores, through works such as Gesang der Jünglinge (1955-56), Kontakte (1958-60) and Mixtur (1964/67/2003). Both elements are seamlessly combined via tape manipulation techniques to create an extraordinary balance between acoustic and synthetic sounds. He showed us that musique concrete need not be a soulless collection of abstraction and could be humanised by including elements such as a child’s voice.

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In one of his last public interviews, Stockhausen fatefully reflected upon his legacy. “My life is extremely one-sided: what counts are the works as scores, recordings, films and books. That is my spirit formed into music and a sonic universe of moments of my soul.” Like Mozart, who incidentally died on the same day a little over 200 years earlier, this extraordinary life is being retold and his work re-examined to perhaps become touchstones for centuries to come.
UPCOMING CONCERTS

TORONTO INSTRUMENTAL PREVIEWS

Graham Lord

The TSO kicks off April with a bang: Benjamin Zander leads the orchestra through one of the most challenging, yet rewarding, staples of the repertoire, Mahler’s Symphony No. 5. From the solitary trumpet call that opens this masterpiece to the frenzied counterpoint of the Rondo-Finale, the Fifth truly embodies the philosophy behind Mahler’s famous quote: “The symphony should be like the world; it must embrace everything.” Shows are on April 3 (8:00 PM) and April 5 (7:30 PM), coupled with pianist Garrick Ohlsson’s interpretation of Mozart’s final piano concerto, No. 27. Mozart’s Overture to The Marriage of Figaro also accompanies the April 3 performance. Other highlights from the remainder of the season include Messiaen’s magnificent Turangalîla Symphony, an exotic tapestry of sound inspired by the Tristan and Isolde myth, presented April 16 and 17 (8:00 PM) with Peter Oundjian at the helm. Featured in the work are remarkable solo parts for piano (Marc-André Hamelin) and ondes Martenot (Jean Laurendeau). French organ virtuoso Olivier Latry, professor at the Conservatoire de Paris, will perform Québec composer Jacques Hétu’s concerto to start the program. Estonian conductor Eri Klas starts concerts on April 30 and May 1 with Brahms’ Piano Concerto No. 2, before the orchestra dives into Symphony No. 4, the composer’s last and, arguably, most dramatic. Believe it or not, this represents only a selection of the programming offered by the TSO to finish the 2007-08 season: www.tso.ca.

Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra also offers some fireworks to close out their season: first up, Beethoven’s Symphony No. 7 and Symphony No. 8. On period instruments, the orchestra will be able to illustrate very clearly how Beethoven pushed musicians of his day to the absolute limit. This is not to say, of course, that Tafelmusik is not up to the challenge; their Juno-winning recording of the Fifth and Sixth more than validates their prowess in attacking Beethoven. Concerts take place March 27-30 at Artscape St. Paul’s and April 1 at George Weston Recital Hall (all shows at 8:00 PM, except 3:30 PM on the 30th). Next, Canada’s star countertenor Daniel Taylor teams up with English soprano Carolyn Sampson to interpret arias and duets by Handel; some of his greatest operas, including Julius Caesar, Tancredi, Rodelinda and Rinaldo, will be on the program. All concerts are at Trinity-St. Paul’s: April 9 (7:00 PM), April 10-12 (8:00 PM) and April 13 (3:30 PM). Tafelmusik’s 2007-08 season finale? Mozart’s Requiem. Though not everything you saw about this work in Amadeus may be true, it is still a masterwork for the ages, still shrouded in myth and mystery. Soloists are Shannon Mercer, Margaret Bragle, Colin Ainsworth and Nathaniel Watson, and the Tafelmusik Chamber Choir naturally joins the orchestra for this program, which also includes Haydn’s St. Cecilia Mass. Shows are at Trinity-St. Paul’s on May 7 (7:00 PM), May 8-10 (8:00 PM), and May 11 (3:30 PM). www.tafelmusik.org

Orchestral music is not the only instrumental fare in the Toronto scene, of course, so here are some upcoming chamber music highlights: the Women’s Musical Club of Toronto presents The Beaux Arts Trio as part of the ensem-
ble’s 52nd and, sadly, final season. Anchored by pianist Menahem Pressler (who has been with the ensemble since its inception), the Beaux Arts Trio is one of the most celebrated chamber ensembles in living memory, and will conclude its career at Tanglewood this summer, the festival site where the group was formed.

In Toronto, it will perform Beethoven’s Archduke Schubert’s Trio D. 999, and a work by György Kurtag. This landmark concert takes place on April 10 at 3:30 PM at Walter Hall, in the University of Toronto Music Building. The Amici Chamber Ensemble closes its season with Hungarian Contrasts, featuring works by Bartók, Kodály, and Dohnányi in music for strings, piano, and clarinet. The artistic directors of Amici are Joaquin Valdepeñas (clarinet) and David Hetherington (cello); they are joined by violinist Jonathan Crow, violist Teng Li and pianist Orli Shaham for the concert, which is at the Glenn Gould Studio on April 6 at 3:00 PM. Finally, Music Toronto presents, among others, the St. Lawrence String Quartet, one of Canada’s most highly regarded chamber ensembles, on May 1 (8:00 PM). Appropriately enough, the concert is at the St. Lawrence Centre, at the corner of Front and Scott Streets; the program includes Dvořák’s Cypresses, Hindemith’s String Quartet No. 3 and Beethoven’s String Quartet in Bb, op. 150 with the Frogate, op. 133.

SOUTHERN ONTARIO VOCAL PREVIEW

Joseph K. So

For winter-weary Ontarians, spring can’t come soon enough. This is doubly true for voice buffs, since spring will bring several delectable operas and recitals. Top on my list is – a draw, between Eugene Onegin and Pelléas et Mélisande, part of COC’s spring season. The chief attraction of the Tchaikovsky opera is baritone Brett Polegato’s first outing in the title role. Having sung in many great houses of the world the likes of La Scala, Glyndebourne, Geneva, and Paris Opera, Polegato is now shifting his career more to this side of the Atlantic. Irish soprano Giselle Allen, last seen as Marie in Wozzeck, is back as Tatiana. Allyson McHardy’s dark, rich mezzo is tailor-made for Olga, and Russian tenor Daniil Shtoda, the second-cast Alfredo from last season, is Lensky. The production comes from Strasbourg, with veteran Brit Richard Armstrong at the helm. Nine shows from April 2 to 30. The other major event is a revival of the terrific production of Pelléas et Mélisande by Nicholas Muni, with a superb cast – soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian and baritone Russell Braun as the star-crossed lovers. Bass-baritone Pavlo Hunka returns as Golaud. Bass Richard Wiegold, a voice I am not familiar with, makes his COC debut as Arkel. Making a welcome return to the Company is conductor Jan Latham-Koenig. I particularly admired his work in Poulenc’s Les dialogues des Carmélites for Strasbourg, so it will be good to have him back. Eight performances run between May 6 and 24.

