

FACETS OF PRACTICAL MUSIC CRITICISM

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BY

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A Portfolio of Published Music Criticism

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ABSTRACT

This document contains a collection of articles, reviews, profiles and programme notes written during an internship in music criticism. The diversity of these pieces reflects the varied nature of the terms *music critic* and *music criticism*, and the many roles a critic must play in writing for different audiences and numerous venues.

The introduction to this portfolio outlines the details of my internship and discusses my perspective and goals as a critic. The sections I - V contain pieces which have been published by *The Hamilton Spectator* and *Opera Canada*, as well as two pieces which have been submitted for publication in the *Spectator* and *Current Musicology*. Section VI contains programme notes written for the McMaster University Celebrity Series and for Symphony Hamilton.

The process of setting up and carrying out this internship has involved the help of several people, without whom it simply would not have happened. The first of these was Dr. Alan Walker, who took seriously my desire to write practical criticism and had the faith in me to approach the *Spectator* on my behalf to establish the internship program, thus making the project a reality. Within the University were Dr. Paul Rapoport, my project advisor, who kept me on track, Dr. James Deaville, whose careful attention to detail as my second reader spruced up the document tremendously, and Dr. William Renwick, who patiently answered my unending stream of questions and made the printing process run smoothly.

The Detroit segment of my internship was handled ^b by Nancy Malitz and Lawrence B. Johnson, who taught me to turn what I hear into marketable prose. In addition to their critical input, they became my advisors, mentors and friends. They both uphold an exceptionally high standard of criticism and journalism, to which I continually aspire.

On the home front, Hugh Fraser, music critic with *The Hamilton Spectator*, has been invaluable to me. From the first days of my internship he has treated me as a colleague and always referred to me as such. He has also become my mentor and friend. He showed me the ropes at the *Spectator* and taught me about the politics and day-to-day hassles of writing

criticism. His musical taste, keen ear and unfailing support for local musical endeavours make him the unsung hero of the Hamilton musical scene.

A special word of thanks must go to Helen Paul for her emotional support and genuine interest in what I have been doing. Her weekly mailings of concert reviews and articles of interest, as well as her willingness to listen to me complain, has helped immensely.

And then there is Mark Hoelscher, my husband, who never questioned my sanity (though perhaps he should have) as we moved across the border and took a two-year vow of poverty so that I could pursue this degree. Since coming to Canada he has had virtually no opportunity to perform, due to his "Yankee" roots in an extremely anti-American musical community, and has toiled at terribly unpleasant jobs on my behalf. Most important have been his support, humour, sideways perspective on everything around us, pride in my work and undying love. This document is as much the fruit of his labour as of mine.

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Introduction

The following pages contain a collection of my critical writings on music, published in various formats. They are presented as the culmination of an internship in music criticism. This document is the final project of a Master of Arts in Music Criticism at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.

I came to McMaster in 1991 with the intention of gaining theoretical knowledge and practical experience in the field of music criticism. My primary interest was and still is in the area of journalistic writing.

Prior to coming to McMaster, I spent eleven years earning my living as a flutist. Living in the world of performing arts, I had experienced printed criticism from two perspectives, that of the performer about whom the words were written, and that of the audience member/curious reader.

I read criticism of my own performances, sometimes agreeing with it and learning from it, at other times finding it unfair or uninformed. Occasionally, I would wonder if the concert about which the critic was writing was the same one that I had played. I learned how frustrating it is to have statements made about one's playing in a format that allows for no discussion or defense.

I also depended on critics for work in many instances. On November 25, 1983, for example, a chamber opera for which I was playing was reviewed in *The New York Times*. The review was to decide our immediate fate. If the review was favourable, the run of the opera would be extended beyond its scheduled closing date. If the review was unfavourable, the production would close immediately.

I paced the floor of my apartment for most of the night, knowing that there was little work on the horizon for the next few months and I would have a struggle to get by if the opera had to close. I picked up a copy of the *Times* at dawn. The review, neither glowing nor damning, allowed the show to continue for the duration of its scheduled run, but brought nothing beyond that.

If I had ever doubted the power of the critic, seven years of experiences like that (in New York City) put those doubts to rest. In New York, the critics of the performing arts not only pass judgement on performances and works, they pass sentence on the future of artists as well. Bad reviews on a New York debut recital can be the kiss of death to a young performer, whereas glowing notices can secure contracts and open doors. As my experience shows, entire productions can close as the result of a single review, throwing dozens of people out of work.

While in New York, I regularly read the writings of Andrew Porter, Donal Henahan, and John Rockwell. When I had attended a concert reviewed by one of them, I compared my own impressions to the "official" opinions. If I had not been able to attend, I would eagerly read the notices to find out how things had gone. I also read reviews of newly released recordings for information on current styles and trends.

Criticism became a fascination of mine. I began to realize that I looked for different things from a review, depending on whether I had performed, attended or was simply curious about what had transpired.

All musicians formulate opinions on performances and are quick to expound upon them — in closed circles. Musical opinions that appear in newsprint are another matter entirely. They must be tempered and rational, factors with which musicians are rarely concerned in the heat of post-concert ranting. Printed critical opinions must be well-founded and free of biases based on personal relationships, also factors which escape most critical musicians.

In short, the more I read of writers I admired, the more my respect for their abilities grew. Concurrently, my tolerance for bad criticism dwindled.

In 1989, when an injury forced me to contemplate making my living without making music, I began to look at music criticism in a new light. Suddenly writing criticism became a means for me to remain a part of the

musical world, whether or not I could continue to perform. I had discovered a third perspective on music criticism, that of the writer, the critic.

In order to develop my fascination with criticism into a skill, I looked for a programme which trained critics. As a student of the flute, I had always gone where the good teachers were. The only way to learn to play like the performers you admire is to go to them and study the way they think about music, and the way they play. It seemed only logical that the same would hold true in the related world of music criticism.

I investigated the options available for training as a music critic and found that McMaster University offered the only functioning program in criticism in North America. Upon further investigation, I discovered that the University also offered a practical internship option, which allowed the student to work with an established critic, with the intent of compiling a portfolio of published pieces. The decision was simple.

In November, 1991, shortly after I arrived at McMaster, the university's Department of Music hosted a symposium on music criticism. Over the course of the weekend conference, I had a chance to meet and talk with several prominent North American critics. Nancy Malitz, music critic for *The Detroit News*, stood out for me as someone who was well educated, articulate, focused, knowledgeable about the business of criticism and tremendously aware of current trends in the world of music. Her direct

manner and openness made me feel as though she was someone with whom I would enjoy working.

Based on these impressions and a few conversations over the course of the weekend, I contacted Ms. Malitz about the possibility of doing my internship work under her guidance and supervision. Her quick and enthusiastic response confirmed my feelings that this would be a profitable experience. We proceeded to set up the terms of the internship and make plans for me to spend a month in Detroit, to work with Ms. Malitz at *The Detroit News* for the month of July, 1992.

Shortly before I left for Detroit, Dr. Alan Walker, then chair of McMaster's Department of Music, contacted *The Hamilton Spectator* and worked out an arrangement through which I would have a weekly outlet for publication of articles and reviews in the newspaper. I left for Detroit with the knowledge that on the day I returned, I would begin putting my internship training to the test. With that in mind, I spent the month of July writing reviews and articles as assigned by Ms. Malitz and her husband Lawrence Johnson, currently a freelance music critic, formerly music critic with *The Milwaukee Sentinel*.

The two critics created assignments that gave me experience in writing the various types of pieces a critic must be capable of writing. Under their supervision, I wrote profiles, CD reviews, opera reviews, concert

reviews on deadline and other related pieces. Everything I wrote during those weeks went through critical editing by both Ms. Malitz and Mr. Johnson. The two critics gave me the training and information I needed to step into the position at the *Spectator* in late July, reporting to the staff music critic, Hugh Fraser. After a whirlwind of introductions and a quick lesson in operating the paper's antiquated computer system, I was sent out to cover my first concert. A few days later, Mr. Fraser took a two-week holiday, leaving me to tend the critic's desk.

The initial weeks of my internship passed in a blur. I discovered that writing about a concert on a newspaper deadline generates the same sort of adrenaline reaction as a performance. There is the same sense of performing for an audience. Hearing a concert and writing about it immediately afterward, with a two-hour imposed deadline, forces intensity of concentration during the performance and clarity of thought afterward, while writing.

My most difficult task, both during my weeks in Detroit and in working at the *Spectator*, has been to find a non-technical, descriptive vocabulary with which to write about music. Over the past months, I have come to believe that criticism must be based on historical, theoretical and phenomenological perceptions. To omit any one of these considerations from the process of experiencing a performance is to limit the experience.

Writing on deadline was not the only adjustment I made in taking up a pen for a newspaper. Writing for an editor, someone who may not have the slightest interest in classical music and even less knowledge about it, is a gruelling process. Often the editorial changes made in a writer's copy radically change the meaning of the text. Some of these changes leave the writer sounding poorly informed on the subject matter at hand.

There is no protection from such changes. Some of the minor ones my pieces have experienced have included the omission of titles of works for reasons of space, and the "correction" of spellings. In a recent article, my editor "corrected" the name *Juilliard* to read *Julliard*. In addition, entire sentences and paragraphs can disappear in the process of editing and printing. The critic can only hope that readers realize that in the short amount of time in which a daily paper is written and printed, some of these things are bound to happen.

Some of the other oddities of the editorial process are the division of paragraphs into single-sentence fragments and the addition of head-lines and cut-lines. The division of paragraphs often leaves fragmented, unfinished ideas. It supposedly makes the article more readable when printed in narrow newspaper columns.

Head-lines and cut-lines are a different matter. I wrote a review about the first concert of the season for a local chamber group. I mentioned that

they had used an electronic harpsichord which sounded surprisingly good. The headline read: **Electronic Harpsichord Surprise of New Season.** That was neither what I had written nor what I had meant.

In a profile piece about Canadian pianist Louis Lortie, the cut-line (a caption beneath an illustration) had been overlooked in the editorial process. When the paper came out, the cut-line read: **Brian [sic] Lortie: Cut-Line Goes Here.**

The issue of limited space for music in a daily paper is a constant topic among music critics, and was one of my first lessons at the *Spectator*. I took a look at the concert list on Mr. Fraser's computer one day, and asked why the file was called "fight." He explained that it was because it was a constant fight for him to secure space to write about the various classical music events in town.

Whenever there are special events in town, like an ice show, or touring theatre company, the editorial department loses nearly all of its allotted space to coverage of that event. When the various entertainment awards are given, we likewise lose our precious few allotted inches. It truly is a constant fight.

The first lesson to be learned in working for a daily paper is that of speed. Every twenty-four hours the newspaper staff writes, assembles and

prints a book-length document. The moment the paper is "put to bed," or sent off to be printed, the process begins again.

The haste with which a daily paper must be put together requires that many decisions be made in little time. The assignment of articles is often done, quite literally, on the run. I had envisioned careful meetings regarding the qualifications and interest of various writers and the presentation of new story ideas. What actually occurred, both at *The Detroit News* and *The Hamilton Spectator*, was far more haphazard than I could have imagined.

Periodic meetings occur in which the editorial staff and writers "plot" the coming issues of the paper. There is always a wealth of ideas from the writers and a dearth of open space. Even when careful plans are made for a feature story, space allotted, and the work begun, the piece can be scrapped at the last moment. Just as I was doing the final work on a piece for the *Spectator* on getting baby-boomers to arts events, William Littler ran virtually the same piece in *The Toronto Star*. My piece was put on hold, slated to run closer to the opening of the Hamilton Philharmonic season.

At the *Spectator*, meetings with the "Weekend Section" editor occurred every month to plot the coming weeks. Prior to these meetings, Mr. Fraser and I would discuss the ideas we had and the upcoming concerts which warranted a lengthy feature article in the "Weekend Section." In the

meetings, Mr. Fraser and I would present our ideas and divide the available space.

The workings of the "Now Section" are somewhat less formal. Every week Mr. Fraser updates his list of upcoming concerts from brochures and announcements sent to the paper. He then requests space for reviews of the various functions that he deems most important. When the space is allotted, he determines which concerts can actually be covered.

The process of determining which events I would cover for the *Spectator* was handled no differently than if I were a non-apprenticed employee of the paper. When possible, Mr. Fraser and I would discuss the coming events and decide which of us would cover a particular performance. We would base the decision on who was free to attend the event and which of us had covered that particular group or performer most recently. We also discussed the possibility of conflicts of interest.

In writing about music in Hamilton, I have run into several conflicts of interest that have presented some concern both to me and to the newspaper. It was decided that I should not review ensembles (or individuals) with which I had performed. This eliminated several of the local ensembles. In addition, it was decided that I should not review McMaster University faculty with whom I had to work or from whom I was taking classes.

Even with these restrictions in place, several conflicts arose. I was assigned to cover a Symphony Hamilton concert. I had played piccolo as a member of the orchestra the previous season and had ties to many of the players as well as the conductor. Fortunately, the concert featured winners of the orchestra's "Stars of Tomorrow" competition. I was able to concentrate the review on the young soloists.

Other conflicts arose when I had to cover a concert in which Zdenek Konicek was featured as soloist. I was preparing to play a concert with him at the time. I also covered the Hamilton Philharmonic while my husband was performing as a member of the orchestra. In both cases I found the anticipation of the event more taxing than the actual experience. I had to trust that no matter how the performance went and no matter what I wrote, the players with whom I had a personal or musical relationship would be professional enough to deal with the situation. In October I was assigned to cover Suzanne Shulman playing Ernest Bloch's *Suite modale* with piano accompaniment. I declined because I was scheduled to play the same piece in the same hall, although accompanied by orchestra, just a few weeks later.

The situation at the *Spectator* was fairly relaxed as compared to many other newspapers. I have been advised that most papers will not tolerate the slightest impression of conflicts of interest. I have also been advised, by

several critics and editors, that the appearance of conflict is of more concern to papers than an actual conflict for the critic.

I expect that conflicts of interest will continue to be a concern for me in the future. I intend to continue performing, as does my husband, which makes conflicts unavoidable. I realize that I will have to be cautious about accepting performance engagements to avoid inappropriate situations. I may be limited to performing outside the community in which I write. My husband and I have been advised to continue using separate surnames to help avoid impressions of conflict.

Conflicts of interest and personal preferences helped to determine which events Mr. Fraser or I should cover. In the case of these planned assignments I would have ample time to prepare for the performance.

In order to prepare to review a concert, the critic spends a fair amount of time listening to recordings and consulting scores. If the work is familiar, the process of hearing several recordings serves to present several different interpretations of the piece. This helps keep the critic from comparing, even if unconsciously, with a favourite interpretation. Consulting scores has the same purpose. Seeing the printed music complete with tempo and dynamic markings can be a revelation after years of hearing liberties taken with a piece.

Premieres of new pieces or performances of unfamiliar pieces present a different challenge to the critic. The critic is not asked to be open-minded regarding the interpretation of a familiar work, but regarding an entirely new musical experience. In the case of much avant-garde music, the tonal and musical language of the composer may be foreign to the audience and critic.

In many cases, the critic is able to obtain a score and/or a recording — even if just a rehearsal tape. These tools make the process much easier than hearing the work for the first time in concert.

If there are no scores or tapes of a new work available, the critic can request admittance to a rehearsal of the piece. Since the work is new and the performers are feeling their way through it themselves, this is often not allowed. In that case the critic works without a safety net. Sometimes recordings or scores of other works by the composer of the new work in question are available. These can be of tremendous help in becoming familiar with a composer's style.

The situation at the *Spectator* was not always ideal, however, and on several occasions I was called upon to review a concert for which I had no chance to prepare or for which I was given no programme information. In several instances, last-minute obligations forced Mr. Fraser to miss a concert and I was called the day of a performance to cover it. Events also came up at the last minute that needed to be covered, and I was called to write the

review. The **Bail out Bob a Blast: Mayor Indebted to Friends** review of Mayor Morrow's fund-raising concert was such a last-minute assignment.

In the ninety minutes following a first hearing of the new work, the critic must describe the work and its performance to readers who may or may not have attended the performance. Of those who did hear it, many are depending on the critic to explain it.

Whether there is time for pre-concert preparation or not, the process at the paper is the same. Immediately after the curtain falls on a performance, I race back to the newspaper, ask an editor how much space I have and begin writing. In order for a review to appear in the following day's newspaper, the piece must be filed by 1:00 a.m. The editors are fairly flexible — if they see the writer sitting in the newsroom and working, they will usually allow a little extra time.

Performance reviews are usually the last items filed for the following day's paper (with the exception of late-breaking news stories). The critic's review length is almost always decided long before the performance is over. Writing to length is extremely important since there is a blank space in the paper which must be filled exactly. If the critic provides too little copy, the editor will stretch it out and leave odd gaps between paragraphs. If the critic submits too much copy, the editor will shorten it — usually lopping off an entire paragraph or two.

When the review is finished, I electronically "ship" it to one of the editorial desks and double-check to make sure that it arrived intact. I have learned to clarify for the editor any names or terms that may be unfamiliar. This allows me to avoid reading the review in the morning paper and cringing at an editorially inserted comma that makes Vaughan Williams look like two composers. *The Detroit News* employs a system of bracketed abbreviations to alert editors to words or terms that are correct as they appear and should not be altered. *The Spectator* uses no such standardized system — various editors make their own notes.

Throughout the following articles and reviews, I have reproduced text as it was printed, with the exception of simple printing errors (misspellings, duplicated lines, etc.). *The Hamilton Spectator* uses American spellings and does not employ foreign-language accents, italics, or underlining. Within the text of *Spectator* articles I have reflected these stylistic traits, in a representative selection of the approximately 50 pieces I have written for this newspaper. Throughout this document I have used the Times-Roman font for published pieces and Universal for my additional comments.

The task of the critic is not only to report on events that take place at local concerts but to inform readers about events in the greater musical community. If orchestras throughout North America are struggling to survive, it is a critic's task to report this. As the power of press is still

formidable, critics also bear the responsibility of helping to bring patrons back to the arts.

As a performer-turned-critic, I feel a tremendous responsibility to performers. I know how devastating a careless word can be to a performer. I also know that not every opera performance will measure up to Bayreuth, La Scala or the Metropolitan Opera. Not every orchestra will measure up to the London Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic or New York Philharmonic. Yet we cannot afford to lose the smaller opera companies or orchestras. Art cannot survive if it is cloistered in the largest of urban centres and performed only for the elite.

A small orchestra in a small community can only withstand so much constant criticism. Soon patrons begin to listen to the critic and cease buying tickets. Responsible music criticism is a careful mixture of criticism, praise and education. Perhaps with the help of responsible criticism the arts will be able to weather their current difficulties and thrive again.

Section I

Feature Articles

When a newspaper hires a music critic, the critic is expected to be able to write more than just performance reviews. She or he is also expected to write longer pieces requiring research and interview skills, both within the area of music and in unrelated areas as well. It is essential for a writer to have several of these feature-length pieces in her or his portfolio in order to be considered for a full-time position as a critic.

