

# the music Scene

www.scena.org

Winter 2009  
Vol. 7.1 • 4,95\$

- › JACQUES ISRAELIEVITCH:  
THE CONCERTMASTER'S ROLE
- › THE LAST OF THE GREAT PIANISTS
- › **PREVIEWS**  
SOUTHERN ONTARIO AND OTTAWA
- › **JAZZ**  
TEACHING IMPROVISATION

ONTARIO



The NEW  
"I Love THE ARTS"  
Button

## PETER SIMON

ROYAL CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

## reative INNOVATION

Display until 2009-03-15



ALEXANDER NEEF  
**COC'S NEW GENERAL  
DIRECTOR**

- **REVIEWS**  
CDS, DVDS, BOOKS
- **CONCERTS**  
OTTAWA, TORONTO, SOUTHERN ONTARIO
- **SPECIAL**  
HIGHER EDUCATION

# Salute to Vienna™

World's Greatest New Year's Concert!

The official live creation of Vienna's  
World-Famous New Year's Concert

Live performances  
in 10 major Canadian cities!

What "Nutcracker" is to Christmas "Salute to Vienna" is to the New Year!

Magnificent  
Live Performance!



Presented by Attila Glatz Concert Productions Inc.

**TICKETS:** 1-800-545-7807 • [salutetovienna.com](http://salutetovienna.com)

## CONCERT DATES:

**January 1, 2009 – New Year's Day!** Jack Singer Concert Hall, Calgary • Winspear Centre, Edmonton  
Hamilton Place Theatre, Hamilton • Place des Arts, Montreal • National Arts Centre, Ottawa • Roy Thomson Hall,  
Toronto • Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver **Saturday, January 3, 2009** The Centre in the Square, Kitchener  
Centennial Concert Hall, Winnipeg **Sunday, January 4, 2009** Royal Theatre, Victoria



# INTRODUCING THE NEW ARTS LOVER CARD

**NEW in 2009**  
10 x / yr

**Discovery**  
**CD**  
**Découverte**



## **E**ssential for artists & arts lovers, musicians & music lovers

- **Discovery CD with XXI Records** (great musicians of the past and rising stars): 10 per year (600+ minutes of music)
- **Access to the Naxos Music Library** (350,000 tracks from Naxos, ATMA, Analekta, Hyperion, etc, a \$189 value)
- **10-15% discounts at Montreal's top arts and musical organizations**

### **PRICE** (CANADA, taxes incl.)

- **\$40 (1 year), includes 12 issues of La SCENA / La Scena Musicale / The Music Scene Ontario**



### **NOS PARTENAIRES / OUR PARTNERS**

Archambault, Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Opéra de Montréal, Orchestre Métropolitain du Grand Montréal, Orchestre de chambre McGill, Société Pro Musica, InfiniTheatre, Ensemble Arion, Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, Concours Musical International de Montréal, Gymnastique sur table, Jules Saint-Michel Luthier, Baffin Inuit Art of Canada, Main Florist, XXI Records, etc.

### **RENSEIGNEMENTS / INFORMATION**

**SCENA.ORG/LASCENACARD**

**514 948-2520**

- ☐ **Carte La SCENA Card** - 1 year (40 \$)
- ☐ **Carte La SCENA Card** - 2 years (73 \$ + free CD)
- ☐ Donation: \_\_\_\_\_ \$
- ☐ CD Puccini 150: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$30 = \_\_\_\_\_ \$
- ☐ Button : \_\_\_\_\_ X \$2 (suggested donation) = \_\_\_\_\_ \$

NOM / NAME

ADRESSE / ADDRESS

VILLE / CITY

PROVINCE

POSTAL CODE

TÉL / TEL

COURRIEL / EMAIL

☐ Paiement joint / Payment Enclosed

NUMÉRO DE CARTE DE CRÉDIT / CREDIT CARD #

EXP

☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX

SIGNATURE

La Scena Musicale, 5409 Waverly, Montréal, QC H2T 2X8  
Télécopieur : 514-274-9456 • cartelaSCENA@scena.org

## PRINT / IMPRIMÉS

## Target Clients / Clientèle cible



### La Scena Musicale (1996 - )

- Contents: classical music, opera, jazz, world  
Contenu : musique classique, opéra, jazz, monde
- 10 x year/an
- 25,000 copies/exemplaires
- Paper: glossy colour & newsprint  
Papier: glacé couleur et journal
- Binding: stapled / Reliure : brochée
- \$2268: colour glossy page rate / tarif une page couleur glacée
- \$1363: BW newsprint page rate / tarif une page noir et blanc journal

**Distribution:** Montréal, Québec  
• 50,000 readers/lecteurs

#### Profile

- Music Lovers: affluent, educated, 35+
- Musicians: professionals, students, amateurs, parents

#### Profil

- Mélomanes: à l'aise, instruits, 35 ans+
- Musiciens: professionnels, étudiants, amateurs, parents



### La SCENA (2007 - )

- Contents: music (including *La Scena Musicale*), dance, theatre, film, visual arts  
Contenu : musique (incluant *La Scena Musicale*), danse, théâtre, cinéma, arts visuels
- 4 x year/an
- 25,000 copies/exemplaires
- Paper: glossy colour & newsprint  
Papier: glacé couleur et journal
- Binding: perfect / Reliure : allemande
- \$2268: colour glossy page rate / tarif une page couleur glacée
- \$1363: BW newsprint page rate / tarif une page noir et blanc journal

**Distribution:** Montréal, Québec  
• 50,000 readers/lecteurs

#### Profile

- Arts & Music Lovers: affluent, highly educated, 35+
- Artists & Musicians: professionals, students, amateurs, parents

#### Profil

- Mélomanes: à l'aise, instruits, 35 ans+
- Artistes et musiciens: professionnels, étudiants, amateurs, parents



### The Music Scene Ontario (2002 - )

- Contents: classical music, opera, jazz  
Contenu : musique classique, opéra, jazz
- 3 x year/an
- 25,000 copies/exemplaires
- Paper: glossy colour & newsprint  
Papier: glacé couleur et journal
- Binding: stapled / Reliure : brochée
- \$2268: colour glossy page rate / tarif une page couleur glacée
- \$1363: BW newsprint page rate / tarif une page noir et blanc journal

**Distribution:** Ontario (Toronto & Ottawa), Western Canada, •50,000 readers/lecteurs

#### Profile

- Music Lovers: affluent, educated, 35+
- Musicians: professionals, students, amateurs, parents

#### Profil

- Mélomanes: à l'aise, instruits, 35 ans+
- Musiciens: professionnels, étudiants, amateurs, parents

## WEBSITE / SITE WEB



### SCENA.org (1996 - )

- Contents: classical music, jazz  
Contenu : musique classique, jazz
- Features: world news, reviews, The Lebrecht Weekly, Canadian Classical Music Calendar, blogs, Newswire, articles archive
- Sections : nouvelles, critiques, The Lebrecht Weekly, Calendrier canadien de la musique classique, blogues, fil de presse, anciens articles
- 7000 pages (HTML & ASP)
- \$30-40 CPM

**Distribution:** International

English Pages en anglais: US, Canada, UK  
French Pages en français: France, Québec

• 180,000 visitors per month/visiteurs par mois

#### Profile

- Music Lovers
- Musicians, Arts administrators

#### Profil

- Mélomanes
- Musiciens, milieu musical

- **NEW IN 2009:** Arts pages  
**NOUVEAU EN 2009 :**  
pages sur les arts



# l'Année des Cuivres / Brass Year

## JAMES THOMPSON

Ex-trompette solo des orchestres symphoniques de Montréal, Atlanta, Phoenix et Mexico / Former Principal Trumpet: Montreal Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Phoenix Symphony and the State of Mexico orchestras.

Sep. 12 – 13	Jan. 16 – 17
Oct. 6 – 7	Jan. 23 – 24
Nov. 14 – 15	Mar. 6 – 7
Nov. 26 – 27	Mar. 12 – 13
Concert : Nov. 26	

## JENS LINDEMANN

Soliste, Professeur de trompette /  
Soloist, Professor of Trumpet,  
University of Los Angeles, California

Oct. 15 – 16	Nov. 26
Feb. 10 – 11	Mar. 17 – 18
Concert : Feb. 11	



## STEFAN DOHR

Cor solo, Orchestre Philharmonique de Berlin /  
Principal Horn, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra  
Oct. 23 – 26  
Concert : Oct. 26



## JÖRGEN VAN RIJEN

Trombone solo, Orchestre Royal du Concertgebouw,  
Amsterdam / Principal Trombone of the Royal  
Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam  
Feb. 16 – 20  
Concert : Feb. 20



## GENE POKORNY

Tuba solo, Orchestre Symphonique de Chicago /  
Principal Tuba, Chicago Symphony Orchestra  
Mar. 12 – 14  
Concert : Mar. 14



Renseignements / Information :

Jennifer Stephenson  
jennifer.stephenson@mcgill.ca  
514-398-2598  
www.mcgill.ca/music



Schulich School of Music  
École de musique Schulich

Brass Area  
Section des Cuivres

## SUBSCRIBE NOW AND RECEIVE THE NEW ARTS LOVER CARD

Essential for artists & arts lovers, musicians & music lovers  
\$40 / year, includes 10 issues of *La SCENA* / *La Scena Musicale*

### NEW!

Complete access to the Naxos Online Music Library (\$189 value)

### MEMBER DISCOUNTS

Enjoy savings every time you travel to Montreal for MSO,  
Opéra de Montréal, Archambault, luthiers, selected theatres and more!

### MONTHLY DRAWS

Lucky members of *La SCENA* win CDs, DVDs, tickets and more!

### COMING SOON!

Receive 10 free Monthly Discovery CDs, beginning in February

Ontario subscribers receive the bi-annual *The Music Scene* FREE  
with subscription to *La Scena Musicale*.



ENJOY THE BEST CLASSICAL MUSIC  
AND JAZZ MAGAZINE AT HOME.

\* In Colour & Glossy!

\* Subscription:

\$40 / year (taxes incl.)

\* Newsstand price:

\$5.35+ taxes / issue

**La Scena Musicale**

TEL: 514-948-2520 FAX: 514-274-9456  
SUB@SCENA.ORG WWW.SCENA.ORG

SAVE /  
ÉCONOMISEZ  
40%

### FREE!

WITH 2 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION

- ☐ CD: Yannick Nézet Séguin - Bruckner 7
- ☐ CD: Alain Lefèvre
- ☐ CD: Sophie Milman
- ☐ CD: Daniel Taylor - The Voice of Bach
- ☐ Tasse LSM Coffee Cup

- ☐ I want to subscribe for 2 years (\$73) and receive a free CD!
- ☐ I want to subscribe to *La Scena Musicale* for 1 year (\$40).
- ☐ Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TEL \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Payment Enclosed
- ☐ Bill Me

CREDIT CARD # \_\_\_\_\_

EXP \_\_\_\_\_

☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_



5409 RUE WAVERLY MONTRÉAL, QC H2T 2X8

TMS7-1



# CONTENTS



photo: Cliff Spicer

## 8 Peter Simon: Creative Innovation



### NEWS & PERFORMANCE

- 7 Editorial
- 11 Notes
- ◀ 12 Alexander Neef: Winds of Change at the COC
- 13 Concert Picks: Southern Ontario and Ottawa
- 14 The Last of the Great Pianists
- 16 The Concertmaster
- 30 The Best of Puccini

### EDUCATION

- 22 Jazz: Teaching Improvisation
- 23 Higher Education News
- 25 Higher Music Education Guide

### REVIEWS

- 18 CD, DVD Reviews

### NEXT ISSUE

Music Camps  
Foreign Summer Festivals  
Visit [ads.scena.org](http://ads.scena.org) for details.

the **music** Scene

### Ontario Edition Winter 2009 Vol. 7.1

**Publisher** La Scène Musicale / The Music Scene  
**Directors** Wah Keung Chan (pres.), Sandro Scola,  
Gilles Cloutier, Holly Higgins Jonas

**Editor** Wah Keung Chan  
**Assistant Editor** Nisa Malli  
**CD/Books Editor** Laura Bates  
**Jazz Editor** Marc Chénard  
**Contributors** Laura Bates, Dawna Coleman, W.S. Habington,  
Holly Higgins Jonas, Norman Lebrecht, Nisa Malli, Kate Molleson,  
Hannah Rahimi, Paul E. Robinson, Joseph K. So, Michael Split  
**Copy Editors/Proofreaders** Annie Prothin, Jeff Wyns

**Cover Photo** Cliff Spicer

**Graphics** Román Varela, Mikaël Saxemard  
**Website** Normand Vandray, Mike Vincent, Susan Callaghan  
**Admin. Assistants** Kali Halapua, Hannah Rahimi  
**Calendar** Eric Legault  
**Calendar Assistants** Andie Sigler, Dominic Spence  
**Bookkeeper** Kamal Ait Mouhoub, Mourad Ben Achour  
**Volunteers** Wah Wing Chan, Lilian Liganor, Olga Nikoulitcheva

**Address**  
5409 Waverly St., Montreal  
Quebec, Canada H2T 2X8  
Tel: (514) 948-2520 / Fax: (514) 274-9456  
**Editorial** (514) 274-1128

**Advertising** (514) 948-0509 • <http://ads.scena.org>  
Gregory Cerallo (514) 656-3947  
Michael James

info@scena.org • Web: [www.scena.org](http://www.scena.org)  
production – artwork: [graf@scena.org](mailto:graf@scena.org)

**The Music Scene Ontario** is the English Canada sister publication of *La Scena Musicale*. It is dedicated to the promotion of classical music and jazz.  
TMS is published two times a year by La Scène Musicale / The Music Scene, a registered non-profit organization and charity. Inside, readers will find articles, interviews and reviews. *La Scena Musicale* is Italian for *The Music Scene*.

**Subscriptions**  
Ontario subscribers receive the bi-annual *The Music Scene* FREE with subscription to *La Scena Musicale*. Surface mail subscriptions (Canada) cost \$40/yr or \$73/2 yrs (taxes included) to cover postage and handling costs. Please mail, fax or email your name, address, telephone no., fax no., and email address.  
Donations are always welcome. (no. 14199 6579 RR0001)  
Ver: 2008-11-14 © La Scène Musicale / The Music Scene.  
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written permission of *La Scena Musicale* / *The Music Scene*.  
ISSN 1916-159X (Print) ISSN 1916-1603 (Online)  
Canada Post Publication Mail Sales Agreement No. 40025257

THE MUSIC SCENE ■ WINTER 2009

**For Advertising:**

514 948-2520

<http://ads.scena.org>

# EDITORIAL

The year 2008 has been tumultuous for music and the arts. Under attack from CBC executives (cuts to classical music programming at CBC Radio 2) and the Conservative government (cuts to arts funding), and now from economic uncertainty, the passion of ordinary Canadians and artists for the arts is heartening. Such passion kept the Conservative government in check in the form of a minority government in October's federal election.

The importance of arts education and its impact on creativity and innovation in Canada's future are what drive Peter Simon and the Royal Conservatory of Music. The opening of the TELUS Centre for the Arts in September signals a new chapter in the organization's leadership role in Arts Education in Canada. Our 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Higher Education Guide shows that music education across Canada is vibrant and well. We also feature a round table discussion on teaching Jazz improvisation.

Uncertainty at the Canadian Opera Company resulting from the sudden death of Richard Bradshaw has recently been resolved with Alexander Neef's appointment as the COC's new General Director. Joseph So garners insights in the company's future direction.

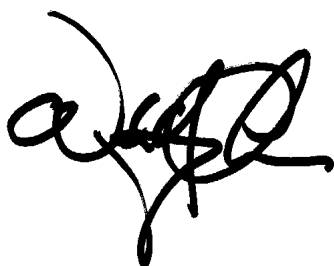
The Music Scene and our affiliated magazines, *La Scena Musicale* / *La SCENA*, and website *SCENA.org* have been active all year defending the arts. We are pleased now to introduce the new "I LOVE THE ARTS" buttons, which we hope you will wear to show your pride in the Arts. They can be obtained in a choice of three designs by sending us a donation (suggested \$2). As a non-profit charitable organization, we also rely on other donations and fundraising to further

our mission to promote music and the arts. In partnership with XXI Records, we have released Puccini 150, a 2-CD compilation of the best recorded performances of the great composer's operas to celebrate his 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It is available at fine record stores and directly through TMS. See page 30 for Joseph So's review.

Another great gift would be the new **La SCENA Arts-Lover Card**, which includes a subscription to our entire family of magazines plus access to the Naxos Music Library (over 350,000 music tracks). Furthermore, beginning in February 2009, there will be 600 additional reasons to be a member: in partnership with XXI Records we will include the new "Discovery CD Découverte", a full-length CD of great musicians of the past and future, with each issue of *La Scena Musicale* and a full-page article will appear in the magazine discussing the recording. This means that in 2009, 10 CDs (over 600 minutes of music) will be sent exclusively to La SCENA card members.

In closing, on behalf of our team of dedicated staff and volunteers at TMS, I would like to wish you a happy holiday season full of music and the arts.

WAH KEUNG CHAN  
FOUNDING EDITOR  
*The Music Scene* / *La Scena Musicale* / *La SCENA*



# Celebrating Puccini

## 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CD



*"Listening to the gems contained in this release – what a trip down memory lane! ... This is a thoroughly fascinating and enjoyable release and a great addition to any collection of Puccini recordings."*

– Joseph So, TMS

In collaboration with XXI Records and Universal Music Canada, LSM/TMS is proud to introduce this 2-CD set of some of the greatest Puccini recordings in history. Experience the unforgettable talents of Callas, Tebaldi, di Stefano, Caruso and more as they sing Puccini's operatic treasures.