Sandwiched between these two high-power revivals is a perennial favourite, Rossini’s Barber of Seville. This production is unusual in that all three principal roles are virtually unknown to Canadian audiences – Albanian mezzo-soprano Enkelejda Shkosa (Rosina), Macedonian tenor Blagoj Nacoski (Almaviva), and Russian baritone Rodion Pogossov (Figaro). They come with impressive credentials. Nacoski excels in Mozart, as Tamino, Ottavio, Ferrando, and can be seen in the 2006 Salzburg DVD of Il sogno di Scipione. Pogossov has sung Papageno in the Julie Taymor production of Magic Flute at the Met, and recorded a highly regarded debut CD on EMI of Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff and Grieg songs. Shkosa was engaged by Colin Davis for his Berlioz cycle as the lead soloist in both Damnation of Faust and Béatrice et Bénédict I look forward to hearing them in Toronto. There are also a few familiar faces back at the COC – Patrick Carfizzi as Bartolo and Burak Bilgili as Basilio. Peruvian conductor Miguel Harth-Bedoya, music director of the Fort Worth Symphony, makes his Company debut, conducting 9 of the 11 performances, with the other 2 under the baton of COC assistant conductor Steven Philcox. Performances are between April 16 and May 23. Tickets for all three operas may be purchased online at www.coc.ca or by calling 416-365-8231, or in person at the Four Seasons Centre Box Office (145 Queen St. W, Toronto).

In addition to the COC, the other big operatic news is superstar Measha Brueggergosman’s first-ever Elettra in Mozart’s Idomeneo for Opera Atelier. Her forays into opera have been rare, the last in Canada was as Madame Lidoine in Vancouver Opera’s Les dialogues des Carmélites three years ago. Her last operatic appearance anywhere was as Juno in Joseph Martin Krauss’s Aeneas in Cartago for Stuttgart in summer of 2006, so this Idomeneo is not to be missed if you are curious about Measha in opera. Also appearing is the terrific male soprano Michael Maniaci as Idamante. Croatian tenor and Baroque/Mozart specialist Kresimir Spicer sings Idomeneo. He can be heard in the DVD of Il Re Pastore from the 2006 Salzburg Festival. There will be six performances, cleverly packed together, from April 26 to May 1 at the Elgin Theatre. For more information and tickets, go to www.operaatelier.com. If you have a taste for off-the-beaten-path repertoire and don’t mind piano accompaniment, give Rimsky-Korsakov’s Le voyage out music to Robert Shaw and the Tallis Scholars. They come with performances of interest – chief among them a Mahler Fourth with the crystalline voice of soprano Barbara Hannigan as the soloist (March 12 & 13, Roy Thomson Hall).
Thomson Hall), and a concert of operatic favourites made up of arias, duets and orchestral pieces, featuring soprano Sally Dibblee and tenor Roger Honeywell, under the helm of up and coming conductor James Gaffigan (April 26, 27). Tickets can be purchased online by visiting www.tso.ca. Aldeburgh Connection presents a duo recital with soprano Nathalie Paulin and mezzo Anita Krause in a program of French, German and Italian songs and duets. For tickets, visit www.aldeburghconnection.org.

OTTAWA NEWS AND PREVIEWS
Graham Lord

Sad news from the Ottawa music scene as the Ottawa Chamber Music Society was unable to find adequate private sponsorship for its proposed Elgin Street concert hall. The funds would have added to pledged government support that was conditional upon the society’s finding other sources of revenue. The proposed $33-million downtown concert hall had roughly $20 million in pledged funding from the three levels of government and started a race against time last November, when the Ottawa city council gave the society until the end of February to find the remaining $6 million necessary to complete the project. In spite of the society’s remarkable standing and international reputation as a presenter of outstanding concerts both in the summer festival and in its regular season of concerts, it is a self-described “small arts organization with very limited resources,” depending heavily upon the work of volunteers. Hopes for the project are not completely dashed, as Ottawa city council’s economic development committee voted to keep a $5.4-million pledge of funding open, even though the deadline has passed. Supporters also hope that other cultural groups around the city will assist in the hall’s realization; after all, the concert hall could be put to use for a variety of artistic functions beyond classical chamber music.

Please note that all NACO concerts listed here are at 8:00 PM and take place in Southam Hall at the National Arts Centre.

The National Arts Centre Orchestra starts its home stretch of the 2007-08 season with artistic director Pinchas Zukerman as soloist in Bruch’s magnificent *Violin Concerto No. 1*, while guest conductor Douglas Boyd leads the orchestra through two oft-neglected gems by Jean Sibelius. First, some excerpts from his *Pelléas et Mélisande* suite (completed only a few years after Debussy’s masterpiece on the same subject), then his autumnal one-movement *Symphony No. 7* to conclude the program. Haydn’s *Symphony No. 67* opens the concert and provides some lighter fare, in contrast to this rich Scandinavian repertoire; shows are on April 2 and 3. Renowned German conductor Helmuth Rilling, noted for his exemplary command of choral repertoire with orchestra, arrives for May 7 and 8 performances of Mendelssohn’s epic and dramatic oratorio, *Elijah*. Soloists include Elizabeth Keusch, Roxana Constantinescu, James Taylor and Nathan Berg; three of Ottawa’s top choirs (Ottawa Choral Society, Cantata Singers of Ottawa and the Ottawa Bach Choir) will add to the massed forces. Finally, on June 12 and 13, Zukerman leads the NACO through Bruckner’s *Symphony No. 9*, the composer’s unfinished valedictory masterpiece, and acclaimed Russian-Israeli pianist Yefim Bronfman interprets Mozart’s rich *Piano Concerto No. 22*; a formidable pair of sublime works to close the 2007-08 season for the NACO. www.nac.ca.

James Ehnes, fresh off his Grammy win with Bramwell Tovey and the Vancouver Symphony for their disc of concerti by Barber, Korngold and Walton, appears in recital with Andrew Armstrong at Southam Hall on May 12 (8:00 PM). In what promises to be an electric evening, Ehnes will perform a wide range of repertoire, including works by Brahms, Bartók, Richard Strauss and Jean-Marie Leclair. Tickets range from $10.67-$68.37.
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SONGS OF SUMMER
INTERNATIONAL OPERA FESTIVAL PREVIEW

Joseph K. So

Canadian performing arts companies typically take summer off, and festival activities in the Great White North are limited. For the invertebrate opera buff, it's time to look outside Canada for that special operatic fix. For many years now, I have regularly spent a few weeks each summer travelling to festivals far and near. With the Canadian dollar at historic highs, this summer presents a fabulous opportunity to visit the great European festivals. This brief preview is not meant to be comprehensive.

When it comes to variety and artistic quality, European festivals are hard to beat. Top on my list is Ben Heppner's first-ever Siegfried in Aix-en-Provence. Heppner's assaying of this Mount Everest of heldentenor roles will be in stages – the young Siegfried this July, to be followed by making the title role. Because of the program's great Finnish baritone Jorma Hynninen in the title role), Aida, Der fliegende Holländer. A comparative rarity is Die Meistersinger (with an all-Chinese cast! Shanghai Opera is also staging Don Giovanni with Robert Carsen as director. There will also be a reworking of Peking opera. Finally, there is the venerable Glyndebourne Festival, which will present Carmen, Eugene Onegin, Hansel und Gretel, and L’incoronazione di Poppea, the last with John Tomlinson conducting. Each of the three parts is about a heroine from the dynastic wars: the young warrior Mu Guiying; Hua Mulan, (familiar from the Disney film); the prostitute Lian Hongyu.