In August 1992, the *Spectator* made the announcement that the paper would be adding a weekend magazine section to be included in the Saturday edition of the paper. As weekend magazines have been tremendously popular in many urban papers, the *Spectator* was hoping for the same sort of success. In contrast to the other regular sections of the paper, the Weekend Section was to have a decidedly more sophisticated focus. In theory, space would be devoted to music, theatre, film, food, travel and other subjects considered "soft news."

(Soft news, or editorial writing, is always the first area to be hit when space cuts are required, and is always pushed aside for breaking "hard news" stories.) The Weekend Section was set up to handle only soft news. Each Weekend edition was planned to include a two-page centre-spread devoted to a single topic.

The *Spectator's* Weekend Section devotes one page per week to music features. Every few weeks it will also devote the two-page "centre-spread" sheet to music as well. Centre-spread pieces run 35 to 45 column inches. The writer is often asked to write related side-bars which are then set into the article. Artwork for articles is often provided by the art or photography departments, but the writer is occasionally asked for input. For those of us writing in the editorial department, the weekend centre-spreads allow us space for topics which would most likely be allotted little space, if any, in the other sections of the paper.

The following feature was my introduction to feature writing. The *Spectator* asked for this article about one week before it was due. The furious phone calls, late-night CD

listening and CD store shopping that followed were exhausting. In addition, I was inundated with comments for weeks after it appeared. Everyone, it seems, has opinions on favourite recordings, and I have been subjected to all too many of them since the article ran.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

September 19, 1992

There's Never Been a Finer Time For Fine Music: The Rules — and The Audience — For Classical Music Are Changing

The classical music industry is getting nervous. A new audience of listeners is coming to classical music in large numbers and they are questioning accepted rules of performance and presentation.

The industry is attempting to respond. From contents, to packaging and pricing, today's new releases are intended to invite listeners to the formerly exclusive world of "serious" music.

Performers are learning from the recording industry's success in this venture. Old ideas on what to play on a classical concert and how to present it are being questioned.

This past weekend, jazz great Bobby McFerrin and classical cellist Yo-Yo Ma put tradition to the test. Performing with the Detroit Symphony, the pair broke every

rule in the book. The audience, a crossover crowd of both jazz and classical fans, loved it.

In a challenge to both classical conventions and recording industry wisdom, the unlikely pair has just released their first joint recording, called Hush. The CD, a terrific success, contains original pieces by McFerrin as well as Bach, Vivaldi and a traditional folksong. There went the rules.

Crossovers between jazz and classical music are only the tip of the iceberg. The various recording labels are scrambling to meet the demands of their eclectic new audience.

Why should you care? Because the current flurry of recording industry activity has created the best CD buyer's market since the small discs first appeared. Both serious collectors and first-time buyers are delighting in the current state of affairs.

For the first-time buyer, the industry offers classical recordings packaged in a user-friendly format. Many first-time buyers are turned on to the classics through the soundtracks of popular films and via music they hear on television. Until recently, humming to a salesperson was the only sure way of identifying a tune and finding it on CD.

To the great relief of buyers and sales personnel alike, several record labels now offer packages of classical music used in films. Deutsche Grammophon's Film Classics and EMI's The Movies Go to the Opera and Madison Avenue Goes to the

Opera are among this genre. For specifics on which pieces are included and where you likely heard them, simply check the back of the package.

Of interest to both seasoned and novice buyers, many of the big record labels are now offering true bargains on remastered releases of wonderful recordings from the '50s, '60s and '70s. As a result, wonderful performances by great orchestras and conductors are available for a proverbial song, many for under \$10.

These vintage recordings were made before the advent of CDs and, in many cases, before the dawn of digital recording. To switch them to CD, the original recordings are converted to digital format, creating a new master copy. The initials ADD on a CD jacket indicate that the original recording was done in analog, not digital sound. DDD indicates a digital original.

The result of all of this digital fussing is a CD with much cleaner sound than was possible in the original recording. For the consumer, it means that the wonderful recordings of the pre-CD age are not lost in a high-tech shuffle.

If you take the cost of the original LP, and figure in inflation, the value of these re-releases, at under \$10, becomes apparent. Add to the equation the fact that CDs offer greater fidelity and durability than their vinyl ancestors and the pot sweetens. CDs also offer longer playing time than was possible on LPs. To fill the bonus space, many re-releases contain more music than the original LP held.

Various labels carry competing lines of these re-releases. CBS offers both a Masterworks series, a Greatest Hits collection and their famous Great Performances

recordings. Deutsche Grammophon's budget offering is Festival of Hits while the London label offers Weekend Classics. There are a host of others.

Many of these remastered gems feature some of the great orchestras of the world. Look for the Berlin Philharmonic under Herbert von Karajan, the Philadelphia Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski, the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Bernstein and the Cleveland Orchestra under George Szell.

Some of these recordings feature the more famous works of a single composer, others combine works by various composers. If you are trying classical music for the first time and are unsure where to start, CDs containing music of various composers are a great way to sample.

Be careful! Not all budget recordings are fabulous deals. As you begin building a collection, don't stray from the tried and true in terms of orchestras, conductors and labels.

Another approach to consider, if you are making a maiden voyage into the classics, is that of boxed sets. RCA's Chicago Symphony Orchestra: Centennial Collection is a great introductory set. The three CDs contain some works performed in their entirety and some single movements from large pieces. Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the orchestra, the set includes music of widely varying styles.

Another possible path into the classics is through excerpt recordings. Operas and ballets are lengthy works containing hours of music. Excerpt recordings feature the highlights, the best known selections, from a larger work. If you enjoy the music

from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* ballet, for instance, look for an excerpt recording rather than the entire ballet for starters.

Don't limit yourself to opera and orchestral music. Chamber music (pieces for small groups of players) is becoming increasingly popular and good recordings are everywhere. One of the more popular groups is The Canadian Brass. Boasting recordings of jazz, pop, classical, and Christmas carols, they offer something for nearly everyone.

The novice CD buyer should be aware of "original instrument," "period instrument" and "historical instrument" recordings. These are recordings made on instruments which are either antique, or replicas of those in use during the composer's life. While they are interesting to hear, the instruments sound a bit odd to our late twentieth-century ears. Many heated conversations have begun with talk of period instruments.

Short of carrying the phone number of the local CD reviewer in your pocket for in-store advice, where do you turn when you have questions about CDs? There are several useful sources of information.

The *Opus* catalogue provides basic information about CDs. Each listing contains information about performer, contents and label essentials of a single CD. For reviews of CDs, a useful source is the *Penguin Guide to Compact Discs*. The reviews, though often very brief, provide basic information about the contents and quality of a recording.

If all else fails, ask someone who enjoys the classics to give you some pointers. Classical music lovers have two great passions, music and their opinions about music. Above all else, enjoy the music.

[The following lists were included as side-bars to the above feature.]

10 CDs For The Beginning Collector

Kathleen Battle and Christopher Parkening
The Pleasures of Their Company
soprano and guitar
Angel CDC-47196

West Side Story Excerpts
composer Leonard Bernstein
Empire Brass Quintet
Telarc CD-80159

Antonio Vivaldi
The Four Seasons
The Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields — Neville Mariner
Argo 414 486-2

Johann Sebastian Bach
Brandenburg Concertos
English Chamber Orchestra — Benjamin Britten
London (Serenata) 425725-2 and 425726-2

The Movies Go To The Opera
EMI CDM-7695962

Aaron Copland
Fanfare for the Common Man, Appalachian Spring, Billy the Kid
CBS MK-42265

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No.5 conducted by Leonard Bernstein with remarks by Bernstein about the piece

Sony SXX 47645

Gustav Holst

Military Band Suites Nos. 1-2

also Handel's Royal Fireworks Music

Cleveland Orchestra Winds — Frederick Fennell

Telarc CD 80038

George Gershwin

Rhapsody in Blue

New York Philharmonic, Columbia Symphony — Leonard Bernstein

Sony MYK 42611

Gioacchino Rossini

Overtures

London Symphony Orchestra — Claudio Abbado

DG 419 869-2

10 Essential CDs For The Collector

Richard Strauss

Eine Alpensymphonie

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra — Herbert von Karajan

Deutsche Grammophon 400039-2

Dinu Lipatti, piano

assorted works

EMI CDH7 697999-2

Igor Stravinsky

The Rite of Spring

Chicago Symphony Orchestra — Sir Georg Solti

Decca 417 704-2

Johann Sebastian Bach
Brandenburg Concertos
English Chamber Orchestra — Benjamin Britten
London (Serenata) 425725-2 425726-2

Francis Poulenc
Gloria
New York Philharmonic — Leonard Bernstein
CBS MK 44710

George Gershwin
Rhapsody in Blue
New York Philharmonic and Columbia Symphony — Leonard Bernstein
Sony MYK 42611

Johannes Brahms
Symphony No. 4
Berlin Philharmonic — Herbert von Karajan
DG 423 205-2

Canadian Brass in Berlin
works by Pachelbel, Bach, Albinoni, etc.
CBS MK-39035

Franz Schubert
Die Winterreise
Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau with Gerald Moore
Deutsche Grammophon 415 187-2

Peter Tchaikovsky
Symphonies Nos. 4-6
Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra — Yevgeny Mravinsky
DG 419 745-2

The following article was written on the suggestion of
the Weekend Section editor. He was in the process of
purchasing his first CD player and felt that readers might be

interested in the fact that there still exists a vinyl vs. CD debate.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

January 16, 1993

Vinyl's Last Stand? New LPs May Be Hard to Find But Many People Refuse to Give Up on the Old Format

If there is a collection of old vinyl LPs somewhere in your home, you're in good company.

CDs may be the current format of choice, but most music lovers born before about 1970 have had a hard time parting with their old albums.

In the home of one prominent American music critic, for instance, a collection of thousands of LPs covers three walls of a large room. A CD collection of even greater numbers dominates an adjoining room.

There are several good reasons, beyond nostalgia, for hanging onto LPs. Most new releases these days are available only on CD and cassette. Trying to replace an existing LP collection with CDs while adding new recordings can be terribly expensive.

Added to the expense is frustration over not finding favorite recordings in CD format. Many wonderful performances by tremendous artists that were recorded on vinyl years ago are unlikely to reappear on CD.

Some LP recordings have been doomed to obscurity due to marketing concerns about limited buyer interest. But not all the blame can go to commercial concerns. In many cases, the original master copies of these old recordings have been lost or are too badly worn or damaged to be usable. A recent CD of music by the Rose Quartet contains so much crackle that the recording is unlistenable.

But even died-in-the-wool LP lovers have been forced in recent years to switch to CDs. As of the beginning of this month, EMI — the last of the large recording companies still producing vinyl — discontinued production of LPs. There are still a few small companies producing LPs, but they are disappearing fast. Many vinyl lovers are finding themselves searching for used recordings in good condition.

Why does vinyl still have such a hold on so many music lovers? Part of the reason is in the CD's rather checkered history.

Compact discs first hit the consumer market in 1983, hailed by the recording industry as being capable of presenting "perfect" sound reproduction. But they got a divided response from the start.

Critics and audiophiles doubted the claims and found the sound difference to be less striking than promised. Consumers were dismayed to find that their existing audio systems were being rendered obsolete.

At a local audio equipment retail store, an employee still sneers at CDs, calling them: "A marketing ploy by the industry...a new format that required new equipment and forced consumers to buy."

He, like many audiophiles, feels that the CD format does not offer enough of an advantage over LPs to have warranted the switch. Like many audio retailers, however, he won't go on record, since he can't afford to offend fans — or manufacturers — on either side of the debate.

Recorded in a digital format that converts music into binary code, CDs unquestionably offer greater dynamic range than their vinyl predecessors. LPs could handle limited decibel levels, and tended to distort true forte sound and to amplify soft sounds. Dynamic levels on CDs are so close to actual sound that a recent recording of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Ballet* has been issued with a warning on the label. It seems that the recorded gunshot and cannon fire can damage audio speakers if played too loudly.

Dust or scratches on LPs cause pops and ticks, while CDs present a clean sound, free of surface noise. But many audiophiles say CDs lack the warmth of LP sound and that their sound is too clean and sounds unnatural.

CDs have the advantage of durability over their vinyl cousins. One false move with a turntable tone arm and a favorite album is ruined. Vinyl discs also wear with each playing, imperceptibly at first, but more distinctly after repeated use. Since there is no contact between a CD and the laser which reads it, there is no wear from playing.

CDs are not prone to storage problems like their vinyl cousins. Albums stored in leaning position, instead of perfectly upright, will warp. Warped album surfaces caused distinct, irritating pitch fluctuations.

Although they are more durable than LPs, CDs can still be damaged. If you drop and scratch a CD, you will hear the result. Fingerprints or dust on a CD can also cause distortions. And, of course, CDs can be simply defective due to manufacturing flaws.

What CDs lose in comparison to LPs is the ability to reproduce subtle changes in sound color and delicate nuances. The loss is most noticeable when comparing original LP recordings and CD re-releases of the same material. The recordings of pianist Dinu Lipatti provide the perfect example.

Lipatti's famous recordings, issued in the 1950's, capture the great pianist's ability to bring subtle colors to individual voices within a piece of music. The CD releases of these recordings are clean and free of extraneous noise, but they do not capture his artistic nuances.

Some objections to CDs are not so easily supported. A Toronto area audiophile adheres to a little-known theory that digital, CD sound is detrimental to the nervous system. "Digital sound," he insists, "is debilitating and enervating." Analog sound, or so goes the theory, has no harmful effects.

Whatever the reasons, people are still seeking to add to LP collections. Fortunately, there are still some vinyl options available, mostly in used albums. The

manager of Dr. Disc, a record and CD vendor on Wilson Street in Hamilton, calls his store, "The last bastion of vinyl in Hamilton." About one quarter of the store's business is in vinyl.

Dr. Disc's vinyl stock is largely pop and rock, although they have a bin of classics and some good jazz as well. The store buys albums in good condition and also takes them in trade for CDs.

Bruce Surtees, whose voice is familiar from CJRT Radio's Records in Review, runs a record store in Toronto devoted exclusively to vinyl. Called The Classical Record Shop, the store stocks between 15,000 to 20,000 used discs. Most of the recordings are from Surtees' own collection. "I realised that I just wasn't listening to my LPs any more," he explains.

In addition, there are several New York City stores that specialize in LPs and will take orders. A Classical Record stocks 50,000 records and no CDs. Tower Records Clearance Outlet, in Greenwich Village, also carries a fair number of LPs. Both stores will take phone orders if the customer knows the proper title and label.

What about those home collections of albums tucked into corners? How long are we going to be able to find equipment on which to play our LPs?

There is no need for panic just yet. For the moment at least, turntables are still available in all price ranges.

Low end turntables, made by major audio manufacturers, run in the \$150 to \$200 range. If you are shopping for a reasonably priced stereo system, be prepared

extra for a turntable. Turntables are no longer included in most pre-packaged systems.

If you do own a turntable, or are planning on investing in one soon, check on the availability of replacement cartridges and/or needles. A Hamilton retailer noted that, "as the turntable market dwindles, cartridges and needles get harder to find."

After-market companies now produce universal cartridges that can be added to most turntables. But if you are happy with the sound of the cartridge you have been using, it's not a bad idea to pick up a couple of extras while they are still available.

High end stereo systems are a horse of a different color. You could spend between \$25,000 and \$60,000 on a top of the line system. One Hamilton dealer, who preferred not to be named, has customers who have paid \$20,000 just for their turntables.

Several Canadian companies — Classe Audio, Bryston, Sonic Frontiers and Mitener — are world-renowned for their high-end, top-dollar, audio equipment, much of it, including turntables, hand-built.

But in the real world, for the average listener with an average stereo, CDs are a handy, durable, easy to move (ever carried a box of LPs?) music format. If you have a record collection and are loathe to part with it, you need not worry. With a little care and planning, your LPs can provide music for years to come.

As the holidays approach, the *Spectator* tries to include consumer buying guides in various markets. I was assigned the daunting task of writing a two-fold article about Christmas music on CD and recorded music as Christmas gifts. As the story progressed, I went to my editor with the suggestion that we make it a three-fold article since there was so much new children's music on the market. The article then took shape as a large piece about Christmas music on CD, with two substantial side-bars on giving the gift of music and music for children.

Christmas music is not a genre with which I was well acquainted before writing this article. As a result, I found myself listening to countless CDs and gathering price and availability information on dozens of recordings. When the piece was nearly finished, I was asked if I would like to have a hand in preparing the art-work for the page. I agreed, largely because I felt it was an experience I should have. I set up a photo shoot and prepared a display of CDs and a small Christmas tree for the layout. It got everyone's approval. We made a "dummy page" which allowed us to fit the text of the article around the artwork. It looked as though it would work.

The dummy page I saw was on glossy paper. The photo had good definition and read quite well. When the final dummy was made up on newsprint, the image changed entirely. All of the definition of the glossy print was gone. The picture was muddled and hard to make out. We were all shocked and dismayed. In the space of a few hours, we had to come up with different artwork. The end result was quite nice, but I couldn't help but think about the time and effort that had been wasted on the original.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Edition

December 5, 1992

Say 'Merry Christmas' With the Gift Of Music

It's that time of year again: Time to hunt up the Christmas tree stand, hang the lights, and get down to the business of being festive.

Once the tree is up and glittering, stockings are hung, and egg nog poured, the holiday scene still needs one more touch — music. After facing the annual assault of carols everywhere you go, you want to choose holiday music for the home with care.

What better place to begin than with the traditional **Nutcracker Ballet** music by Tchaikovsky? The Nutcracker appears in several different formats. The full ballet is 80 to 90 minutes long but the significantly shorter Nutcracker Suite was arranged

by Tchaikovsky and includes many of the major sections of the ballet. There are also some excerpt recordings available that feature some of the most popular tunes from the ballet.

One of the new Nutcracker recordings this year was done by the London Symphony Orchestra, under Sir Charles Mackerras, for the ballet motion picture. Mackerras captures the charm and magic that make this music such a favorite. The Toronto Symphony, under Andrew Davis, offers a lovely recording of The Nutcracker Suite.

No holiday list would be complete without mentioning Handel's **Messiah**. The oratorio can be found in the complete version as well as various collections of excerpts. There is the added choice of period or modern instruments.

The Philips label offers a fine, period instrument recording of Messiah by the English Baroque Soloists and the Monteverdi Choir under the direction of John Elliot Gardner. A fine performance on contemporary instruments is found on the Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Sir Georg Solti recording.

Now, on to carols! Among the opera glitterati taking their turn at Yule tunes are Jessye Norman, Placido Domingo and Kathleen Battle.