- ☐ **La SCENA Card** + 1 year subscription (\$40)
- ☐ **La SCENA Card** + 2 year subscription (\$73 incl FREE CD)
- ☐ Donation: \_\_\_\_\_ \$
- ☐ CD Puccini 150: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$30 = \_\_\_\_\_ \$
- ☐ Button : \_\_\_\_\_ X \$2 (suggested donation) = \_\_\_\_\_ \$

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TEL \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Payment Enclosed

CREDIT CARD # \_\_\_\_\_

EXP \_\_\_\_\_

☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

La Scena Musicale, 5409 Waverly, Montréal, QC H2T 2X8  
Fax: 514-274-9456 • [carteLaSCENA@scena.org](mailto:carteLaSCENA@scena.org)





**PETER SIMON**  
ROYAL CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC  
*Creative*  
**INNOVATION**

Wah Keung Chan





**W**hen you hear Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) President Dr. Peter Simon talk about the importance of the arts in education, you can feel the passion of his visionary ideas. "Innovation is the future of our country, the root of innovation is creativity, and you get that through arts education," he said. Four hundred schools, 500,000 students and many Canadian philanthropists have already bought into Simon's and the RCM's vision. The recent opening of phase I of the \$120-million Telus Centre for Performance and Learning will see the RCM eventually reach another 500,000 students, entrenching it as Canada's leading institution in the arts.

### The new facilities

The 122-year-old RCM has always been a national institution, "creating ideas and programs and systems of instruction that was taken across Canada, for music literacy and personal development," said Simon. Generations of Canadians have measured their musical education through the RCM Examinations. And some of Canada's great musicians, such as Glenn Gould, Gordon Lightfoot, Jon Vickers and Teresa Stratas started there.

The new facilities include state-of-the-art studios, which are isolated acoustically and fully loaded technologically to allow lessons to be given from Toronto to British Columbia or Nova Scotia. In each studio, teachers have access to web tools, and the expanded space will allow the RCM to host music and arts conferences. "The new 1100-seat Koerner Concert Hall, to be unveiled in September 2009, will be one of the great halls in the world," said Simon, who plans to invite international artists, such as Andras Schiff and Leon Fleisher, to interact with the students and give masterclasses. Of the 100 annual masterclasses, he plans to record one third and make them freely available on the Internet. The RCM's Glenn Gould Professional School now attracts 120 top professional level students, one third of which are foreigners. "Our greatest strength is that our kids get 50% to 100% more time with teachers than found at universities," said Simon.

### The history of the new RCM

All of this activity pales in comparison to the RCM of 17 years ago, when the school was coming out of a messy divorce from the University of Toronto. For over 40 years, the RCM was the poor cousin of the University of Toronto Faculty of Music. In 1991, Peter Simon was hired as President to lead it through the transition. "It needed some energy and revitalization and I came back to do that. It is perhaps Canada's greatest cultural asset and I didn't think it was doing very well," he said.

At the time, the RCM was housed in Ihnatowycz Hall, a beautiful Victorian structure that was showing its age, with a leaky roof and in need of constant repair. Simon had to consolidate the RCM by cutting the number of Toronto campuses from six to two. He built his fundraising team gradually from zero to the current ten, growing donations from \$120,000 in 1992 to \$22.5 million in 2006. "Once you build a fundraising infrastructure there are huge returns," said Simon. "For most arts organizations, getting there is very difficult because they can't afford it; we have to think differently." In the 1990s, the RCM sought to create a database of its alumni with TV commercials on CBC-TV.

The RCM's most innovative project began in 1994. Learning through the Arts (LTTA) used the arts as an education tool in public schools. The school changed its mission statement – "To develop human potential through leadership in music and arts education." When Simon speaks about the motivation, he almost sounds evangelical: "Education without the arts is a travesty. Cuts to arts education happened, and we stood around and let it happen." Simon noticed that although many outreach programs sponsored by arts groups sprouted up in its place, they were not sustainable and arts literacy was still in decline. Simon went one step further with LTTA by commissioning studies to prove its validity. The program is evaluated

regularly by the University of Toronto and Queen's. The studies found that students scored 11% higher in Mathematics, had better attendance and were more involved in their studies. "Most students are disengaged," he said. "The lecture method is effective for 15% of students. The best way to get students interested is through an emotional connection with the arts. Once interested, the marks will go up by themselves."

Starting out with seven schools in its first year, LTTA now has 400 schools and is expanding worldwide, including in the UK and Ireland. "We offer teacher training and certification in several centres across Canada, in every province in Canada, for three to four weeks in summer," Simon said. "What's really great is if the entire school, every teacher is involved." It takes three years for a school to make the transition and the school fee is \$5000 to \$10,000 a year. "It's very low cost but a huge return."

What about talk of the demise of classical music? Simon refutes, "The numbers don't support it. The number of opera companies and orchestras have increased. This is timeless human creation. Why is it that the market for classical music is enormous in Japan and China, where there are 20 million students, yet it is not part of their cultural heritage? It's because music

is not confined to nationality. It speaks to people and is timeless and universal. When you promote Canada in foreign markets like China, they know Canada through Glenn Gould because he represents innovation and creativity at the highest levels, and it speaks for everything in Canada."

### Creative rewards

Simon realizes that his work is not yet done, given recent remarks from Stephen Harper that the arts are a niche. Simon is adamantly opposed. "It's simply wrong. That was an unfortunate statement Harper made; I don't think personally he believes it. You bear a responsibility to look at our society. We are supposed to create an innovative society with leading thinkers and that is not possible without the creativity found in the arts. Ontario is in a difficult situation right now. We have to make sure businesses are creative, intelligent forward-looking companies. The old 19<sup>th</sup> century model of the assembly line mentality to receive and regurgitate information is no good. Facts and information constantly change. The future is about great ideas. Microsoft and Google are idea-based companies. People, government and donors understand this."

The RCM board also understood that all of the organization's achievements would have been for naught without Simon at the helm. They recently rewarded him with a 10-year contract extension. "The RCM has offered me endless possibilities. I thought getting the RCM back on its feet might take five to ten years, and never thought of staying 17 years." It comes as a bit of a surprise that running a national arts institution was never in Simon's plans in his youth, when he trained as a concert pianist. "I was fortunate to come from a family who thought that creativity and artistry were perhaps the highest aspirations that you can have. Rather than being pushed to a profession, they gave me a freedom and a confidence to do what's valid," he said. "You are not achieving your full potential if you are not thinking of yourself as a creative person."

### A classically trained CEO

Simon began his musical education at the RCM as a student of Boris Berlin. He went on to study at New York's Juilliard School and in London with Louis Kentner. After finishing a Doctorate at the University of Michigan under Leon Fleisher, Simon returned to Toronto to pursue his career in performance (about 20-30 concerts a year) and teaching (at the University of Western Ontario). "That was my plan; I wanted a balanced life," he said. Running Preview Concerts in Toronto motivated him to take a night course in Arts Administration at McMaster's University "to accelerate my learning curve." From there Simon, took on the position as Director of Academic Studies at the RCM before a two-year stint as president of the Manhattan School, where he introduced the first Master's Degree in





INSTRUMENTS À  
CORDES ET ARCHETS

•  
RESTAURATION  
VENTE

FINE STRINGED  
INSTRUMENTS AND BOWS

•  
RESTORATION  
SALE

257, RUE RACHEL EST, MONTRÉAL (QUÉBEC) H2W 1E5 CANADA  
TÉL.: (514) 289-0849 • [www.wilderdavis.com](http://www.wilderdavis.com)  
1 888 419-9453 • [info@wilderdavis.com](mailto:info@wilderdavis.com)

Orchestral Performance in the US. It was there that he formulated his ideas for arts education.

How did his musical training help him develop as a CEO? "I always worked hard and I was used to working seven days a week. As a musician, you are constantly trying to go deeper, to find a better, truer way, which has helped me realize that superficiality is not worthy of attention. You learn of compromise, the more you compromise, the more you get away from the truth of the music. You are constantly faced with choices where you are forced to compromise. We make a decision – what is the impact on the final goal? Our goal of excellence is always to do everything to the best of our ability. As a leader, you must have that orientation. You cannot say something is good enough. It's also about dealing with people. In music, you are working with people all the time. The fundamentals are there."

What's your secret to fundraising? "You have to have a passion for what you are doing. People can tell if you really believe what you are saying and are committed to it. There is a dogged persistence about fundraising, you have to be there every day, and you have to constantly expand your relationship with people and it's a process-oriented thing. The more people you get to know, the more people you can see, the more success you will be. It's a great cause that we are representing. You have to be determined, and not relax, or you fall backwards."

#### Future expansion

When asked what constitutes the next 10 years of his 27-year plan, Simon laughed. He plans to launch a concert production program in the new hall and expand the RCM's examination, curriculum and books in China and the US. He's also devoted to a new arts-based online program, "so kids can have a fundamental relationship with arts and creativity but in a language they are current with." He also plans to expand the Young Artist Performance Academy from its current weekend format to full-time, and increase the number of students from 70 to 100, hopefully on full scholarship. "Lastly, I want to have a greater impact in early childhood. Working with young children is virtually all arts based, yet people in daycare centres are not trained and certified. We could give parents tools, to really work with kids, to get learning and cognitive development at a far early age. We have been working with ages 4-5-6, and that is the future." If only we had people like him running our country. ■



- [rcmusic.ca](http://rcmusic.ca)
- [LTTA.ca](http://LTTA.ca)



## 2009 Opera IS

### Opera Tours with Iain Scott

with New Wave Travel. Itineraries are on website below.

Strauss Week in Berlin (5 operas) 7 nights, Feb. 9 - 16, 2009

*Der Rosenkavalier, Ariadne auf Naxos, Die Aegyptische Helena, Salome & Elektra*

Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden (5 operas) 9 nights, April 16 - 25

*La Traviata, Macbeth – La Rondine – Die Zauberflöte, La Cenerentola*

\* Post-Option: Prague, Apr. 25-28, *Rusalka, Le Nozze di Figaro*

Royal Opera and Ballet, Covent Garden 6 nights, May 7 - 13

*Lohengrin, Il Trovatore, L'Elisir d'Amore – Les Sylphides, Firebird*

\* Post-Option: Paris, May 13-16, *Masked Ball, The Makropoulos Case*

La Scala, Milan! Verona! Venice! 8 nights, June 24 - July 2

*New Zeffirelli Aida – Turandot & Carmen – Götterdämmerung*

\* Pre-Option: Turin, 2 nights, June 22 - 24, *Adriana Lecouvreur*

[www.opera-is.com](http://www.opera-is.com)

416-486-8408

## LA SCÈNE MUSICALE / THE MUSIC SCENE

### GALA 2009

*The best musicians in Montreal supporting our cause*

### February 14, 2009 at 7 PM Choral Extravaganza

Iwan Edwards, Concerto Della Donna;  
Christopher Jackson, Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal; Patrick Wedd, Musica Orbium

Honourary president: Maurice Forget

VIP Tickets: \$130 (including a \$100 tax receipt)

Regular Tickets: \$30

877 948-2520 • [SCENA.org](http://SCENA.org)



## CBC RADIO ORCHESTRA RESURRECTED



The CBC Radio Orchestra has been called back for an encore. The farewell concert on November 16 would have been a day of mourning for 70 decades of listeners. Now, thanks to Montreal businessman Phillippe Labelle and many private donors, it will live on as the National Broadcast Orchestra under music director Alain Trudel. Labelle plans to leap into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with webcasts, contemporary compositions, young Canadian soloists and cross-generational board members. The orchestra will double its schedule dividing performances between concerts and studio recordings with a small audience. The CBC hasn't ruled out the possibility of broadcasting the NBO, but says it will not fund the orchestra. The NBO will launch its fundraising with a benefit concert in Spring 2009. [broadcastorchestra.ca](http://broadcastorchestra.ca)

## COLIN OBERST ANTHEM WINNER

CBC's process of public vote to select the new Hockey Night in Canada Theme has yielded a winner from thousands of online submissions. On October 11 on national TV, Beaumont, Alberta elementary school music teacher Colin Oberst's *Canadian Gold* became the new theme, besting 13-year-old Toronto native, Robert Fraser Burke's *Sticks to the Ice*. Oberst collects a cheque for \$100,000 and half of the lifetime royalties, with the other 50% invested by the CBC in minor hockey. Oberst's final version was produced by Bob Rock who added the bagpipe opening, although there was dissatisfaction with the Rock's version online. Listening to both versions, I too found that the original *sans* bagpipe more effective. The televised Anthem Challenge professionally profiled 5 composers and made for good TV. Given the superiority of the original theme, the CBC may want to make this Anthem Challenge an annual event. **WKC**

## STRADIVARI CAN'T LURE BIDDERS

One of only 60 Stradivari cellos in existence failed to meet its reserve price at auction. After months of tantalizing showcasing in London, New York, Boston and Cremona, Tarisio Auctions hoped that the instrument would entice bidders. But the cello, made in 1717 by Antonio Stradivari and named for Amaryllis Flemming, only lured one bidder who offered less than half of the \$1.48 million dollar reserve price. Tarisio is still in negotiations with the bidder. When it sells, part of the proceeds will benefit the Royal College of Music in London, Amaryllis Flemming's former school.

This auction represents a recent drop in once-skyrocketing prices. In the 1970s Stradivari instruments sold at auction for around \$500,000. In 2005, a Russian lawyer paid \$1.05 million for a Bergonzi violin (est. 1720). Early this year he paid \$3.9 million for a 1741 Guarnerius.

Antique stringed instruments used to be relatively safe investment for the rich. As the heyday of handmade craftsmanship disappeared further in the past, the value of antique instruments increased, particularly for the products of master craftsmen like Stradivari, Guarneri and Amati. Stradivari did his best work between 1700 and 1720 and instruments from this period, like the Flemming cello, are worth more than those from the early part of his career.

## MUSHROOMS KEY TO STRADIVARI SOUND

Swiss researcher Francis Schwarze announced on November 6 that treating maple wood with the *Xylaria longipes* mushroom yields a sound quality comparable to violins made by Italian master Antonio Stradivari. The mushroom nibbles lightly on the wood, reducing its density and intensifying the sound, he said. **WKC**

## VAN OPERA KEEPS DARLINGTON

The Vancouver Opera extended their music director's contract until 2010. Jonathan Darlington has been with the Vancouver Opera since his appointment as Principal Conductor in 2002. He made his debut with the BBC Symphony and has previously conducted the English National Opera, Bordeaux Opera and Deutsche Oper am Rhein. Upcoming performances with the Vancouver Opera include Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* (Nov. 22-29) and Strauss's *Salome* (May 2-9).

## COC SURPLUS, KW SYM. DEFICIT

The Canadian Opera Company closed the books with a \$41,000 surplus for the 2007-2008 year. Despite the death of general director, Richard Bradshaw, the company had a box office high, near 100 percent attendance and more performances than ever. Thanks to a \$5 million donation from Rosalie and Isadore Sharp, the Four Seasons

Centre has been paid off and an anonymous \$2 million gift will help fund the COC's 100 annual free public concerts. The company also announced increases in private sector support.

Despite declaring a \$275,000 deficit this season, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony is rejoicing. The Symphony suffered from staffing shortages, drops in ticket sales and shrinking stock-market endowments but a \$2.5 million fundraising campaign has saved the once almost bankrupt organization and exciting new programs are reviving the once dying symphony. The Intersections Series draws younger audiences with a combination of classical, jazz, rock and folk while a partnership with local school boards offers music lessons to children. Music Director, Edwin Outwater has big plans to push the symphony creatively and musically outside the bounds of classical music.

## OTTAWA SLASHES ARTS FUNDING

The City of Ottawa will make \$4.2 million in cuts to 286 arts and culture programs in 2009. The Ottawa Tulip Festival, Ottawa Bluesfest, Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival and the Ottawa Book Awards will lose 100 per cent of their municipal funding; Opera Lyr and the Independent Filmmakers Co-operative of Ottawa will lose 42 per cent; while the Ottawa Arts Court Foundation, the Ottawa Art Gallery and the Bytown Museum will lose 10 to 24 per cent. Also affected: diversity programs such as the Latin American Festival and the Ottawa Chinese Arts Group and community projects such as Centretown movies and Ladyfest. Local arts administrators are concerned the cuts will severely affect the tourist industry, removing more money from the local economy than the cuts will save. Public delegations can comment on the budget Dec. 1 and 2; before Council approves it on Dec. 5.

# Opera Weekend in Montreal

May 23-26, 2009

Join **The International Resource Centre for Performing Artists**  
and **La Scena Musicale/The Music Scene** in Montreal

**May 23:** *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Donizetti (Montreal Opera)

**May 24:** Masterclasses, Montreal International Music Competition

**May 25-26:** Finals, Montreal International Music Competition

416-362-1422 • [www.sumarts.com/ircpa/](http://www.sumarts.com/ircpa/)



# ALEXANDER NEEF: WINDS OF CHANGE AT THE OPERA

## CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY LOOKS TO THE FUTURE WITH A NEW GENERAL DIRECTOR

Joseph K. So

PHOTO: MICHAEL COOPER

Sitting face to face with Alexander Neef in an interview, one is struck first and foremost by his youth – at 34, he is surely one of the youngest major opera company heads. Impeccably dressed, soft-spoken – in equally impeccable English – Neef exudes a certain patrician quality, his manner genteel and somewhat reserved. Though this interview took place only three weeks into his new appointment, he looked comfortably at home in the spacious office once occupied by his predecessor, the late Richard Bradshaw. In the forty-five minute interview, Neef responded to my probing questions with articulate, well considered, and diplomatic answers that reveal a quiet confidence and depth of intellect.

Born in Ebersbach an der Fils near Stuttgart, Germany, Neef studied Latin Philology and History at the Eberhard-Karls-Universität in Tübingen and is a founding member of the Akademie Musiktheater heute – Berlin/Salzburg at Humboldt University in Berlin. Two summers of internship at the Salzburg Festival led to a stint with the artistic administration staff of the RuhrTriennale, a multi-disciplinary festival of opera, theatre, and dance. His career received a major boost when he was offered the plum job as Director of Casting at the prestigious Opera national de Paris, a post he held for the past four years under the tutelage of his mentor, Gerard Mortier. During his tenure, Neef worked with an impressive list of big-name producers, directors and singers, among them Canadians Robert Carsen, Ben Heppner, and Russell Braun. Given his experience at the highest level of opera administration, Neef has the right credentials for the top job at the COC. Certainly the Board thought so – at a press conference last June 25, David Ferguson, chair of the search committee, introduced Neef to the media as the committee's unanimous choice, after an exhaustive seven-month worldwide search.

