


PROGRAM  NOTES

2023/24 Season

Cathedral Bluffs
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Martin MacDonald, Music Director



NEW SEASON, NEW WORLD

Saturday, October 7, 2023, 8PM

Marion Newman, mezzo-soprano

CONCERT PROGRAM

Please kindly turn off all phones and all other audible electronic devices before the concert begins.

The concert is approximately ninety minutes long with a twenty minute intermission

CONCERT PROGRAMME

Martin MacDonald, conductor
Marion Newman, mezzo-soprano

Kati Agócs*

Shenanigan (2011)

Christine Donkin*

Three Autumn Scenes (2011)

- I. Leaves in the wind
- II. Migration
- III. First Snowfall

Bramwell Tovey*

Ancestral Voices (2017)

- I. In Arcady
- II. The Last Bison
- III. The Letter
- IV. Bring Light to the Truth

Marion Newman, mezzo-soprano

-intermission-

Dvorak

Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, B. 178 ***New World***

- I. Adagio - Allegro molto
- II. Largo
- III. Molto vivace
- IV. Allegro con fuoco

*Canadian composer

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Martin MacDonald

Martin MacDonald is one of Canada's most dynamic and outstanding young conductors and has been awarded both the Heinz Unger Award and the Jean-Marie Beaudet Award for orchestral conducting. In January 2022, Martin was named Music Director of the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra based in East Toronto, Ontario. Martin has guest conducted extensively across Canada having worked with the orchestras of Toronto, National Arts Centre, Vancouver, Victoria, Kamloops, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Niagara, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Windsor, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland. He has served as a Cover and Guest Conductor for the National Ballet of Canada for several productions and has worked with the Minnesota Ballet, Atlantic Ballet, and Halifax Dance. Martin has recorded extensively for the CBC and for several commercial recordings. Most notably, Martin has served as Resident Conductor, Associate Conductor, and a regular guest conductor of Symphony Nova Scotia since 2008 with over 200 performances in a diverse range of programs and artists. Previously, Martin served as Associate Conductor of the National Academy Orchestra of Canada and has participated in several international conducting workshops and competitions.



of

Martin has a Master's in Orchestral Conducting from McGill, a Bachelor's in Cello from Memorial, and has studied conducting with Alexis Hauser, Bernhard Gueller, Boris Brott, Michael Jinbo, Kenneth Kiesler, Gustav Meier, Jorma Panula, Johannes Schlaefli. Martin's conducting activities have been generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts. Cape Breton born, Martin is the youngest of twelve children and has a diverse musical background with a strong Celtic music tradition including extensive touring and performing with members of his family throughout Europe and North America.

Martin resides in Toronto, Ontario with his wife, Kristen and their daughter, Frances.

THE ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN 1

Alexander Gangurean *
David Colpitts
Laura Brownell
Pamella Fell
Wendy Frey
Clive Davis
Kirsten Hambleton
Dana Bultje

VIOLIN 2

Clare Pellerin*
Natali Jamal
Nicole Yoshimura
Susan Ross
Wendy Servalle-Smith

VIOLA

Valentina Ceaicovscaia*
Carol Burton
Anna Heath
Kunihiro Ito
Leise Warner
Eve Wyatt

CELLO

Oleg Volkov*
Ivan Chu
Shonagh Mcvean
Michael Remenyi
Mary Kay Winter

CONTRABASS

Sara Lukjanovs*
(Acting Principal)
David Harvey
Ernie Mee
Michael
Penafiel
Kerry Johnston
Max Farmakidis

FLUTE

Christine Fong*
Rana Mireskandari

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Andre Manivong

ENGLISH HORN

Cris Seweri

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ELizabeth Day*
TomTsang

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Roland Wilk

FRENCH HORN

Samir Abd-Elmessih*
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David Murrell
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TRUMPET

Tim Hendrickson*
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TROMBONE

David King*
Blair Smith

BASS TROMBONE

TUBA

Alex Smith

PERCUSSION

Mary Thomson
Yang Chen
Jacob Valcheff

TIMPANI

Jeff Mason

* denotes principal

** acting principal

TONIGHT'S SOLOIST

Marion Newman

Marion Newman, mezzo soprano
A critically acclaimed mezzo-soprano of Kwagiulth and Stó:lō First Nations with English, Irish and Scottish heritage, Marion Newman was born in Bella Coola and grew up in Sooke, BC. She is one of Canada's most accomplished singers in repertoire from Charpentier to Cusson.