Christmas With Placido Domingo has been around for a while and can still be found on LP (if you hunt) for a great price, as well as on CD and cassette. In addition to familiar carols, Domingo adds a traditional Spanish carol, Irving Berlin's White Christmas, and a rendition of O Holy Night that is unforgettable.

Kathleen Battle's **A Christmas Celebration** is a sampling of Christmas favorites, recorded with the Orchestra of St. Luke's under Leonard Slatkin, the New York Choral Artists and the Boy's Choir of Harlem. Battle is simply exquisite.

Jessye Norman's new Philips release, **Jessye Norman at Notre Dame**, is a rather different approach. This is a live recording of less familiar pieces. She includes three tremendously moving Spirituals, as well as some Bach, Brahms and Gounod. The concert, accompanied by the Orchestre de l'Opéra de Lyon under Lawrence Foster, is a musical treat.

Quink — and no, that's not a typo — is the name of a wonderfully fresh vocal ensemble. They have released a disc entitled **Carols From Around The World**, featuring a cappella arrangements of everything from J.S. Bach to Charles Ives. They are a tight, polished ensemble that is able to switch periods and styles easily. Their sensitive interpretations make this understated recording a welcome change from the pomp and sentiment of many holiday recordings.

Robert Shaw's **The Many Moods Of Christmas**, with the Atlanta Symphony Chorus and Orchestra, contains several medleys of favorite carols and has been a favorite for some years. It ranges from a rousing Hark the Herald Angels Sing, to a hushed lute accompanying What Child Is This, offering a well-rounded selection.

Christmas With The Pops by Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops includes appearances by Rosemary Clooney, Sherrill Milnes, Doc Severinson, Toni Tennille and choirs of children, adults, brass and handbells.

In the good deal/good recording category, look for **We Wish You A Merry Christmas**, on the Philips label. This set of three CDs contains many favorite carols as well as excerpts from *The Nutcracker* and pieces by Bach and Handel. All this for under \$25.

Christmas With the Canadian Brass is an exciting collection of carols performed with organist John O'Grady on the organ of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

The King's College Choir of Cambridge offers several wonderful choral collections of holiday music, including **On Christmas Night**, **Carols From King's**, and **Christmas Music From King's**. These are among my favorite holiday recordings.

[The following two sections were set into the article as sidebars.]

Boxed Sets Make a Wonderful, Classical Present

Looking for the perfect gift for someone who has everything? Try the gift of music.

There is a huge selection of classical music on CD and cassette to choose from. If the recording is not the perfect choice, most record stores are good about exchanges, especially if the shrink-wrap is still intact on the recording.

Boxed sets are all the rage in the record stores this holiday season. The good news is that many are reasonable priced (under \$30 for five CDs) and a lot of them are great quality collections. Take a look at some of these sets:

The Baroque Experience — Christopher Hogwood and the Academy of Ancient Music offer a collection of Baroque music, well played on period instruments.

The Mozart Experience — A five-CD collection of Mozart's music played by the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields under Sir Neville Marriner. It contains bits of everything from symphonies and chamber music to excerpts from *The Marriage of Figaro*.

The Strauss Experience — Five CDs of the music of Johann Strauss, played by the Vienna Philharmonic under Willi Boskovsky. These vintage recordings date from the 1950's and 60's.

The Karajan Festival — A five-CD set of von Karajan conducting the Berlin Philharmonic during the 1960's and 70's. The set includes a disc each of German, French, Italian, Hungarian and Nordic composers.

Two recordings include all nine of Beethoven's symphonies. **Beethoven Nine Symphonies** is an exciting new recording by Nicolaus Harnoncourt and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, that won the Gramophone Record of the Year, among many other prestigious awards.

Beethoven Nine Symphonies is the famous 1963 recording by the Berlin Philharmonic under von Karajan, now in a reasonably-priced, boxed CD set.

Your Hundred Best Tunes, Volumes 1 and 2 — These two boxes are great introductory sets for newcomers to the classics. There are four CDs in each set, each

set containing a collection of favorite classics recorded by some of the world's most noted orchestras and performers.

Leonard Bernstein: The Final Concert — Bernstein's last public appearance, in which he conducts the Boston symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood.

Hush — jazz vocalist and composer Bobby McFerrin and cellist Yo Yo Ma team up on this jazzy, upbeat, completely different, runaway bestseller.

Songs Of The Cat — Author and radio personality Garrison Keillor and soprano Frederica von Stade transpose folk and classical tunes into the key of cat. A sure winner for cat, Keillor or von Stade lovers.

Billie Holiday fans will be thrilled to hear of Polygram's new 10 CD collection of the great singer's recordings. The set contains virtually everything Holiday recorded between 1945 and '59, including unedited recording sessions — complete with stops and starts. There are only 15,000 copies available worldwide, 500 in Canada.

Take a look at classical videos as well. From **Essential Opera**, a collection of famous opera selections in performance, to concert videos and entire operas on tape, there is a huge selection. Prices begin at \$19.99.

Also worth checking into are operas on laser disc. The Metropolitan Opera's laser disc recording of Wagner's **Der Ring Des Nibelungen** is nothing short of monumental.

Canada Leads The Field In Music For Children

Tapes and CDs are no longer just gifts for adults. The children's recording market has been growing steadily, and this year there are some wonderful titles to choose from.

Canada has long been a leader in the children's recording business. An example of these Canadian creations is the immensely popular (with adults as well as children) **Beethoven Lives Upstairs**. The children's video and audio recording is the brain-child of Susan Hammond, a Toronto-based pianist and mother of two.

Beethoven Lives Upstairs tells the tale of Beethoven's work on his Ninth Symphony through a young boy. The video, heavily spiced with Beethoven's music, is beautifully set and costumed, and done with special attention paid to period accuracy. In addition, it is engaging and touching.

Hammond didn't stop with the engaging Beethoven saga. She has produced three more videos, all part of the Classical Kids series. The series includes **Mr. Bach Comes To Call**, **Mozart's Magic Fantasy**, and **Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery**. In addition to the videos, audio recordings are also available in a boxed set or separately.

The audio recordings contain all of the dialogue, music and sound effects of the videos. Listening to them is a lot like hearing a well done radio show.

Hammond's most recent release is a delightful, creative audio recording called **Daydreams and Lullabies**, that follows a family in old London through the nursery,

the park, the streets of the city, and finally back home to bed. The recording combines classical music and poetry, including poetry written and performed by children.

Also made in Toronto are **Leonard Lion's Childhood**

Favorites. Sold on the Polygram label, there are six recordings now available on cassette or CD, with two more to follow in the spring.

The concept was developed by Bonnie Taylor, a Toronto business woman, mother of two and classical music lover. She noticed that her own children responded to some classics and not others. She also noticed that their interest would fade long before an entire piece had been played.

As a result, she put together brief excerpts from the classics with narration from children and from "conductor" Leonard Lion. Each recording has a theme: Traveltime, Sillytime, Playtime, Dancetime, Bedtime, and Gymtime. They're a great way to expose children to classical music.

While visiting friends recently, I stumbled upon a recording called **The Kelsey Tape**. It is part of the Personalized Name Tunes Series by Kidselebration in New York City. The little girl I saw with this tape was delighted by it. Every song on the tape included her name. In her eyes, it was her tape, singing just to her.

The Kidselebration project was also begun by a concerned parent, Peter Roth. The delightful tapes are available in 292 names, with more on the way. They can be ordered for about \$10 from Centerpoint Marketing in Toronto, (416) 513-0780.

And a final recommendation is Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, joined by Bob McGrath, Patti Page and Mel Tormé on **Young At Heart**, a new Telarc recording. Listeners of all ages respond to these light tunes. It includes such favorites as "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing," a medley of famous cartoon themes, and "Young at Heart".

An important part of the function of a music critic at a local paper is to promote the arts within the community she or he serves. Our media-oriented society tends to consider events that are covered by the media as important. Those not covered are not important.

When the Hamilton Philharmonic launched its 1993/1994 season, the *Spectator* sent me to cover the event. The assignment included writing two articles on the season. One article appeared the following day, to avoid being scooped by the local radio and television stations, whose reporters also covered the event. The other piece, substantially longer, appeared in the following Weekend Section, complete with a side-bar listing highlights of the upcoming season.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

Thursday, February 4, 1993

Kitt, Jones Slated For Pops Next Season

Eartha Kitt, the Kingston Trio, Shirley Jones and Peter Nero are coming to town next year.

The reason for this parade of stars is that Akira Endo, music director designate of the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, is a good listener.

Endo, who officially takes the helm of the HPO in the fall, has been listening to people in Hamilton for months.

He has asked the orchestra members what they would like to play and what they would rather not play. He has also asked subscribers what they would like to hear.

Their answers are reflected in every concert of the 1993-94 season, which was unveiled yesterday.

And what a season it will be. From classics to pops to candlelight concerts, Endo feels "Every program will offer something you might like."

It seems that pops fans would like to see more name performers on the pops series. Say hello to Kitt, Nero and company.

Hamilton likes Canadian music. Knowing that, Endo has been listening to contemporary Canadian music.

The conductor, who has a tremendous interest in this century's compositions, excitedly referred to Canadian music as "a whole new world of music."

Endo plans to do a lot more listening. He will be spending time at McMaster University and Mohawk College, listening to what the young people of the community would like to hear from their orchestra.

Meanwhile, there is a lot of good listening in store for Hamilton music lovers.

Look for principal players of the HPO to be featured as soloists. Trumpeter Larry Larson, oboist Jon Peterson, and violinist Lance Elbeck are scheduled for next season.

Look for creative programming mixing traditional favorites and exciting newer works.

Schedules for next season are available now. Plan ahead and plan to enjoy.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

February 6, 1993

The Endo Era Begins

Did you know that the Hamilton Philharmonic is about to celebrate its 110th birthday?

The orchestra knows, and they are planning to celebrate the anniversary all next season.

The season that will start in October, announced this week, will also be a celebration of the arrival of Akira Endo, the orchestra's new Music Director. Endo was on hand Wednesday morning for the announcement.

Endo, who will officially take the helm in the fall, has been hard at work for months, planning the exciting, varied 1993-94 season.

A newcomer to Canadian contemporary music, Endo has spent long hours at the Canadian Music Centre in Toronto. He has been studying scores of Canadian pieces written after 1985. There have been yet more hours spent listening to recordings of Canadian music.

Maestro Endo's listening has not been limited to recordings. He has been conversing with orchestra members and patrons to get a sense of what they would like to see on future programs.

The result is what the Maestro refers to as "typical Endo programming." He hopes to offer "something you might like in every program."

Endo confesses to indulging himself just a bit in next year's programming. On the Oct. Classics concert, which will begin the new season, the Maestro has included Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 (Pathétique). The piece is scheduled, in part, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the composer's death.

It also holds special personal significance for Endo. It is one of the first pieces of classical music his father introduced him to. He was five years old at the time.

Endo plans to feature some of the "in house" talent of the Philharmonic. To that end, principal players Lance Elbeck (concert master), Larry Larson (trumpet), and Jon Peterson (oboe) will play concertos with the orchestra next season.

From outside the fold will come such names as Jon Kimura Parker, Jean-Alexander Sarrazin, Rivka Golani, Andre LaPlante, and Catherine Robbin to appear on the Classics series. In addition, the orchestra will feature a new name — the winner of this year's prestigious Naumberg Violin Competition.

When he was talking to patrons, Endo found that Hamilton would like to see more known-name, star performers on the Pops series. So, next season's stage will be graced by Eartha Kitt, Peter Nero, Shirley Jones, and the Kingston Trio.

Endo is looking forward to the more informal Candlelight Series at the Royal Botanical Gardens Centre in Burlington. He sees this as his opportunity to give the audience some tidbits and personal insights on an evening's program — as well as a chance to tell a joke or two.

Endo has already offered some insights into the importance of the Hamilton Philharmonic to the community. The desire and ability to support an orchestra says a lot about a city.

During Endo's years with the Austin Symphony, the IBM corporation contemplated locating a major plant in the Texas city. One of the three factors that heavily influenced their decision was the existence of the Austin Symphony.

The members of the HPO, who have no doubts about the orchestra's importance, are thrilled about the new conductor and the new season. They praise his energy and connection with the orchestra in rehearsal and concert.

Their enthusiasm was underscored recently by a fund-raising drive among the musicians. The effort, spearheaded by principal oboist Jon Peterson, saw the players reach into their own pockets to collect \$5,500 for the HPO's corporate fund-raising drive.

Maestro Endo knows that the orchestra needs to reach a greater percentage of the Hamilton community. To that end, he plans to spend time at McMaster University and Mohawk College, asking Hamilton's young people what they would like to hear from their HPO.

The Endo Era of the Hamilton Philharmonic promises to be a colorful, exciting time for Hamilton. Endo is aiming to please, and is anxious to hear what people think. Come out and see for yourself. Schedules are available through the HPO box office at 526-6555.

Not all feature articles are as serious as the previous pieces. In mid-February I "pitched" an article on comical classical CDs (to "pitch" an article is to sell it to an editor, to convince the editor that it is worth publishing). The idea was well-received and I was given a publication date of March 27.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

March 27, 1993

**Classic Comedy: Meet Some Musical Legends Who are So Awful that They are
Outrageously Funny**

If you have ever been in downtown Hamilton's Sam's record store on a Friday night, you may have heard some strange sounds wafting out of the classical department.

It seems that they clear dawdling partons from the store by playing a record that has become a legend in the world classical music.

The recording is *The Glory of the Human Voice*?????. Its "star" is one Florence Foster Jenkins. Appearing on the same recording are the equally curious Jenny Williams and Thomas Burns.

So who are these people and why are they such musical legends? They are legends simply because they are incredibly bad: no, they are awful — so awful that they are outrageously funny.

As to who they are:

Jenkins was a New York City socialite who fancied herself a singer. She had the means to rent the finest recital halls in town for her recitals, and the social clout to fill them. Her captive audiences were "treated" to one concert per year. One year, in a fit of benevolence, she deigned to cut a record for posterity. Some years

later, the recording surfaced and was released to a stunned public. It remains in print today, in cassette and CD format.

Thomas Burns and Jenny Williams are more elusive characters. There is little information on them or their recording. Word has it that someone was cleaning out the RCA archives and stumbled across their recording. It was too funny to pass up so they released it. While Williams is simply annoying, Burns is the comical genius of the duo. He sings with the inflection and sensitivity of a Brooklyn cab driver.

Within the world of classical music there have been a few brave souls who have trod their own paths, making tremendous sport at the expense of music. Some of these performers have had such great success in the field of music that they have never returned to the high road of serious performing.

One of them, Peter Schickele, has won four Grammy awards in recent years for his inventive comedy/classical recordings. Schickele has not limited himself to the comedic, however. He continues to write and perform "serious" music as well. He has provided songs and arrangements for Joan Baez, Buffy Saint-Marie and Broadway shows, including *Oh Calcutta*.

If Schickele's name didn't ring any bells, how about the name P.D.Q. Bach? In the early '60s Schickele invented a sort of alter ego in this fictitious character, whom he claims was the 21st child of Johann Sebastian Bach. In Schickele's tongue-in-cheek retelling of music history, Bach's son P.D.Q. has been overlooked by

history. It is only through Professor Schickele's scholarship and tireless struggle that the dubious musical efforts of P.D.Q. Bach have come to light.

In fact, Schickele has invented the hapless, less-than gifted composer as a tool through which he takes liberal pokes at the conventions of classical music and musicology. There are no sacred cows in the musical world of Peter Schickele.

In his good-natured mockery of music, Schickele writes hilarious pieces under the name of P.D.Q. Bach. What makes these pieces so funny is that Schickele can actually write music. He knows just how far he can take a musical joke and still remain funny.

Included on the early P.D.Q. album releases in the mid '70s, were such gems as the oratorio *The Seasonings* (S. 1 1/2 tsp.) and the *Unbegun Symphony*. The *Unbegun Symphony* contained not a single original melody — but it did contain such favorites as *Hark the herald Angels Sing* and the *Marine's Hymn*.

Schickele's latest release, entitled *Music For An Awful Lot Of Winds And Percussion*, won a Grammy in 1992 for best comedy album. Among the highlights of the Telarc-label recording are *Six Contrary Dances* (including *Allegro*, but not too mucho, and *Moving right alongo*), and *Last Tango in Bayreuth*. The tango, played by an unlikely quartet of bassoons, places some of Richard Wagner's most poignant themes over a continuous tango beat.

So who is this guy? He is a classically trained musician who took a sharp left turn somewhere along the way.

After studies at Swarthmore, Juilliard and the Aspen Music School, he began to draw upon his sense of the comedic and combine it with what he knew best — music. P.D.Q. Bach hit the stage of New York City's Town Hall in 1965. Since then, Schickele has become the best known American musical humorist. His pieces have been played, with suitable explanations, by performing ensembles throughout North America.

Schickele's recordings are available these days on two different labels. His earlier albums, including the *Wurst of P.D.Q. Bach* and *The Stoned Guest*, are available on the Vanguard label.

Among the more recent releases, on Telarc, are *1712 Overture & Other Musical Assaults*, *Oedipus Tex and Other Musical Calamities*, and *WPTP Talkity-Talk Radio*. The *1712 Overture* contains a blatant rip-off of Tchaikovsky — sort of an *1812 Overture* gone bad — and *Einstein on the Fritz*, in which he spoofs minimalism. The *Oedipus Tex* disc features Schickele rapping to a classical beat.

The appeal of Schickele's musical goofery is that no matter how limited your knowledge of classical music may be, you will still find these recordings outrageously funny. Schickele's liberal use of fog horns, slide whistles, puns and anything else that pops to mind, make it simply funny music.

In addition to his musical credits, Schickele has also written *The Definitive Biography of P.D.Q. Bach*, a book that takes aim at musicology (the study of music history) and hits it squarely between the eyes.

He has also taken to video production with *The Abduction of Figaro*. Suffice it to say that opera may never be the same.

Peter Schickele is hardly the only classical musical comedian out there. Anna Russell, one of the more famous musical cut-ups, got her start in Canada. She and her mother fled London at the outbreak of the Second World War and settled in Toronto. Russell entertained the troops over the radio until Sir Ernest MacMillan, then director of the Toronto Symphony, discovered her special brand of comedy.

Russell was trained as an opera singer, but found little success in her performing endeavors. She built a career of lampooning opera and singers. Her 22-minute analysis of Wagner's entire *The Ring of the Nibelungs* is fabulous.

Her whirlwind tour of the musical and mythical epic contains some liberal paraphrasing of the four operas as well as hilarious musical excerpts. Somewhere into the Wagner diatribe she stops and insists, "I'm not making this up, you know."

One cannot discuss comedy in classical music without stumbling over pianist Victor Borge. Borge is most remembered for installing seat belts on his piano bench.

What is less widely known is that the pianist began a classical career at the age of 13. When the Second World War forced his exodus from Denmark, he arrived in the United States. After several years of terrible struggle, he found a gig warming up the studio audiences before Bing Crosby's radio broadcasts.