*"We need to give meaning to the work and not focus on the superficial. A great opera is like a great painting – it's important to discover its message."*

With Neef at the helm, COC audiences can look forward to significant changes in coming seasons. It will be gradual – we won't feel the full impact of a Neef season for some time. It's not just because the next couple of seasons had already been finalized before his appointment; one gets the impression that Neef is a cautious leader who recognizes local traditions and eschews change for the sake of change. But the push to appeal to a broader, younger audience, already underway during the Bradshaw era, is going full steam ahead. The COC website has a new blog feature, apparently with Neef's blessings. He has even contributed the occasional entry, and for a personal touch, a nice photo of his wife Eloise and daughter Marnie can be found in the publicity material. The Company even has a presence on Facebook, a "must" for the younger set. These touches may be minor, but

they signify a shift towards making the art form more relevant and current. Neef, as part of the new breed of opera administrators, brings with him a certain contemporary sensibility, one that takes the art form out of the museums and into the streets.

How his Euro-inspired *Regietheater* aesthetic will go over with the COC audience remains to be seen. Despite Bradshaw's effort to wean the audience away from pleasantly decorative stage productions, a significant segment of the core subscribers remain quite conservative – they'd sooner applaud pretty scenery than bare-staged symbolist productions. An oft-heard refrain from the conservative blue-rinse set is "why can't a tree look like a tree?" "Because a tree is not a tree" Neef responds a tad mischievously. But goes on to elaborate: "The heart of a piece is more than a tree. We need to give meaning to the work and not focus on the superficial. A great opera is like a great painting – it's important to discover its message." The question is: how far one can go in the search for meaning. To Neef, some operas are more open to



symbolist and interpretive staging. Particularly good candidates are those with multiple layers of meaning, the ones focusing on human relationships, or those with social commentary as subtexts. "It's important not to put operas into contexts that are too concrete," he says. "For example, there are wonderful human messages in *Aida*, and you don't want to hide them by putting the action in ancient Egypt where people will only see the elephants – you know what I mean? Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro* is not about gods and heroes but about people in Mozart's time. If it was a contemporary piece for Mozart, it should be a contemporary piece for us. If we perform it as an 18<sup>th</sup> century piece, we don't do it justice."

Ultimately the judge of the success or failure of a production is the audience. "Two thousand people each night, and every single member of the public sees it in a different way, which is fine and normal," comments Neef. "You'll never find one hundred per cent consensus. We have to present operas in a good, coherent, logical, and strong way, and maybe the public will discover things that will surprise them, things they haven't thought about before." He cites the season-opening *War and Peace* as a prime example of what a good production should be. Interestingly, the mega-budget, famous Francesca Zambello production for Paris Opera does not find favour with him – "it's a big Hollywood show." Rather, the much pared-down, ENO-COC co-production is closer to the spirit of the work in its attempt to delve deeper into the psychology of the characters: "A grand opera like *War and Peace* with so many scenes and characters can fall apart, but framing it in 1941 Russia in its war with Germany by Tim (director Tim Albery) gives it a stronger coherence – I like it very much." The audience and critics seemed to agree, as all later performances were sold out.

What operas can COC audiences expect to see in future seasons? Neef was careful not to show his hand except to say that the priority will be on pieces the Company has never done, or not done in a very long time. I did manage to get out of him a few tasty morsels – a long overdue premiere will be *Parsifal*. For the longer term, we can expect premieres of major Strauss pieces like *Arabella* and *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Even more adventurous would be perhaps something by Zemlinsky, or Busoni's *Doctor Faust*. An upcoming revival is *Ariadne auf Naxos*, starring Canada's own Adrienne Pieczonka, whose fabulous Ariadne I had the good fortune of experiencing in Munich this past July. Other revivals include *Tristan und Isolde*, which is a Neef all-time favourite. Also on the horizon at some point will be *Otello*, *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Lulu*. This delightful operatic smorgasbord demands singers of the first order. Neef feels that the COC is well positioned, given so many Canadians either live in the area or are already enjoying strong relationships with the company. Since his appointment in June, he has started securing the services of important Canadian artists in advance, finding out what roles they would like to sing, and what they have not yet sung but would like to try out here. "We need to plan long term, to get access to singers like Ben Heppner, Adrienne Pieczonka, Michael Schade, and Russell Braun, for instance. I think we can have first-rate Canadian artists in each of the productions, and they'll attract their international colleagues," he says.

The repertoire of major houses like the Met have, until very recently, been like a collection of museum pieces we're trying to keep alive. Successful commissions are few and far between. COC's last major new work, Randolph Peters' *The Golden Ass*, has never been revived to my knowledge. Neef is all for new commissions – "but I don't want to present it only eight times and nobody does it ever again. We want great pieces that are strong enough to enter the repertoire – that's what the art form needs. The innovations at the moment come from the production side, but I think innovations should also come from the musical side. I'd like the public to be like those in Handel's time, when they went to the opera because they were curious to discover something new. I want our public to be curious about operas like they do about films. When you go to the cinema, you go because you don't know the film and are curious."

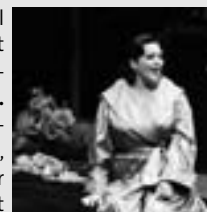
What about showing COC productions at the cinema as the Met has successfully done? "Of course, we want to do everything we can to reach those areas of the country that do not have access to opera," Neef says. "Cinecasting into theatres, however, is an extremely expensive proposition, and we can't afford to do anything that compromises the quality of the COC's mainstage season. In the short term, we'd like to re-establish our national full-season radio broadcasts, and we hope for the collaboration of all the parties involved to help make that happen in the near future." ■

► coc.ca

# Southern Ontario Vocal Preview

Joseph K. So

With the onset of cold weather, the vocal scene in Southern Ontario is sure to heat up. The **Canadian Opera Company** is pairing a core repertoire piece – *Fidelio* (Jan. 24. – Feb. 24), with a comparative rarity – *Rusalka* (Jan. 31-Feb. 23). The singers are familiar faces at the COC, while both conductors are new – Gregor Bühl for Beethoven and John Keenan in Dvorak. Given that the COC is actively seeking a Music Director, these two maestros will no doubt be scrutinized as potential candidates. *Fidelio* features a very strong cast led by Canadian soprano Adrienne Pieczonka as Leonore, in an infrequent foray into the dramatic soprano repertoire. She is partnered by tenor Jon Villars (Florestan), making a welcome return. Gidon Saks, another frequent guest, is the villainous Don Pizarro. Swedish bass Mats Almgren, the marvelously evil Hagen of the COC Ring, returns as the sympathetic Rocco. Czech bass Zdenek Plech sings the brief role of Don Fernando. Virginia Hatfield and Adam Luther are the young lovers Marzelline and Jacquino. *Rusalka* is primarily known for its showstopper aria, "Song to the Moon", so it's nice to see the whole opera, in a production from Theater Erfurt and directed by Dmitri Bertman who scored a success last season in *From the House of the Dead*. American soprano Julie Makerov, who made a splash in the COC *Don Giovanni* as Donna Elvira, sings the title role, opposite tenor Michael Schade as the Prince. Also featured are Richard Paul Fink, Irina Mishura, and Joni Henson. [www.coc.ca](http://www.coc.ca)



**Opera Atelier** begins the season with six performances (Nov. 8-15) of Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio*, conducted by David Fallis. It stars tenors Frédéric Antoun and Lawrence Wilford, and sopranos Amanda Pabyan and Carla Huhtanen as the two pairs of lovers. Norwegian bass Gustav Andreassen is Osmin. For tickets, go to [www.operaatelier.com/home\\_buytix.htm](http://www.operaatelier.com/home_buytix.htm).

Elsewhere on the operatic front, **Opera In Concert** offers two rarities, *La Vestale* by Mercadante (Nov. 30), and Haydn's *Il mondo della Luna* (Feb. 1). The first opera has piano accompaniment by resident pianist Raisa Nakhmanovich, while the Haydn opera has the added benefit of orchestra, with Kevin Mallon leading the Aradia Ensemble. Ticket information can be found at [www.operainconcert.com/tickets.htm](http://www.operainconcert.com/tickets.htm).



The newly resurrected **Opera Hamilton** is now back in business, albeit minus the Kitchener-Waterloo venue. On Nov 16 at the Centenary United Church in Hamilton, we get a rare chance to hear soprano Adrienne Pieczonka and mezzo Laura Tucker, partners in art and partners in life, in a duo recital. The popular Popera takes place on Jan. 29 and 31, with soprano Miriam Khalil, mezzo Kimberly Barber, tenor Marc Hervieux, and bass Nathan Berg. Daniel Lipton leads the Hamilton Philharmonic. Go to [www.operahamilton.ca/tickets.html](http://www.operahamilton.ca/tickets.html) for tickets.

If you want lighter fare, try Carl Zeller's *Die Vogelhändler* (The Bird Seller) from the **Toronto Operetta Theatre** at the St. Lawrence Centre (Dec. 26-Jan 4), or Kurt Weill's rarely performed *Knickerbocker Holiday* (Feb 18-22). [www.torontooperetta.com](http://www.torontooperetta.com)

December is *Messiah* month, and the **Toronto Symphony Orchestra's** version this year, billed as "Toronto's Favourite", features Noel Edison and the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir (Dec. 16-21), with a strong quartet of soloists: soprano Gillian Keith, mezzo Allyson McHardy, tenor Frederic Antoun and baritone Robert Gleadow. [www.tso.ca](http://www.tso.ca)

If you prefer your *Messiah* intimate, try **Tafelmusik's** Baroque version, with Ivars Taurins and soprano Nancy Argenta, mezzo Laura Pudwell, tenor Lawrence Wilford, and baritone Brett Polegato. The Sing-Along version has become quite a tradition, which takes place on Dec 21 at Massey Hall. [www.tafelmusik.org](http://www.tafelmusik.org)



# LAST OF THE GREAT PIANISTS

Norman Lebrecht

**T**he last of the great pianists are taking their final bows. The last? Well, for 40 years and more, Alfred Brendel and Vladimir Ashkenazy have ploughed their way on record through the entire classical and much of the romantic repertoire, endowing civilised homes the world over with essential culture at the spin of a disc.

Both recorded all 32 Beethoven sonatas and 27 Mozart concertos - in Brendel's case, twice. They also covered Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Liszt and, in Ashkenazy's case, Chopin. The Russian exile branched into Musorgsky, Rachmaninov, Prokofiev, Skryabin and Shostakovich. The Austrian émigré saw to Haydn, some Dvorak and the infinitely challenging piano concerto of Arnold Schoenberg.

Brendel and Ashkenazy were the music industry's workhorses, a pair of infallible brands, never poorly reviewed. Ashkenazy played exclusively on Decca. Brendel first on Vox, then, in maturity, on Philips. Both based themselves early on in London for ease of travel and the amenities of social life. Ashkenazy took up conducting in the 1980s and now leads the Sydney Symphony Orchestra while living mostly in Iceland, a bipolar existence. Brendel has a sideline in whimsical writings, much praised by the present Poet Laureate, and serves a leftish section of the British establishment as its resident musical oracle.

So long as records boomed, the two men played to order, turning out new releases in their endless cycles practically every other month. Others - Argerich, Barenboim, Pollini - made large piles of records, but none ploughed the opus numbers so methodically, so integrally and so consistently as Ashkenazy and Brendel until, in the past decade, the labels dried up or started taking their talent off reality TV.

Ashkenazy, 71, has given up the piano after being diagnosed with degenerative bone disease in three fingers. Brendel, 77, plays his farewell concert next month in Vienna.

I admired them both, and for very different reasons. Ashkenazy's touch was one of the wonders of the age. He made the opening of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* sound as if years of practice and reflection had gone into the phrasing of a melody so simple any page-turner could have played it. Yet what we heard was not the contortion of false complexity but the clarity of an uncluttered mind, a pellucid interpretation.

His 1970s Rachmaninov concertos with Andre Previn and the London Symphony Orchestra were revolutionary in their discretion, for Ashkenazy shunned showboat pianism and brought a conversational ease to these troubled pieces. He restored solo Skryabin to circulation and his late interest in Shostakovich, the wartime second sonata and beyond, tapped insights and delights that I never heard elsewhere. Up to his final record this year, Ashkenazy always gave the impression of pushing boundaries, even as he industriously reinforced the old canonic fences.

Where Ashkenazy made a virtue of reticence - he gave fewer interviews than anyone except the reclusive Horowitz - Brendel could not help but grip the eye with his tall, stooped frame, his sleeve-tugging fidgets and his myopic squints into the hall, as if to assure himself that the audience had not gone home. He was a showman with a highbrow aura. I found his Schubert

irresistible, as much for its idiomatic lyricism as for a communicated sense of the seamier side of Vienna. Brendel had an uncanny knack for dictating mood. With the dozen notes of an opening phrase, the first gloss of buffered hammers on wire, you knew what kind of evening it was going to be, whether in concert or on record.

He was fortunate in his recording partners, never more so than with the unfussy Sir Neville Marriner and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, with whom he explored the Mozart concertos, culminating in a K595 that flutters hints of paths untaken. For all the Grammys that crowd his Hampstead mantelpiece, the records that stick most in my mind are the ones from his early Vox days in Vienna when a hungry young Alfred recorded Liszt's firework transcriptions of opera arias and an unforgettable Beethoven Emperor Concerto with an ad hoc orchestra made up of moonlighters from the Vienna Philharmonic and an unknown Zubin Mehta on the rostrum. Brendel proved then that he could play anything a producer put in front of him, with care and conviction.

But the days of wholesale record-making are over and will not return. There will never be another Brendel or Ashkenazy - which, for all that I admired them, is no bad thing. Music was not meant to be played wall to wall. After a while, inevitability sets in.

Immaculate Brendel and Ashkenazy discs would arrive like clockwork with all the wrong notes edited out and an artist-approved photograph staring businesslike from the cover or eyes-down at the keyboard - a deadly serious frontage that seemed designed to deter casual listeners. The seamless flow of product diminished the distinction between one work and the next. Looking back at the catalogue, it is less easy than you might think to extract nuggets of pure gold from a mountain of perfect slate.

Although Brendel and Ashkenazy wax rich on royalties, I wonder if they might not agree with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, the busy German baritone, who admitted sadly to me that he had done too much for his own place in history and left too little for the next generation to emulate and exceed. I would hesitate to suggest that Brendel and Ashkenazy each made 50 records too many. For the record, they are measurably the last of the great pianists. But greatness, in the post-record era, has moved on. The power of music is being redefined as you read this in less mechanical, less perpetual criteria. ■ Visit [lebrecht.scena.org](http://lebrecht.scena.org) for the author's weekly column.

## Ashkenazy's best:

Rachmaninov 2nd concerto (with Kondrashin, Moscow, 1963)  
Beethoven Kreutzer sonata (with Perlman, London, 1973)  
Shostakovich 2nd sonata (Suffolk, 2003)

## Brendel's best:

Liszt opera transcriptions (Vienna, 1961)  
Schubert A-major sonata (Snape, 1999)  
Schoenberg concerto (with Kubelik, Munich, 1971)



As part of the Mozart@253 Festival, the **TSO** is putting on *Die Zauberflöte* in concert (Jan. 22 and 24) conducted by Bernard Labadie, starring Canadians Karina Gauvin (Pamina) and Benjamin Butterfield (Tamino), who replaces the originally announced German tenor Andreas Karasiak. Also featured are two singers making comparatively rare appearances in Toronto – baritone Joshua Hopkins (Papageno) and soprano Aline Kutan (Queen of the Night). The TSO website lists a scriptwriter (Bill Richardson) and a stage director (Graham Cozzubbo) – so expect a semi-staged performance with narration by CBC broadcaster Richardson. The rarely performed *Damnation of Faust* will be given by the TSO (Feb. 26 and 28). Charles Dutoit conducts the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Mendelssohn Choir and Toronto Children's Chorus, with four top-notch soloists: Susanne Mentzer, Gregory Kunde, Jonathan Lemalu, and Sir Willard White.

The recital lineup is especially tempting this season. The venerable **Roy Thomson Hall Vocal Series** begins with Kathleen Battle in her first visit to Toronto in years, in a program of Handel, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Liszt, Fauré, and Montsalvatge (Nov. 16). Cecilia Bartoli brings her unique vocalism to Toronto on March 1, with her own band, the Orchestra La Scintilla of Zurich Opera. She will undoubtedly be singing selections from her recent disc of songs by Maria Malibran. Bartoli always sells out RTH so get your tickets early. She is followed by a voice new to Toronto, soprano Nicole Cabell (March 8). Cabell was catapulted to fame after winning the Cardiff Singer of the World in 2005. I heard her as Musetta in Santa Fe and I find her very talented. [www.roythomson.com](http://www.roythomson.com).



This season we have an embarrassment of riches when it comes to Schubert's *Die Winterreise*. **Offcentre Music Salon** presents its 14<sup>th</sup> Schubertiade on Nov. 23 at the Glenn Gould Studio, with baritone Peter McGillivray and pianist Boris Zarankin tackling this Mount Everest of song cycles. [www.offcentremusic.com](http://www.offcentremusic.com). The other one is the Greta Kraus Schubertiade from the **Aldeburgh Connection**, with baritone Brett Polegato and pianist Stephen Ralls, also at the Glenn Gould Studio (**March 25**). [www.roythomson.com](http://www.roythomson.com).

Last but not least, **Music Toronto's** Discovery Series features the dramatic voice of soprano Joni Henson, in a recital of Beethoven, Wagner, Britten and Morawetz, on March 12 at the St. Lawrence Centre. Stephen Ralls is the collaborative pianist. [www.stlc.com](http://www.stlc.com).