The staging represents a contemporary reworking of Peking opera. Finally, there is the venerable Glyndebourne Festival, which will present Carmen, Eugene Onegin, Hansel und Gretel, and L’incoronazione di Poppea, the last with Robert Carsen as director. There will also be a world premiere of Peter Eötvös' new opera, Love and Other Demons, jointly commissioned by Glyndebourne and the BBC (www.glyndebourne.com)

While the focus of this preview is on European festivals, I have been to quite a few venues on this side of the pond that are well worth a visit – Glimmerglass Opera (www.glimmerglass.org), Tanglewood (www.tanglewood.org), Seattle Opera (www.seattleopera.org) which is presenting in August a run of Aida, Ben Heppner in recital and the International Wagner Competition, Spoleto USA (www.spoletousa.org), and Santa Fe Opera (www.santafeopera.org). My favourite is Santa Fe (June 27-Aug. 23), which I have been attending annually for a dozen years. Its magnificent outdoor theatre with its superb acoustics and the spectacular New Mexican desert landscape beckon visitors from the world over. The five operas this summer are Falstaff, Billy Budd, Marriage of Figaro, Radamisto, and Adriana Mater, this last opera an American premiere starring Canadian tenor Joseph Kaiser. So, dust off your trusty suitcase and pack your opera glasses!
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<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Festival Name</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>Symphony Festival</td>
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**LUXEMBOURG**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Festival Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>Luxembourg Festival</td>
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**MEXICO**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mexico City</td>
<td>Mexico Festival</td>
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**NETHERLANDS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Festival Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>Holland Festival</td>
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**NEW ZEALAND**

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<th>City</th>
<th>Festival Name</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>Auckland International Festival</td>
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**NORWAY**

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<thead>
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<th>City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bergen</td>
<td>Bergen International Festival</td>
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**POLAND**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warsaw</td>
<td>Warsaw Festival</td>
<td><a href="http://www.warsawfestival.com">www.warsawfestival.com</a></td>
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**PORTUGAL**

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<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Festival Name</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lisbon</td>
<td>Festival International</td>
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**RUSSIA**

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<th>City</th>
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<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Moscow</td>
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**SCOTLAND**

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<tr>
<th>City</th>
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<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
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**SLOVENIA**

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<th>City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ljubljana</td>
<td>Ljubljana Festival</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ljubljanafestiva.si">www.ljubljanafestiva.si</a></td>
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**SPAIN**

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<th>City</th>
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**SWEDEN**

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**SWITZERLAND**

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<th>City</th>
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<td>Zurich</td>
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**THE NETHERLANDS**

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<tr>
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**UKRAINE**

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<tr>
<td>Kiev</td>
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**UNITED STATES**

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**VIETNAM**

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**VOLGA FESTIVAL**

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<td>Volgograd</td>
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**WROCLAW FESTIVAL**

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<tr>
<td>Wroclaw</td>
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### Summer Camp Directory

**Key**
- Accd: Accordion
- Acp: Accompaniment
- Bas: Bass
- Bl: Blues
- Bsn: Bassoon
- Br: Brass
- Cel: Cello
- Chef: Conducting
- ChM: Chamber Music
- Cho: Chorus
- Ci: Clarinet
- CM: Contemporary Music
- Cmp: Composition
- Dn: Dance
- EM: Early Music
- Ens: Ensembles
- FH: French Horn
- Fl: Flute
- Fid: Fiddle
- Gui: Guitar
- Hpc: Harpsichord
- Hrp: Harp
- Imp: Improvisation
- Jz: Jazz
- LS: Listeners Studies
- Lt: Lute
- MT: Musical Theatre
- Ob: Oboe
- Orch: Orchestra
- Ped: Pedagogy
- Per: Percussion
- Pi: Piano
- PS: Performance Studies
- Rec: Recorder
- Sax: Saxophone
- Song: French & English Language Song
- SD: Symphony Orchestra
- Str: Strings
- Th: Musical Theory
- Tr: Trumpet
- Tro: Trombone
- Via: Viola
- Vin: Violin
- Vo: Voice
- WM: World Music
- Ww: Woodwinds

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**Strings Week**
Historic Leir House, 220 Manor Park Avenue, Penticton
Tel.: 250-493-7977
pentictionacademyofmusic.ca

**Camp:** July 7 – 11 | **Limit:** June 2
**Cost:** $225 | **Scholarships:** No
**Languages:** English
**Disciplines:** Vi, Fl, Pic, Tr, Vn, Vla, Cel, Str, Gui, Orch, Th
Strings week, an inspiring program of chamber music, string orchestra and master classes. Learning and fun in beautiful Penticton.

**Langley Community Music School**

**Suzuki Summer Workshop**
Langley Community Music School, 4899 207 St., Langley
Tel.: 604-534-2848 • langleymusic.com

**Camp:** July 21 – 24 | **Limit:** June 1
**Cost:** $175 - $250 | **Scholarships:** No
**Languages:** English | **Disciplines:** Pi, Vn, Vi Unique opportunity for students, parents and teachers to be immersed in a nurturing and musical environment. Fiddling, fun with Composers, Origami, Marimba, Chamber Music and more. SAA Teacher Training.

**Pulse Summer Advanced Chamber Music Workshop**
Langley Community Music School, 4899 207 St., Langley
Tel.: 604-534-2848 • langleymusic.com

**Camp:** July 26 – August 3 | **Limit:** June 1
**Cost:** $400 - $550 | **Scholarships:** No
**Language:** English
**Disciplines:** Vi, Vn, Cel, Cl, Ww, Mem, Jz. Imp

Work in small chamber groups and receive daily coaching on repertoire. Improvisation classes, chamber music and instrumental masterclasses, large ensemble rehearsals and performances.

**Vancouver International Song Festival**
School of Music, University of British Columbia
Tel.: 778-868-6351 • vims.ca

**Camp:** June 8 – 22 | **Limit:** March 15
**Cost:** $310 - $1,195 | **Scholarships:** No
**Languages:** English
**Disciplines:** Vi, Pi, Song, PS, Ped, LS
Immerse yourself in the art of song with some of the world’s great artists and thinkers during 15 days of intensive, interdisciplinary and innovative courses.

**Victoria Piano Summer School**
1771 Mortimer Street, Victoria
Tel.: 250-383-0712 • vpss.ca

**Camp:** June 30 – July 19 | **Limit:** April 30
**Cost:** $430 plus | **Scholarships:** No
**Languages:** English
**Disciplines:** Pi, Ens, Arcd, Jz, Cho, Th, Cmp, Alexander Technique, Concerto Programme. Pianists of all ages and levels flourish in a supportive, friendly environment with daily Masterclasses, Practice Supervision, Recitals and numerous electives. Special programmes: Piano Teachers, Adults, and the French School with Dr. Carla Dotzek.

**Victoria Conservatory Summer Music Academies 2008**
Victoria Conservatory of Music, 900 Johnson St., Victoria
Tel.: 250-386-5311, x202, 866-386-5311 x202
vcm.bc.ca/summer.htm

**Camp:** June 27 – August 9 | **Limit:** Various
**Costs:** Varied | **Scholarships:** Yes
**Languages:** English
**Disciplines:** Vi, Str, Gui, R, P, Tr, Im, Th, Sac, Cl, Ww, Pr, Orch, Cho, ChM, Jz, Imp, Cmp, Mt, Dn.
Academies in Classical Vocal, Guitar & Strings, Flute and as well as Jazz. Artists include: Judith Forst, Stuart Hamilton, Timothy Vernon, Lafayette String Quartet, Judith Fraser, Don Thompson, Ian McDougall, Phil Dwyer, Neil Swainson.