In 1953 he created his one-man-show, which played on Broadway. An updated version of the show, which was the biggest hit of the 1953-54 season, is

currently available on video. Borge's gentle humor and musical expertise have been described as "fantastic excursions into the irrelevant."

Borge's wit and music are available on CD through Sony Music. The riotous disc is entitled *Victor Borge Live (!)*. He has also written two books on music history as it may never be told again. Their titles are *My Favorite Intermissions* and *My Favorite Comedies in Music*. Both are Barnes and Noble books.

These classical/farcical recordings can be found in either the comedy or classical sections of your local record store. Bring one home and settle in for a good, hearty laugh.

Section II

Compact Disc Reviews

In August, 1992, as the *Spectator* began planning for the new Weekend Section, the section's editor approached me about writing a fairly regular CD review column. His idea was that it would contain reviews of newly released classical CDs. The centre-spread article entitled **There's Never Been a Finer Time for Music**, which launched the CD review column, is included in Section I of this document.

The first step in beginning the column was to contact various CD distributors to announce our plans and express our desire to include reviews of their products. Once those contacts were established, I began receiving new release information as well as promotional copies of newly released CDs. The understanding is that tear sheets will be sent to the various distributors when their product's review appears in print. The term "tear sheet" refers to the page of the newspaper or magazine on which the review appears.

The tear sheet not only shows a distributor that a review of their product actually appeared in print, but how it was positioned on the page as well as where it was located within the section of the paper. Promotional copies of CDs are sent with the understanding that the majority of the discs will be reviewed. If too few of the promotional items are reviewed, the distributor will stop providing them.

Writing for a regular audience about a limited subject matter presents a different set of problems from those encountered in writing concert reviews. Concert reviews can vary as much as the events they describe. The concert venue, staging and all factors of a live performance are included in the critic's perception of the event.

In writing a regular column, it is assumed that the writer is dealing with a repeat audience. In the case of concert review writing, the audience is assumed to differ. Concert-goers tend to read reviews of concerts they have attended, or in which they have a particular interest. CD collectors are more likely to read about all new releases in their area of interest. In addition, it is far more difficult to vary vocabulary and approach in dealing with recorded music, all of which is presented in largely

the same format, than in dealing with concerts which vary widely in presentation.

The following reviews appeared in my CD review column, in *The Hamilton Spectator's* Weekend Section. In many cases, the paper had space to add CD cover art. The cover art is important as a visual hook that catches the eye of the reader as well as that of the CD distributors.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

Glenn Gould Celebrated

Saturday, September 19, 1992

Gould, Gould, and more Gould.

September 1992 will be remembered by Ontario music lovers as Glenn Gould month.

Ten years after the legendary pianist's death, marking what would have been his 60th birthday, Sony Classical has released a mammoth collection of Gould audio and video recordings. In addition, Toronto plays host to a five-day International Glenn Gould Conference beginning Wednesday, while the Necessary Angel Theatre Company of Toronto presents the world premier of *Glenn*, a play about the pianist.

With tremendous ado, Sony has released Volume One of the new Glenn Gould collection. Consisting of 17 CDs and six laser discs (or 12 VHS tapes), Volume One

is merely the tip of the iceberg. Over the next two years, Sony intends to release the most comprehensive edition of recordings ever dedicated to the Canadian pianist.

Sony's collection contains the complete CBS catalogue of Gould's recordings as well as the entire radio and television material which Gould recorded for CBC. Sony includes in its collection a bit of everything, from the sublime to the ridiculous. They offer tremendous performances with Maureen Forrester, Yehudi Menuhin and others, as well as glimpses of Gould's imaginary identities (Karl-Heinz Klopweisser, Myron Chianti and Sir Nigel Twitt-Thornwaite). There is something here for fans of every facet of Gould's career.

Bandyng about terms like "20 bit sound quality" and "SUPER-BIT MAPPING," Sony explains that these are not mere re-releases, but restored and remastered presentations of the original recordings. The fact is that the sound is quite good. The recordings contain a tremendous depth and color of sound. It is often hard to remember that some of these recordings date back to the 1950s.

It is in the recordings from the '50s that we hear some tremendously soulful Gould. The Art of Glenn Gould, a sampler disc of the new release, contains the Largo from Beethoven's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 1 in C Major, Op. 15. This is tender Gould, coaxing soft colors from the instrument in exquisite phrasing. This early Gould is often forgotten in the shuffle of his later, somewhat pedantic recordings.

In all, the new Glenn Gould Edition (the audio recordings) and the Glenn Gould Collection (video) are a fascinating look at this enigmatic performer. The controversy over his life and music continues in full force 10 years after his death.

For a closer look at the life and work of Gould, consider attending the Glenn Gould conference in Toronto beginning on Wednesday. For more information, call 1-800-363-1199.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

Bernstein's Final Appearance is a Superb Recording

Saturday, October 3, 1992

Bernstein: The Final Concert

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein

Deutsche Grammophon 431 768-2

If it is possible for an orchestra to "win one for the Gipper," the event is captured on this new Deutsche Grammophon release. Bernstein's long, fond association with the Tanglewood Music Festival came to an end with this emotionally charged performance on August 19, 1990. The concert proved to be the revered composer/conductor's final public appearance.

Bernstein had been in poor health prior to the concert, and there was grave doubt as to whether he would be able to conduct the performance. He decided to

conduct only two-thirds of the afternoon's program, Benjamin Britten's *Four Sea Interludes* and Ludwig van Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7*.

Recorded in the Tanglewood Music Shed, before a capacity crowd, the recording instantly captures the emotional intensity of the afternoon's performance. The orchestra, a pivotal part of Bernstein's association with Tanglewood, is at their best in this powerful performance. Their superb ensemble playing and exquisitely phrased solo passages bring Bernstein's uncharacteristically restrained interpretations to life.

The *Four Sea Interludes* are, in this performance, a study in clarity. Bernstein avoids the common temptation to overdramatize these pieces. He allows Britten's evocative score to paint the stark vistas and ominously powerful seascapes which inspired the work.

Throughout the Beethoven, Bernstein takes broad tempos and few liberties. The effect is one of simple elegance and absolute grandeur. The orchestra gives its all in this tremendously moving performance.

Bernstein was exhausted by this performance, at times leaning on the podium rail for support. The performance contained none of the usual "Lenny Dance" that marked his unique conducting style. The music, however, is Bernstein through and through.

Igor Stravinsky

The Rite of Spring, Pulcinella Suite

Atlanta Symphony, Yoel Levy conductor

Telarc CD-80266

It was nearly 80 years ago that the premiere of *The Rite of Spring* caused rioting in the theatre. Early 20th-century audiences were unprepared for the shock of this driving music, evocative of ancient rituals, and full of complex rhythms and unusual orchestral sounds. They were equally unprepared for the unorthodox choreography which accompanied it.

Audiences today, seasoned by decades of composer's experiments, no longer find this music jarring. We accept it as an exciting work, which draws the listener from idea to idea, never relaxing its hold on the audience's interest.

Yoel Levi and the Atlanta Symphony present a clean, accurate reading of the 1947 version of the ballet. The players revel in the rich textures and colors of Stravinsky's score.

It tends to be a cool, rather detached performance. Stravinsky's primal themes demand a less restrained approach to be truly successful.

The *Pulcinella Suite* is an eight movement concert suite which Stravinsky arranged from his music for the ballet by the same name. This is an intimate work for small orchestra.

Levi and the players bring a warm, full sound and a fresh energetic feel to the work. They glide through the eight dance movements as though dancing themselves, capturing the unique flavor of each section and then spinning off into the next dance.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

October 10, 1992

William Alywn Recordings a Pleasant Surprise

Richard Hickox conducts the City of London Sinfonia

Chandos 9065

Chandos 8866

Richard Hickox with the London Symphony Orchestra

Chandos 8902

Just when you think you've heard it all, there comes a complete surprise.

Composer William Alwyn (1905-1985), recognized in North America for film scores like Disney's *The Swiss Family Robinson*, came as such a surprise.

Best known for his music for more than 60 films, the British composer's "secret life" as a painter, poet, flutist and symphonic composer is far less well known. The Chandos label is attempting to change this with their project of recording Alwyn's works.

Alwyn's music is largely tonal. Hardly unaware of the atonal works of his contemporaries, he makes use of atonality long enough to add spark and color to his works, always returning to a familiar tonality in fairly short order.

The first of these three discs contains Alwyn's Three Concerti Grossi and the premier recording of his Oboe Concerto. Written during long nights of air raid warden duty in World War II London, the concerto capitalizes on the haunting qualities of the oboe's sound. British oboist Nicholas Daniel adorns the work with his rich, throaty sound, singing through long phrases and wide leaps.

Concerto Grosso No. 1 was written for the composer's "friends in the London Symphony." Each member of the orchestra serves as both soloist and ensemble member. Concerto Grosso No. 2, for strings only, features a string quartet contrasted with the full orchestra. The third Concerto Grosso features the orchestra's brass, woodwinds, and strings in successive movements.

Shortly before his death, Alwyn was asked which of his compositions he felt was the most beautiful, he responded without hesitation, "My harp concerto." Titled *Lyra Angelica*, this is an exquisite piece of music. Alwyn makes full use of the range of the harp, and harpist Rachel Masters gives an unforgettable performance.

Also featured on this disc is Nicholas Daniel in *Autumn Legend* for Cor Anglais and String Orchestra. Alwyn's *Pastoral Fantasia* for Viola and String Orchestra and *Tragic Interlude* for Two Horns and String Orchestra round out the

recording. The City of London Sinfonia, a tight ensemble, plays with tremendous musicality.

The final disc combines Alwyn's Symphony No. 4, Elizabethan Dances and Festival March. The Fourth Symphony is the final work of a quartet of symphonies designed as a cycle, a format which Alwyn hoped would have an impact upon the evolution of symphonic writing. Beginning with a classically constructed first symphony, the cycle progresses through musical styles, culminating in his unique tonal treatment of the twelve note scale.

Believing that "all symphonies are dramas — dramas of contrast and emotion...", Alwyn intended the symphonies to be capable of standing on their own, yet integral parts of a greater whole. Conveying the composer's sense of drama and contrast, Richard Hickox guides the London Symphony Orchestra through murmuring atonal episodes which evolve into elegant, unabashedly tonal phrases.

Elizabethan Dances makes expansive use of traditional dance forms and rhythms, incorporating the timbres and dynamic capabilities of a modern large orchestra into these Elizabethan melodies.

Alwyn's works are well worth a knowing. Take special note of the art work on the covers of all three discs — the artist was the composer, William Alwyn.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

Three Boxed Sets are Worthwhile Experiences

November 21, 1992

If you have been steering away from CD boxed sets because of their high prices, it's time to take a new look at them. Recent releases on the London, Philips and L'Oiseau Lyre labels are putting great quality recordings into boxed sets at a very reasonable price.

On a release titled *The Mozart Experience*, Philips offers five CDs of selected great works by the famous composer. The recordings were originally cut between 1971 and 1989 by the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields under the baton of Sir Neville Marriner.

These are beautifully done recordings. Marriner and the Academy give impeccable, tasteful performances. The set contains a well-chosen sampling of some of Mozart's great works.

Included are Symphonies No. 40 and 41 (Jupiter), two piano concertos performed by Alfred Brendel, the Flute and Harp Concerto and *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*. The final disc contains excerpts from *The Marriage of Figaro* with Ruggero Raimondi, Lucia Popp and Jose van Dam.

If there is any complaint to be made about the set it is the brevity of the album notes. A single booklet is included with the set that provides a brief outline of the composer's life and places the included works into perspective of his overall output.

The grace and elegance of Strauss' music is still captivating today, nearly 100 years after his death. For lovers of Johann Strauss, the London label has released a boxed CD collection called The Strauss Experience. The set contains 72 selections of the composer's Viennese waltzes, polkas, galops and marches. These vintage recordings of the Vienna Philharmonic date from the '50s, '60s and '70s.

No matter how careful the remastering, recordings of this age are going to have a few sound quirks. These tend to have a slight hiss. The other concern with The Strauss Experience is that it offers a lot of very similar music. Unless Johann Strauss is a particular favorite, this may be too much of a good thing.

The third set worth mentioning is The Baroque Experience, featuring Christopher Hogwood and the Academy of Ancient Music. Unlike the other sets, the baroque edition is a collection of various composers of the period.

J.S. Bach, Vivaldi, Telemann and C.P.E. Bach are among the great composers featured. Played on period instruments, this is a fabulous collection of baroque classics. Hogwood and his players give spirited performances, filled with the dignity and character of the period.

The best news about these sets is that they are priced under \$30. At less than 6 dollars per CD, these are terrific bargains.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

December 19, 1992

New Recordings to Add to Your Christmas Music Collection

Christmas With Thomas Hampson

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra

Hugh Wolff conducting

Thomas Hampson is fast becoming a fixture in the vocal world. Since the young baritone's 1986 Metropolitan opera debut, he has scored successes around the world. In 1990, the New York Times predicted that he, "Is surely fated to be the Don Giovanni of his generation."

Hampson's rich sound and impeccable musical taste bring life and color to this splendid recording. He includes an international selection of traditional carols as well as several secular holiday tunes.

He brings full-voiced power to carols like Joy To The World and Adeste Fidelis. He lightens and thins his voice to croon White Christmas and a touching Stille Nacht.

Hugh Wolff and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra are a tight, refined ensemble. Their support of Hampson is flawless, their sound superb. In a market flooded with singers taking to the Christmas carol genre, this is a recording that is worth having.

Adeste Fidelis

Louis Quilico, Gino Quilico

The Toronto Children's Chorus

Judy Loman, Jean Ashworth Bartle, and member of the Toronto Symphony.

Here is another vocal recording of Christmas music, but with a much broader focus. Father-and-son team Louis and Gino Quilico are a large part of this recording — but certainly not the only thing happening. They are featured on just half of the pieces presented. The remaining numbers feature the Toronto Children's Chorus, harp and various instrumental ensembles.

The Quilico duo, claiming Canada as home, made Metropolitan Opera history as the first father and son ever to appear on the Met stage together. Both are outstanding on this recording.

Judy Loman, principal harp with the Toronto Symphony, reveals herself as a respectable soloist and chamber musician. She brings lovely colors of sound from the harp.

The Children's Chorus is no rag-tag ensemble. These kids are a precision troupe. Their pitch, diction and sound are clear, polished and controlled.

The disc includes international favorites and some lovely less familiar carols.

Noël, Noël: French Christmas Music, 1200-1600

The Boston Camerata, Joel Cohen

Early music fans will be delighted at both the quality of this recording and the selection of music offered. Early music novices will find this disc a perfect introduction to the genre.

The Boston Camerata is a thoroughly refined, artful ensemble. Their lively, clean readings of this delicate repertoire are a delightful contrast to the usual Christmas fare.

Selections on the disc are arranged to provide variety and contrast, leading the listener through music that is new territory for many classical music lovers. Instrumental additions are colorful and fascinating.

The album notes are mainly devoted to translations of works presented and notes as to the original context of the pieces. The notes are an interesting, educational read.

In early February, 1993 the distributor for Warner Music called to inform me that she was sending me a new release that she would really appreciate my writing about in the near future. As is usually the case with recordings that have been released in Europe before they appear on this continent, she sent copies of various reviews as well as a listing of awards the recording

had won and where it stood on various charts. The new release was Henryk Górecki's *Symphony No. 3*. I listened to it, decided that it really was worth writing about and was able to include the review in the next Weekend magazine.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

Crossover Hit Symphony Is Hauntingly Unforgettable

February 20, 1993

Henryk Gorecki, Symphony No. 3

Dawn Upshaw, soprano

The London Sinfonietta, David Zinman, conductor

Elektra 79282-2

There is something curious going on in the British recording industry, and it has just migrated to these shores.

The curiosity is a newly released recording of Symphony No. 3 by Henryk Gorecki (pronounced Gore-ET-skee). It has been sitting at No. 1 on the British classical charts for several weeks. This is the first time that music of a living composer has topped that chart.

What's even more interesting is the fact that this week, the recording also reached No. 6 on the British pop charts.

Curiosity on this continent has been piqued. Having no idea what to expect from a crossover hit symphony, I settled in to give it a spin a few days ago. I was instantly addicted.

Symphony No. 3, subtitled *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*, is written for orchestra and soprano soloist. The recording features the London Sinfonietta under conductor David Zinman and soprano Dawn Upshaw.

The work is based on three heart-rending poems, which are sung in Polish. The piece rose to fame after its presentation on Sept. 1, 1989, in the German city of Brunswick. The concert, presented without interruption or applause, commemorated the Nazi invasion of Poland.

One of the poems set within the symphony was found written on the wall of a Nazi prison cell. The wall also bore the poet's name and the words, "18 years old, imprisoned since 26 September, 1944."

The poignancy of that poem and inscription are echoed throughout the piece. Set in an Aeolian mode, the piece has a haunting, timeless quality that makes it unforgettable. Its three movements have a hypnotic effect on the listener, pulling them along, rendering them unable to turn away. Each movement is marked *Lento* (slow) and the slow tempos become a unifying theme throughout the work.

Gorecki's soprano melodies are devastating. The Polish lyrics provide a sound of ancient grief. The relative unfamiliarity of the Polish language forces the listener to rely on the music for meaning.

Zinman and the Sinfonietta artfully shape Gorecki's long, lingering phrases. The group's warmth of sound and emotional intensity bring the piece alive. Soprano Upshaw's voice simply weeps. She handles the difficult twists of Polish easily and conveys the wrenching anguish of the lyrics.

Symphony No. 3 ends with a ray of hope, as a final A Major chord rises out of the minor-key fabric of the work. The effect is simply devastating.

There is no doubt in my mind that the reason for this recording's success is its articulate fluency in the universal language of human emotion.

The following review of Smetana's *Ma Vlast* was not published as of March 26, 1993, left in a state of limbo at the *Spectator* referred to as "banking." Editors love to have articles "banked." The term simply means that the article has been written, the art-work prepared and the piece filed. It allows the editor the security of having pieces on file and ready to go when the next crisis of unfilled space arises.

In order for most newspaper writers to leave the paper for a few days of holiday time, or to attend a conference, they are often required to bank several pieces beforehand.

Bedrich Smetana
Ma Vlast

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Jiri Belohlavek conducting
Supraphon 11 0957-2

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Zdenek Macal conducting
Telarc CD-80265

Most classical music lovers both know and love Bedrich Smetana's *The Moldau*. However, many are surprised to learn that it is part of a larger work. In 1874-79 Smetana wrote cycle of six tone poems entitled *Ma Vlast* (My Country). *The Moldau* is the second, and certainly most famous, poem of this cycle.

Smetana wrote these poems during the great nineteenth-century swell of Czech nationalism. Today, as the Czech Republic and Slovakia struggle to recover from decades of communism, it is no surprise that these pieces, considered national treasures by the Czech people, should once again find tremendous popularity.