The **Canadian Children's Opera Company** (CCOC) presents the holiday favourite, *A Dickens of a Christmas*, November 28, 29 and 30 at Harbourfront's Enwae Theatre. Based on Dicken's *A Christmas Carol*, the children's opera was commissioned by the CCOC in 2005 and has grown to charm audiences every winter. Composed by Errol Gay, with libretto and stage direction by Michael Patrick Albano, *A Dickens of a Christmas* is a fully staged production involving 200 choristers from the CCOC. Artistic Director Ann Cooper Gay conducts, showcasing the level of talent and dedication that children can bring to music. [www.canadianchildrensopera.com](http://www.canadianchildrensopera.com)



## Southern Ontario Instrumental Preview

Hannah Rahimi

The **Montreal Stockhausen Project** comes to Toronto on November 15 as part of New Music Concerts. Karlheinz Stockhausen is one of the best known and most controversial composers of contemporary music. He composed close to 400 works and 10 volumes of texts about music until his death last year at the age of 79. Over the span of his career he has explored and expanded upon numerous techniques and theories, including electronic music, serial composition and musical specialization. Due to the idiosyncrasy of his works, performers must be well versed in Stockhausen's vision and musical language. The Montreal Stockhausen Project is composed of five musicians whose interpretations were approved by Stockhausen on numerous occasions.

They will perform works for flute, basset horn, and electronics, including *AVE and Entführung* from *Eve's Magic*, *Flautina* and *Kathinkas Gesang*. [www.newmusicconcerts.com](http://www.newmusicconcerts.com)

**Continuum Contemporary Music** is a gem in the new music scene of Toronto. Under the artistic direction of Jennifer Waring, the six-piece group is dedicated to promoting contemporary music, providing greatly-needed exposure for emerging Canadian and international composers. This year they are participating in the inaugural SHIFT, a festival of Canadian and Dutch music, film, literature and visual art. Hosted by Amsterdam's famed Muziekgebouw and Toronto's Harbourfront Centre, SHIFT presents an exciting fusion of the two cultures, taking place in Amsterdam in November and Toronto in February. On February 28, Continuum will perform at the Harbourfront Centre with The Dutch Ives Ensemble. Founded by pianist John Snijders, the fourteen-member Dutch ensemble is at the forefront of new music performance. The two ensembles will perform Canadian and Dutch works commissioned specifically for the festival. [www.shift-festival.ca](http://www.shift-festival.ca) [www.continuummusic.org](http://www.continuummusic.org)



If you're looking for concerts that will appeal to the whole family, try the **Kitchener Waterloo Symphony Orchestra's Generation Series**. Held on Sunday afternoons, these concerts are designed to bring music to children in a way that allows them to understand and appreciate the stories behind the sound. Conductor Edwin Outwater and host Tom Allen guide the audience through a world of music and storytelling. Join them on December 7 for a jazz-inspired program of Gershwin and Bernstein, led by guest conductor Joana Carneiro. For children or for anyone wanting to discover how music works, this is an opportunity to learn and listen in the presence of talented musicians and a charming host. [www.kwsymphony.on.ca](http://www.kwsymphony.on.ca)



In the coming months Peter Oundjian and the **Toronto Symphony Orchestra** offer a varied and appealing series, presenting numerous international guest performers. The extraordinary percussionist Evelyn Glennie appears January 28 and 29 to perform John Corigliano's new virtuoso concerto. Glennie is the first musician to sustain a living as a solo percussionist. Before attending her concert, watch Thomas Riedlesheimer's documentary "Touch The Sound" for a fascinating exploration of Glennie's experiences in hearing as a deaf musician.



On February 12, 14 and 15, master pianist Radu Lupu joins the TSO to perform Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3. The Romanian-born pianist has made over 20 recordings for London/Decca and is a leading interpreter of the works of Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart and Schubert. He plays with exquisite tone and delicate phrasing. When Lupu appears in Canada, his performances are not to be missed.

Following Lupu, violinist Midori arrives February 18 to perform Shostakovich's dark and frenzied *Violin Concerto No. 1*. Beginning her career as a child prodigy who released her first recording at the age of 14, Midori has sustained her unique and talented voice, growing into a mature and dynamic performer. [www.tso.ca](http://www.tso.ca)

**Chamber Music Hamilton** showcases local and international string quartets and trios throughout the year. Avoiding the chamber series tendency to present only European and North American musicians, they have invited the Mexican Cuarteto Latinoamericano to perform at the Hamilton Conservatory Recital Hall on February 1. The quartet is an authority on Latin American string quartet repertoire and strives to promote this music both within and beyond Latin America. Leaving their post as quartet-in-residence at the prestigious Carnegie Mellon University, they returned this year to Mexico for a residence at the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes. They are working tirelessly to develop an intense musical education system in Mexico, and are credited with the emergence of a new generation of Latin American string players. In addition, they tour extensively and have collaborated with an impressive range of musicians. The quartet will perform a mix of European and Latin American repertoire. [www.chambermusichamilton.ca](http://www.chambermusichamilton.ca)

# THE CONCERTMASTER

Kate Molleson

The concertmaster walks on stage alone and takes a solitary bow. The orchestra is seated, audience hushed, oboe player poised to deliver his A. This ceremony is the residual pomp of age-old concert-hall etiquette – but it's a staple routine of any concertmaster's workday.

Jacques Israelievitch, Toronto Symphony Orchestra's concertmaster, put down the title in September to pick up his solo and chamber career; stepping out of one 20-year limelight and into another. Meanwhile, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra seeks a second concertmaster to pair with violinist Richard Roberts, who has helmed the OSM for 27 years.

## Diplomacy

Both the TSO and the OSM launched a screening process for candidates, with panels looking for technical ability, reliability, and most importantly, diplomacy. When translating a conductor's aesthetic vision into technical application, diplomacy is essential. "I remember a conductor asking us to 'make it sound like a leaf falling,'" says Roberts. "A guy at the back of the violin section called out, 'You want it loud or soft?'"

So whether it's to sonically actualize a falling leaf or to inform stylistic integrity, Roberts says their job is to ensure the homogeneity of the string section. "For us, that boils down to a couple of things: Bowing and vibrato."

It's the concertmaster's job to mark bowings for the violin section – small symbols indicating whether a note should be played using an 'up bow' or a heavier 'down bow'. If the violinists don't bow together, chances are they won't play together. The other string sections take these markings and match their own articulation. "Sometimes the other string principals don't want to hear about it," says Roberts. "They have their own ideas about how the ensemble should sound, and how this sound can be technically produced."

Ultimately a consensus is reached, forming the basis for unified sound and phrases. It's a constantly renewing task; even bowings for standard repertoire can differ from one conductor to the next, as variations in tempo and interpretation might alter the strong point of the phrase. "And sometimes," Roberts says, "I look back on bowings I did in a past lifetime and think 'how could I have been so stupid?'"

Knowing a conductor's preferences can be a lifesaver when preparing bowings for a new program. When Roberts first came to Montreal from the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, it took time to become accustomed to the habits of the MSO's legendary artistic director, Charles Dutoit. "He had his own way of doing things," he says. "But after a while you get to know a conductor you work with often. If I didn't know what Dutoit wanted after 24 years then there was no excuse – I'd have been incompetent!" Now Roberts is relearning the repertoire through the eyes of the MSO's new artistic director, Kent Nagano, who takes an unusually involved role in the initial preparation stages of a program.

"Nagano often consults with me about bowings. He's interested in profile and shape – in the contour of a phrase even if there's no dynamic change. No two bars are the same," he says. "There's always something happening within the music."

## Influence

The concertmaster also ensures that the string section achieves the desired contour. As Nagano introduced more Bach to MSO programs, he sent Roberts to Berlin to study baroque style with the concertmaster of the

Deutsches Symphonie Orchester, Bernard Hartog. The benefits of this training trickle down through the entire string section.

Because the MSO follows the European tradition of sharing its concertmaster chair between two violinists, Roberts is frequently able to listen to his section from the point of view of the audience. He remembers hearing Marris Jansons conducting the orchestra on one of his nights off. He says, "They opened with Verdi's *Sicilian Vespers*. I was blown away, and couldn't help thinking, 'do we sound like that, or do they sound like that without me?'"

Partly due to Israelievitch's affinity for the period, the TSO has featured baroque repertoire for years. He says he can hear the affect of his own style when he listens to the TSO's string section. "After all these years I'm sure I've had an influence," he says. "I'm proud that we're one of the most versatile string sections on the continent. Specialist baroque conductors rehearse with us and are amazed they don't have to spell out which kinds of stylistic vibrato and bowing techniques to use."

## Humility

A degree of humility is essential for survival in an industry where tempers, and personas, can be fiery. Orchestral hierarchy fosters a social dynamic that isn't always pleasant. Israelievitch remembers joining the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as associate concertmaster. "Half of the violin section had applied for the job," he explains. "One of those was my stand partner, and for the six years I was there he never turned a page for me at the right time – it was always too early or too late."

Israelievitch says he hasn't run into such resentment at the TSO, "I've had feedback from my colleagues thanking me for the fact that I've only been involved in the music. I've never picked on people."

One of a concertmaster's greatest dualities exists within the music itself. Many orchestral parts require seamless transition from section playing to solos – what Roberts describes as a "Dr Jekyll-Mr Hyde" skill. "When playing with the section you have to subdue your personality; you're trying to promote the vision of the conductor, so you have to be submissive," he says. "But in a solo you suddenly have to show a spark of personality. I heard a singer describe the change from lieder to opera as the difference between microsurgery and amputation with a hacksaw."

Israelievitch says he's had enough of the submissive bit. He's happily planning to focus on solo and chamber music after this year: "I look forward to hearing every note I play." His leaving present from the TSO was a pair of concerts in June 2008 that are tailored to his talents. He played a newly commissioned concerto by Kelly Murphy. He also conducted Bach. "Observing conductors right there from the first chair for 36 years gives me a lot of insight into what works, what doesn't work, what to leave alone," he says.

Technical proficiency is a given for the concertmaster of any major orchestra, and most emerge into the limelight periodically to perform concertos, both as visiting soloists and at home. "Dutoit used to tell me to make a list of repertoire I'd like to play," Roberts recalls. "How about the Brahms *Concerto* in an evening concert?" I'd say, 'Forget it,' he'd say, 'We've got Itzhak Perlman doing that next year.'"

## Leadership

While the responsibilities attached to a concertmaster's position varies slightly between North American orchestras, it is markedly different in other cultures. In the UK and Australia the name of an orchestra's 'leader' is listed on concert programs along with that of the conductor. In France, it's 'supersoloist'.

And, of course, there's much in a name. Israelievitch says the North

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



*"Observing conductors right there from the first chair for 36 years gives me a lot of insight into what works, what doesn't work, what to leave alone."*

*- Jacques Israelievitch*

# Ottawa Previews

Hannah Rahimi

Fans of Yo Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble will appreciate the **Brooklyn Rider String Quartet**, formed by four longstanding participants of Silk Road. Brooklyn Rider performs November 29 at the Christ Church Cathedral during the Ottawa Chamber Music Society Series. The dynamic ensemble embraces an impressive range of styles, interpreting the traditional canon of Western classical music and expanding it's international reaches by commissioning new works from composers around the world. They will perform works by Bartok, Sibelius and Glass as well as traditional Armenian folksongs and contemporary Finnish compositions by Toivo Kärki and Erik Hokkanen. [www.brooklynrider.com](http://www.brooklynrider.com)



On January 18, the **Borodin Quartet** will come to Ottawa. Founded in 1945, the ensemble is one of the longest lasting string quartets. In addition to performing Beethoven's *Serioso Quartet* in F minor, the quartet will emphasize it's expertise in Russian repertoire, performing works by Alexander Borodin and Vissalio Shebalin, a close friend of Shostakovich. In fact, Shostakovich used to work closely with the Borodin quartet members, personally supervising their interpretations of his works. [www.chamberfest.com](http://www.chamberfest.com), [www.borodinquartet.com](http://www.borodinquartet.com)



In conjunction with the Ottawa Chamber Music Society, the National Arts Centre presents Generation 2008, a Canadian touring concert by the **Ensemble contemporain de Montréal**. Led by artistic director Veronique Lacroix, the eight-player ensemble will present new works by young Canadian composers: Michael Berger's *Skeleton*, Scott Good's *Shock Therapy Variations*, Brian Harman's *Gregarious Machine*, and Fuhong Shi's *Kaleidoscope*. The concert also features soloists Tim Brady on electric guitar and Scott Good on trombone. The ECM is a rare and essential vehicle for contemporary composers, and Lacroix works passionately to bring new compositions to an enthusiastic audience. Come witness the birth of new compositions and discover a range of contemporary sound. [www.nac.ca](http://www.nac.ca)



The **Ottawa Symphony Orchestra** presents a poetry-themed main concert series this year. They will perform on November 17 at the National Arts Centre in a program of British composers, focusing on music for theatre. The concert will feature Healey Willan's witty *Overture to An Unwritten Comedy*, the poetic and evocative *Sea Interludes* from Benjamin Britten's opera *Peter Grimes*, and Vaughan Williams' *Job – A Masque for Dancing*. Williams composed *Job* to accompany Geoffrey Keynes' balletic scenario, inspired by William Blake's *Illustrations to the Book of Job*. Williams used his expertise and experience with church music to compose the ballet score with an informed yet modern voice. During the performance, Blake's illustrations will be screened, providing an intense (and often gory) visual stimulus to accompany Williams' music. [www.ottawasymphony.com/](http://www.ottawasymphony.com/)

If you've ever dreamed of singing one of the most massive, moving works of choral history, you won't want to miss **Come Sing Messiah**, led by conductor Louis Lavigne December 5 at the Dominion Chalmers United Church. Organized by CAMMAC, this yearly tradition has become popular among amateur singers and music lovers alike. The performance provides an encouraging environment for talented and enthusiastic amateur musicians, supporting performers who exude an evident joy for Handel's masterpiece. The charismatic organist and choir leader Alan Thomas will conduct rehearsals November 15, 22 and 29 at the Parkdale United Church, going over the choruses to prepare participants for the performance. Scores can be purchased at Book Bazaar, The Leading Note and Granata Music. Experience the unmatched exhilaration of singing sublime music en masse. [www.cammac.ca](http://www.cammac.ca)

## THE CHOIR OF THE THEATRE OF EARLY MUSIC

Conducted by Daniel Taylor

### "A SPOTLESS ROSE"

choral works by  
Palestrina, Purcell, Tallis, Barber and Allegri

December 8, 2008 at 7:30PM

Basilique-Cathédrale Notre-Dame  
Notre-Dame Cathedral Basilica  
56 Guigues (facing National Gallery of Canada)  
Ottawa, ON K1N 5H5

Tickets: \$40, \$30 and \$20  
819-682-2693 or [www.arsnova.ca](http://www.arsnova.ca)

Further information  
[www.theatreofearlymusic.com](http://www.theatreofearlymusic.com)

Conseil des arts  
et des lettres  
Québec

CONSEIL DES ARTS  
DE MONTRÉAL



Conseil des Arts  
du Canada

Canada Council  
for the Arts

SONY BMG  
MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

## DANIEL TAYLOR THE VOICE OF BACH CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA OF THE THEATRE OF EARLY MUSIC

"...eloquently thought through and brilliantly offered with the perfect sense of dramatic character... sung with peerless vocal beauty... his voice will stop you in your tracks" GRAMOPHONE

Exclusively on SONY/BMG





# 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.sцена.org](http://www.sцена.org).

★★★★★ **A MUST!**  
 ★★★★★ **EXCELLENT**  
 ★★★★★ **VERY GOOD**  
 ★★★★★ **GOOD**  
 ★★★★★ **SO-SO**  
 ★★★★★ **MEDIOCRE**

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

## Reviewers

DC Dawna Coleman  
 WSH Stephen Habington  
 HHJ Holly Higgins Jonas  
 NL Norman Lebrecht  
 PER Paul E. Robinson  
 JKS Joseph K. So  
 MS Michael Spleit

## VOCAL MUSIC

### Songs My Mother Taught Me

Magdalena Kožená, mezzo-soprano; Malcolm Martineau, piano

Deutsche Grammophon 00289 477 6665 (70 min 4 s)

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

The Deutsche Grammophon website declared *Songs My Mother Taught Me* as Kožená's "most personal album so far," but the vocal intimacy is outshined by accompanist Malcolm Martineau in the first half of the CD. In both the opening Janáček pieces and the Dvořák *Gypsy Melodies*, the pianist's ear is attuned to a variety of articulations, leaving her beautiful voice in the expressive dust.