### ALBERTA

**Mount Royal College Organ Academy**

**International Summer School**
4825 Mt. Royal Gate SW, Calgary
Tel.: 403-440-7769 • mroyal.ca/conservatory/summercamp.shtml

**Camp:** July 20 – 29 | **Limit:** June 15
**Cost:** $680 includes a $25 registration fee
**Scholarships:** Yes | **Language:** English
Intensive, short-term studies for organ students and young professionals.

**Alberta Suzuki Strings Institute**
Edmonton • Tel.: 780-469-7382
albertasuzuki.org

**Banff Centre Music Programs**
Banff • Tel.: 800-565-9989
banffcentre.ca/music

### SASKATCHEWAN

**2008 International Saito Conducting Workshop**

**Camp:** July 20 – 27, 2008 | **Limit:** May 20
**Cost:** $895 - $995 | **Scholarships:** No
**Languages:** English
Empower your gestures with precision and artistry with instruction from Wayne Toews for virtuosity in all styles and genres. Limited enrollment.

### ONTARIO

**Music at Port Milford**
89 Colliers, Milford • Tel.: 914-439-5039
mpmcamp.org

**Camp:** July 19 – August 16 | **Limit:** Ongoing
**Costs:** $1400 - $2600 | **Scholarships:** Yes
**Languages:** English

**JVL Summer School for Performing Arts**
29 Chagall Drive, Thornhill
Tel.: 416-735-7499, 905-882-7499
musiciansummer.com

**Camp:** July 17 – 27 | **Limit:** May 26
**Cost:** $1695 | **Scholarships:** Yes
**Languages:** English, French
**Disciplines:** Vi, Vl, Vln, Vc, Bas, Str, Orch, Cho, ChM, Th, MT.
Young musicians of all ages, highly professional training under the tutelage of a distinguished faculty. Intensive music studies and concert performances, recreational activities.

**CAMMAC Ontario Music Centre**
4396 Yonge Street, Suite #158, Toronto
Tel.: 866-273-7697 • ontario.cammac.ca

**Camp:** 2 week sessions August 03 – August 17
**Limit:** June 23 for pre-registration
**Cost:** $900 - $1075
**Scholarships:** Yes | **Languages:** English
**Disciplines:** Vi, Str, Fl, Rec, Cl, Ob, Bsn, Gui, Br, Pt, Per, Ens, Cho, MT
Young musicians of all ages and abilities are welcome! Each week presents a variety of jazz, classical and world music. Special programming for children aged 5-12 years. Recreation: swimming, canoeing, hiking, tennis.
Young musicians come from across Ontario and Canada to enjoy a challenging music experience balanced with a wide range of recreational activities.

**Algonia Music Camp**
St. Joseph Island, near Sault Ste. Marie
Tel.: 705-253-1931, 705-246-1607
alamusicamcamp.ca

**Algonia Traditional Music and Dance Family Camp**
Desbarats • Tel.: 705-782-4311
algoniatrad.ca

**Beach Summer Voice Program**
Toronto • Tel.: 416-893-8648
marjorieparkvoicesstudio.com

**Canadian Opera Company**
Toronto • Tel.: 416-306-2377 • coc.ca

**Celtic College**
Guelph • Tel.: 519-524-8221
celticfestival.ca

**Choirs Ontario**
Ontario Youth Choir, Ottawa
Tel.: 416-923-1144 • choirontario.org

**Claim Your Voice Studios**
Singing, acting, dancing, script writing, camp for girls, modeled after the series.
An American Idol inspired musical theatre day Camp Manitou, Parry Sound
Camp: July 5 – July 11 • Limit: Ongoing
Cost: $770 • Scholarships: Yes
Language: English
Disciplines: Vo, Fl, Rec, Tr, Tr, Br, Fl, Gui, Fd, Sax, Cl, Bsn, Ob, Wk, Per, Orch, Cho, ChM, Jz, Blu

20 music programs for adults, families and children combined with a world-class concert series. The beautiful Lake Huron location and the finest quality musical opportunities make this event unbeatable.

**Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute**
427 Bloor Street West, Box 14, Toronto
Tel.: 416-964-9562 x.241 • tafelmusik.org

**National Music Camp of Canada**
P.O. Box 251, Kincardine
Tel.: 519-396-9710 • kmfc.ca
Camp: August 3 – 15 • Limit: August 3
Cost: $510 - $495 • Scholarships: Yes
Language: English
Disciplines: Vo, Fl, Pi, Rec, Tr, Tr, Fr, Br, St, Gui, Fd, Sax, Cl, Bsn, Ob, Wk, Per, Orch, Cho, ChM, Jz, Blu

An intensive 14-day residency in baroque period performance with a focus on orchestral and vocal performance.

**Classes**
June 1 – 14 • Limit: March 20
Cost: $1,095; $750 for Conductors/Directors
Yes • Scholarships: Yes
Languages: English

**Scholarships:** No • Scholarships:
Yes • Scholarships:
TBC

**Limit:**
Yes • Scholarships:
Yes
Languages:
English

**Camp:**
Tel.: 613-542-1486, 888-283-1539
139 Joseph Street, Kingston
Summer Music Festival - Suzuki Kingston

**Interprovincial Music Camp,**
Camp Rock, and “The” Jazz Camp
Camp Manitou, Parry Sound
Tel.: 416-488-3315
InterprovincialMusicCamp.ca

**JAZZWORKS**
North of Hawkesbury
Tel.: 613-523-0316 • jazzworkscanada.com

**Kingsway Conservatory Summer Camps**
Toronto • Tel.: 416-234-0121
kingswayconservatory.ca

**Krysmar School of Music**
Etobicoke • Tel.: 416-877-2902
krysmarmusic.com

**Little Voices, Dancing Feet**
Tel.: 905-770-9059 • lcvmi.ca

**National Youth Orchestra of Canada**
Toronto
Tel.: 416-532-4470, 1-888-532-4470
nyoc.org

**No Strings Theatre**
Toronto • Tel.: 416-588-5845
nstringstheatre.com

**North Toronto Institute of Music**
Toronto • Tel.: 416-488-2588
ntimusic.com

**Oakville Performing Arts Camp**
Oakville • Tel.: 905-338-7128
oakvillesuzuki.org

**Ontario Mennonite Music Camp**
Waterloo • Tel.: 905-842-7070
grebil.uwaterloo.ca/OMMC

**Queen of Pudding: Songs & Scenes for Classical Singers and Collaborative Pianists**
Welland • Tel.: 416-203-4149
queenofpuddingsmusicaltheatre.com

**Opera Scene Study at The RCM Community School**
Toronto • Tel.: 416-408-2824 ext. 803
rcmusic.ca/communityschool

**Southern Ontario Chamber Music Institute**
Oakville • Tel.: 1-888-886-4604 • socmi.org

**Summer Opera Lyric Theatre**
2008 Opera Workshop
Toronto • Tel.: 416-922-2912 • solt.ca

**Theatre Ontario**
St. Catharines • Tel.: 416-408-4556
theatreontario.org

**The Toronto District School Board**
Toronto • Tel.: 416-394-7251

**The Toronto School for Strings**
North York • Tel.: 416-260-1882
torontoschoolforsstrings.com

**The Toronto School of Music**
Toronto • Tel.: 416-546-7717
torontosummermusic.com

**University of Toronto Wind Conducting Symposium**
Tel.: 416-588-9050 x. 2
worldsongs.ca

**Woldsong Vocal Camp**
Lake Simcoe • Tel.: 416-588-9050 x. 2
worldsongs.ca

**Yamaha Music School**
Toronto • Tel.: 416-224-1550
yamahamusicschool.ca

**QUEBEC**

**Trillium**
6225 Godfrey, Montreal
Tel.: 514-489-9728 • trillium-music.com
Camp: June 30 – July 11 • Limit: June 1
Cost: $425 • Scholarships: Yes
Language: English
Disciplines: Vo, Cho, Mt
An American Idol inspired musical theatre day camp for girls, modeled after the series. Singing, acting, dancing, script writing, games, swimming and more.