Three of the *Ma Vlast* tone poems were inspired by Czech folk tales. The remaining three draw on the composer's love of Czech landscapes. *The Moldau* falls in the last category, describing the *Moldau* (Vltava in Czech) River.

In the past few months, two Czech-born and -trained conductors, have released new recordings of *Ma Vlast*. Zdenek Macal, who became a naturalized American this past October, conducts the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra on a Telarc disc and Jiri Belohlavek leads the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra on a Supraphon recording.

Like Beethoven as he composed his Ninth Symphony, Smetana was completely deaf by the time he began to work on these pieces. Also like Beethoven, Smetana witnessed the overwhelming reaction to the premiere. He was inspired to add the final two poems.

These two recordings offer distinctly different approaches to the music. Macal and Milwaukee bring a stately grace to the cycle. A well-balanced ensemble, the orchestra sweeps through Smetana's grand phrases with a highly polished sound, relishing delicate wind lines as well as rousing brass passages. Macal's reserve and the discipline of the orchestra are apparent as they convey a sense of dignity and reverence for the work.

In contrast Belohlavek, conducting the Czech Philharmonic, abandons himself to the sentiment of the work. Throwing caution to the wind in racing passages, he pushes the orchestra near its limit. Yet through exquisite phrasing, he still allows Smetana's melodies to sing.

Swept along by the powerful tide of the music, the orchestra occasionally risks beauty of sound for the sake of expression, their gamble paying off in great musical moments. Just as a breaking voice betrays emotion, so does the Czech orchestra's occasionally rough sound. Percussive attacks, and great contrasts of volume, not all of which are under perfect control, provide a performance which is above all, exciting.

Milwaukee and Macal offer the cleaner, fuller sound of the two, if a slightly too restrained performance. Belohlavek and the Czech orchestra have a rougher, edgier sound but give the more musically convincing performance.

Section III

Profiles, Previews and Corresponding Reviews

Writing an artist's profile requires an entirely different set of skills again than are needed to write a concert review, recording review, or a feature story. The profile must start with a personal interview with the artist. In the course of a brief interview, the critic must make the artist feel relaxed and comfortable enough to speak freely about her or his goals and frustrations and, hopefully, encourage the addition of personal anecdotes. If these things do not occur in the interview, the critic is left with a lot of single-word answers to what seemed, before the interview, to be probing, pertinent questions. Single-word answers are difficult to transform into gripping copy.

Most newspapers today have little or no travel budget for critics, so the majority of these interviews must be conducted by phone. If it is difficult to coax a stranger to open up in person, it is nearly impossible over the telephone.

In the course of my internship at the *Spectator*, I had the opportunity to profile four artists. In the case of Marjorie

Patterson and Kevin McMillan, there was an instant, easy rapport. I knew McMillan from my years in New York and shared common friends with Patterson from those same years. Dancer Cynthia Westaway had also been in New York at the same time. Although we had no mutual friends, the common New York experience proved to be a comfortable ice-breaker. In all three of these interviews, the conversation flowed naturally from common experience or friends to the matter at hand, the upcoming performance.

During the last week of my summer internship work at *The Detroit News*, Nancy Malitz assigned me to interview Montreal pianist Louis Lortie. We had never met, had no common friends, and didn't even claim the same first language. Fortunately, Mr. Lortie is a warm, open, charming person and gave a lengthy, informative interview. He proved to be a perfect first interview. Several months later, in December, I was able to write a profile of him based on that interview.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

December 19, 1992

Louis Lortie's Patience Pays Off

At 9:15 in the morning, an hour when most musicians are still relishing REM sleep, Canadian concert pianist Louis Lortie answered his phone in Montreal with a chipper, "himself speaking."

With two CDs newly released, bringing his total to more than a dozen, and concerts booked around the world for the next several years, he has every reason to be chipper.

Recording on the Chandos label, 33-year-old Lortie has just released his first volume of the complete Beethoven Sonatas. This past summer Lortie was featured with the Montreal Symphony, performing all of Beethoven's piano concertos. In addition, he performed much of Beethoven's chamber music for piano in free noon-hour concerts around Montreal.

Although he thinks of himself as a "slow worker on records," he has undertaken a huge project in recording the complete 32 Beethoven sonatas. Claudio Arrau, Alfred Brendel, Arthur Schnabel and Wilhelm Kempff all recorded the sonatas decades ago, but few artists have undertaken the entire cycle in recent years.

After his recordings a few years ago of the music of Maurice Ravel, Lortie was thought of as a specialist in the music of French impressionists. Speaking with a

deep, warm voice, flavored with the distinct French accent of his native Quebec, he explains with a laugh, "I don't even like French music that much."

"I am interested in a lot of the repertoire," Lortie explains, "but I go with what seems to me the best project to do as far as my musical development goes." He felt that Ravel was the best choice for him while he was in his 20s. Now, he is focusing on the Austro-German music that he has always loved.

Lortie is the first pianist since Glenn Gould to be represented by Toronto impresario Walter Homburger. Homburger, at one time manager of the Toronto Symphony, was a powerful ally for a young musician to have. He had the ability to spot talent and the connections to promote it. Lortie credits Homburger, who launched many musical careers, with giving him "good counsel, right from the start." For Lortie that start came with his professional debut at the tender age of 13.

As Lortie becomes a familiar figure on concert stages around the world, he makes a point to perform in Canada whenever possible. He keeps a home in Montreal, expressing concern over the number of Canadian artists who no longer maintain ties with their country. "I think I am the only Canadian pianist who still lives in this city," he complains.

Lortie has performed in the Toronto, London and Niagara areas, but never, he reports, in Hamilton. When asked why not, he laughs and explains that he has simply never been invited to play here.

Hamilton residents can hear Lortie on a variety of CD recordings. In addition to his recent Beethoven release, Chandos also offers the versatile pianist performing the piano music of Maurice Ravel and Franz Liszt. Another recent release contains piano concertos by Robert Schumann and Frederic Chopin with Neeme Jarvi and the Philharmonia Orchestra.

Describing himself as, "not a reactionary but a very classical person," Lortie brings a sense of classical reserve and control to his new Beethoven recording. The disc contains Sonatas No. 8, "Pathetique," No. 21, "Waldstein," and No. 26, "Les Adieux." Through delicate colors and fluid passage work, Lortie stays out of the way of the music. He is always moving to the next idea, always aware of where the music is going.

On his Ravel recordings, Lortie brings completely different sounds and effects from the piano than are found in his Beethoven Sonatas. In Ravel's *Gaspard de la Nuit*, for instance, he coaxes a crystalline, shimmering sound from the piano, allowing phrases to gently cascade and flow. His early reputation as a specialist in French piano music is certainly understandable from these exquisite recordings.

In the history of Lortie's recordings, Liszt comes between Ravel and Beethoven. In 1989 the versatile pianist recorded Liszt's *Années de Pèlerinage*, Book 2, *Italy*. Lortie captures the intensely spiritual nature of the opening *Sposalito* through an exploration of tone colors. Lortie's clear interpretations of the Liszt

selections keep the composer's long fluid phrases sounding unaffected and fresh, as though he is playing his own heartfelt improvisations.

Playing Schumann and Chopin concertos with conductor Jarvi and the Philharmonia, Lortie displays yet another face. Here he is the commanding soloist, never rushed or crowded by the orchestra. He maintains the musical direction and clarity of thought that are characteristic of his earlier recordings. Jarvi is sensitive to every nuance, creating a distinct feeling of ensemble between orchestra and soloist.

Lortie's highly acclaimed, earlier recordings include a selection of Mozart piano concertos, the complete Chopin Etudes, selections of Beethoven's smaller pieces and a disc of his own piano transcriptions of 20th century orchestral music. All of these recordings appear on the Chandos label.

Lortie is slow to crow about his achievements. "I didn't really attract public attention outside my country before I was 24 or 25 when I did some international competitions," he reflects. He does not add that in 1984 he was a prizewinner in the Leeds International Competition and took the first prize in the Busoni International Competition in Italy. He merely reiterates, "I felt that I wanted to grow and take my time."

Apparently Lortie's careful approach has been the correct one. It would seem that his time has come.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

February 27, 1993

McMillan Follows The Lieder: Canada's 'Busiest Recitalist' Will Sing With The HPO

Kevin McMillan, the lyric baritone who will sing Tuesday with the Hamilton Philharmonic, should be of special interest to Hamilton area residents.

This interest is not based only on the tremendous international acclaim he has received, or because of his nine CD recordings or even his frequent appearances on the CBC. The extra interest lies in the fact that McMillan, who has been called the busiest recital singer in Canada, is a southern Ontario talent, living down the road, figuratively speaking, in Chatham.

In a recent conversation, the personable young singer, a native of Listowel, Ont., spoke candidly about the ups and downs of a successful concert career. "The biggest thing you have to cope with is being away from home," he said, noting that home includes his wife and young son. "I'm away about 75 per cent of the time."

Until six months ago, McMillan's travels were mainly on this continent, as he performed with virtually all of the major orchestras in North America. But toward the end of last year, that began to change.

"This fall I was in Europe quite a bit, things have really started to open up for me there." He estimates that about 20 per cent of his work this spring will be in Europe.

McMillan is reticent to crow about his achievements. But he has built a highly successful career as a concert singer, which means that he sings in recitals and solo performances with orchestras, rather than in opera. Some of his recent career highlights include an invitation to perform the title role in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the New York Philharmonic under conductor Kurt Mazur, four CD releases in 1992, and one this month.

He has recorded Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the San Francisco Symphony under Herbert Blomstedt. In addition, he has performed with many renowned conductors, including Charles Dutoit, Neeme Jarvi, and Pierre Boulez, to name just a few.

Keeping busy as a recital singer is no small feat. Recitals are tricky business in a shrinking economy.

McMillan refers to his recital work as "a constant struggle, but something I have always put a high priority on doing. If there is a recital to be had, I sort of sniff it out."

"Canada has been really good that way, I do a lot more recitals here than in the States. Because of the CBC, there is a lot more interest in recitals here."

In the U.S. there is a star system among recitalists, which has led to two distinct classes, most clearly indicated by pay scale. The introductory fee level, which includes nearly all singers, is terribly low and can be measured in a few hundred dollars. The star level, which is reserved for the likes of Jessye Norman and

Kathleen Battle, is outrageously high — and is measured in the thousands of dollars. There is virtually no middle ground in this system, which extends beyond singers to all recitalists.

As a result, many young singers get little recital experience. McMillan sees a potential problem in that.

"Many singers build a career as an operatic singer and then when a recital opportunity comes, once they have made a name in opera, they are just scared to death," he said. "When the time comes for me to do more important recitals, I will have done so many of them that it won't be a big deal for me."

McMillan's decision to focus on recitals and concert performances, rather than opera, was a choice that was largely made for him by a farming accident. Working on his father's farm during the Christmas break of his first year at the University of Western Ontario, he fell down a silo chute and crushed a vertebra.

The accident left him with partial paralysis in his legs. "It could have been complete," he reflects, "And I would have been bound to a wheelchair."

But that's not what happened. After six weeks of complete paralysis, he regained the use of the upper part of his legs. He dismisses the difficulties of dealing with crutches saying, "I just kind of forget about it. It's quite normal to me now."

The accident doesn't appear to have slowed him down in the least. After completing his studies at the universities of Guelph and Western Ontario, McMillan went on to the Juilliard School in New York City for his Master's degree.

He also spent several summers studying at the Britten-Pears School for Advanced Musical Studies in England. While there he studied with Peter Pears and Elizabeth Schwarzkopf.

As to any regrets about being kept off of the opera stage by his accident, he says: "Recitals feel natural to me. I feel more embarrassed going out on stage in a silly costume. I don't have anything to do with the operatic world — which suits me just fine."

Giving up after his accident doesn't seem to have been an option.

"I do recall being stubborn as a mule when I was in my wheelchair," he said. "But there are certainly bridges I can cross more easily without it. It would be pretty brutal keeping up with the schedule I've got right now having to be concerned with a wheelchair all the time."

McMillan's recent CD release of German Lieder makes clear what a terrible loss it would have been had he given up. The recording, issued by CBC Records (number MVCD 1052) is entitled *Lieder On Poems Of Heinrich Heine*.

The young baritone sings with an unaffected ease that allows both poetry and music to speak. His voice is rich and ringing, yet controlled and able to utter the tenderest phrases. The disc contains Robert Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, and selections by Johannes Brahms, Franz Liszt, Felix Mendelssohn and Franz Schubert.

McMillan can also be heard in several other recordings, including: a selection of Britten and Vaughan Williams on Marquis records, Nielsen's *Symphony No. 3*

with the San Francisco Symphony on London/Decca, Brahms' A German Requiem with the Freiburger Bachorchester on Deutsche Harmonia Mundi. Dorian Recordings has just released a disc of McMillan singing Schubert's Die Schone Müllerin.

In Hamilton Tuesday, McMillan will be performing Gustav Mahler's song cycle, Songs Of A Wayfarer, a piece for which his voice is perfectly suited. The Tuesday evening concert with the Hamilton Philharmonic will be held at Hamilton Place. This local rising star is a "must hear" performer.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

March 3, 1993

Singer Helps make HPO Musical Feast

The Hamilton Philharmonic's Classics concert last evening was simply a musical feast. The orchestra, conducted by music director Victor Feldbrill, presented a program of contemporary and romantic works.

Kevin McMillan, a young Canadian baritone who has made an international name for himself, joined the orchestra to make gorgeous music of Gustav Mahler's Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen (Songs of a Wayfarer).

His warm, colorful sound and lyrical style brought the four heartbreaking songs of an unforgettable lost love to life.

The young singer's tremendous control and musical subtlety are perfectly suited to the lieder. He communicates easily and unaffectedly, reflecting every change in the music's mood and character.

He brought an unselfconscious innocence to the Mahler, as though telling his own story rather than Mahler's.

Feldbrill and the orchestra captured the ever-changing character of the piece. However, in their musical exuberance they tended to be a bit heavy handed and insensitive to their soloist, at times crowding and covering McMillan's delicate musical nuances.

The orchestra came into its own and soared in Franz Schubert's Symphony No. 9 in C Major. Playing with musical abandon, the orchestra revelled in the huge, romantic work.

The strings sounded like many more than their number, playing with a full, rich sound. Their section playing was clean, decisive and thoroughly exciting.

The trumpets and trombones brought fire to the mammoth symphony, punctuating and underscoring its expansive phrases.

Out of the woodwinds came moments of beauty mixed with moments of confusion. The oboes and clarinets sang through the Schubert, handing phrases back and forth and dovetailing gracefully.

The wind section playing was marred by muddled phrases and uncertain pitch. The energetic tempo of the final Allegro Vivace threatened to leave some of the winds behind.

The evening's program opened with Andre Prevost's Celebration. The atonal work is spicy and interesting but seems to be more concerned with technical device than musical statement. The orchestra played it cleanly and precisely.

From McMillan's superb Mahler to the colorful Prevost and sweeping Schubert, the program was well-balanced and thoroughly delightful.

The following article marked my introduction to editorial changes in what I had written. The general rule of thumb in newspaper writing is that paragraphs should not be more than two or three sentences in length. In column width, a few sentences looks like a lot of copy. This particular editor thought that shorter paragraphs would make the story easier to read. To that end, the piece was cut into very short paragraphs. I was shocked when I saw it. The short paragraphs leave me with a feeling of fragmented thoughts. I was not thrilled when I first saw the piece cut up in this fashion.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

August 12, 1992

Lynden Girl Conquering Continents

How does a girl from Lynden wind up singing Beethoven in Europe? Soprano Marjorie Patterson, featured as a soloist in this Saturday's performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at the du Maurier Centre, can tell you all about it.

Patterson, a warm, personable woman with a musical laugh that gives her away as a singer, has put in a lot of miles since her early musical training in Hamilton.

After completing her undergraduate degree at Brooklyn College in New York, she went on to the Juilliard School of Music where she earned her Master's degree.

Like many young singers, she found greater performing opportunities in Europe than in North America. Consequently, she and her husband, violinist Martin Wulfhorst, relocated to Hamburg, Germany.

"I'm not unhappy at all that I live in Europe, because I think that it's very difficult to make a career of music here. Today, musicians have to be willing to base themselves out of anywhere in order to work," she says.

Although the first couple of years were slow going, as they are for any musician trying to get established, Patterson, who is in her early thirties, now finds herself with a fairly steady flow of concert dates, primarily in Germany.

"I would like to come and do more work here," she reflects, "but the realities of the musical world keep that from happening."

Germany has a rich musical tradition, which seems to be continuing in the younger generation. To the performer, this means a wide audience. There are also the matters of higher European fees for musicians and greater job security there than in North America.

"Musicians have the right to earn money. I don't think that's as common an attitude here as in Europe. I have singer friends here who are very talented, but they have to work in offices all day and then have to find the energy to sing at night."

Patterson is a concert singer, meaning that she performs oratorios, opera galas, and recitals rather than fully staged operas.

Always interested in chamber music, she now performs with the Trio Voce Con Stromenti who can be heard at Syracuse University on September 15, Colgate University in Hamilton, NY on September 16, and St. John-Fischer University in Rochester, NY on September 17.

It is ironic to the jet-set singer that Boris Brott should be conducting her Saturday performance. Some of her earliest musical memories are of Brott conducting children's concerts in Hamilton area schools.

Of the seven children in her family, all had music lessons as children. Before turning to voice, the singer studied French horn.

"I can't imagine," she muses, "how unhappy I would be if I hadn't had those things in my life."

In addition to her studies in New York, Patterson was also a fellowship student at the Aspen Music Festival, and worked with renowned singer Jan DeGaetani in England.

Her educational background adds weight to the great compliment Patterson pays to her early teacher, Gladys Whitehead: "I don't think you can get much better teaching than I got right here in Hamilton. Ms. Whitehead is an honest, forthright, practical person to whom I will always be grateful."

The following review of Marjorie Patterson's performance with the Boris Brott Festival appeared in the Monday, August 17, 1992 edition of the *Spectator*. As both Mr. Fraser and I had covered two concerts over the weekend, we each planned on filing two reviews for the Monday paper. We were given adequate space for the reviews but were not informed that there was space for only one headline per critic. The paper decided that of the two reviews I filed, the Old Mill concert would receive top billing and a headline (**The Four Seasons Sing at the Old Mill**) since it had occurred most recently. In reality, the performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 the evening

before was of greater significance since it was a larger work, it had been given the above preview, and was the final orchestral concert of the Boris Brott Summer Music Festival. As a result of the headline confusion, the review of the Beethoven concert was fairly difficult to find.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

August 17, 1992

The Four Seasons Sing at the Old Mill

[The Four Seasons review appeared first, followed by the performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The two reviews were separated only by three asterisks.]