It is not until Rösler's *To the Distant Beloved* that Kožená demonstrates the capabilities showcased on her famous first recital disc of 2001. Here, the singer breaks through the clouds; every line is impossibly long, perfectly nuanced, winged and lethal. Novák's *Fairytale* is passionate singing at its finest, the *Moravian Duets* with soprano Dorothea Röschmann is a treat, and later Janáček songs—featuring crunchy piano dissonance and perfectly timed vocal rubato—complete the album with a delicious and surprising piece of musical dessert. Definitely worth the purchase, if you listen past the first few songs. **DC**



### Verdi: Nabucco

Renato Bruson, Maria Guleghina, Fabio Armiliato, Ferruccio Furlanetto, Elena Zarembo

Tokyo Symphony Orchestra / Daniel Oren

Naïve V 5158 (2CDs: 114 min)

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

One of the most popular of the Early Verdi operas, *Nabucco* isn't all that frequently performed outside Italy. However, even the casual opera listener will be familiar with "Va, pensiero" (Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves). Arguably the best known of all Verdi choruses, its catchy tune is infectious—the piece even served as a *de facto* Italian national anthem. In Italy the audience would rise en masse and the piece has to be repeated. This release is a concert performance that took place at Tokyo's Suntory Hall in 1998, with Daniel Oren conducting the Tokyo Symphony—not the Philharmonic, which is the number one orchestra in Japan. The cast is largely imported, save for a couple of supporting roles and the chorus. On paper the principals look stellar. Maria Guleghina was the Abigaille of choice at that time. The three men—Renato Bruson, Ferruccio Furlanetto and a young Fabio Armiliato, are all big names. However, the performance is surprisingly uneven. As *Nabucco*, Bruson is past his best—he sings with authority but also a hint of a wobble and occasionally strained tone. Maria Guleghina has great stamina but her sound is gusty and stentorian, perhaps par for the course when it comes to this impossible role. If one were to nitpick, her diction is vague, her coloratura smudged and the top often flat. Armiliato (Ismaele) belts his way through the music. Furlanetto (Zaccaria) sounds secure if sounding slightly grainy, but his high register is great. The recorded sound is broadcast-quality, acceptable, the left-right channel separation a little extreme. The packaging is minimal—track information, a decent essay, a very sketchy synopsis, no libretto and not one word about the artists. Daniel Oren is an old hand in this repertoire, but the Tokyo Symphony plays correctly rather than with genuine passion and fire. However the "Va, pensiero" is very good. This issue is of interest mostly to the legions of fans of the various stars. **JKS**



## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

### Éclairs sur l'au-delà

Wiener Philharmoniker / Ingo Metzmacher

Kairos KAL0012742

★★★★☆ \$

Ingo Metzmacher, who conducted Messiaen's *Saint François* opera at the BBC Proms this summer, is on much higher ground with *Éclairs sur l'au-delà*, if only because the Vienna Philharmonic play this late music as if it were located halfway between Schubert and Schoenberg. Talk of unsuspected beauties—I had to go rushing for a score to make sure this was what Messiaen really wrote. Slow,



sonorous and steeped with nasal intimations of a huge wind and brass section, it provokes a complete suspension of earthly concerns for the 67-minute duration and must be the least typical record ever to leave sybaritic Vienna. **NL**

### Glazunov: Symphony No. 6 / La Mer / Introduction and Dance from Salome

Royal Scottish National Orchestra / José Serebrier

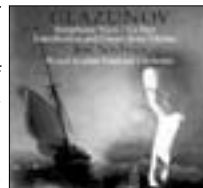
Warner Classics & Jazz 2564 69627-0 (65 min 32 s)

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

There is not word on Serebrier in the album booklet, but he is one of the busiest recording conductors around—and a very good one. He was born in Uruguay but made his career mostly in the United States. At one time he was Stokowski's assistant at the American Symphony Orchestra. Serebrier helped Stokowski make the first-ever recording of Charles Ives' difficult Fourth Symphony before making an even better one himself.

This is the latest installment from Serebrier's Glazunov symphony cycle with the RSNO. The Sixth is rich in melody and orchestral virtuosity with a wonderfully grand tune in the last movement. The performance is exciting and full-blooded with excellent sound.

A couple of intriguing fillers: *La Mer*, Op. 28 was composed six years before Debussy's more famous piece by the same name and has nowhere near the same poetry and subtlety. But if you like massive, crashing waves in music you'll enjoy this work anyways. Likewise, Glazunov's *Dance of the Seven Veils* doesn't challenge Richard Strauss but it is evocative and richly scored. **PER**



### Kabalevsky: The Symphonies

NDR Chor; The Choir of Hungarian Radio; NDR

Radiophilharmonie / Eiji Oue

Cpo 999 833-2 (2CD 105 min 38 s)

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

This set is especially welcome at a time when previous recordings of the four symphonies of Dmitri Kabalevsky (1904–1987) are absent from the catalogue. Kabalevsky was by no means a great composer but these performances demonstrate his ample gifts for lyrical melody and clever, transparent orchestration. Kabalevsky's music has features which seem to echo the musical language of Shostakovich and Prokofiev but without any pretense toward their towering intellects. In a nutshell, Kab was a convinced Communist and a strong candidate for the title of 'Mr Socialist Realism'. According to Fred Prieberg, "[Kabalevsky] was the only significant composer of the Soviet Union who never, not even in 1948, had to endure an official rebuke." Suspicion that he was on the wrong side of the Zhdanov-Shostakovich confrontation of that year probably diminished the popularity of his compositions, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union. For collectors with a special interest in Soviet music, this issue will be irresistible. Eiji Oue secures excellent per-



performances from his Hanover musicians. The Third Symphony (or, "Requiem for Lenin") from 1934 includes a choral setting of verses by Nikolai Asseyev. Translation of the text is buried in the booklet note.

WSH

#### Renew'd at Ev'ry Glance

Banff Centre Ensemble / Theirry Pecou; Joseph Macerollo, accordion; Accordes String Quartet; New Music Concerts Ensemble / Robert Aitken

Centrediscs CMCCD 13708

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

To celebrate 25 years of marriage, Calgary-based composers David Eagle and Hope Lee gifted the Canadian music scene with this first-rate recording on the Centrediscs label. Truly eclectic in their influences, the composers draw from Chinese music and medieval and classical poetry, working out these influences in electric and acoustic contexts. In this recording, Lee and Eagle focus on the union of music with nature and its sounds.

Though they drive at the same concept, the composers work out a convergent idea in divergent ways. Lee gets her feet dirty with forceful rhythms and thick textures in *Fei Yang (Driven by the Wind)* for string quartet and accordion, quoting fragments of ancient music for the qin – a Chinese 7-string zither. Her choice is motivated by a lifelong study of Chinese music and poetry, not the zeitgeist of world-influenced music. The depth of these studies amply acquit themselves in *Voices in Time*, where she combines acoustic ensembles with soundfile recordings of the guzeng (Chinese zither), lending a genuinely Eastern timbre without sounding like a CBC ad for the Beijing Olympics.

Eagle's music draws less on Eastern influences and turns toward nature sounds for inspiration. The result is simultaneously earthy and big-city intellectual. In *Breath*, the composer immerses the listener in a natural soundscape by shaping electronically recorded sounds such as banging, blowing, and tapping into a rich grain of textures

– both as a background for the strings, and in the sonic foreground.

The sound quality and performances on this recording are as brilliant, detailed, and nuanced as the composing. A grown-up recording for the grown-up musical palate.

DC

#### Olivier Messiaen 1908-1992 Anniversary Box Set

Various artists including Martha Argerich, Serge Baudo, Michel Beroff, Yvonne Loriod, Andre Previn, Olivier Messiaen, Michelle Command, Antal Dorati, Sir Simon Rattle, etc.

EMI 5099921746628 (14 CDs)

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

The EMI factory outlet has issued a 14-CD Messiaen survey in which Simon Rattle conducts the *Éclairs* in Berlin with no intensity to match Metzmacher's and Andre Previn busks the LSO through an endurance test of *Turangalila*. Much else, though, is worth having – the composer's widow leading *Quartet for the End of Time*, Martha Argerich duetting with Alexandre Rabinovich in the *Visions de l'Amen*, Messiaen himself playing the organ. There are inexplicable omissions – *Des Canyons aux étoiles*, for instance – but this box will keep any would-be Messiaenist happy for the rest of the century year.

NL

#### Shostakovich / Britten

Pieter Wispelwey, cello; Sinfonietta Cracovia / Jurjen Hempel

Channel Classics CCS SA 25308 (61 min 56 s)

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

With this release, cellist Pieter Wispelwey shows once again why he is one of the leading solo cellists performing today. Both works are incredibly contemplative but peppered with bursts of energy and lyricism. His technique is almost impeccable, though there are slight intonation issues in some

of the chromatic series, they do not distract from the performance and every note sings clearly, infused with character. Wispelwey and Sinfonietta Cracovia are balanced and the ensemble is very tight. This album is a follow-up to his previous release of Shostakovich's *Cello Concerto No. 1* (paired with Kodaly's *Sonata for Cello Solo*, op. 8 – CCS 15398). Wispelwey has already released an album with all three Britten *Suites* for cello solo (CCS 15398), but this newer recording of the third suite is more stylized than the previous one. Shostakovich and Britten are both 20th century composers who were also linked by a close friendship, so it is not surprising to find their works, which use a similar language, paired together. However, the way Britten effectively compliments the concerto is pleasantly surprising. While one anticipates getting bogged down by the heavy tension prevalent in these two pieces, Wispelwey alleviates this with occasional moments of light and hope.

MS

#### The Art of Dimitri Mitropoulos, Volumes 1 & 2

Various soloists; New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, \*NBC Symphony Orchestra / Dmitri Mitropoulos

Music & Arts CD-1213, CD-1214 (4+4 CDs)

Volume 1: Berg: *Violin Concerto* (Szigeti) \*; Beethoven: *Piano Concerto No. 3* (Casadesus); Vaughan Williams: *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*; Chausson: *Symphony in Bb*; Stravinsky: *Firebird Suite*; Schumann: *Symphony No. 1*, Strauss: *Eine Alpensinfonie*; Mozart (arr. Busoni): *Overture to Idomeneo*; Busoni: *Indian Fantasy* (Petri), *Two Sketches for Doktor Faustus*, *Violin Concerto* (Szigeti) Volume 2: Mahler: *Symphony No. 6*; Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5* \*; Prokofiev: *Piano Concerto No. 3* (Mitropoulos) \*, *Piano Concerto No. 2* (Scarpini); Lalo: *Symphonie Espagnole* (Francescatti); Vaughan Williams: *Symphony No. 4*; Schoenberg: *String Quartet No. 2* (orch composer) \*, *Erwartung* (Dow)

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

In an era of giant podium personalities, Dimitri Mitropoulos (1896-1960) stood out from the crowd. He was a firebrand conductor who sancti-

## Composer's Kitchen

qb quatuor bozzini

Call for young Composers



In Montreal, from April 24th to May 2nd, 2009

Mentors : Serge Provost and Rodney Sharman

Submit your Project!

Deadline:

December 15th, 2008

Application forms:

[www.quatuorbozzini.ca](http://www.quatuorbozzini.ca)



fied his interpretations of music with fierce devotion. Mitropoulos is remembered chiefly as a mentor to the young Leonard Bernstein in New York. Only a fragment of his recorded legacy has been reissued on CD. These collections of live broadcast relays from 1941 to 1957 are an invaluable contribution to rectifying the deficit. In excellent, freshly re-mastered sound, both sets are bound to be mandatory acquisitions for collectors of vintage recordings and bright, curious novices who ache to hear performances of raw passion.

The account of Mahler's Sixth (Vol. 2) from April 1955 is an example of Mitropoulos at his scintillating best. This recording was also selected to represent the work in the New York Philharmonic's exquisitely documented 12-disc box of the Mahler broadcasts of 1948-1982. In New York, Mitropoulos reversed the order of the inner movements and split the performance with an intermission. Four years later, in Cologne, he had changed his mind and adopted the original scherzo-andante sequence. Despite the contrived circumstances of the New York matinee, it is still a powerfully gripped performance with orchestral balance so fine that you will forget that it's a mono recording.

Mitropoulos at less-than-best can be found in the over-conducted account of the Vaughan Williams Fourth. It is very exciting but the *Tallis Fantasia* (Vol. 1) gets more sympathetic treatment in Vol. 1. The remainder of the programme in both boxes is a superb panorama of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century music-making at the highest level of attainment. **WSH**

## DVDS

### Górecki: The Symphony of Sorrowful Songs

A film by Tony Palmer

Dawn Upshaw, soprano; London Sinfonietta / David Zinman

Isolde Films TPDVD102 (53 min)

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

The 1992 recording of Henryk Górecki's Third Symphony "The Symphony of Sorrowful Songs", is unique among classical recordings in that it claimed the No. 1 position in the UK Classical Record Charts for 26 weeks, and its accumulated sales now total almost three-quarters of a million copies worldwide. This would make it the best selling contemporary classical work of all time, a feat unlikely to be repeated anytime soon given the continuing decline of the recording business. The performance was captured in this Tony Palmer film. Running nearly an hour long, the work is interspersed with clips including an interview with the composer, as well as haunting images of human conflicts, from the Nazi Holocaust to other historical atrocities around the world. The focus of the images is on human suffering – disturbing footage of starving, emaciated children, savage beatings of victims and so on. It does not make for comfortable view-



ing, but it's not meant to be. This work is unique in contemporary classical repertoire in its power to elicit a deep emotional response from the listener. In the first movement, the soprano soloist sings of a mother's mourning for her dying son. The text of the second movement comes from a message written on a prison wall by an 18 year-old girl, Helena Wanda Blazusiakowna, comforting her mother. The third movement is about a mother looking for her lost son. Since the breakthrough recording with Zinman and Upshaw there have been many other excellent versions, including Canadian soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian singing the second movement with the Sinfonietta Cracovia in a film in memory of the Holocaust. Anyone interested in seeking meaning in music when so much of it today is devoid of any will find this work a powerful and life-altering experience. Highly recommended. **JKS**

### Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 3

Anna Larsson, contralto; women of the Arnold

Schönberg Chor, Tölzer Knabenchor, Lucerne

Festival Orchestra / Claudio Abbado

Medici Arts 2056338 (102 min)

Video Director: Michael Beyer

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

Claudio Abbado has demonstrated a remarkable affinity with Mahler's Third in two fine audio recordings for DG (with the VPO and BPO). This live performance from the 2007 Lucerne Festival is finer yet; an interpretation of mature depth which is touched with intimations of mortality in the great concluding slow movement. We expect excellence from this conductor in Mahler and this presentation allows generous insight on how he achieves such a rare high standard of performance. For this symphony on DVD, Abbado surpasses the competition from Leonard Bernstein (VPO/DG) and Bernard Haitink (BPO/Philips).

The Lucerne Festival Orchestra assembles each summer with a cadre of all-star instrumentalists superimposed on the Mahler Chamber Orchestra. A strong bond is maintained between Abbado and these musicians who respond magnificently in this sprawling and challenging work. Video direction is first class with nine cameras rolling and sound quality is superb in both stereo and surround mode.

Of the two-dozen concert DVDs auditioned in the past year, this one is second only to the EuroArts (2072408) re-issue of Herbert von Karajan's immortal (and genuinely live) performance of Beethoven's Ninth filmed on December 31, 1977. **WSH**

### Massenet: Werther

Keith Ikaia-Purdy, Armin Kolarczyk, Tero Hannula,

Andreas Heideker, Mika Kares, Gideon Poppe, Silvia

Hablowetz, Ina Schlingensiefen, Clara Lim

Badische Staatskapelle / Daniel Carlberg

Arthaus musik 101 317 (140 min)

★★★☆☆ \$\$\$

With the decline of the studio opera recording, we have witnessed a concomitant rise of live performances, particularly on DVD. This *Werther* from Karlsruhe, a German regional house, would not have been released even a few short years

ago. There are no starry principals, just typical "house singers" on *fest* contracts – competent, occasionally very fine artists as members of an ensemble. Updated to modern day, this *Regietheater Werther* is par for the course in Germany. There are lots of little touches – some work better than others:

a physically handicapped Sophie, the Bailiff, Johann and Schmidt as major drunks, a Charlotte completely unhinged at the end, and the addition of a flashback in the beginning, with Charlotte sobbing at Werther's newly dug grave. Director Robert Tannenbaum's vision is unrelentingly dark. Practically everyone has a long face, including Sophie. Musically it is uneven, the major liability being Hawaiian tenor Keith Ikaia-Purdy as Werther. He sang a fine Nemorino for Opera Ontario some years ago, but his lyric tenor has become darker and heavier, and afflicted with a slow vibrato. His singing is effortful, resorting to a constant *mezzo forte* that becomes monochromatic and dull very quickly. There isn't much chemistry between him and the quite well-sung Charlotte of Silvia Hablowetz – his being quite a bit shorter than her doesn't help matters. The sets and costumes aim for realism at the expense of Romanticism – frankly, watching Werther in a raincoat the whole opera is not my idea of good costuming. The conducting of Daniel Carlberg and the playing of the Badische Staatskapelle save this show. This is a curiosity at best, as there are better updated versions around, such as the Alvarez-Garancia-Wiener Staatsoper version. **JKS**

### Puccini: Tosca

Catherine Malfitano, Richard Margison, Bryn Terfel

De Nederlandse Opera; Royal Concertgebouw

Orchestra / Riccardo Chailly

Decca DVD 0743201

★★★★☆ \$\$\$

Like death and taxes, new recordings of *Tosca* are one of life's certainties. Given the already lengthy discography starring some of opera's greatest interpreters, the question is – do we need another one? This "new" recording is actually ten years old, from director Nikolaus Lehnhoff's 1998 staging of the De Nederlandse Oper. Frankly, this *Regietheater* production makes my skin crawl. In the documentary, he expresses his take on the settings of each act – Church of the Sant'Andrea della Valle, Palazzo Farnese, and Castel Sant'Angelo – as death traps from which the characters find no escape. The sets have a deliberately claustrophobic, oppressive atmosphere. Act Two takes place in a dungeon, with the blades of a gigantic propeller slowly revolving, casting a long shadow during the torture scene. It opens with Scarpia reclining on a bejewelled chaise lounge stroking a cat! Words fail me when it comes to describing the costumes of Scarpia and Tosca – plenty of primary colours clash violently. With such radical updating, references to historical events – Napoleon, for example – end up not making any sense. Stage actions specified





in the libretto are not followed.

There is much to commend on the musical side of things. Kudos to conductor Riccardo Chailly, who draws remarkable sounds from the Concertgebouw. Despite the leisurely tempo in the *Te Deum*, the tension never ceases. Of the three principals, Bryn Terfel steals the show. His Scarpia is powerfully acted and thrillingly sung with impeccable Italian. One does not choose Catherine Malfitano for vocal perfection. Her soprano has seen better days, with the top now frayed and wobbling under pressure. Her top notes are hit or miss – most of Tosca's five high Cs are flat. Costumed and made up to look like Theta Bara, her acting is campy but exciting. If you want to hear her in fresher voice, the "Real Time Tosca" with Plácido Domingo from the early 1990s is a good choice. As Cavaradossi, Richard Margison delivers the goods vocally, although one wishes for a bit more subtlety and Italianate lyricism. His stage appearance is stodgy. There you have it – not exactly a *Tosca* for the ages, but worth acquiring for the resplendent Scarpia of Bryn Terfel. **JKS**

#### W.A. Mozart: *Così fan tutte*

Barbara Frittoli (Fiordigili), Angelika Kirchschrager, Bo Skovhus (Guglielmo), Michael Schade (Ferrando), Monica Bacelli (Despina), Allesandro Corbelli (Don Alfonso)

Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra / Riccardo Muti

Stage Director: Roberto de Simone

Video Director: Brian Large

Medici Arts 2072368 (2 DVD – 187 min)

★★★★☆ \$\$\$\$

Opera on DVD went from strength to strength during the past year. There have been a number of sensational new works on the medium and chart-topping productions of standard repertory. This 1996 staging from Vienna's historic Theater an der Wien can be safely recommended as a first choice for both seasoned collectors and newcomers to the work. With an excellent cast of motivated soloists, superb conducting from Muti, marvelous sets (Mauro Carosi), gorgeous costumes (Odette Nicoletti) and musically informed stage direction, this is the version to have and to return to. In every respect it surpasses Muti's 1989 Milan performance (Opus Arte/Scala).