**Académie du musique et de danse du Domaine Forget**
5, rue Saint-Antoine, Saint-Énée
Tel.: 418-452-8111 • domaineforget.com
Camp: 15 mai - 1 septembre
Limites : voir site Internet
Coût : 600 $ par semaine
Scholarships : Oui

**Instruments :**
Vo, Br, Wk, Gui, St, Cho, ChM, Jz, Cm, Dn.
Cours particuliers, cours de maître, musique de chambre, ateliers spécialisés, concerts étudiants, entrées aux concerts du Festival International. Nouveaux stages à l’été 2008!

**Camp Musical Tutti**
3440 Patricia, Montreal
Tel.: 514-486-8727 • campmusictutti.com
Camp: June 29 – July 6 • Limit: June 1
Cost: $770 • Scholarships: Yes
Languages: English, French, Russian •
Disciplines: Vo, Fl, Pic, Rec, Vln, Vla, Cel, St, Gai, Fil, Hrp, Sax, Cl, Bn, Ob, SD, Per, Orch, Cho, CM, Jz, Chef, Imp, Cmp, Dn, MT, Art, Sport.
Located at the picturesque Bishop’s University campus in Lennoxville. All ages and abilities, two swimming pools, tennis, possibly to have a private room. Day camp option available.

**Lamba School of Music and Fine Arts**
4989 bdv. des Sources, Pierrefonds
Tel.: 514-697-9991 • [LambaArts.ca](http://www.LambaArts.ca)
Camp: July 2 - August 27 • Limit: June 30
Cost: $550 - $2,750 • Scholarships: Yes
Languages: English
Disciplines: Pt, St, Vo, Dn, Theatre Arts, Virtual Instruments, Graphic Arts, Sciences and Technologies of the Arts
Lamba is proud to present its “Enrichment in the Arts” summer camp providing a unique opportunity for children to sample all its fine arts programs.

**Camp Musical St-Alexandre**
267 rang St-Germain, St-Alexandre
Tel.: 418-495-2888 • [campmusical.com](http://campmusical.com)
Camp: June 22 - July 16 • Limit: June 1
Cost: $400 - $930 • Scholarships: oui
Languages: français
Disciplines: Vo, Fl, Pic, Rec, Tr, Tre, FH, Br, St, Gui, Hrp, Sax, Cl, Bn, Ob, Wv, Per, Orch, Cho, CM, Jz
Classes de maîtres, musique de chambre, concerts de professeurs, de stagiaires, d’artistes de grande renommée, brunchs, etc.
Concerts de professeurs, de stagiaires, classes de maîtres, musique de chambre, concerts de professeurs, de stagiaires, d’artistes de grande renommée, brunchs, etc.

**Camp Musical du Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean**
1589 route 169, Métisbouchouan-Lac-à-la-Croix
Tel.: 888-349-2085
Camp: June 22 - August 16 • Limit: June 1
Cost: $373 - $903 • Scholarships: oui
Languages: français, anglais
Disciplines: Vo, Fl, Pic, Rec, Tr, Tre, FH, Br, St, Gui, Hrp, Sax, Cl, Bn, Ob, Wv, Per, Orch, Cho, CM, Jz
Scholarships: Yes
Cost:

**Vincent Music Camp**
Box 40, Ladle Cove, NL
Tel.: 709-670-3377 • [vinlandmusic.ca](http://vinlandmusic.ca)
Dates: August 17 - 23 • Limit: June 1
Cost: $300 (tuition) • Scholarships: No
Languages: English
Disciplines: Vo, Fl, Pic, Gai, Fid, Hrp, Per, Cmp, Dn, Accd.
Traditional music workshop for all ages (9 years up) and levels. Improve instrumental skills, write songs, and learn folk dancing in a relaxed and beautiful setting.

**Tuckamore Festival**
Box 23203 Churchill Square, St-John’s, NL
Tel.: 709-737-2372
Camp: Aug 11-24 • Limit: March 1
Cost: $1000 tuition, $600 room/board
Scholarships: No
Disciplines: Pt, Wv, Vla, Cel
Chamber Music program for talented string players and pianists ages 16-25
University of New Brunswick Music Camp

**Centre for Musical Arts**
P.O. Box 4400 Fredericton, NB
Tel.: 506-453-4697 • [cel.unb.ca/music](http://cel.unb.ca/music)
Camp: August 8-16 • Limit: June 30
Cost: $370 - $685 • Scholarships: Yes
Languages: English
Disciplines: Vo, Fl, Pic, Rec, Tr, Tre, Cor, Br, St, Gui, Fid, Sax, Cl, Bn, Ob, Wv, Per, Orch, Cho, CM, Jz
String, winds and choral camp, ages 10 and up, day and residential see website for additional programs in opera, fiddle, songwriting and for younger students.

**Acadia Summer Music Institute**
Wolfville, NS • Tel.: 902-585-1434
The Scotia Festival of Music
Halifax, NS • Tel.: 902-429-9467 • [scotiafestival.ns.ca](http://www.scotiafestival.ns.ca)

**USA**
Music@Menlo Chamber Music Institute
50 Valparaiso Avenue, Atherton, CA
Tel.: 650-330-203
music@menlo.org
Britt Institute Jazz, Saxophone and String Quartet camps
P.O. Box 1124, Medford, OR
Tel.: 541-779-0847
www.brittfest.org/summercamps.htm
Litchfield Jazz Camp
PO Box 69, Litchfield, CT
Tel.: 860-567-4142
litchfieldjazzcamp.com
Belvoir Terrace
Winter: 101 W 79th St, New York
Tel.: 212-580-3398
Summer: Lenox, MA 01240
Tel.: 413-637-0555
belvoirterrace.com
Chautauqua Music Festival
Chautauqua, New York
Tel.: 716-357-6233
http://music.ciweb.org
Camp Curtain Call
Winter: P.O. Box 366, Seymour, TN
Summer: 849 River Road, Dugsburg, VA
Tel.: off season: 865-573-7002
CampCurtainCall.com
Point CounterPoint Camp
Winter: PO Box 207011 New Haven Cr
Summer: 1361 Hooker Rd., Leicester, VT
Tel.: 860-567-4162
litchfieldjazzcamp.com

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Winter: PO Box 366, Seymour, TN
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CampCurtainCall.com

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Languages: English
Disciplines: Vo, Fl, Pic, Rec, Tr, Tre, Cor, Br, St, Gui, Fid, Sax, Cl, Bn, Ob, Wv, Per, Orch, Cho, CM, Jz
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REVIEWS

Review Policy: While we review all the best CDs we get, we don’t always receive every new release available. Therefore, if a new recording is not covered in the print version of LSM, it does not necessarily imply that it is inferior. Many more CD reviews can be viewed on our Web site at www.scena.org.