Boris Brott threw quite a farewell party Saturday evening. For the final performance of the Technics Classical Academy Orchestra, Brott led the orchestra, the Bach Elgar Choir and four vocal soloists in a rousing performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The orchestra went out in style.

This bunch has been running in high gear for four weeks. They have been playing and rehearsing in halls all over town. Somehow, they all managed to find the strength to not only get through this mammoth work, but to do so with excitement and conviction.

The quartet of soloists — soprano Marjorie Patterson, mezzo Carol Ann Feldstein, tenor Glyn Evans and baritone Daniel Lichti — formed a well blended, clean ensemble. They deftly made their way through what is often a garbled section of the symphony.

Patterson's rich, powerful voice rose easily above the orchestra and chorus, never sacrificing quality and control of sound for volume. Lichti's focused sound lent strength to his solo passages as well as the quartet's ensemble sections.

Singing Beethoven's Ninth is, for the chorus, a bit like running a marathon. The Bach Elgar Choir handled the piece with a solid, centered sound. Soft, exposed sections for the women were the only points at which sound and pitch faltered.

Brott's orchestra was at its best. The strings played with the ensemble sense of a chamber group. The sound they seem to have developed over the past weeks was in full voice. The somewhat dry hall, and its capacity-plus crowd (there were patrons seated on stage) took some of the fullness off of the bottom of the sound. As a result, the celli and basses were often lost in the audio shuffle.

While the group's winds and French horns occasionally struggled, the clear, vibrant sound of oboist Jim Mason remained a musical beacon for the younger players.

As exciting as this work is to hear, it is nothing short of thrilling to perform. As a result, it often runs out of control in performances. Brott managed to channel the exuberance of his young players into a disciplined performance. Though he

tended to take slow passages too slowly and fast sections too fast, he never allowed the orchestra to go its own way.

The orchestral facet of the festival is over, but there is one final Lunch With Ludwig concert at the Royal Connaught Hotel at noon today and a Hot Jazz concert on Friday evening, also at the Royal Connaught.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

August 8, 1992

A Lawyer In Toe Shoes Comes To Town

A dancing lawyer? Or perhaps a legal dancer. I give up.

Cynthia Westaway, the 29-year-old Canadian dancer-turned-law student who will grace the of the Boris Brott Summer Music Festival Wednesday, is difficult to characterize.

Her impressive resume includes the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and the Grand Ballets Canadiens. She has appeared as guest artist with Eglevsky Ballet and Southold Dance Theatre and soloist with the Pacific Ballet Theatre.

Westaway spent 10 years in New York City where she was soloist and ballet mistress of the renowned Feld ballet, and a member of the Parsons Dance Company.

This is where it starts to get tough. While Westaway was dancing in New York, she served as union representative for AGMA (American Guild of Musical Artists), the dancer's labor union. It sparked her interest in law.

She is enrolled in the University of Western Ontario Law School, and should become a lawyer in 1994. Just to keep things from being too easy, she has chosen a bilingual course of study, taking classes in both English and French.

Westaway spoke recently from Northern Quebec where she is studying French through an immersion program. Answering the phone in French, she explained with a laugh that she is only allowed to speak English on the phone.

Westaway instantly dispelled all stereotypes of dancers as frail, vain, undernourished creatures, consumed by vanity and unable to count past the number eight. She is bright, funny, perceptive, thoughtful and, as usual, outrageously busy.

Westaway decided to retire from dance before age and injuries forced the decision.

"I did my last show last spring." Then she laughs at herself noting, "But I've done about four shows since then."

Not ready to completely hang up her dancing shoes, Westaway continues to teach intensive week-long dance workshops. She also takes on the occasional performance.

She remembers the days of touring — spending 35 weeks per year on the road.

"Hotels, airports, suitcases," she sighs, "I really want to have a place and stay in it for a while, and travel on vacations like normal people." Then she adds, "But I

can't. I keep taking these engagements to go off to Italy for a week and do this or that for a week."

Her voice sounds a bit weary as she talks about her years in New York.

"They (dancers) struggle there daily, but when you're there you get used to it, and I was so used to it, that you don't notice the struggle so much. I'm getting used to being out of New York."

Westaway was initially drawn to entertainment law. Earlier this summer, while in New York rehearsing, she worked with an entertainment law firm.

Looking to the future she comments, "My horizons are opening and I'm finding that I am interested in constitutional law and very interested in feminist rights."

This legal eagle in toe shoes will be in town dancing with the Boris Brott Festival Orchestra — literally, on stage with the orchestra. This is a rare opportunity for both dancer and orchestra to be on stage together, rather than being separated by a cavernous orchestra pit.

"I dance now because I love it," Westaway proclaims. "I'm glad it's not my full time job. When I do perform now, I savor each moment."

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

August 13, 1992

Program Of Ballet And Music Delightful

A dancer, two pianists and an orchestra — it was an artistic smorgasbord last evening at the du Maurier Centre as Boris Brott and his Technics Academy Orchestra presented a delightfully varied program of ballet and music.

Dancer Cynthia Westaway performed her exquisite, original choreography to excerpts from Beethoven's Prometheus Ballet Suite. Using the familiar form of classical ballet style, contrasted with the more angular, abrupt movements of modern dance, Westaway brought both the joy and angst of the story to the stage.

Westaway became, at times, a musical entity, her movements seemingly an instrumental sound written in the original score. She would then pull back and react to the music as though hearing it for the first time, changing again to sail on the waves of musical sound.

The captivating dancer blithely negotiated a treacherous jungle of chair legs, string bows and percussion instruments as she made the entire stage her own.

Westaway's enchanting, expressive performance, though clearly well planned, gave the impression of inspired, spontaneous improvisation.

Duo pianists Bracha Eden and Alexander Tamir joined forces in Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 10 in E Flat Major, K. 365. Engaging in an articulate musical

conversation, the pair presented an intricate exchange of ideas, one player answering the other, each with beautiful, subtle phrasing.

This was not a note-perfect performance for the duo. Labored ornaments and muddled runs dotted the performance. But the occasional technical struggles did not obscure the artful musical statements of this expressive team.

It is getting harder by the day to tell apprentices from mentors in Brott's Academy Orchestra. Weeks of intensive work are paying off.

Amid some uncertain French horn passages and woodwind pitch arguments, it was the strings whose sense of ensemble was most apparent in Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A Major. Clean, decisive entrances and a lovely warm sound brought color and life to their polished performance.

Brott and his players delivered an energetic performance of the symphony, savoring its lyrical melodies and digging in to its compelling rhythms.

From his delicate background texture in the Mozart to his ringing solos in the Beethoven symphony, oboist Jim Mason was a delight throughout the concert. Mason's pure, centered sound and unfailingly accurate pitch are the backbone of the wind section.

Apprentice conductor Rosemary Thompson also seems to be reaping the benefits of these weeks of hard work. She opened the program with Beethoven's Overture from Prometheus. Her musical sense was readily apparent as she confidently led the orchestra.

The following preview was based in part on research into the lives and music of the composers mentioned, and in part on an interview with Richard Birney Smith, the conductor of the Te Deum Singers. Newspaper and academic conventions butted heads in the published version of this preview. It is newspaper policy to use a person's full name only in the first mention within an article. Any subsequent mention of the person requires the use of last name only. It was that policy that led to the use of the "Bingen" to refer to Hildegard throughout the article. When I filed the review of the *concert*, I explained to the editor that the first name had to be used for subsequent references.

The Hamilton Spectator, Weekend Section

October 31, 1992

Composers History Forgot: Early Music by Women Composers Who Drifted Into Obscurity

Take a few minutes and think — how many women composers can you name?

If you are like most people, you won't come up with many — and most of them will be 20th Century figures.

Women have been writing music for centuries. Although many of them were hailed by their contemporaries as great composers, history has nearly forgotten them.

On November 6, Richard Birney Smith and the Te Deum Singers will offer Hamilton a chance to change that. They will present a concert of early music written by women who have drifted into obscurity through the centuries.

One of these remarkable early women composers was the Abbess, Hildegard von Bingen. Born nearly 900 years ago, she wrote some 87 religious songs, poetry, and two books on natural history and medicine, and a morality play in dramatic verse. A remarkable mystic, she had frequent visions which she carefully recorded. Bingen was sought out by political and religious leaders, including two popes, for counsel and advice.

Bingen was the daughter of an era that prohibited women from teaching or holding authority over men. Devoutly religious, she spent the 80 plus years of her life serving the church, eventually starting an Abbey on her own. She was proposed for canonization shortly after her death. For some reason, it never actually occurred.

Extraordinary as she was, Bingen is not a lone female figure in the predominantly male history of Western music. Nor is she unique in having been neglected for centuries.

During the baroque era, 500 years after Bingen's death, women composers were somewhat more common, though certainly not the norm. Although women

musicians in 17th Century Europe were allowed to perform, composition was heavily frowned upon.

Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre had made a name for herself as a performer by the time she was six. By age ten she was singing and accompanying herself from memory. A 1678 periodical called her the "marvel of our century."

Unlike Bingen, she married and had a son. She was able to continue her career as a performer throughout her marriage. At age 25 she began to compose music of her own, completing hundreds of works from small pieces to ballet and opera music.

After the deaths of her father, husband and son, all within a two-year period, she largely retired from public appearances. She continued to give concerts in her home and to write music. After her death in 1729, the French government issued a commemorative medal in her honor.

Two other women composers whose music will be heard on November 6 are Barbara Strozzi, and Sister Isabella Leonarda, both of whom wrote during the early baroque.

One must wonder how this music fell into obscurity and what has saved it from being lost forever. While musicologists and medievalists have been aware of the existence of these composers, performers and audiences have remained fairly oblivious.

During the early part of this century, there was a resurgence of interest in early music, including the music of the baroque. Having fallen out of fashion during the 19th Century, this early music was a welcome change for ears weary of the heavy style of the late romantics. As a result, the music of Bach, Handel, Telemann and others was rediscovered by performers and audiences.

Women composers and instrumentalists were virtually invisible in professional music circles prior to the Second World War. As baroque music was reintroduced to concert audiences, it didn't seem odd at all that no women composers were represented. After all, it hardly seemed possible that women could have been respected professionals 500 or more years earlier.

This began to change in the late seventies, with the First Festival of Women's Music in New York City. The festival was intended to fill the need for music of women composers, ancient and contemporary, to be heard. In addition, sponsors hoped to correct a misconception that women do not write music.

Lack of awareness is not the only obstacle to be overcome. Much of this early music by women composers exists only in its original notation, which is a foreign language to most contemporary musicians. For musicians trained in the 20th Century, deciphering the ancient scores is a very real barrier against performance.

Richard Birney Smith, Te Deum's music director, called the process of deciphering ancient scores and their awkward literal transcriptions, a "slow process of discovery."

In discussing his decision to perform this challenging program, he noted, "This is a penance program for me. I had fallen into the trap of assuming that female composers are a product of the 20th Century. I am not putting on a freak show. "These are four composers who deserve our attention simply because they are excellent."

Joining the ensemble will be soprano Mary Enid Haines, baroque violinists Ruth Hoffman and Margot Jewell, and baroque violoncellist Margaret Gay. Haines' involvement with this music goes beyond the Te Deum concert. She has a recording of Strozzi's music coming out soon.

Should you be overcome by curiosity about this music before the concert date arrives, there are several recordings worth checking out. A collection of Bingen's Hymn's and Sequences is available in Hyperion (CDA-66039). Strozzi's Arias and Cantatas can be found on Bayer (BR 100 078/79 CD). Strozzi and Leonarda's works appear together on Adda (581 173).

If you've grown a bit weary of concert fare featuring Bach, Beethoven and the boys, come out to Christ's Church Cathedral on Friday, November 6 at 8:15 p.m. Give Bingen, Strozzi and the girls a try.

The review that followed the Hildegard preview prompted a call to the paper from the conductor who asserted that his strings were not in the least bit out of tune. One of the first

rules that performers learn is that one never complains to a critic about a review. At very least the critic will avoid future performances by the complaining performer. At very worst, it will incline the critic to judge the performer's future performances by a harsher standard. It never accomplishes what the performer sets out to do, which is to prove the critic wrong.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

November 7, 1992

Choir Spotlights Early Women Composers

The Te Deum Singers climbed aboard the early music bandwagon last evening with a concert called Hidden Treasures at Christ's Church Cathedral. The group, under the direction of Richard Birney-Smith, presented a program of unjustly neglected music of early women composers.

The program featured three pieces by The Abbess Hildegard of Bingen, a noted twelfth-century mystic, scholar, poet, and musician whose life was spent in service to the church.

Her haunting music strikes twentieth-century ears as refreshingly clean and unaffected.

Abbess Hildegard's hymn, *O Ecclesia*, sung by women's chorus, was the highlight of the evening. Producing a clear, light sound that floated above the droning symphony (an instrument much like a hurdy gurdy), the women were sounds from another century. Their deft handling of difficult rhythms and quickly moving passages was truly a feat of ensemble singing. Serving as both soloists and ensemble members, they blended to make a delightfully delicate unison sound.

The men's chorus and tenor soloist struggled with Abbess Hildegard's fluid lines, at times sounding unsure and strained. All three of these pieces were performed from the narthex of the church. Not seeing the performers lent an ethereal air to the performances, but it also caused a lot of awkward audience shifting and turning that rather marred the effect.

Soprano Mary Enid Haines, violinist Margot Jewell and cellist Olga van Kranendonk leapt into the seventeenth century with their reading of Elisabeth-Claude Jaquet de la Guerre's cantata and symphony: *Semele*.

Haines, a veteran of early music, will be available soon in recordings of this repertoire. She delivered an engaging performance, always in control and always interesting. She was equally captivating in Barbara Strozzi's *Serenata con violini*.

Her ensemble members were, unfortunately, not so well controlled. Their performance was plagued by wild pitch and general untidiness. When the strings returned for Barbara Strozzi's *Serenata con violini* and Sister Isabella Leonarda's

Messa Prima, with additional violinist Ruth Hoffman, the problems returned with them.

A surprise addition to the program was a short piece by the Countess De Die played on the symphony by Michael Franklin. The little instrument charmed the curious crowd, many of whom took to their feet for a view.

If awards were given for lengthy concerts, this one would certainly have been a finalist.

The logistics of moving people and instruments around the church, combined with Birney-Smith's chatty program notes (spoken from stage), stretched the concert to near marathon length.

These are pieces well worth hearing. The concert will be repeated today in Toronto at The Church of the Redeemer.

Through contacts at *Opera Canada*, my name reached Henry Ingram at Toronto's *Opera In Concert* series. I was asked to write a brief profile of soprano Rosmarie Landry for their concert presentation of *Sapho* by Jules Massenet. This profile was based on a telephone interview.

Opera in Concert

December, 1992

Sapho

Soprano Rosemarie Landry is delighted to return to Opera in Concert as *Sapho*, a role she first performed here in 1986. Her voice, musically accented with her native French, becomes animated as she describes *Sapho* as an extraordinary, complete role — "a Carmen for soprano." Miss Landry has found the same rich rewards in performing the challenging role now as she did in her first performance of it. In her eyes, the role contains "everything from drama to passion, love, and madness. It is simply a fantastic role for soprano."

Miss Landry has won critical acclaim throughout North America and Europe. Paul Hume, former critic of the *The Washington Post*, described Miss Landry as "one of the great artists of today." Her credits include numerous performances as a solo recitalist as well as with chamber ensembles and orchestras. In the coming months she will be featured on programs in New York and Chicago. A bit closer to home, fans will be able to find Miss Landry appearing across Canada on Christmas Eve. She will be playing the duo roles of hostess and performer on a Radio Canada television special, featuring French Christmas music.

Miss Landry is hardly a stranger to Canadian audiences. She has appeared with all of the major Canadian orchestras and festivals, including Mainly Mozart and the Toronto International Festival. She has also been featured with several European

orchestras. Her musical travels have carried throughout North America, Europe, South America, Japan, China and to Singapore and Hong Kong.

Among her recent achievements are a JUNO award for her recording of Murray Schafer's String Quartet with the Orford Quartet. In 1990 she performed a series of recitals at the Osaka Expo '90 in Japan. In that same exciting year, Miss Landry also became a member of the Order of Canada.

Recognized as one of the finest interpreters of French Art Songs, Miss Landry has been invited to prestigious art song festivals around the world. In addition, she performs regularly as a member of the Bath International Ensemble.

Fortunately for her Canadian fans, Miss Landry can be heard on a variety of recordings. She performs with Dalton Baldwin, the Festival de Wexford, Ireland and others.

On September 20, 1992 Professor Marta Hidy presented a celebration recital to commemorate her retirement from full-time teaching. Rather than printing standard programme notes for her concert, the Department of Music decided to print a profile of Professor Hidy's career and life. I was asked to interview her and write the profile. Interviewing Professor Hidy was an easy task because we had worked together before. I

had served as her Teaching Assistant and had performed with her Ensemble Sir Ernest MacMillan.

Profile of Marta Hidy

September 20, 1992

A Celebration for Marta Hidy

Marta Hidy, a founding member of McMaster University's Music Department, retires this year after 27 years of dedicated teaching. At age 19, Miss Hidy received her Master's degree in violin performance from the Franz Liszt Academy in Hungary. She remained in Hungary, performing and teaching, until 1956, the year of the Hungarian revolution.

Many Hungarians fled the country immediately after the October 23 revolution, but Miss Hidy was teaching away from home at the onset of the fighting. She made her way home, but travel restrictions forced her to leave her violin behind. When travel was possible again she returned to the school and remained there for several weeks to allow her students to complete their semester. When she left, violin in hand, to join her family for the Christmas holiday, she knew that she would not return to her students.

Miss Hidy, her husband, and their two small children left home on Boxing Day, 1956, risking their lives in the pursuit of their freedom. They trudged in darkness though deep snow, their path lit only by exploding bombs. Several times

they were forced to lie flat in the snow to avoid detection, meanwhile telling the children that the explosions around them were fireworks. The family crossed the border five days later, on New Year's Eve. One of the few things they were able to carry with them was Miss Hidy's violin.

The family began to learn English on the ship that carried them to Canada. Miss Hidy recalls her first view of Canada from the ship. The Halifax skyline, mixing old and new, tall and short buildings, simply looked like freedom to her.

Sent by the government to Winnipeg, the couple began to carve out a musical life for themselves. In 1957, Miss Hidy became concert master of the CBC Winnipeg Orchestra. She also performed with the Winnipeg Symphony and various chamber ensembles during her eight years in that city.

Throughout this period, Miss Hidy worked on developing her solo career as well. Her New York debut and her well-received Toronto performances brought her to the attention of the late Dr. Lee Hepner, then the conductor of the Hamilton Philharmonic. Dr. Hepner brought her to Hamilton as a member of the new Department of Music and concertmaster of the Hamilton Philharmonic.