*Così fan tutte* was the third Mozart collaboration with Lorenzo da Ponte. Like *Don Giovanni*, it is designated as a *Dramma giocoso* but the opening credits proclaim 'Opera buffa' in the manner of *Figaro*. *Buffa* is presumably what director Roberto de Simone had in mind for this production. His *Così* presents split-second comic timing fully integrated with the score. The hapless couples (Barbara Frittoli, Angelika Kirchschrager, Bo Skovhus and our own Michael Schade) enter the fray with enthusiasm while the fulcrum of trickery and deceit is provided by Monica Bacelli and Allesandro Corbelli. The director exploits the intimate stage-frame of the Theater an der Wien while the 18<sup>th</sup> century Neapolitan landscapes of Jacob Philipp Hackert are adapted very effectively to provide sumptuous backdrops. Swift, stylish and con-



stantly amusing, this production exemplifies the definition of opera as, "The ultimate art." **WSH**

#### Zubin Mehta Los Angeles Philharmonic:

##### Dvořák/Mozart/Bartók

Los Angeles Philharmonic / Zubin Mehta

Euroarts DVD 2072248 (110 min)

★★★★☆ \$

This is another release from the vaults of Unitel, the Munich-based company that spent a small fortune making classical music films in the 1970s. Karajan and Bernstein were featured in dozens of films but other conductors such as Böhm, Abbado and Solti also appeared. Most of these productions were initially released on VHS years ago but only recently have they made their way to DVD. Deutsche Grammophon has been issuing the bulk of the Unitel catalogue but other companies are issuing those passed on.

The Mehta release documents an important stage in this conductor's career. Mehta was twenty-six when he became conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and he stayed for seventeen years, growing into a major conductor. These performances were recorded in 1977 in concert at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. Mehta left the following year to take over the New York Philharmonic. Kirk Browning of *Live from Lincoln Center* was the producer and RCA veteran Max Wilcox was the sound engineer and their work is first-rate.

There are two major works: Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* and Dvořák's *Symphony No. 8*. The orchestra plays superbly and Mehta is at his charismatic best. He could pass for either a Hollywood or a Bollywood film star playing a great conductor. Fortunately, he was also a great musician. From these same concerts there are two shorter Dvořák pieces and Mozart's *Bassoon Concerto* with the LAPO's principal bassoonist as soloist. **PER**



## BOOKS

#### Elmer Iseler: Choral Visionary

By Walter Pitman

Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2008 (351 pg.)

ISBN 978-1-55002-815-7

This biography of Elmer Iseler, the famous Canadian choral conductor, guides us from his childhood in a family headed by a Lutheran pastor to his death in 1998 with remarkable detail, precision, and openness. We follow his five decade career in music, including twelve years of unorthodox and his lifelong involvement in choral conducting. His excellence and discipline created a unique choral sound that won him accolades both at home and abroad.

In 1954, Elmer established the "Festival Singers", Canada's first professional choir. They performed regularly on CBC and at Stratford Music Festivals. Stravinsky hailed them "the best choir on this con-



tinental". In 1964, Elmer was invited to conduct the 180-voice Toronto Mendelssohn Choir (TMC), a position he held for 33 years. In 1979, he created the 20-voice Elmer Iseler Singers, with his wife and soul mate, Jessie, as General Manager.

Elmer believed in touring and brought his choirs to communities all over Canada, as well as to the United States and Europe. He endlessly conducted "workshops" to enhance the skills of Canada's emerging choral conductors and to raise the quality of singing in both community and school choirs. His dogged determination to keep his career based in Canada, his fervent advocacy for public funding of the Arts and his promotion of contemporary Canadian composers shows a staunch patriotism.

This biography reveals how Elmer Iseler became a household name and a national icon and examines his life outside of the spotlight. Thought well known publicly, he valued family life and lucky close friends and musical colleagues were invited to his "retreat" at Quail Hill Farm. We learn that Elmer was an avid fisherman (his fishing rod was buried with him), photographer, and gardener. He loved literature and poetry, and became preoccupied with the natural world, with telescopes trained on the skies from different positions in his home.

Elmer had his share of dark days, with health problems and conflicts with his choirs' Boards. Pitman does not gloss over these difficulties, and Elmer's controversial dismissal from the TMC in 1997 while he was battling brain cancer is depicted candidly. Elmer's final concert occurred in October 1997, at the University of Toronto, his Alma Mater, which conferred on him an Honorary Doctorate in the same year.

There is no doubt of the enormity of Elmer Iseler's legacy. As a visionary role model, he created new generations of gifted Canadian choral conductors, enhanced the status of many choral composers, and is responsible for the existence of many fine professional choirs today. His Alma Mater has established national choral scholarships in his name and the Elmer Iseler Singers is the "professional choir-in-residence" at the University of Toronto. This highly acclaimed choir continues under the direction of Lydia Adams, Elmer's former accompanist.

This biography has been meticulously researched and includes many quoted press releases of a huge span of performances. An overload of detail and an endless parade of characters may irritate some readers. Moreover, as we criss-cross through time and material inevitably becomes repetitious. Each chapter focuses on a self-contained theme, and assumes readers may not have read preceding chapters. However, it is the go-to book for deep insight into this remarkable Canadian. CBC's Robert Cooper heralds him as the single greatest influence on the maturation of Canada's choral art. American icon Robert Shaw admired him for creating a vibrant world-class choral infrastructure in Canada. Dundurn Press is to be commended for getting this important Canadian story into circulation. **HHJ**

> Metropolitan United Church, Dec 5, 2008, 8pm

> Glenn Gould Studio, Feb 13, 2009, 7pm

[www.elmereislersingers.com](http://www.elmereislersingers.com)

# TEACHING IMPROVISATION: REALITY OR MYTH?

Marc Chénard

In times past, improvisation was discouraged in traditional music education. Although widely accepted nowadays, it is still something of a hot potato. Unpredictable by nature, and subject to the vagaries of the moment, improvisation doesn't always follow theoretical precepts.

Jazz has resurrected and re-legitimized the practice of improvisation in Western music. It evolved its own complex language, now codified for use in the educational system. Beyond jazz, Western experimental music born out of free jazz (minimalism, noise music and multi-media performance) and a myriad of world music rely on improvisation. But is it possible to teach it? A number of jazzmen have expressed skepticism regarding "teaching" improvisation. One of them, the late alto saxophonist Paul Desmond, said that "improvisation can be learned but not taught."

Considering improv's acceptance in today's music education system, is this statement still valid? LSM asked two seasoned music educators to respond to Desmond, with added input provided by two performers of international standing.



**Andrew Homzy**

Professor of Jazz Studies, Concordia University, Montreal

Immediately, I question Desmond's credentials as an educator. His comment is anecdotal opinion. Improvisation can be taught as much as the student wants to learn. But students differ in that some learn faster than others, have more support in their social environment or are simply more talented.

Technical mastery of an instrument is important, but achieving good intonation and a sense of rhythm are just as essential, all of which have to be addressed by a good teacher. This is not the place to expose a method or system of teaching improvisation, but rather to present the fundamentals.

One of the most important aspects of teaching improvisation is to create a situation where the student feels safe, one where errors are seen as part of the learning process. This leads to what should be the most important aspect in a student-teacher relationship: confidence and trust. But the teacher must also be able to demonstrate what the student is expected to do, while creating opportunities for him or her to develop in a practical way, through simple things like encouraging him to play with other students, running a jam session, recommending attendance at events, etc.

I believe Paul Desmond was taught improvisation, not in any formalized manner, but he was a most exceptional learner.



**Reno De Stefano (Ph.D.)**

Jazz guitarist, Professor of Jazz Studies, Université de Montréal

For quite some time now many great performers, educators and authors have made comparisons between the processes involved in learning to improvise jazz and learning a language. We can better respond to Paul Desmond's statement by comparing these processes.

A child is basically guided by an aural process that enables him to listen to the sounds around him. Instinctively he starts to pick out words in his interactions with the world. Jazz improvisation, in a similar way, has developed itself through an aural tradition. Musicians have acquired their skills by reproducing improvised solos on records and by playing along with others. These means enable them to

acquire a vocabulary and articulation for jazz improvisation. Intensive listening is then the best way to acquire each of these.

A jazz improvisation student goes through a similar early development and struggle that a child does before entering school. Once there, he or she is taught new words, proper pronunciation, spelling, additional vocabulary, and the basic rules of grammar and syntax that will finally bring him to "understand the internal mechanisms of the language". Thus, it is possible to teach someone a language but not necessarily how to "speak" it.

Such is the case for jazz improvisation in a classroom setting. As in verbal language, we can teach the "internal mechanisms of jazz improvisation and its vocabulary" but not necessarily how to improvise. That must be experienced through the "aural process".



**Steve Kuhn**

Pianist, active on the jazz scene since the late 1950s

I agree with that statement. I came up in a time when there were no jazz schools around. I learned how to play piano with a classical teacher in Boston, Margaret Chaloff (the mother of noted jazz baritone saxophonist, Serge Chaloff). But I was also exposed to one of the earliest jazz teaching environments, the Lennox School of Music. The teachers there were all active performers who took part in a summer music camp, so it was more geared to sharing their experiences with the students rather than having a set curriculum. There is something in the wealth of experience you gain by working steadily that you just cannot get in a classroom. I was fortunate to come along in a period where work was plentiful. There were so many outlets and great players who taught music (Miles and Coltrane being the two great leaders of that era). I was lucky enough to be Trane's first pianist in his quartet, even if it lasted for only two months (he was waiting for McCoy Tyner to wind up his gig with the Jazztet). So to really feel this music you've got to live it, that's what counts, and you can only get that by yourself.



**Marilyn Crispell**

Pianist, best known for her work in the area of free improvised music

To me, if it can be learned, it can surely be taught. I don't really see the difference here. I've never held a teaching position, and never really wanted one either, but I do like to give improvisation workshops. The most important thing for me is to make people more aware and responsive to what is going on, and there are ways of doing that, too. Pauline Oliveros gives a whole course on that. Now I'm talking about a context of free improvisation, not really one of, say, showing how to play chord changes and the like. Improvisation to me is more a question of attitudes, accompanying someone else, imitating what another person is doing, or taking his playing in a completely different direction. I often have students play in duos, so they can really focus their attention on each other, and then we, meaning I, the players and the rest of the participants, can sort of analyze what went on. It's not really a question of right or wrong here, it's more a question of making them better listeners, which is the key to all good improvising. ■

SEE COMPLETE TRANSCRIPTS OF RESPONSES AT  
[WWW.SCENA.ORG/BLOG/JAZZ](http://WWW.SCENA.ORG/BLOG/JAZZ)

## WIN ! Jazz Icon Series 8 DVD-Box set edition (Market value of \$150!)

THE TITLES: Sonny Rollins \* Cannonball Adderley \* Bill Evans \* Rhasaan Roland Kirk \* Lionel Hampton \* Oscar Peterson \* Nina Simone \* DVD Bonus  
BOTH NEW AND EXISTING SUBSCRIBERS ARE AUTOMATICALLY ENTERED INTO THE CONTEST. SUBSCRIBE NOW AND GET A YEAR'S WORTH OF *LA SCENA*  
*MUSICALE* AND *THE MUSIC SCENE*. DRAWING TAKES PLACE ON DECEMBER 15, 2008.  
GIVE YOURSELF, OR A FRIEND, A SWINGING GIFT OF MUSIC FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON!

While some music programs are making faculty changes, others are receiving major facelifts to their buildings and programs. Our Higher Education News shows you what's new and what's coming in Southern Ontario.

The big news at the **Glenn Gould Professional School** and the Royal Conservatory of Music is the highly anticipated opening of its new premises, the Telus Centre for Performance and Learning. See page 8 for the feature article.

This year **McMaster University** unveiled its undergraduate specialization in Music Cognition in the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour. The program is unique in North America, providing students with a background in both cognitive neuroscience and music. The curriculum includes an intense concentration of music and psychology. Specialized core courses include Music Cognition, Neuroscience of Music Cognition, Cognitive Development and Music Education. Students will also have access to McMaster's Institute for Music and the Mind. While programs are offered as both Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts degrees, the School of the Arts also offers a related Music Cognition specialization to students in pursuit of a music degree.

[www.science.mcmaster.ca/psychology/music-cog](http://www.science.mcmaster.ca/psychology/music-cog)

While small in size, the Department of Music at the **University of Ottawa** continues to develop fresh and intimate programs. New this year is the Artist-in-Residence Master Class Series. The series will stage repeat visits from renowned performer-pedagogues, including pianist Anton Kuerti, violinist Andrew Dawes, cellist John Kadz, and guitarist Benjamin Verdery. Each artist will present three or more master classes spaced throughout the year, allowing them to follow the students' progress and compliment their regular studies. Other changes to the program included some new – and notable – staff appointments: famed Canadian pianist David Jalbert and violist and conductor Rennie Regehr. A recipient of the Canada Council for the Arts' Virginia Parker Prize, Jalbert's solo career has taken him throughout North America and Europe. Regehr is the former Dean of the Glenn Gould School in Toronto. The vocal faculty has also had some exciting additions: two of Canada's most celebrated singers, soprano Donna Brown and countertenor Daniel Taylor. [www.music.uottawa.ca](http://www.music.uottawa.ca)

The Faculty of Music at the **University of Toronto** has finally concluded its search for Dean with the recent appointment of Professor Russell Hartenberger. A member of the Faculty of Music since 1974, Hartenberger is a percussionist of great acclaim, most notably as a member of Nexus and

of the Steve Reich ensemble. In addition to a long list of administrative roles, he has served as Intern Dean of the Faculty since October 2007.

Esteemed Principal Conductor of The National Ballet of Canada, David Briskin, started this September as Director of Orchestral Studies and Conductor of the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra. With a wealth of experience under his belt, Briskin is known for his versatility and is expected to continue developing the orchestral conducting program while increasing the faculty's ties to Toronto's arts community.

The Opera Division welcomes Miah Im as a lecturer, principal coach and conductor. Other changes to U of T Opera include Sandra Horst as Director of Musical Studies working in conjunction with Michael Patrick Albano, who continues as Resident Stage Director. Acclaimed Canadian baritone Russell Braun also joined the faculty this year as Resident Operatic Performance Specialist.

After several years replacing Scott St. John, violinist Annalee Patipatanakoon has been officially appointed as Assistant Professor of Violin. With studies at Curtis and Indiana, first prizes at the CMC International

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



Russell Hartenberger

Bringing extraordinary  
classical music home.

debut atlantic



début atlantique

[www.debutatlantic.ca](http://www.debutatlantic.ca)



# GUIDE TO MUSIC COMPETITIONS



## Canadian Music Competition

1450 City Councillors, suite 220  
Montréal (Québec) H3A 2E6  
Telephone: 514-284-5398 /  
1-877-879-1959

info@cmcnational.com  
www.cmcnational.com  
Dates: March 24 to July 5, 2009  
Entry Deadline: November 22, 2008  
Age limit: 7 to 25 years  
30 years for singers

Instruments: All  
First Rounds and Provincial Finals:  
March 24 to June 4, 2009  
(18 Canadian cities)  
National Final:  
June 19 to July 4, 2009 (Montreal).  
Gala Concert with Maestro Jean-François  
Rivest: July 5, 2009.

Scholarships totalling \$130,000, including  
\$30,000 in prizes to be awarded at the  
National Final.



## 3rd International Beethoven Competition For Piano In Bonn

Deutsche Telekom AG, Zentrale,  
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 140, 53113 Bonn,  
Germany  
Telephone: 49 228 181 11 181

Fax: 49 228 181 11 182  
info@beethoven-competition-bonn.de  
www.beethoven-competition-bonn.de  
Dates: December 2-12, 2009  
Deadline: May 31, 2009  
Ages: 20-32 years

A generously endowed piano competition in honor of Ludwig van Beethoven is held every two years in Bonn, the composer's place of birth.



## Queen ELISABETH Music Competition—Brussels

20 rue aux Laines  
B-1000 Brussels, Belgium  
Telephone: 32 2 213 40 50  
Fax: 32 2514 32 97  
info@cmireb.be  
www.cmireb.be  
Date: May 2009  
Entry Deadline: January 15, 2009  
Age limit: 27 years  
Instrument: Violin

The Queen Elisabeth Competition is open to musicians who have already completed their training and who are ready to launch their international careers. The competition covers the following musical disciplines: piano, voice, violin and composition. The performance sessions take place every three years and the competition for composers before each instrumental session. The winning works of the composer's competition are given as compulsory works during the piano and violin sessions.

Next Guide **Spring 2009**

## Summer Music Camps

Deadline: 2009-03-11  
Info: 514-948-2520  
or info@scena.org

## HIGHER EDUCATION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

Stepping Stones competition and the Eckhardt-Grammatke Competition, and a laureate at the Queen Elizabeth International Violin Competition in Belgium, her talents extend well beyond solo performance. A skilled chamber musician, Annalee is a founding member of the Gryphon Trio.

Norbert Palej started this fall as Assistant Professor of Composition. With degrees from New England Conservatory, Juilliard and a DMA from Cornell, studies in Poland, a fellowship at the Tanglewood Music Center and many other accolades to his credit, he is known for the high quality and originality of his work.