Concert Highlights for the 2023/24 season include the premiere of "Songs from the House of Death" (Cusson) with Regina Symphony and Beethoven's Ninth with Symphony Nova Scotia. Marion stars as Hildegard of Bingen in re:Naissance Opera/Vancouver Opera's production of Sanctuary and Storm (Olson/Barker).

Recently, Marion created the role of Dawn in the world premiere of Migration with Welsh National Opera. In 2024, Marion leads the cast in Missy Mazzoli's "Song from the Uproar" with City Opera Vancouver and curates a concert with Musica Intima.



Upcoming new works include the role of Mimi in *Indians on Vacation*, an operatic adaptation of the novel by Thomas King (Cusson/Vavrek) with Against the Grain Theatre and Edmonton Opera.

A driving force for truth and reconciliation within the context of classical music and host of CBC's *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera*, Marion brings her talented and inspiring colleagues to the attention of listeners across Canada and beyond.

PROGRAM NOTES

Katie Agocs*

Shenanigan (2011)

From the composer:

Shenanigan draws its inspiration from Reels that entered the musical tradition of Atlantic and French-speaking Canada in the waves of immigration from England and Ireland. I played with the symmetrical phrase structure and static harmony of the original improvised dances, developing the melodies and rhythms, infusing them with my own piquant harmonies, and interlacing iridescent orchestral colours. The resulting hybrid melds traditional Folk Reel with a full symphonic palette. Running a bit under four minutes in length, *Shenanigan* features the principal flutist as a soloist. The work was commissioned in 2010 by James Somerville, Music Director, for the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra (Hamilton, Ontario, Canada), and is four minutes in duration. (Kati Agócs)

Christine Donkin*

Three Autumn Scenes (2011)

From the composer:

Three Autumn Scenes was written for a performance by the Prince George Symphony Orchestra in the fall of 2012. Since I didn't have a great deal of time to complete the piece before rehearsals began, I took some themes from a set of pieces that I had originally planned to use for a string quartet - those pieces depicted the four seasons, so the "autumn" movement became the first theme for "Migration" (the English horn solo was originally intended for viola) and the "winter" movement became the first theme of "First Snowfall". Then I expanded both of those movements, reorchestrating them and adding new themes that highlighted the winds (since the original themes had been written for strings only); and added a first movement which was completely new. The "Migration" theme, which I think is in many ways the central theme of this composition, was inspired by time spent in northwest Alberta, sitting by a lake for several hours and watching a steady procession of what must have been thousands of geese heading southeast.

PROGRAM NOTES

Bramwell Tovey*

Ancestral Voices (2017)

Bramwell Tovey, iconic British-Canadian conductor, pianist, composer and educator wrote this cycle of songs exploring the complex discussions that need to take place around Truth and Reconciliation. The texts present concepts essential to understanding the Truth part of these essential conversations: Indigenous ties to the untouched nature of pre-colonized Canada, the painful truth of residential schools and shared hopes for a reconciled future. Dazzling in their use of the full orchestra, the songs are at times ironically jovial and heart breaking.
(programme notes by Gordon Gerrard, used with permission)

I. In Arcady text from John Keats (1795-1821)

In Arcady, In Arcady
In the dales of Arcady
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes? What timbrels? What wild wild ecstasy?
So happy, happy melodist unwearied forever piping, piping
Ye soft pipes play on unwearied forever and ever piping,
piping, piping
In the dales of Arcady, what men or gods are these?

II. The Last Bison text from Charles Mair (1838-1927)

Strange men
Strange men who ravaged our domain
And ring-ed us around with fire
Pale enemies who slew with equal mirth
the harmless or the hurtful things of earth
So yielded our vast multitude
And scattered to barren wastes
for still the spoiler sought and still he slew us there
My spirit fain would rise and prophesy
My vision sweeps the prairies wide
Naught but naked wilderness is seen
and grassy mounds where cities once had been
The earth smiles as of yore
The skies are bright, cattle graze and below and below the plain
And nations roam o'er native wilds again
My burden ceased and now with head bowed down
midst these gath'ring shadows I die.

PROGRAM NOTES

III. The Letter text from the Canadian Government archives

Dear Sir,
Sow the seeds, sow the seeds
And separate, isolate, educate, assimilate
Separate, isolate, educate, dominate
Assimilate, assimilate
Sow the seeds, sow the seeds
And forcibly, effectively
Kill the Indian in the child
Kill the Indian in the child
Assimilate, assimilate
Yours respectfully.

IV. Bring Light to the Truth text from Canadian Government sources and the UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples

Bring light to the truth
Bring light to the truth
What happened to you, what happened and why
The burden, the burden has been on your shoulders for much too long
A sad and terrible legacy
Who died? Why did they die?
Where are they buried? Why did they die at all?
Bring light to the truth
What happened and why
They had no right to dignity
No right to live, to live in freedom,
in peace and security, the right to life
Bring light to the truth
In Arcady
What men or gods are these?