During 1974, her last year with the Hamilton Philharmonic, Miss Hidy founded the Ensemble Sir Ernest MacMillan. In 1978, she became artistic director of the Chamber Players of Toronto. Not content to confine herself to classical music only, Miss Hidy loves the Beatles and has recorded with contemporary musicians like Chuck Mangione.

For today's recital, Miss Hidy has chosen to play pieces which have special meaning for her. Speaking recently about today's concert, she noted, "These are pieces which have given me distinct emotional excitement, not only in performance, but while I was practising them also. Some pieces bring me tears, even in practice. These are some of those pieces.

She said of Brahms' *Sonata No. 1 for Violin*: Usually violinists like Brahms' third violin sonata, which is monumental, almost like a concerto. I wanted to include Brahms, and this sonata, number one, is almost like chamber music. It is not a show piece, but intimate and full of soul."

"I played the *Bach Partita No. 2 in D Minor* in Hungary, in 1985. It was my first official recital there since I left in 1956. I especially love the last movement, 'Chaconne.'"

"I heard Igor Oistakh play the *Ysaÿe Solo Sonata No. 3* just after the Second World War. It was the first time I heard it — I hadn't even known that it existed and I was so fascinated by this work that I knew I must learn it. It was years before I performed it."

Miss Hidy refers to the Franck *Sonata* as the "crown of the sonatas." The piece has long been a favorite of hers and was included in her 1972 Wigmore Hall debut, in London, England. Miss Hidy was delighted when she recently discovered that the sonata was written for violinist and composer, Eugene Ysaÿe.

Marta Hidy will remain on the faculty of McMaster's Department of Music as a part time instructor of violin. She will also continue to play an important part in Hamilton's musical community.

Section IV

Concert Reviews

Placing one's musical opinions before the public in printed form is a difficult, anxious experience on the best of days. It is far more difficult to do so when the music being reviewed is outside one's sphere of experience. As long as music, whatever the genre, speaks to the critic, she or he can write about it.

I enjoy jazz, but know little or nothing about its history, and about musical styles and trends within the genre. I set out to review my first jazz concert (Lenny Solomon) with grave doubts about whether I would have anything useful to say. I discovered that I needed to find a different vocabulary, or a different tone, to deal with non-classical forms of music. Writing about the concert proved far less difficult than I expected.

The following reviews are representative of the variety of concerts I was assigned to cover. They are arranged in a fairly

random order to reflect the experience of covering classics one night, then jazz the next, then children's concerts, etc.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

August 15, 1992

Violinist Lenny Solomon Goes the Gamut of Styles

Hot jazz was promised — and hot jazz was delivered last night at the Hamilton Convention Centre. Toronto jazz violinist Lenny Solomon was featured in a Boris Brott Summer Music Festival evening of jazz, pizza, and drinks.

Solomon, joined by guitarist Reg Schwager and bassist Shelly Berger, offered a sampling of 300 years worth of violin music - with a twist.

Taking a poke at his own classical music beginnings, the engaging Solomon began an oh-so-correct baroque solo violin partita. With a smirk to the audience, he careened off into some fast and furious country fiddle improvisations, sounding a bit like Bach on roller blades, only to land primly back on the partita.

Playing the part of a strolling fiddler, Solomon wandered through the delighted audience, wallowing in the dramatic strains of a gypsy violin tune.

But what about jazz? How about Joe Venuti, Jerome Kern, George Gershwin, Duke Ellington or some original Lenny Solomon? Solomon's guided tour of jazz violin contained a bit of everything.

Solomon's remarkable technique sounds absolutely effortless and his musical sense makes him completely at home in whatever style he is playing at the moment. He speaks through the instrument as though it were an extension of his own voice.

Schwager and Berger, who both glowed in their spotlighted solos, rose to the difficult task of ensemble work as they formed the tight, creative rhythm section of the group.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

January 11, 1993

HPO and Jones Trio Warm Up a Winter's Night with Hot Jazz

It may have been cold and snowy outside this weekend, but it was as hot as jazz gets inside Hamilton Place on Saturday night.

The Hamilton Philharmonic offered a tonic for bad weather blues by way of More Hot January Jazz, featuring jazz pianist Oliver Jones and conductor Errol Gay.

The program, billed as a pops concert, was an engaging mix of familiar jazz pieces as well as several original tunes by Jones. He was joined by drummer Sherrie Maricle and bassist Dave Young.

The trio played the large hall like any other club date - any other club date that includes a full orchestra that is. Jones chatted with the audience between tunes, even prompting a couple of rousing "Amens" from the crowd.

The orchestra served as much more than a backup band. The HPO players were featured as individuals and sections throughout.

The high point of the evening came when the trio took the spotlight to play a few numbers without the orchestra.

Asking the audience for requests, they sailed through a Gershwin medley to open their set and closed with Oscar Peterson's moving Hymn to Freedom.

This was the hottest jazz of the evening.

The trio plays like a well-oiled machine. Their rapport is immediately evident and their musical communication is phenomenal. They seem to read one another's minds, matching moods and tempi instantly, always supporting one another.

Jones literally grew up at the piano. He plays with the ease and confidence of someone who communicates best through the keyboard. His playing is sprinkled with bursts of brilliant technique — always for the sake of the music, not simply for technical display.

Jones introduced Maricle as a "wonderful, wonderful drummer." It was not mere hype. Maricle plays with taste and finesse. She colors and adds sparkle to the music, coaxing an endless array of sounds and effects from her sticks, brushes, drums and cymbals.

Bassist Dave Young is creative and engaging. He moves about the instrument with amazing agility.

Gay and the orchestra had some of their best moments in George Williams' Days of Wine and Roses, which featured HPO principal trumpet Larry Larson. Larson played like a singer, humming and crooning the poignant melody.

Some unfortunate balance problems between trio and orchestra left the audience straining to hear the bass and piano at times.

The orchestra had fun with the music and could be seen grinning and nodding throughout the trio's unaccompanied numbers. Their fun was contagious. It was a delightful concert, just what the doctor ordered to forget the weather.

I was very uncomfortable writing about my first child performer. As it turned out, James Ehnes was a seasoned professional and therefore very easy to review. Having children on stage means having parents in the audience. Parents read criticism of their children with more emotional involvement than perhaps any other readers of criticism. Mr. Fraser recently wrote a review of several youth orchestras that had given a joint concert in Hamilton. He was careful not to compare the groups, but praised one ensemble more highly than the others. The calls and letters from angry parents flooded the office. Caution is essential in writing about children!

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

October 14, 1992

Promising Talent: Young Violinist Stands Out with HPO

Last night was a big night for 15-year-old James Ehnes.

The young Canadian violinist appeared as featured soloist in the Hamilton Philharmonic's first Classics concert of the new season.

To round out his evening, he was presented with the Mildred Dixon Holmes Award, intended to further the careers of promising young musicians.

And promising he is.

At age 11 he was awarded the Grand Prize in Strings at the Canadian Music Competition. Since then he has won both prizes and recognition from New York to his native Manitoba.

Ehnes took the stage with the confidence of a seasoned pro. He delighted and amazed the audience with Ludwig van Beethoven's Violin Concerto, Op. 16, in D Major.

The young pro made glorious music of Beethoven's only violin concerto, fairly dancing through difficult technical passages and savoring lyrical melodies.

Listening to Ehnes' commanding performance, it is difficult to remember that he is too young to drive a car.

His is not the style of a youngster who has merely mastered technical fireworks. He is a thoughtful, careful musician - one can only imagine what he'll be doing by the time he is old enough to vote.

The orchestra, under the Music Director Victor Feldbrill, was less than inspired in its reading of the Beethoven. The performance was marked with meandering phrases and indecisive dynamics.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, gave the orchestra a chance to show its true colors. The players were quick to respond to Tchaikovsky's stirring, sweeping themes.

When given the chance, they let their hair down and created genuine excitement. In tender, quiet moments, however, they tended to lose musical focus, and allow their phrasing to become flat and uninteresting.

Murray Adaskin's Fanfare opened the program with a flourish. Fanfare is a study in interesting rhythms and orchestral sounds. The 86-year-young composer was present to hear his work performed and take a quick bow.

For the orchestra, it was a night of uneven performances. Tasteful oboe and clarinet solos were the high point of a concert in which the woodwinds were plagued by uncontrolled sounds and pitch problems. The strings struggled to play as an ensemble.

The strongest facet of the orchestra's performance was the section brass playing. Its clean, strong sound and rhythmic accuracy made for a tight, exciting ensemble, which was just what the Adaskin and Tchaikovsky needed.

It was heartening to have Ehnes and Adaskin on the same stage. One is a tribute to the current generation of Canadian musicians and the other a tribute to the upcoming generation.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

December 7, 1992

Children's Choir Performs Like Pros

It was an evening of angelic voices Saturday at Christ's Church Cathedral. The Hamilton Children's Choir and its director, David Davis, presented Light One Candle — Music for Christmas and Hanukkah.

It was easy to spot the singers' family members in the crowded cathedral. Parents aimed video cameras, grandparents beamed and siblings pointed and waved. In a couple of instances, young soloists glanced discreetly at family members for approving nods.

This was an ecumenical concert. The program included both favorite Christmas carols and non-standard Christmas music, quite a bit of which was written by Canadian composers. The chorus was joined by Cantor Ruth Slater in music celebrating Hanukkah.

Slater, the only woman cantor in Canada, has a gentle, warm contralto voice. She presented touching Hanukkah melodies which gave the impression of having one foot in the present and one in the timeless past of the Jewish faith.

The Children's Choir sang like angels — well trained angels. Davis had their undivided attention on stage as they followed his tempi and musical direction. Their precisely placed consonants displayed the group's discipline.

From within the ranks of the chorus came several outstanding young soloists: Greg McCausland, Danielle Bond, Mary Kennedy, Ardra Shephard, Alana Friesman, Kate Ladniak and Debbie Bottley. They delivered their parts with confidence, accuracy and clean, beautiful sounds.

John Leek, organist at Christ's Church Cathedral, serves as the group's accompanist. His presence was always what was needed, never too much, never too little.

The chorus has a polished sound and winning manner on stage. These children seem like veteran performers. I walked past the chorus, off stage, just after the concert. They were jumping about and cheering one another for a job well done. Their exuberance reminded me of just how young they are. What a remarkable group.

A successful children's concert is one that keeps the young patrons involved and interested for the duration of the

performance. The younger the patrons, the more bedlam this involves. My first children's concert was a nerve-shattering experience. The children were asked to sing, shout and play one-note chimes. The din from the audience was astounding. At the same time, the fun was contagious. I realized that children's concert reviews had to be about fun more than about serious music.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

August 10, 1992

Viennese Waltzes Have Audience Dancing in Aisles

[The above headline referred to the first half of this review. Due to limited space, the two reviews had to be combined under one headline.]

The secret to a successful kiddie concert is to keep things interesting and moving at a good clip. Boris Brott managed both on Sunday afternoon at the du Maurier Centre.

"Beethoven Lives Upstairs" was the theme for an afternoon of music making and entertainment. Beethoven was indeed present thanks to the appearance of actor Douglas Campbell.

Campbell portrayed an aged, deaf Beethoven, reanimated for the afternoon. Brott provided him with a hearing aid and introduced him to rock music, synthesizers and motion pictures - all to the delight of the young audience.

Campbell's believable Beethoven, clips from Walt Disney's animated film *Fantasia*, and some high-tech synthesizer tricks kept the young crowd attentive — much to the delight of their parents.

Ian Bates, an 11-year-old, prize-winning pianist, awed his peers with an extremely musical performance of Beethoven's "Für Elise."

The disarming virtuoso in high-tops seemed perfectly at home on the stage as he won the approval of audience and orchestra alike.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

January 18, 1993

Babar Spectacle Has a Magical Effect

Elephants, lions, a clown, gymnasts and a symphony orchestra. What is wrong with this picture? Nothing at all if you ask the patrons of yesterday afternoon's Hamilton Philharmonic Sundaes Symphonies concert — most of whom have not learned to spell *symphony* yet.

The spectacle in question was "Babar at the Bigtop," a joint presentation by the HPO, Hamilton Ballet Youth Ensemble and the Hamilton Regionettes Gymnastic Club, conducted by Roberto de Clara. The performance was more than a standard

children's concert, it was also a chance for children to watch their peers perform as dancers and gymnasts.

The effect of children performing for children was magical. Four agile, young gymnasts were received with a chorus of "wows" as they flipped and cartwheeled their way across the stage. Throughout the concert, junior patrons perched on the edges of their seats, or climbed on parental laps to get the best possible view of the stage.

Children's entertainer Beth Anne Cole joined the festivities in a piece of her own, entitled Bubbles. Bubbles tells the tale of a clown who cannot laugh. Cole, playing the clown, worked the room with complete ease. She had the entire kinder contingent tell her a joke — at the same time, and coaxed laughter from them on cue.

Although fairly upstaged by clown, bubbles and waves of laughter, tubist Mark Bonang was undaunted. He made lovely music of the lyrical piece which features tuba throughout.

Even scene changes were choreographed. While clearing the stage, the four performers from the gymnastic club mimed and tossed bubble gum to the audience.

The hit of the afternoon was the title act, Babar. The familiar tale, The Story of Babar the Little Elephant, was narrated by Cole and danced by members of the Ballet Youth Ensemble. Clever costumes and highly descriptive choreography brought Francis Poulenc's music and the story itself to life. The disciplined young

dancers skimmed and glided as birds, and lumbered as elephants, beautifully characterizing their roles.

De Clara joined the circus theme as he deftly juggled the orchestra and all other activity on stage. An unruly microphone and buzzing sound system demanded some creative improvisation from him, eventually leading to a deletion from the program. He kept the performance moving, and the audience listening.

Children's concerts are an orchestra's chance to reach out to young people in hopes that they will, as adults, become patrons of the arts. Creative programs like Babar at the Bigtop make a lasting impression and leave the children looking forward to their next concert. If the truth be known, most of the adults present will be looking forward to the next concert as well.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

Music, Magic, Good Times

March 22, 1993

Performer Jim Witter had his audience jumping up and down yesterday afternoon — he also had them singing, shouting whispering, snapping their fingers and flying imaginary kites. To his enthralled audience of youngsters, this sort of interactive performance is simply what a good concert should be.

Held at the Central Hamilton Public Library, the concert was presented by the Hamilton Philharmonic as part of their Carpet Concerts, a concert series for children. The afternoon's theme was music and magic.

And a Carpet Concert it was. A large carpeted area in front of the stage was part of the reason for the afternoon's success. It allowed the tiny patrons the freedom to move about and be comfortable. They sprawled out, jumped around, danced and crowded the stage to see Witter's magic tricks more clearly.

Witter, a singer/pianist/magician, handled the diminutive crowd with ease. He made seamless shifts between music and magic. He varied his selections and kept everything short and energetic. Not once did he lose the children's attention.

Witter's musical program included such kindergarten favorites as Puff the Magic Dragon, Doe a Deer and Bingo. He invited the audience to join in every number he sang — and join they did.

The charismatic young performer's most astonishing success came in silence. To the obvious surprise of the audience's parental contingent, he had the entire roomful of children silently mouthing lyrics to John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt. Those were the quietest moments of the afternoon.

Children were not the only patrons having fun. There were a good number of adult voices joining the choruses of Witter's musical numbers.

The controlled chaos of yesterday's Carpet Concert was a delight to witness, even though I cheated and chose a chair over carpeted seating.

The Canadian premiere of David Amram's *Celebration* was a case of hearing a work cold. There were no scores or recordings available to me prior to the performance.

Fortunately, I have both played and heard a number of Amram's pieces. As a result, I had an idea of what to expect and some perspective in which to place the new work.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

February 8, 1993

Premiere Offered at Pops

A virtuoso travelogue was presented this weekend by the Hamilton Philharmonic. Music Around the World, the current Pops series instalment, offered a musical tour of the planet led by conductor David Amram.

Amram spent the evening deftly switching hats, as he moved from conductor to narrator, to player of assorted ethnic instruments, finally to percussionist and pianist. In addition, he conducted the Canadian premiere of his own work, *Celebration*.

Celebration is a fascinating, eclectic, three movement work based on diverse ethnic musics. Each movement reflects a distinct culture and style of music, making liberal use of ethnic melodies and rhythms. Diverse as the movements and their inspirations are, *Celebration* is surprisingly cohesive.

The first movement, "Chakra," was inspired by a driving, compelling 10 beat rhythmic pattern from India. "Song of the Sky Loom" from the Laguna Pueblo, based on a haunting Southwestern Native American melody, sings of the timeless Southwestern culture and landscape.

The final movement, "Bomba-Mambo-Blues" is a rollicking piece with 'Afro-Cuban-Puerto Rican Jazz Roots.' This is the kind of music that demands involvement rather than passive enjoyment. To that end, Amram had the audience clapping as he ran from the podium to drums, piano and penny whistle.

Some of the selections included on the musical travelogue were Johannes Brahms's Hungarian Dance No. 1, Hector Berlioz's Roman Carnival Overture, Aaron Copland's Rodeo: Hoe Down, and Antonin Dvorak's New World Symphony — Finale. Amram and the orchestra, while playing the taxing program cleanly, were often slow to shift musical gears. The first half of the concert in particular was marked by a bland similarity.

The orchestra dug in for musically charged readings of the Amram and Dvorak selections. Nancy Bourdon Nelson, English horn, was featured in several pieces throughout the concert. She continually delivered a rich, warm sound, and compelling musical statements.

From shepherd's flutes, cow bells, ocarinas, and a Sioux courting flute to classics and ethnic inspirations, the evening was delightfully diverse and wholly entertaining.

When the St. Lawrence Quartet came to town, it was widely known that they would be performing *Love in a Trampled Garden* by Marjan Mozetich. Mozetich is a composer with Hamilton ties, which made the concert of special local interest. *Love in a Trampled Garden* was the new piece presented to quartets for quick preparation at the Banff String Quartet Competition. The St. Lawrence Quartet won that competition, which jump-started their career. Since then, they have made the Mozetich quartet part of their repertoire.

Although the St. Lawrence Quartet has recorded the Mozetich piece, the recording was not yet available at the time of their Hamilton concert. There was also no score to be had. As a result, I was left with a single recording of other works by Mozetich. I used it to become familiar with the composer's musical language, hoping that it would help me to get a grip on the quartet after only one hearing. It did help, immensely.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

January 29, 1993

Quartet's Performance Alive, Riveting

A hot young string quartet is taking the musical world by storm — and its members hail from Ontario. The St. Lawrence Quartet, which got its start in Toronto, delighted a Chamber Music Hamilton audience on Wednesday evening.

The young players formed the quartet in the autumn of 1989. Since then, they have won top prizes in several prestigious competitions, including the Young Concert Artists Competition in New York and the Banff International String Competition. They are currently "Quartet-in-Residence" at the Juilliard School of Music in New York.