★★★★★★ A MUST!
★★★★★ EXCELLENT
★★★★☆ VERY GOOD
★★★☆☆ GOOD
★★☆☆☆ SO-SO
★☆☆☆☆ MEDIocre

$ < 10 $  $10–15 $  $$$ 15–20 $  $$$$ > 20 $

Reviewers
JKS Joseph K. So
NL Norman Lebrecht
SH Stephen Habington

VOCAL

Puccini Gold: Puccini Arias and Duets
Roberto Alagna, Carlo Bergonzi, Andrea Bocelli, Montserrat Caballé, José Carreras, Giuseppe di Stefano, Renee Fleming, Mirella Freni, Angela Gheorghiu, Jonas Kaufmann, Christa Ludwig, Sherrill Milnes, Anna Netrebko, Luciano Pavarotti, Joan Sutherland, Kiri Te Kanawa, Renata Tebaldi, Rolando Villazón
Various orchestras and conductors
Decca 4790397 (2 CDs: 116 min 26 s)
★★★★★★ $55

This 2-disc compilation represents the best of Puccini from the Decca vaults. When it comes to the depth of riches in its vocal catalogue, no other record label with the possible exception of EMI can rival Decca. The list of singers on this release reads like the who’s who of opera. The most important name missing is Maria Callas, who was of course under contract to EMI. A few other famous Puccini singers are also absent – De Los Angeles, Scotto, Cotrubas, and Del Monaco. But there are enough great ones here to justify the title “Puccini Gold” – Tebaldi, Freni, Caballé, Fleming, Gheorghiu, Domingo, Carreras, Pavarotti, Bergonzi, di Stefano, Milnes, Alagna, even Sutherland is included although she was not really a Puccini singer. For some strange reason, instead of “In questa Reggia”, “Senza mamma” is excerpted here, a performance that finds her well below her best. The greatest singing among the “old-timers” on the set are Tebaldi and Bergonzi in the Love Duet from Madama Butterfly. Caballé with her astonishingly long-breathed pianissimo at the end of “Signor, ascolta”, Pavarotti’s splendid, open-throated “Nessun dorma”, and Domingo’s impassioned “Ch’ella mi creda” from La fanciulla del West. But when it comes to the new generation of singers, this compilation falls short. The “dream pair” of Anna Netrebko and Rolando Villazón contributes a very nice Act One duet from La bohème, but they are under contract with DG and are not really Decca artists. Other than these two, the only young singer of interest is tenor Jonas Kaufmann, heard here in “Che gelida manina”. To my ears, his remarkable voice is more suited to the Germanic repertoire, its heldentenor timbre not ideal in Puccini, especially when so closely mixed. The accompanying booklet is extremely skimpy, completely devoid of anything other than titles, artist names and timing. Despite these limitations, this is a very satisfying trip down memory lane. JKS

Schumann, Schumann and Brahms:
Frauenliebe und Leben
Susan Platts, mezzo-soprano; Rena Sharon, piano
ATMA Classique ACD2 2586 (63 min 59 s)
★★★★★☆ $55

Schumann’s Frauenliebe und Leben (Op. 42) was composed in 1840, his so-called Liederjahr when he also wrote three other song cycles. In the current age of feminist politics, this collection of eight songs, lasting all of twenty minutes about a woman’s path through life – love, engagement, marriage, motherhood, and widowhood – has been branded as regressive, not liberated in its depiction of women. Yet this cycle has not lost its universal appeal, judging by how frequently one encounters it in recitals. Even the celebrated baritone Matthias Goerne felt the urge to tackle this cycle two years ago, raising many eyebrows! This newest version is a welcome addition to an already huge discography. A lieder and oratorio specialist, Platts’ smooth and dark mezzo, always used with taste and refinement, is well suited to these songs. A great melodist and personal relationship, and superb musicianship. He is perfect-

Sommersohn, Schumann and Brahms
Gerald Finley, baritone; Julius Drake, piano; The Aronowitz Ensemble
Hyperion CDA67528
★★★★★★ $55

This is a Mahler world premiere - The Song of the Earth, sung in the “original” Chinese. Mahler let upon Tang Dynasty poets during the summer of 1907 while suffering his daughter’s death and the collapse of his own health. The six poems he chose from Hans Bethge’s Chinese Flute were German translations made from an 1895 French edition by Marquis Saint-Denys and Judith Gauthier, Wagner’s last love. These are so far removed from the scrolls of Li Bai and Wang Wei that one source has proved impossible to trace. Daniel Ng, a Hong Kong businessman who used to own the McDonalds concession, has spent the past 20 years creating a performing edition in modern Chinese and the results are intriguing if not altogether convincing. Most of the lines appear to scan and if some Mandarin consonants jar the ear, they sound no worse than Mozart does in English. Singing and playing are first-rate, but the “Ewig, ewig” ending just won’t work in Chinese – so much so that this disc offers an alternative German finale. NL

Songs of Samuel Barber
Gerald Finley, baritone; Julius Drake, piano; The Aronowitz Ensemble
Hyperion CDA67528
★★★★★★ $55

Following the critically acclaimed disc of Charles Ives songs, baritone Gerald Finley and pianist Julius Drake teamed up for this album of Samuel Barber songs. It reaffirms their position as a great singer-pianist duo. Finley has a beautiful instrument, backed by solid technique, dramatic commitment, and superb musicianship. He is perfectly suited to these songs. A great melodist and unabashedly romantic, Barber’s way with a melody bears a strong kinship to fellow American Ned Rorem, and to Giancarlo Menotti, with whom Barber had a lifelong professional and personal relationship. At a time when others rushed to serialism, Barber stuck to a lushly lyrical style deemed to be regressive and old-fashioned. It is thus ironic that his contemporaries, having flirted with atonality, reverted back to a more traditional style. Sadly, Barber, who died in 1981, didn’t
live long enough to witness the pendulum swinging back his way.

This disc contains 27 of Barber's best output, including Hermit Songs and Dover Beach, two of this three best song cycles. It's a pity that the third, Knoxville, Summer 1915, isn't included. Commissioned by Eleanor Steber, Knoxville is sung by a soprano and very occasionally by a boy treble. For once I would love to hear a mature male voice in this! While Barber did not specify a voice type for Hermit Songs, it will forever be associated with the great Leontyne Price, who premiered it with the composer at the keyboard, and subsequently recorded it for RCA. It is refreshing to hear a baritone in this piece. Set to translations of Medieval Gaelic poems attributed to Irish monks, it has a disarming simplicity.