Antonín Dvořák Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, B. 178 *"From the New World"*

In 1891, Antonín Dvořák was invited by American philanthropist Jeannette Thurber to direct the National Conservatory of Music in New York. He accepted, spending the years 1892-1895 in the United States. During this time, he not only shaped the conservatory, but also composed remarkable works like his "American" String Quartet, String Quintet, and the iconic Symphony No. 9, "From the New World," composed in 1893.

PROGRAM NOTES

The symphony's subtitle, "From the New World," reflects Dvořák's view of it as an exploration of impressions and greetings from this land. While it carries elements reminiscent of his "Czech spirit," it also exudes a unique American character, notably in its syncopated rhythms and modal melodies influenced by American folk and popular music.

Dvořák was particularly drawn to African-American spirituals and, during his time in the U.S., attended performances featuring Native American music. However, the symphony's direct inspiration from these sources is debated, as Dvořák later emphasized that it was composed in the spirit of American national melodies, not taking melodic material from established songs.

The symphony comprises four movements, and its enduring popularity arises from its catchy melodies, exquisite orchestration, and thematic unity across movements. The famous English horn melody in the second movement has been affectionately known as "Goin' Home," although it is an original creation by Dvořák.

While the symphony reflects elements of both Brahmsian conservatism and Wagnerian experimentalism, it successfully bridges the musical divides of its time. Dvořák's "New World" Symphony stands as a musical testament to his exploration of American and Bohemian influences, making it a forever cherished masterpiece in the world of classical music.

Percussion Special Thanks

As you tune in to the first three pieces, you'll notice the dynamic role played by our percussion section. These opening Canadian compositions place significant demands on our percussionists, showcasing instruments like the gigantic wooden marimba, the crackling whip, and the resonant hand drum. Together, these percussive elements contribute to the creation of thrilling and distinctive sounds throughout these pieces.

None of these captivating performances would have been possible without the generosity of those who donated their time and instrument rentals. A special note of gratitude goes to:

Mary Thomson
Yang Cheng
Bruce Densmore
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We extend our heartfelt thanks for your unwavering dedication in making these Canadian compositions come to life!

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We would also like to thank all donors who wish to remain

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Cathedral Bluffs SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Martin MacDonald
Music Director

2023/2024
Concert Subscription Season



I. NEW WORLD

Saturday, October 7, 2023
Marlon Newman, mezzo-soprano

II. REMEMBRANCES

Saturday, November 11, 2023

III. FAIRYTALES

Saturday, December 16, 2023
2023 NYMF Concerto Competition
Winners

IV. SULTANS OF STRING:

WALKING THROUGH THE FIRE
Saturday, February 3, 2024
Sultans of String, guest artists

V. SCHEHERAZADE

Saturday, April 20, 2024
Jennifer Stephen, tuba

VI. TITAN

Saturday, May 25, 2024
Josie Crigger, violin

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CATHEDRAL BLUFFS TEAM

Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra has a long history of presenting the power of live orchestral music to the local community in Scarborough and Greater Toronto. Founded in 1985, Cathedral Bluffs has brought to life some of the greatest musical masterpieces, presented internationally acclaimed performers and helped to introduce some of Canada's rising stars in their debut performances with a symphony orchestra.

The Board of Directors, Music Director, and members of the orchestra are committed to continually improving diversity and inclusion in artistic programming, audience outreach and membership development.

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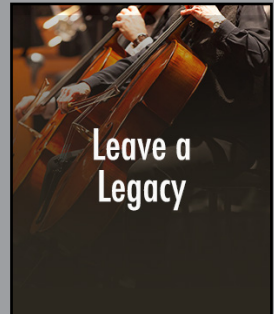
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The Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra is sustained by its patrons and generous contributions and grants. The quality and scale of the orchestra's performances, as well as our collaborations with other arts organizations, involve significant costs. Ticket sales are an important and growing source of revenue, but they cover only a portion of our annual expenses. The orchestra is a registered non-profit charitable organization and provides tax receipts for donations of any amount.

(Charity # 89036 4573 RR0001) To donate today, please visit our website at: www.cathedralbluffs.com/support-us/



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On behalf of Imperial Graphics, we would like to commend the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra for your positive engagement with the community. We are thrilled to hear about their inspiring concerts in the Scarborough community, and we are proud to support and partner with this non-profit Arts Organization.
BRAVO to all involved!