U of T's Ethnomusicology Division recently received an abundance of welcomed news. Dr. Josh Pilzer will join the Faculty in July 2009 as Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology upon completion of a Mellon Post-doctoral fellowship at Columbia University. As well, current professor Gage Averill has been elected President of the Society for Ethnomusicology. An award-winner in his field, Professor Averill is currently a Professor of History and Culture. [www.utoronto.ca/music](http://www.utoronto.ca/music)

Recognized for its strong Music Education curriculum, the **University of Western Ontario** continues to make its programs more accessible to the working music educator through the new Summer Master of Music in Music Education program. Beginning July 2009, musicians with a minimum of two years teaching experience may pursue their MMus in Education over four summers. Also new to their Master of Music in Literature & Performance is a concentration in Music Theatre. [www.music.uwo.ca](http://www.music.uwo.ca)

With its newly renovated music building opening in 2009, **Wilfrid Laurier University** will create a series to introduce students to high caliber performers in an intimate setting that encourages discussion. The MWM Financial Group Distinguished Artist Series will provide students with a profound learning experience. Artist performances will be open to the greater public, part of WLU's plan to further immerse itself in the Kitchener-Waterloo community. The series opens on June 2, 2008 with Grammy award-winning oboist Alex Klein. [www.wlu.ca/music](http://www.wlu.ca/music)

## CONCERTMASTER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

American practice of one player filling the concertmaster's seat was one reason for his retirement. "It's a lot of work for one person – it ties you down," he explains. "I'm looking forward to being master of my own time."

For Roberts it's the social role that changes markedly: "When I did stints as leader with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, musicians would come to me and apologize: 'Sorry I was sick yesterday.' I'd say, 'Well, sorry you were sick, but why'd you come to me?'"

There are even tales of the Vienna Philharmonic following a concertmaster who walked out of a rehearsal with a particularly impolite conductor. "Unfortunately we don't have that kind of influence these days," says Roberts. "Our job is largely functional. Joseph Silverstein was one of the greatest concertmasters to have walked the earth. Why? He was a fabulous player. His solos were impeccable. And he could lead."

## Motivation

Concertmasters act as a face for the orchestra in its community, obliged to attend fundraisers and functions. They're also responsible for motivating the orchestra. With grueling and monotonous schedules – Roberts played Brahms's *First Symphony* 57 times one year – complacency can be far more damaging to a section's sound than rogue bow strokes. A concertmaster must lead by enthused, focused example, whether playing with the orchestra, or recording with famous soloists.

"We were playing with Martha (Argerich) in Carnegie Hall," says Roberts. "As she walked on stage the audience gave her a standing ovation. She turned to me and whispered, 'I hate it when they do that – it makes me so nervous.' So I did my best Barbara Bush imitation: 'Don't worry; you'll be just fine.' And, of course, she was."

Perhaps such skills don't show in an audition. So how to choose Canada's next leading concertmasters? While Nagano has asked Roberts help assess candidates as they play with the orchestra, Israelievitch wants nothing to do with the process. "The orchestra must choose who will lead them," he says. ■



Richard Roberts

# HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION

## Higher Music Education Guide 2008

To help students find information on music education, the edition of this season's *The Music Scene* offers a guide to the major educational institutions in Canada. An information coupon is available on page 29. Happy searching!



Hydro Québec

Le Domaine Forget  
Music and Dance Academy 2009

Chamber Music : May 19<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> | Brass : May 31<sup>st</sup> to June 14<sup>th</sup>  
Woodwinds : June 14<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> | Guitar and Dance : June 28<sup>th</sup> to July 11<sup>th</sup>  
Strings : July 12<sup>th</sup> to August 8<sup>th</sup> | Voice and Choral Singing : August 9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>  
Jazz : August 16<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>th</sup>

DOMAINE Forget

5, Saint-Antoine | Saint-Irénée, Québec | G0T 1V0 Canada | Ph: 418-452-8111 | aca@domaineforget.com

www.domaineforget.com



Conservatoire  
de musique  
et d'art dramatique  
**Québec**

Conservatoire de musique et d'art  
dramatique du Québec

Phone : 418-380-2327

www.conservatoire.gouv.qc.ca

### Programs offered

Preparatory course: The Conservatory offers introductory courses to students at the primary and secondary level which lead to a Cegep degree with a major in music.

Advanced I (equivalent to a bachelor's degree): Courses in performance for instrumentalists, singers and composers including electroacoustic composition.

Advanced II (equivalent to a master's degree): Courses in performance for instrumentalists, singers, orchestral directors and composers. Post-graduate Advanced Training program.

### Facilities

Seven music teaching schools (Gatineau, Montréal, Québec, Saguenay, Rimouski, Trois-Rivières, Val-d'Or) equipped with instruction and practice rooms, rehearsal or concert halls, listening stations, libraries, audiovideo libraries and MIDI-labs.

### Faculty

217 (professors and instructors)

### Students

657 at the prep and intermediate level including 168 at Cegep level. 159 at the Advanced I, II and Post-graduate Advance Training levels.

### Tuition

(1 academic year, full time)  
Quebec residents: \$1,800 max.  
Canadian residents: \$3,200 max.

### Description

Courses are given by outstanding musicians of national and world renown. The low teacher/student ratio guarantees high quality coaching which in turn promotes faster access to the more advanced curriculum. Accompaniment is also included throughout each program with weekly coachings by professional pianists.



**LAVAL UNIVERSITY MUSIC FACULTY**

1055, avenue du Séminaire  
Québec, G1V 0A6

Phone : 418-656-7061

Fax : 418-656-7365

mus@mus.ulaval.ca

www.mus.ulaval.ca

### Programmes offered

Bachelor of Music Degree in Teaching, Bachelor of Music Degree with a declared major, depending on the individual, in Composition, History, or a Bachelor's Degree in Classical Performance or Jazz and Popular Music Performance. Certificate in Musical Culture. Master's Degrees in Composition, Instrumental Pedagogy, Musical Education, Performance and Musicology. Doctorate Degrees (Ph.D.) in musical education (general programme or instrumental pedagogy) and musicology.

### Facilities

Two concert halls (240 and 650 seat capacity). Computer music labora-

tory. Recording studios, renaissance music studio, large halls to accommodate opera workshops, orchestras, percussion studios, studios for eurhythmics and body movement classes. 47 teaching studios, 120 practice studios with pianos. Sound-proofed studios fully equipped for jazz and popular music, 3 organs, 6 harp-sichords. Music Library.

### Faculty

19 full-time, 47 part-time

### Students

254 full-time, 142 part-time

### Tuition Fees

One year (30 credits) between \$2,375 and \$6,730 depending on the level of study and student housing.

### Description

Besides the professors and casual teachers, the Faculty of Music also is privileged to have as guest professors the members of the Arthur-LeBlanc String Quartet to carry out the instruction of stringed instruments, as well as the assistant conductor of the Québec Symphony Orchestra, Richard Lee, who conducts the Faculty's student orchestra. Many achievement scholarships are offered each year. Hundreds of artistic activities (concerts, lectures, master-classes) are organised each session. Institutional programme of automatic scholarships for grade point average upon admission.



### SCHULICH SCHOOL OF MUSIC OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY

555 Sherbrooke W.  
Montreal, Quebec H3A 1E3  
**Phone:** 514-398-4535  
**Fax:** 514-398-8061  
[www.mcgill.ca/music](http://www.mcgill.ca/music)

#### Programs offered

B.Mus., B.A.  
Licentiate, Artist Diploma  
M. Mus., M.A.  
D. Mus., Ph.D.  
Undergraduate and Graduate programs in Performance, Orchestral Training, Opera, Jazz, Early Music, Composition, Musicology, Education, Technology, Theory, Sound Recording.

#### Facilities

3 concert halls (600/200/177 seats)  
100-seat lecture hall  
Recording studios  
Digital Composition Studio  
Music Technology Labs

125 practice rooms  
Marvin Duchow Music Library  
Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Music Media and Technology

#### Teachers

57 full-time, 150 part-time

#### Students:

825  
540 undergraduate  
285 graduate

#### Tuition fees (excluding ancillary fees)

Quebec Students: \$1,868  
Non-Quebec students: \$5,378  
International students \$15,420

#### Description

Thanks to a transformative philanthropic gift of 20 million dollars in 2005, the Schulich School of Music of

McGill University supports approximately 60 Schulich scholars annually and brings in two visiting academic chairs each year to teach in various disciplines. Canada's largest university-level music school combines professional training with outstanding undergraduate and graduate education. Building on a strong base of studio and classroom teaching, McGill is renowned for its ensemble programs and for award winning creative and research work in humanities based and scientific-technical study of music.



### FACULTY OF MUSIC UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL

P.O. Box 6128, succursale Centre-ville  
Montreal, Quebec H3C 3J7  
**Telephone:** 514-343-6427  
**Fax:** 514-343-5727  
[musique@umontreal.ca](mailto:musique@umontreal.ca)  
[www.musique.umontreal.ca](http://www.musique.umontreal.ca)

#### Programs offered

Bachelor's degree: General, Musicology, Performance (classical, jazz), Composition, Writing.

Master's degree: Musicology, Ethnomusicology, Performance, Composition, Conducting.

*Diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées* (specialized graduate diploma): Performance (classical, jazz), Orchestral Repertory.

Doctorate: Musicology, Ethnomusicology, Performance, Composition, Conducting.

#### New Programs

Composing for Film, Video and Multimedia (option in Master's degree in composition)  
Minor in Digital Music  
Minor in Music, Arts and Society

#### Facilities

Salle Claude-Champagne (1000-seat concert hall), two other concert halls, electroacoustic and multitrack composition studios.

#### Faculty

159 (professors and instructors)

#### Students:

725  
Undergraduate: 449  
Graduate: 276

#### Tuition

(per full-time semester, bachelor's)  
Quebec residents: \$934  
Canadians from outside Quebec: \$2,689  
Foreign: \$6,296

#### Description

Welcomes the most graduate students of all music faculties in Canada. Partners with foreign institutions for exchange programs. Scholarships available at all levels. Substantial research on musicology, popular music, performance and creation, including through the *Observatoire international de la création et des cultures musicales* (OICCM).



821, boul. Sainte-Croix  
Montreal, Québec, H4L 3X9  
**General:** 514-744-7500  
**Denise Dubé:** 514-744-7500 ext. 7688  
[dubed@vaniercollege.qc.ca](mailto:dubed@vaniercollege.qc.ca)  
[www.vaniercollege.qc.ca](http://www.vaniercollege.qc.ca)

#### Programs offered

2 year DEC in Pre-university Music  
3 year Double DEC in Science and Music  
3 year Double DEC in Modern Languages and Music  
3 year Double DEC in Social Science and Music  
3 year DEC in Professional Music and Song Techniques  
6 month AEC in Audio Recording Technology

#### Facilities

Vanier College Auditorium (400 seats).

Recital Hall with 2 grands.  
Digital Sound Design lab, recording studios, computer labs, 35 practice studios, piano workshop, 40 pianos including 8 grands.

#### Teachers:

47  
Students Full-time: 197

#### Tuition fees

Quebec residents: \$155 / semester  
Out of Province applicants: \$990 + \$155 / semester  
International Students: depending on the program between \$1000 and \$5000 / semester

#### Description

Outstanding campus facilities, varied music programs leading to university and to the professional world, weekly concerts, annual festivals including MusicFest Québec and Big Band Benefit Concert hosted by Oliver Jones.

#### Information Evening

February 3, 2009, 5:00-8:00 PM



### MARIANOPOLIS COLLEGE

4873 Westmount Avenue  
Westmount, Québec H3Y 1X9  
**Phone:** 514-931-8792  
**Fax:** 514-931-8790  
<http://www.marianopolis.edu>

#### Programs offered

DEC in music  
(2-year pre-university program)  
Double DEC's in Music and Science; Music and Social Science; Music and Creative Arts, Literature and Languages  
(3-year pre-university programs)

#### Facilities

Two recital halls with grand pianos  
Music computer lab  
Digital sound recording equipment  
Practice rooms  
Access to McGill University's Schulich School of Music library and practice rooms

#### Teachers

37 (full-time & part-time)

#### Students

40 full-time

#### Tuition fees

1 academic year, full-time: \$3,680  
International students: \$4,904 additional

#### Description

Building on a tradition of excellence at Marianopolis, music students benefit from the program's association with the Schulich School of Music at McGill. The size of the department allows for individual attention from teachers and for a warm personal atmosphere. All music students take private lessons with instructors at McGill University. Students also participate in the University orchestra, choirs, wind symphony and other large and small ensembles.





### BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY

2600 College Street  
Sherbrooke (Lennoxville)  
Quebec J1M 0C8  
**Phone :** 819-822-9600 ext. 2422  
**Fax:** 819-822-9661  
jeby@ubishops.ca  
http://www.ubishops.ca

#### Programs offered

B.A. with Honours, Major, or  
Minor in Music  
Certificate in Music Studies  
Both Classical and Popular Music  
Studies are available

#### Facilities

Bandeau Hall (160 seats, 2 Hamburg  
Steinways)  
1 Smart Classroom  
1 Theory Lab (Mac computers +  
keyboards)  
Electronic Studio  
12 Studios + practice rooms  
2 Manual Wilhelm tracker organ  
Music Library (adjacent)

#### Faculty

3 full-time  
18 part-time

#### Students

45 full-time  
5 part-time

#### Tuition fees

(1 academic year, full-time)  
Quebec resident: \$2,579.30  
Out-of-province: \$5,824.70

#### Description

Bishop's is a liberal arts university  
and the Music Department shares  
this philosophy of education.  
We offer courses in theory, history,  
literature and performance, and  
music studies may be combined with  
any other discipline at Bishop's.  
We offer an excellent concert series  
as well as regular master-classes,  
small classes and personal attention  
to students.



### Department of Music University of Ottawa

50 University Street  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5  
**Phone:** 613-562-5733  
**Fax:** 613-562-5140  
musique@uottawa.ca  
www.music.uottawa.ca  
www.musique.uottawa.ca

#### Programs offered

Undergraduate: B.Mus. (profiles:  
performance, music education, piano  
pedagogy, composition, theory, musi-  
cology).

B.A. with Honours (Specialization in  
Music). Major in Music – some pro-  
grams can be combined with a Major  
or Minor in Arts Administration.  
Graduate: M.Mus; M.A.

Two Certificates, Orchestral Studies  
and Piano Pedagogy Research

#### Facilities

Freiman Recital Hall and Tabaret Hall  
Two large rehearsal halls and dozens  
of practice studios.  
Technology & research: 1.3 million

dollar Piano Pedagogy Research.  
Electronic music studio, music and  
computers lab.  
The latest recording technology;  
Isobel Firestone Music Library &  
Resource Centre.

#### Faculty

19 full-time, 39 part-time

#### Students

320 full-time, 65 part-time

#### Tuition fees

(1 academic year, full-time)  
\$5,345.71 (undergraduate)  
\$4,494.50 (graduate)

#### Description

Our faculty is constituted of active

performers on the national and  
international scene and scholars at  
the top of their fields. Small classes,  
in English and French, create an  
intimate atmosphere. Performance  
opportunities for students abound,  
both within the department and in  
the greater community, thanks to  
close ties with arts organizations  
such as the Ottawa Symphony  
Orchestra and the National Arts  
Centre. With a campus located in  
the heart of the national capital, our  
students find it easy to enjoy the  
bilingual and multicultural milieu of  
the region and the rich cultural life  
of Ottawa.



redefine THE POSSIBLE.

### DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

4700 Keele St.  
Toronto, Ontario M3J 1P3  
**Phone:** (416) 736-5186  
**Fax:** (416) 736-5321  
musicprg@yorku.ca  
www.yorku.ca/finearts/music

#### Undergraduate Programs

BFA Honours in Music (performance,  
composition)  
BA Major, Minor and Honours in Music  
(history, theory)

#### Graduate Programs

MA in Music  
PhD in Music  
(Fields of study: composition;  
ethnomusicology; jazz; musicology;  
performance; popular music)  
Combined MBA/MA

#### Facilities

Moved into new, state-of-the-art  
facilities in 2006. 327-seat Tribute  
Communities Recital Hall, two record-  
ing studios, 18 specialized teaching/  
rehearsal studios, 38 individual prac-  
tice rooms, ethnomusicology lab and  
archive, jazz research collection,  
Sound and Moving Image Library.

#### Faculty

101 (full-time & part-time)

#### Students

478 undergraduate, 131 graduate

#### Tuition Fees (domestic)

(one academic year/two terms)  
Undergraduate: \$4,774  
Graduate: \$5,022

#### Description

York's Music Department offers inten-  
sive, professional studio training,  
academic studies and research  
across a wide range of musical cul-  
tures and traditions. Taught by  
nationally renowned faculty, streams  
of study include courses in perform-  
ance, music history and theory, con-  
temporary technologies, musician-  
ship, composition and arranging, con-  
ducting, ethnomusicology and music

pedagogy. Studio options include  
instrumental and vocal performance  
in western classical music, jazz, con-  
temporary repertoire, world music,  
improvisation, electro-acoustic, digi-  
tal and popular music. Student and  
faculty talent is showcased in over  
100 public concerts each year.  
Performances include solo recitals,  
chamber ensembles, jazz and classi-  
cal music workshops and master-  
classes, more than a dozen different  
world music ensembles, Concert and  
Chamber Choirs, Women's Choir, Male  
Chorus, World Music Chorus, Gospel  
Choir, Wind Symphony, Jazz Orchestra,  
four jazz choirs, York Symphony  
Orchestra.