Barber composed Dover Beach and sang the cycle himself on its first recording in 1935. Barber's skill and sophistication in the setting of this highly dramatic cycle on the loss of religious faith at the tender age of twenty is quite something. The composer dedicated Mélodies passagères Op. 27 to Pierre Bernac and Francis Poulenç. Composed in a distinctly French manner and derivative in style, it is as if Barber were deliberately imitating Poulenç. Finley sings beautifully throughout. His English is crystal clear, and his attention to textu-
al details exemplary. Julius Drake is at the top of his game, offering excellent support. The record-
ed sound is warm and mellow. The beautifully produced booklet, with the trademark landscape oil painting on the cover, contains an essay, artist bios and song texts, except for the James Joyce items. Hyperion claims it is for copyright reasons,

**Shostakovich: Odna (Alone)**

Irina Mataeva, soprano; Anna Kilnadze, mezzo; Dmitry Voropaev, tenor; Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra/Mark Fitz-Gerald

Naxos Film Classics 857316 (79 min 56 s) 

★★★★✩✩  $55

In a rare example of creative justice, Mark Fitz-Gerald gets to conduct the premiere recording of his own reconstruction of the film score for Odna (1931). The composer's widow supported him in the demanding task of restoring the music. Film music enthusiasts and Shostakovich fans alike will avidly welcome this release. Unfortunately, the offering is much more relevant to motion picture science than musical art. It was only Shostakovich's second attempt at a soundtrack composition. At the dawn of the talkies film was still a primitive medium and early Soviet attempts were more primitive than most. The music is presented with 48 index points in seven reel sequences, which makes for a rather episodic collection of folksy young Communist joy and diabolical counter-revolutionary reaction. The bad guys get all of the good chords.

The performance is as good as it will ever get. There are some rather bland vocal numbers to prove to the masses that people on film could sing as well as talk. It is hard to resist the conclusion that most collectors would be better off with the twenty minutes of excerpts recorded by Riccardo Chailly for Decca.

Contrary to many suppositions, Shostakovich enjoyed working for the movies (often the only work he could get). Scores for films such as The Maxim Trilogy, Michurin, Hamlet, Pirogov and Belinsky attest to his greatness in this medium. Odna might well have been left unreconstructed, but Naxos earns a three-star rating for the quality of the presentation. No film buff will be disappointed.

**INSTRUMENTAL**

**Mozart: Works for Violin and Orchestra**

Julia Fischer, violin; Gordon Nikolic viola, violin; Netherlands Chamber Orchestra/Yakov Kreisberg

Concertone for 2 Violins, Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola, Rondo (K.373)

PentaTone OTC 5186 098 Hybrid SACD (65 min 35 s) 

★★★★★✩  $55

Julia Fischer has previously recorded the violin concertos for PentaTone (5186 064 and 5186 064); it will come as no surprise to anyone acquainted with those fine discs that the present issue has a legitimate claim to being the best Mozart orchestral recording of the past year. It offers unadulterated Mozarthiana in supreme measure. Kreisberg directs crisp, articulate accompaniment and the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra responds with remarkable spirit throughout the programme. Above all, the collaboration of Fischer and Nilolic in the Sinfonia Concertante produces a perfect balance between the two solo instruments. All too often in this music, the violinist can run away with the piece but Fischer demonstrates wisdom and forbearance in leaving her partner sufficient space. Their playing is equally impressive in the Concertone with Nilolic on the second violin. Hans Meyer (oboe) and Herre-Jan Stegenga (cello) also make significant contributions to the piece. For the rondo, Julia Fischer performs her own cadenza. This is a splendid addition to the Fischer discography and exactly the right sort of music to take away the chill of a long Canadian winter.

**Schoenberg and Sibelius Violin Concertos**

Hilary Hahn, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra/Esa-Pekka Salonen

Deutsche Grammophon 4777346 (62 min 56 s) 

★★★★★✩  $$

Arnold Schoenberg's Violin Concerto is so resistant to easy listening that Jascha Heifetz turned it down after brisk perusal and the Israel Philharmonic was hit by a subscriber walkout when they put it on in 1971. It still grates the ear more than ingratiating it, even in a performance as rare and winning as
Hilary Hahn’s, full of youthful mood swings and romantic delusions. The middle movement concerns over sensual and sumptuous, almost neo-\textit{tonal}, and if the outer themes are angry……well, this was the 1930s and Schoenberg was a penniless exile in Hollywood. The Sibelius concerto, popularised by Heifetz around that time, has been a winner ever since with women soloists; Ginette Neveu, Ida Haendel, Viktoria Mullova, Tasmin Little. It sounds facile by comparison with the Schoenberg, for all the heat of Hahn’s advocacy. Her tone has such enaging depth you wonder at times if she’s playing viola and her virtuosit\textit{y} is agreeably unflashy. I warmed to her eloquence more on second hearing, and more still on third. This is definitely a record to live with.

\textbf{Ka\textit{rajan: The Music, The Legend}}

Berlin\textit{er} Philharmoniker; \textit{Orchestra} of La Scala, Milan/Herbert von \textit{Karajan}

\textbf{DG 4777097 (CD: 70 min 55 s, DVD: 74 min 2 s)

- \begin{itemize}
  - CD: Bach; \textit{Concerto for Two Violins}
  - Lizt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 5; Brahms: \textit{Symphony No. 4}
  - DVD: Beethoven: \textit{Symphony No. 5}
  - Supp\textit{é}: Light \textit{Cav\textit{alry Overture}; Excerpts from; Brahms: A German Requiem; Rachmaninov: \textit{Piano Concerto No. 2}; Tchaikovsky: \textit{Symphony No. 4}; \textit{Wagner: Das Rheingold}; Leoncavallo: \textit{Pagliacci}}
\end{itemize}

This audiovisual set represents the entry-level offering in the DG commemoration of the Herbert von \textit{Karajan} centennial. It marks a subtle change in marketing strategy by the yellow label. DG now appears intent on recruiting a whole new generation of Karajanites from youngsters scarcely born when he died. Youth is also being actively courted on the company’s website, where an avalanche of Karajan material is available for download. For seasoned collectors, the welter of commemorative reissues mostly boils down to a case of, “Been there……got that.” That said, the CD encased in the handsome hardcover booklet does have a certain degree of collector appeal. The sombre Lizt Hungarian \textit{Rhapsody No. 5} is beautifully played in its CD premiere. Never previously released in any format, the Brahms Fourth gets a splendid outing from 1964, a version that many might not already have.

Rated on its own, the DVD would be lucky to walk away with two stars. With the exception of the 1973 Unite\textit{l} Film of a “mock-live” Beethoven \textit{Fifth} (already issued on \textit{DVD}) and a genuine and pleasing concert performance of Supp\textit{é}’s \textit{Light Cavalry} overture, the rest of the programme consists of “bleeding chunks” to promote forthcoming releases. Of these, four minutes’ worth of Jon Vickers from \textit{Pagliacci} and a quarter of an hour from \textit{Rheingold} appear to offer the most promising prospects. There is also eleven minutes of Alexis Weissenberg in the Rachmaninov concerto.

Other attractions of the centenary are listed in the booklet. A look at the “selected discography” indicates that it is pretty much business as usual as far as Karajan’s most memorable recordings. It is a pity that DG seems to have lost enthusiasm for re-mastering into \textit{SACD} since 2003. More of Karajan’s most durable hits need to be heard in super audio, especially the Schumann and Bruckner symphony cycles and his indelible accounts of Mahler’s Sixth and Ninth. His last recordings (with the VPO) of Bruckner 7 and 8 would be spectacular in surround sound. SH

\textbf{Janacek and Haas: String Quartets}

Pavel Haas Quartet

\textbf{Supraphon SU 3922-2 (54 min 42 s)

- \begin{itemize}
  - \begin{itemize}
    - \textit{Brahms: A German Requiem; Rachmaninov: Piano Concerto No. 2; Tchaikovsky: \textit{Symphony No. 4}; \textit{Wagner: Das Rheingold}; Leoncavallo: \textit{Pagliacci}}
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

This pairing of the old master’s love-drenched \textit{First String \textit{Quartet}} with two intense scores by his unfortunate protege is imaginative in more ways than the obvious. Janacek’s late quartet is filled with yearnings for his improbable muse, a plump Jewish housewife, Kamila Stoesslova. Haas’s one-movement \textit{First \textit{Quartet}} is explicitly Judaic, melancholic at first before swelling into affec\textit{tionate melodin} reminiscences. His \textit{Third \textit{Quartet}}, dated 1938, is a techni\textit{cal marvel}, full of confidence and clever inter\textit{twining of \textit{Jewish} and \textit{Greek} themes, ob\textit{livious to the imminent \textit{Munich} \textit{betrayal} and the disaster that lies ahead. The young Prague \textit{ensemble} addresses this music on its merit, without a hint of sentimental retrospect. The sheer brio of their \textit{playing} invests all three works with such vigour and narrative momentum that they sound like a first performance, fresh off the page. SH

\textbf{Leroy Anderson: Orchestral Works Volume 1}

Jeffrey Biegel, piano; \textit{BBC \textit{Concert Orchestra}/Leonard Slatkin}

\textbf{Naxos American Classics 8559313 (61 min 54 s)

- \begin{itemize}
  - \begin{itemize}
  \end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

Millions of people of a certain age will recognize many of the orchestral miniatures presented here. Most of them may never have been aware of the composer’s name but the music seemed omnipresent during the 1950s. Certainly, Bugler’s \textit{Holiday}; \textit{Blue \textit{Tango}} and \textit{Chicken \textit{Reel}} will raise smiles and evoke pleasant memories of a distant, uncomplicated past. Leroy Anderson’s special talent was to combine the considerable skills of a Tin Pan Alley tunesmith with an astonishing command of the symphony orchestra. This is “light” music at its best, the most fun you will have with a \textit{CD} until Volume 2 arrives.

It is not exactly shocking but the album collides with serious art music at track 15 on the disc. The \textit{Piano Concerto} is a wonderful composition. While by no means “heavy” or profound, it can hold its own in comparison with Gershwin. It receives a burnished, optimistic performance and we should hear more of the accommodating soloist Jeffrey Biegel in the future. The music is diverting, but is it really worthwhile? Leonard Slatkin obviously thinks so and the BBC \textit{Concert Orchestra} plays with genuine affection and enjoyment. SH

\textbf{DVD}

\textbf{Beethoven: Piano Concertos 1-5}

\textit{Staatskapelle Berlin/Daniel Barenboim}

\textbf{EuroArts 20535782 (2 DVDs - 298 min)

- \begin{itemize}
  - Production by Paul Smaczny
  - Directed by Michael Beyer
\end{itemize}

Most conventional maestros will tell you that it is extremely hazardous to attempt to conduct a symphony orchestra while operating heavy equipment (like a piano). Evidence to the contrary already exists showing that Daniel Barenboim can both direct and play to superb effect. His 1995 performances of Beethoven’s \textit{Triple \textit{Concerto}} (with the BPO, Ma and Perlman) and \textit{Choral \textit{Fantasia}} are available on an EMI \textit{DVD} (4 94737-9). If that occasion was a triumph, the present issue is the crowning glory of Barenboim’s Beethoven, a rare example of imagery reinforcing the power of the music. This soloist/conductor seems to have the scores embedded in his soul. And it is quite obvious that the \textit{Staatskapelle/Barenboim partnership is an all round mutual admiration society. He leads the orchestra with a minimum of gesture, fleeting expressions and, as the piano keys become more slippery, something akin to group telepathy. The last means of communication is probably necessary because no matter how well rehearsed the works might be, the spontaneity from the keyboard is as common here as it was in Barenboim’s first recordings of the concertos with Klemerer and the Philharmonia for EMI forty years ago.

These thrilling concerts were filmed at the Klar\textit{vier-Festival Ruhr} over three days in May 2007. The venue was the Jahrhunderthalle in Bochum, which looks like a converted industrial space. Any acoustic challenges were overcome by EuroArts sound engineers. Sonically, in surround mode, it really seems as if you are perched on the piano bench right next to Barenboim. Director Michael Beyer manages his eight cameras with great dexterity to provide a satisfying viewing experience.

\textbf{Website}

\textbf{www.scena.org}

More \textit{CD} reviews
MAESTRO STRANGELOVE,
OR HOW I STOPPED WORRYING AND
LEARNED TO LISTEN TO KARAJAN

Stephen Habington

H
erbert von Karajan died in 1989 but he won’t go away. His music mak-
ing is still venerated by millions of classical record collectors. For oth-
ers, the commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of his birth this year has been another in a long succession of provocations. It is fair to dis-
pute Karajan’s reputation on the basis of musical taste or even current musical
fashion. But to condemn him and all that he did because he joined the National
Socialist German Workers’ Party in 1935 is not. At the age of 27, he desper-
ately needed a job in his chosen profession and joining the party was a means to an
end. Other mortal ends and horrendous means were unforeseen at that point.
Although Karajan was exploited in various political power plays, he endured the
approval of Adolph Hitler and by the end of the war, he and his partly Jewish
wife were fugitives from the Nazis in northern Italy.
I freely confess to being an admirer of the conducting of Herbert von Karajan. I
must also admit that it was a struggle against a virtually genetic pre-disposition to
hold even the slightest whiff of Nazism in contempt. I am the son and grandson of
men who were wounded fighting Germans in the world wars. On a personal level,
the entire apparatus of Teutonic aggression might have been a continental con-
spicacy that I should never exist. Then there is the matter of the modest family
heritage of Idi Amin, the commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of his birth
is still venerated by millions of classical record collectors. For oth-

Herbert von Karajan – The Complete EMI Recordings
1946-1984 – Volume 1 Orchestral
EMI 5 12038 2 (88 CDs)
★★★★★✩

To qualify for ownership of this set you must:
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inine landmark in the history of the gramophone. It is a gift made to last for decades.
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1946-1984 – Volume 1 Orchestral

Herbert von Karajan: A Life in Music
London 1998) demonstrates conclusively that his subject never practiced Nazism.

Young Karajan may have been politically naïve, but he was perceptive and
possessed of an acute sense of humour. These characteristics would have
made him a pretty miserable excuse for a Nazi. Richard Osborne’s exhaust-

And aren’t we lucky to have so much Karajan on disc to assess and enjoy?

The first nine discs include the maestro’s post-war recordings with the Vienna
Philharmonic and the 1984 account of Vivaldi’s Four Seasons with the VPO and
Anne-Sophie Mutter.

Volumes 10-46 offer the London legacy with the Philharmonia Orchestra and 47-87
originated in Berlin. Along the way, the Lucerne Festival Orchestra and Orchestre de
Paris also make brief contributions. Disc 88 is an audio documentary. Remembering
Karajan, which features the recollections of several of his closest musical collaborators.

Herbert von Karajan: A Life in Music
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