### FACULTY OF MUSIC, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Edward Johnson Building  
80 Queen's Park  
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2C5  
**Phone:** Undergrad: 416-978-3750  
Graduate: 416-978-5772  
**Fax:** 416-946-3353  
undergrad.music@utoronto.ca  
grad.music@utoronto.ca  
www.music.utoronto.ca

#### Programs Offered

B.Mus.: Composition; Comprehensive;  
Concurrent Teacher Education  
Program (CTEP); History and Theory;  
Music Education

B.Mus. Performance: Classical or Jazz  
Diplomas: Artist Diploma; Advanced  
Certificate in Performance; Diploma  
in Operatic Performance

M.A.: Ethnomusicology; Music  
Education; Musicology

Mus.M.: Collaborative Piano;  
Composition; Conducting;  
Instrumental; Jazz, Opera; Piano  
Pedagogy; Vocal; Vocal Pedagogy  
Ph.D.: Ethnomusicology; Music  
Education; Musicology

D.M.A.: Collaborative Piano;  
Composition; Conducting;  
Instrumental; Jazz; Opera; Piano  
Pedagogy; Vocal; Vocal Pedagogy

#### Facilities

Walter Hall (seats 490), MacMillan  
Theatre (seats 815), Electroacoustic  
and Recording studios, most exten-  
sive Music library in Canada

#### Faculty: 50 full-time, 150 part-time

#### Students: 700

#### Tuition Fees: Undergraduate

(1 academic year, full-time)  
Domestic: \$5,703.30  
International: \$21,087.30

#### Description

The Faculty of Music has a great tradi-

tion and reputation as one of the finest  
institutions in North-America for music  
studies. Throughout the academic year  
we host masterclasses, lectures, recitals  
and concerts given by renowned artists  
and leading scholars. The diversity in  
our course offerings is hard to match;  
jazz, chamber music, opera, Balinese  
Gamelan, contemporary music, and  
early music to name a few. Our schol-  
ars, performers, and educators boast  
internationally active careers through  
which we disseminate our knowledge,  
skills, and passion for music with the  
community and the world. Our students  
participate in colloquia, conferences,  
large-scale concerts and performances,  
recordings, and in internships.



## DON WRIGHT FACULTY OF MUSIC, UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

London, ON, CANADA, N6A 3K7

**Phone:** 519-661-2043

**Fax:** 519-661-3531

music@uwo.ca

www.music.uwo.ca

### Undergraduate Programs

B.Mus.: Music Education, Performance, Theory and Composition, Music History.  
B.A.: Honours or Major in Music; Specialization in Music Admin; Major in Popular Music Studies.  
Music Performance Diploma  
Certificate in Piano Technology

### Graduate Programs

M.Mus.: Composition, Literature and Performance, Music Education.  
Graduate Performance Program in Musical Theatre  
M.A.: Music Theory, Musicology.  
M.A.: Popular Music and Culture  
Ph.D. in Music, Ph.D. in Composition.

### Performance Facilities

250 seat recital hall  
370 seat theatre with orchestra pit  
Organ recital room: 2,200 seat hall.

**Faculty:** 42 full-time, 69 part-time

### Students

600 undergraduate, 118 graduate

### Tuition fees

(1 academic year, full-time) \$5,600

### Description

Western's Faculty of Music is one of the top-rated university music programs in Canada. Few other schools have the depth and breadth of programs offered here. We offer a full range of traditional music programs, opportunities to combine music with

other disciplines and new and unique programs such as Music Administrative studies and studies in Popular Music. Western is also a leader in technology and computer applications in music. Over 300 concerts are presented each year. Our facilities include a recording studio with a full-time technician, lounges, instrument repair shop that includes hundreds of instruments for student use, string instrument bank of rare and valuable instruments and bows for student use and over 150 pianos. Our Piano Technology program offers excellent instruments and support to our music faculty.



## FACULTY OF FINE ARTS | UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

### DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

2500 University Dr. NW

Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4

**Telephone:** 403-220-5376

**Fax:** 403-284-0973

music@ucalgary.ca

www.finearts.ucalgary.ca/music

### Programs offered

BA (Music)  
BA Honours (Music Minor in Music)  
BMus - Performance; Composition; Music History and Theory; Integrated Studies; Combined BMus (Music Education)/BEd (Master of Teaching Program)

### Facilities

Students have access to practice studios and state-of-the-art theatres and recital halls, including the award winning Rozsa Centre. The Department also has a number of resources available to students, including a digital lab with a fully

functional MIDI workstation, including keyboards, tone generators and a wide range of software. The opportunities for extensive student participation in the musical process, combined with exceptional music facilities, provide an excellent environment for individuals interested in developing their musical abilities and knowledge.

### Faculty

17 full-time, 26 part-time

### Students

131 full-time, 5 part-time

### Tuition (1 academic year, full-time)

\$2,798.28

### Description

The Department of Music at the University of Calgary is home to extraordinary opportunities for learning about music through research and creative activity. Academic preparation is at the heart of our programs, and is translated into performances, publications, compositions, engaging tradition and innovation, scholarship and improvisation. The world-class acoustics of the Eckhardt-Gramatté Recital Hall and a focus on the growing realm of digital media offer students and faculty exciting opportunities to hear, create and perform music.



## SCHOOL OF MUSIC, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

6361 Memorial Road

Vancouver, British Columbia V6T 1Z2

**Phone:** 604-822-3113

**Fax:** 604-822-4884

music.admissions@ubc.ca

www.music.ubc.ca/programs

### Programs offered

B.Mus. in Composition, Opera, Voice, Guitar, Harpsichord, Music Scholarship, Orchestral Instruments, Organ, Piano and General Studies  
B.A. Major, Minor and Honours in Music

### Graduate Programs

M.Mus. in Composition, Piano, Orchestral Instruments, Organ, Harpsichord, Guitar, Opera, Voice and Choral Conducting.  
M.A. in Musicology, Music Theory, and Ethnomusicology  
D.M.A. in Composition, Piano, Voice and Orchestral Instruments  
Ph.D. in Musicology (concentrations: Historical Musicology,

Ethnomusicology, Music Theory)  
Diploma in Collaborative Piano Studies  
Diploma in Music Performance

### Facilities

Recital Hall (289 seats)  
The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts (1200 seats)  
Gessler Hall (80 seats)  
Practice studios  
Computer music studio  
Music library  
Multimedia centre

### Faculty

29 full-time, 56 part-time

### Students

291 undergraduate, 118 graduate

### Tuition fees

B.Mus. (32 credits) \$4,632

(Canadian, landed immigrants)

B.Mus. (32 credits) \$20,623

(non-Canadians, visa students)

### Description

Situated within a large university with extensive research and learning resources on a campus near ocean and mountains, the UBC School of Music offers you an inspiring setting, many program options, and a high level of training from dedicated and internationally respected faculty members plus masterclasses and workshops from renowned guest artists, composers and scholars.



## VICTORIA CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

900 Johnson Street

Victoria, British Columbia V8V 3N4

**Phone:** (250) 386-5311

**Fax:** (250) 386-6602

info@vcm.bc.ca

www.vcm.bc.ca

### Programs offered

Post-secondary Foundation Year (1 year) and Diploma in Music (2 years): majors in Piano, Collaborative Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello, Classical Guitar, Flute, Voice, Composition, Jazz Studies.

Teacher Training: majors in Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello, Classical Guitar, Flute, Voice.

Summer Vocal Academy and Summer String Academy: master classes with renowned guest artists, individual instruction, and performance opportunities.

Summer Jazz Workshop: big band and combo experience with established jazz artists.

Self-directed studies: instruction at all levels in piano, voice, orchestral instruments, theory, composition. Ensembles, chamber music, Opera Studio, master classes.

### Facilities

Alix Gooldeen Performance Hall (800 seats)  
Robin and Winifred Wood Recital Hall (100 seats)

Teaching and practice studios, ensemble rehearsal rooms, Music Library

### Faculty

162

### Students

50 full-time, 2000 part-time

### Tuition fees

Foundation Year: \$4,000 (Domestic)

\$9,600 (International).

Diploma in Music: \$5,000 (Domestic)

\$12,000 (International).

Teacher Training: \$2,000 plus fees for

Theory and individual instruction.

Open Studio \$900

*Fees may change, please consult website*

### Description

The Victoria Conservatory of Music provides professional music education and outstanding performance venues in a beautiful century-old heritage building. Students benefit from small classes, considerable one-on-one instruction, and performance opportunities.

# Programs Offered

BM  
BA  
Certificate in Performance  
PhD  
DM  
Double and self-designed degree programs available for undergraduates

# Facilities

3 concert halls (2003/400/200 seats)  
4 computer labs, 97 practice rooms

**Faculty:** 59 full-time, 72 part-time

**Students:** 600

425 undergraduate  
175 graduate

**Tuition Fees:** \$36, 756



# Description

The Northwestern's Bienen School of Music combines conservatory-level training with the academic rigor of a world-class research university. The faculty includes members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Special opportunities are undergraduate double and self-designed degree programs



and full tuition funding for all PhD and DM students. Students also interact with international artists who win two prizes sponsored by the school. A new, state-of-the-art building with a 400-seat recital hall will open in 2012.

## Information Request Coupon

All requests for information will be forwarded to the selected institutions.

This coupon is also available at **www.scena.org**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservatoire de musique et d'art Dramatique du Québec | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Toronto          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Le Domaine Forget                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Western Ontario  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laval University Faculty                               | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Calgary          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Université of Montreal                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> University of British Columbia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vanier Cégep College                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> University of Victoria         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marianopolis College                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Northwestern University        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bishop University                                      |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> University of Ottawa                                   |   |

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

send to **the music Scene**  
**5409, rue Waverly, Montréal QC H2T 2X8**

# Wear it with Pride

## The NEW "I Love THE ARTS" Button



- ☐ **Carte La SCENA Card** - 1 year (40 \$)  
☐ **Carte La SCENA Card** - 2 years (73 \$ incl. Free CD)  
☐ Donation: \_\_\_\_\_ \$  
☐ CD Puccini 150: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$30 = \_\_\_\_\_ \$  
☐ Button : \_\_\_\_\_ X \$2 (suggested donation) = \_\_\_\_\_ \$

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

PROVINCE \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TEL \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Payment Enclosed

CREDIT CARD # \_\_\_\_\_

/ EXP \_\_\_\_\_

☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

La Scena Musicale, 5409 Waverly, Montréal, QC H2T 2X8  
Fax: 514-274-9456 • cartelaSCENA@scena.org



# THE BEST OF PUCCINI ON RECORD

Joseph K. So



This year is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of **Giacomo Puccini** (1858-2008). Throughout Italy but particularly in Lucca and Torre del Lago, special performances, exhibitions, screenings, lectures and academic conferences will mark the occasion. Here in Canada, **XXI-21 Records**, in partnership with **La Scena Musicale**, is issuing a 2-CD set of some of the greatest Puccini recordings ever made. I just spent a day listening to the gems contained in this release – what a trip down memory lane! These are recordings of my youth, many of which I have in my old LP collection, with tracks so worn out that they are practically unplayable. It is great to have the best bits now put together on two discs, which will go straight into my car CD player. There are many memorable moments on the discs. Here are some of my favourites, my personal desert-island selections, arranged by opera:

## LA BOHÈME

The 1956 RCA recording with Sir Thomas Beecham at the podium is hard to beat – the gentle and tragic Mimi of Victoria de los Angeles tugs at the heart strings while the clarion tones of Jussi Bjoerling as Rodolfo can't be surpassed, pace Luciano Pavarotti. But I'll always have a soft spot for Renata Tebaldi in the 1959 Decca recording under the great Tullio Serafin. This was one of the first opera recordings I bought, and it remains one of my favourites. Tebaldi's Mimi isn't girlish, but the sheer beauty of her sound takes your breath away. The Act 3 "Addio, senza rancor" is well captured here.

## TOSCA

The generous, 30+ minutes comes from the legendary Callas and di Stefano Tosca on EMI (1953), conducted by Victor de Sabata. It caught both artists at their absolute peak – Callas never sounded better, with rock solid intonation and spitfire dramatic instinct. Giuseppe di Stefano is equally impressive, singing with great beauty of tone and technical ease. With the wonderful Tito Gobbi as Scarpia, this is a Tosca for the ages.

## Manon Lescaut

Here we have the much-underrated 1954 Decca recording, featuring a youthful Tebaldi in resplendent voice – her "In quelle trine morbide" is exquisite. Partnering her is Mario del Monaco at his stentorian best, not exactly subtle but few tenors can touch him when it comes to squillo!

## Madama Butterfly

The Callas and Tebaldi recordings chosen here allow a direct comparison of the two famous divas. Tebaldi's Cio-Cio San is a tad mature – one never gets the sense that she is really Butterfly, but is rather an Italian spinto soprano impersonating a geisha. But with such opulent tone, one cannot quibble over characterization. Callas keeps her fiery temperament in check here, and her Butterfly is quite moving. Partnering the ladies as Pinkerton are two excellent tenors caught in their respective primes – Carlo Bergonzi and Nicolai Gedda. I wouldn't want to do without either one.



## La fanciulla del West

I actually saw Tebaldi in this opera at the Metropolitan in 1970, when her voice was past its prime. But here we have her twelve years earlier, in great form as a knock-'em-dead Minnie, in the 1958 Decca recording. Minnie doesn't have any show-stopping arias, but Tebaldi brings off this Act 1 arioso "Laggiù nel soledad" with purity of tone and a firm high C, something she no longer possessed in 1970. The Dick Johnson is Mario del Monaco, who sang with beauty of tone and surprising sensitivity in "Ch'ella mi creda."

## Turandot

If there's one regrettable omission on this set, it is the absence of Birgit Nilsson, the reigning Turandot of mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. In her place we have German soprano Inge Borkh on the 1955 Decca recording. Borkh is better known in German opera and she was overshadowed by Nilsson, but her Turandot here is a revelation. Her "In questa Reggia" is good, so good in fact that any opera house today would be thrilled to have her! On

this recording we have the added bonus of Tebaldi as Liu, a role she never sang on stage. She contributes a lovely "Signor, ascolta!" Of the three Calafs represented – di Stefano, del Monaco, and Bjoerling, I prefer Bjoerling for his elegance and plangent tone.

## Bonus Tracks

For me, this is the most fascinating part of the set, with eight hard-to-find arias by famous singers of the past. Brazilian soubrette Bidù Sayao is a delicious Lauretta in "O mio babbino caro" under the baton of Eric Leinsdorf, recorded in New York in 1947. The great Beniamino Gigli sings a short excerpt, "O dolci mani" from Act 3 Tosca with his trademark honeyed tone. Two more sopranos offer a beautiful if unidiomatic "Si, mi chiamano Mimi". Ina Souez has a nice soubrette sound, but she doesn't have the facility with parlando, and she sings with little portamento. The legendary Maria Cebotari's version is better, but the aria sounds very strange in German. The same can be said about Joan Hammond's "Senza mamma", translated into English as "Dying thus without a mother's blessing." The voice is lovely, but her diction is so indistinct that she could have been singing in Mongolian and we wouldn't know. The great French tenor Georges Thill sings a stylish "Nessun dorma." Perhaps the most curious selection is Enrico Caruso singing "Vecchia zimarra", Colline's Act 4 "Coat Song", recorded by RCA Victor in 1916. Caruso darkens his voice here, but you can tell he can manage the baritone tessitura though not basso. Legend has it that once in a performance of *La bohème*, the Colline lost his voice and Caruso turned his back to the audience and sang the two-minute aria! He went on to make this recording, but later asked to have it destroyed. It is our great good fortune that a copy of it survived.

Overall, this is a thoroughly fascinating and enjoyable release, and a great addition to any collection of Puccini recordings. ■

► Featuring: *Tebaldi, Del Monaco, Bergonzi, D'Angelo, Merrill, Bastianini, Cesari, Corena, Callas, di Stefano, Gobbi, Mercuriali, Caselli, Luisi, Gedda, Sordello, Macneil, Borkh, Sayao, Gigli, Thill, Souz, Cebotari, Stella, Hammond, Volpi, Caruso, Molinari-Pradelli, Beecham, Serafin, de Sabata, von Karajan, Capuana, Erede, Patane, Leinsdorf, Pasternak, Zweig, Curiel*



## QUEEN ELISABETH COMPETITION

2008-2010



### BRUSSELS / BELGIUM

#### COMPOSITION 2008 [Age limit: 40]

Work for violin and symphony orchestra, deadline: 07 /11/2008

#### VIOLIN 2009

[Age limit: 27]

04 ▶ 09/05/2009

##### FIRST ROUND

15.00 & 20.00, Royal Brussels Conservatory

11 ▶ 16/05/2009

##### SEMI-FINAL

15.00 & 20.00, Royal Brussels Conservatory

with the Orchestre Royal de Chambre de Wallonie, dir. Paul GOODWIN

19 ▶ 22/05/2009

##### MASTER CLASSES

10.00 ▶ 16.30, MIM (Musical Instrument Museum)

25 ▶ 30/05/2009

##### FINAL

20.00, Brussels Centre for Fine Arts (Palais des Beaux-Arts)

with the National Orchestra of Belgium, dir. Gilbert VARGA

#### COMPOSITION 2009 [Age limit: 40]

Work for piano and symphony orchestra, deadline: 07 /11/2009

#### PIANO 2010

[Age limit: 27]

02 ▶ 08/05/2010

##### FIRST ROUND

15.00 & 20.00, Royal Brussels Conservatory

10 ▶ 15/05/2010

##### SEMI-FINAL

15.00 & 20.00, Royal Brussels Conservatory

with the Orchestre Royal de Chambre de Wallonie, dir. Paul GOODWIN

18 ▶ 21/05/2010

##### MASTER CLASSES

10.00 ▶ 16.30, MIM (Musical Instrument Museum)

24 ▶ 29/05/2010

##### FINAL

20.00, Brussels Centre for Fine Arts (Palais des Beaux-Arts)

with the National Orchestra of Belgium, dir. Marin ALSOP

NEXT SINGING COMPETITION: MAY 2011

[WWW.QEIMC.BE](http://WWW.QEIMC.BE)

QUEEN ELISABETH INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITION OF BELGIUM

INFO: RUE AUX LAINES 20, B-1000 BRUSSELS (BELGIUM)

TEL : +32 2 213 40 50 - FAX : +32 2 514 32 97 - [INFO@QEIMC.BE](mailto:INFO@QEIMC.BE)

# GREAT ARTISTS, GREAT MUSIC