The group opened its program with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's String Quartet in C Major, K. 465, known as the "Dissonant" Quartet. From the dissonance of the opening Adagio to the exciting final Allegro, the quartet infused the piece with passion and intensity. Their musical communication was like an animated conversation between good friends. There was nothing conservative or safe about their reading of the Mozart. It was fresh, inventive and completely convincing. Their charged reading made the piece feel like something they had written themselves, an hour before the concert.

Shifting gears completely, the quartet presented *Lament in a Trampled Garden* by Canadian composer, Marjan Mozetich. Mozetich refers to himself as a "post A-

bomb romantic." He is unabashedly eclectic. He freely borrows from and refers to any era or style that suits his expressive need.

Lament is highly romantic, occasionally jazzy and always interesting. St. Lawrence has clearly made the piece their own. From the romantic melodies to the minimalist undercurrents, its delivery was alive, intense, and completely riveting.

Claude Debussy's Quartet in G minor, Op. 10, closed the well-rounded program. The group's reading was clean and exciting, but lacking in some of the subtle colours and textures for which this piece is known.

If you missed the concert, all is not lost. A recording of the group performing Wednesday evening's program will be available soon through the CBC.

I went off to hear the Hamilton premiere of Thomas In-goldsby's *Dialogues pour violin et piano* with great curiosity. One week prior to the Hamilton performance, the work had been performed in Guelph. The audience in Guelph was less than impressed with the piece and showed its displeasure by walking out during the performance. By the time the piece ended, there were only a few patrons left in the house.

I was prepared for virtually anything from both the piece and the audience. I had envisioned a wonderful headline about

the audience fleeing the concert hall. It was almost disappointing when the audience actually enjoyed the piece.

The Hamilton Spectator, Life Section

Duet Club Does Well with Brave Rendition

October 22, 1992

Bravos are in order for violinist Paule Barsalou, pianist Ken Gee and the Duet Club of Hamilton. To the musicians, the praise goes for an intense piece well played and for bravery in programming. For the Duet Club, the praise goes for an open-minded reception to that very different work.

At last evening's Duet Club - sponsored recital, the Barsalou/Gee duo gave the Hamilton premiere of Thomas Ingoldsby's 1989 composition, *Dialogues Pour Violin Et Piano*. The duo preceded Ingoldsby's highly dissonant piece with a warning of what was to come. The work "touches us but doesn't make us feel good," Barsalou explained.

Dialogues was not the monster we were expecting. True, if one heard pretty sounds, they were likely a mistake, but this is dissonance with a purpose. The piece is very clearly structured and directed. It is a touching piece of music, emotionally exhausting to hear.

The successful reception to Ingoldsby's complex piece was due to the duo's reading of it. Their thoughtful, well-communicated conception of the piece allowed the audience to understand it.

Igor Stravinsky's *Suite Italienne*, the composer's lively, neo-classical rip-off of some familiar Pergolesi themes, opened the program with a flourish. Comfortable partners, the pair savored these often-heard tunes while relishing Stravinsky's added spice.

The program was rounded out with Maurice Ravel's *Sonata*, and three little gems by George Gershwin, Claude Champagne and Fritz Kreisler. Making lovely musical statements throughout Ravel's lush piece, the players dug in and had some fun as they spun through Champagne's *Danse Villageoise*, a feisty little piece based on Irish fiddle tunes.

Delightful as the recital was, a special bravo must go to the faithful audience, who selflessly missed a televised World Series game.

There are concerts and then there are spectacles. Hamilton's mayor, Bob Morrow, presented a fund-raising spectacle, calling it a concert. The performance was extremely difficult to cover. The evening's fare included a high-school vocal ensemble, a professional string ensemble, tap-dancing retirees, a famous comedian, and a famous music-theatre star. In

addition, the concert included the mayor himself, playing the piano.

By the end of the concert, I was laughing about the task at hand. When I returned to the *Spectator* to write the review, my laughter dimmed somewhat.

It is one thing to use a different yardstick by which to judge professional and amateur performances, but is another thing entirely to switch yardsticks continually during a single performance. Also to be considered was the fact that this was a benefit performance, organized at the last moment. The last complication of the evening's fare was that the curtain did not fall on the mayor's gala until 11 p.m. This seriously cut into my deadline time at the paper — on a night when I needed every second.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

Friday, February 26, 1993

Bail Out Bob A Blast: Mayor Indebted to Friends

We should all have as much fun paying off our debts as Mayor Bob Morrow did last evening.

The mayor called on famous friends and local talent to fill the stage at Hamilton Place for what host Eugene Levy called the "Bail Out Bob Show." The goal was to defray a shortfall from a previous mayoralty campaign.

And Mayor Morrow has a circle of very talented friends to call upon. In addition to comedian Levy, a high-school buddy of Morrow's, last night's roster included Wayne Strongman and the Bach Elgar Choir, Marta Hidy and the Ensemble Sir Ernest MacMillan, the Geritol Follies Dancers, the young singers of New Faces and singer Maggie MacDonald.

The highlight of the evening was the brief appearance of singer/actor Michael Burgess. Burgess, star of Toronto's *Les Misérables*, delighted the audience with a few musical chestnuts.

The tenor, who'll open in *The Man Of La Mancha* this summer in Toronto, took the stage with Morrow, his long-time friend and former music theatre colleague, at the piano. Burgess' selections included "To Dream The Impossible Dream" from *The Man Of La Mancha* and "Try To Remember" from *The Fantasticks*, a musical on which he and Morrow had worked some years ago.

Suffice it to say that Burgess can really sing a tune and knows how to work a room. The audience, seemingly suffering from a collective winter cold, magically fell silent while he held the microphone.

Levy, whom Morrow served as accompanist during high school years, wondered aloud whether he or Burgess was the mayor's better friend, and brought dry humor and quick one-liners to the evening.

A collage of Hamilton talent filled out the program. Marta Hidy conducted the Ensemble Sir Ernest MacMillan in excerpts from Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* and, with Morrow at the keyboard, Albinoni's *Concerto in G Minor* and Bach's *Concerto in F Minor*.

MacMillan's Mozart was lively and well crafted. It is a tribute to both Ensemble and conductor that the stage logistics didn't bring the Bach to its knees. In order for the piano to have been further from conductor and Ensemble, it would have had to have been off stage. Somehow they managed.

New Faces, a group of young singers from Westdale, presented both ensemble and solo numbers. This is a talented, disciplined bunch of kids. They are poised and animated in performance and sound great besides.

Hamilton's Geritol Follies dancers tapped and grinned their way to hearty applause for the cause. The flashy troupe of hoofers regaled with several numbers including "One Singular Sensation" from *A Chorus Line*.

Wayne Strongman and the Bach Elgar Choir apparently took requests from the mayor. They opened with one of Morrow's favorites, "He Is Watching Over Israel" from Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

The choir also presented R. Murray Schafer's *Epitaph for Moonlight*. *Epitaph* is best described as a tapestry of vocal sounds accompanied by random chimes and percussion. The piece is often highly dissonant, with a divided chorus moving in half steps from dissonance to consonance. The choir gave a clean, musical performance of the fascinating work.

Wrapping up was the Paul Sparrow video *Voice Of A City*, slightly marred by technical problems between video and choir accompaniment, and a rousing *O Canada*.

While some of the evening's offerings fared better than others, the audience was given several real treats.

After hearing a really spectacular performance, the tendency is to write a lot of gush. Superlatives appear every other word or so and the piece becomes weak with praise. This was the case after Marina Mdivani's recital at McMaster University. She is an amazing pianist. When I returned to the paper, full of excitement over the concert, I wrote a horrible piece of unmitigated praise. When I re-read what I had written, I realised that I was so full of praise that the words became meaningless. At that point I calmed down and re-wrote the piece in less lofty terms, to make it a stronger review.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

February 15, 1993

Mdivani's Deft Touch Pleasing to the Ear

One of the truly criminal effects of the cold war was the sequestering of talent behind the Iron Curtain. Last night, the McMaster University Celebrity Concerts presented a formerly sequestered Russian artist, pianist Marina Mdivani.

Mdivani, who took prizes at several international competitions in the early sixties, served as principal piano soloist of the Moscow Philharmonic for 25 years. She was not allowed to perform in the West or make recordings. In 1991, the pianist emigrated to Canada.

Mdivani's penchant for unconventional programming was illustrated last night. Her opening work, filling the first half of the concert, was Paul Hindemith's *Ludus Tonalis: Studies in Counterpoint, Tonal Organization and Piano Playing*.

Ludus Tonalis, a rarely performed work, is a true tour de force for performer. Consisting of Prelude, Postlude, 12 Fugues and 11 Interludes, the work exposes every facet, strength and weakness of the performer's technique and musical perception.

Mdivani made the lengthy piece a mesmerizing tonal excursion. She was alternately aggressive, virtuosic, delicate, playful and lyrical, her powerful, commanding style melting away as she easily delivered fluid, cascading passages. She plays with a seemingly limitless palette of colors at her disposal.

Each of the 25 sections of *Ludus Tonalis* has a distinct musical flavor.

Mdivani instantly captured the essence and character of each section and presented them with crystal clarity. I suspect that any future performances I may hear of this piece will live in the shadow of this definitive performance.

After the musical intensity of the Hindemith, Mdivani chose to present a selection of Preludes and Etudes by Alexander Scriabin as the second half of her program.

In Mdivani's deft hands, the Scriabin pieces formed a connected set of short, contrasting movements — a sort of older *Ludus Tonalis*. Her controlled romanticism gave each piece unique color and focus.

Mdivani will give a free lecture tonight, which is open to the public. It will be at 8 p.m. in the McMaster Health Sciences Centre, room 1A4.

Tomorrow, she will give a free recital at 12:30 p.m. in McMaster's Convocation Hall.

One of the more delicate situations I had to deal with in writing reviews was that of the performance of soprano Janet Obermeyer. Obermeyer is a tremendous performer and thoroughly professional. During the concert I was reviewing, Ms. Obermeyer "went up" while singing Fauré's "Notre Amour". She stopped, began the piece again and was able to

finish it with no difficulty. The problem in reporting the incident was that I was aware that the soprano had lost her mother to cancer two weeks earlier. I had to mention the re-start of the Fauré piece, but I did not want to dwell on it, given her personal circumstances.

The Hamilton Spectator, Now Section

March 30, 1993

Laing Singers 'Snow-Check' Concert Proves to be Well Worth the Wait

The John Laing Singers presented their "snow-check" concert last evening at Christ's Church Cathedral.

Rescheduled due to the March 13 snowstorm, the concert proved to be well worth the wait.

Music Director John Laing and his chorus were joined by soprano Janet Obermeyer in a concert entitled, Now and Then. The concert celebrated unaccompanied choral music from the 17th and 20th centuries.

The chorus offered Renaissance motets by Adrian Batten and William Byrd as well as Byrd's Mass for Four Voices as their early music selections. The singers handled the intricate moving lines with ease, their warm sound and refined blend creating the impression of a small, intimate ensemble of few voices.

The second half of the concert moved to the 20th century with Benjamin Britten's Hymn to St. Cecilia. The moving piece, set to a poem by W.H. Auden, featured soprano Obermeyer and contralto Marg Funston.

Obermeyer's light, controlled sound matched the timbre of the chorus, rising from their midst for her solo lines. The chorus formed a tight, clean ensemble, the strength of their sound coming from the alto and tenor sections. Periodic sags in soprano pitch held the group back.

The chorus displayed tremendous discipline and ensemble sense in R. Murray Schafer's vocal tone poem, Epitaph for Moonlight. The piece is a soundscape of a night in northern Canada. The chorus, accompanied by occasional piano sounds, bells, chimes and glockenspiel, painted a lovely musical image.

Laing's creative programing placed a brief vocal recital by Obermeyer in the midst of the evening's choral concert. The animated soprano offered works by Vaughan Williams, Faure, Quilter, Grieg and Gounod.

Her superb technical control allowed her complete musical freedom — and what wonderful use she makes of that freedom. She captured the essence of each piece she sang, slipping into a new character for each selection. Even a stop and restart of Faure's Notre Amour didn't faze this consummate musician.

The chorus returned to the stage to close the evening, the final concert of their 10th anniversary season, with two sentimental Canadian Folksongs. Their fondness

for these lovely pieces by Derek Healey and G. Moustaki was evident and quite contagious.

Section V

Articles for Current Musicology and Opera Canada

McMaster University hosted an international symposium of music critics, "New Dimensions in Music Criticism," in November, 1991. For the students in McMaster's Music Criticism M.A. programme, the symposium provided an opportunity to hear academic papers as well as reports, presentations and panel discussions from newspaper critics.

In the weeks following the symposium, Dr. James Deaville, then Director of the criticism programme, suggested that one of the graduate students write about the events for publication in *Current Musicology*. The purpose of the article was to present a listing and synopsis of events as well as a few words from the perspective of a graduate student in criticism. The article has been submitted for publication but has not yet been printed.

The international Symposium, *New Dimensions in Music Criticism*, held in November, 1991, provided the students of music criticism here at McMaster University with a unique look into that field. Presentations and panels by journalistic critics allowed us to survey the current state of practical music criticism and to speculate about the future of the discipline, while various papers provided us with exposure to current critical academic work. The following discussion organizes the symposium events into four categories: I) presentations by critics; II) papers by academics; III) ancillary presentations; and IV) other events.

I

Two panel discussions among critics took place, one seeking to determine "What is Criticism" and the other entitled "The State of Music Criticism in North America." Both panels provided interesting interaction among the various members and between audience and panel. The panel defining criticism made it clear that evaluative writings in all areas of music should be considered music criticism, stretching the common definition beyond journalistic criticism. The panel which discussed the state of music criticism commented, among other things, on the scarcity of jobs, noting that even the large newspapers no longer keep as many critics on staff as in the past. It was also pointed out that critics must be versatile to survive in today's market.

Richard Freed of Washington, D.C. and Arthur Kaptainis of *The Montreal Gazette* spoke on "A Day and Night in the Life of a Critic." Both speakers were candid about the pressures of deadlines, schedules and priority decisions about which concert should be covered, in the event of a conflict. Mr. Kaptainis dealt with the difficulties of writing objective criticism while the critic might be personally involved with the performers or composer of the work being performed. The two critics also related a few amusing anecdotes, eliciting knowing nods and laughs from the other critics present.

John Rockwell of *The New York Times* spoke on "Criticism and the Diversity of Today's Music." Mr. Rockwell, now European Cultural Correspondent for the *Times*, has served that paper as a music critic of wide-ranging interests. He stressed how the fight for survival is being experienced by all facets of the arts today and how the successful critic must be versatile, i.e. conversant with a variety of musics.

One of the most interesting and thought-provoking presentations by a critic was that of Nancy Malitz, critic for *The Detroit News*. Her paper, "The Graying of the North American Arts Audience and Its Effect on Musical Journalism," addressed the problem of survival for many arts groups as their audiences age. The questions she posed were whether the "baby boomers" can be attracted to arts appreciation and support and if so, how will that be accomplished. She based her observations on interviews with consumers of recorded music. Her solutions were realistic and left the listener with a feeling of responsibility for the continued health of arts organizations.

Her presentation pointed out the need for responsible and involved critics if the arts organizations in North America are going to survive.

The issue of the survival of music criticism was often discussed during the Symposium. One solution presented was the possibility of expanding criticism to media other than print in hopes of reaching a greater audience through radio, television and even computer networks. Many of the critics present stressed the need for literate musicians to write in various capacities throughout the music industry.

II

Professor Frank Cooper of the University of Miami opened the symposium with a presentation entitled "Authenticity, a Musicological Myth: The Problems of the Urtext." He used both recorded and score examples in demonstrating that there is no such thing as definitive authentic performance. The interesting extemporaneous talk might have benefitted from a tighter organization, but there is no question that he raised an issue of importance for critics.

Professor Glenda Dawn Goss of the University of Georgia presented a paper entitled "Functions of Music Criticism: The Case of Olin Downes." She discussed the manner in which Olin Downes publicly championed Jean Sibelius's music and his near obsession with the work of this composer. In considering this case, she addressed the issue of objectivity in criticism. She questioned the appropriateness of

a critic's promotion of a composer or performer, which became the subject for considerable discussion following the presentation.

The subject of feminist music criticism was broached by two speakers, Dr. Roberta Lamb of Queen's University, Ontario and Roseanne Kydd of McMaster University. Dr. Lamb's paper, "The Value of Feminist Criticism to Music Education," provoked a fairly heated discussion about the validity and value of feminist criticism. Ms. Kydd's articulate presentation, "The Music Criticism of Susan McClary," approached feminist criticism through the specific work of one writer. She provided the necessary background for an initial understanding of the feminist perspective on criticism. Both presentations highlighted the controversy still surrounding the idea of feminist criticism.

Professor Michael Saffle of Virginia Tech University devoted his paper to the long-standing debate over the relationship between criticism and musicology. He pointed out that, in a sense, we are all phenomenologists, in that the music we hear is always changing and its result is to change us. It became clear that the disciplines of criticism and musicology should not be mutually exclusive, contrary to what certain purists maintain.

In discussing "Deconstruction, Criticism and Musicology: The Beginning and the End of the Book," Dillon Parmer of The Eastman School of Music provided a basic yet thorough discussion of how deconstruction can be applied in music criticism.

In doing so he again opened up the question of meaning in music. Unfortunately, time did not permit him to apply his ideas to an actual composition as was his intent.

A fascinating talk was given by Dr. John Shepherd, who is a pioneer and one of the leading figures in the world of popular music studies. Dr. Shepherd made a strong case for the study of popular music as a part of university music curriculum. He also illustrated the ways in which popular music studies have broadened the perspectives of critics.

Hermeneutics was the central topic of a rather terse presentation by Dr. Roger Savage, who argued on behalf of a critical system which could accommodate new music. In his discussion, he drew heavily upon the philosophy of the Frankfurt School and the work of Theodor Adorno.

III

Three ancillary presentations rounded out the weekend. Attorney Bert Bruser spoke about "Criticism and the Law of Libel," addressing some of the fears and concerns of critics regarding lawsuits, presenting both factual and anecdotal information. In a presentation entitled "The Next Step: The Musings of a Concert Manager," William Littler of *The Toronto Star* interviewed impresario Jacques Leiser. Mr. Leiser reminisced about encounters with performers he had managed in an entertaining and engrossing manner. The final offering of the symposium was a conversation between Dr. Alan Walker of MacMaster University and Michael

Maxwell of Toronto about the reconstruction of Franz Liszt's early unfinished work, "De Profundis." Mr. Maxwell, in studying the piece and determining that it was largely complete, undertook the project of completing it. The engaging presentation we heard featured excerpts from the newly released recording as well as live demonstrations by pianist Phillip Thomson.

IV

The Friday sessions ended with a dinner in Hamilton and an excellent concert by resident McMaster pianist Valerie Tryon. A brief reception followed the concert. On Saturday evening *The Hamilton Spectator* hosted a reception and dinner for those participating in the symposium, at which all participants had an opportunity to continue the many on-going conversations and debates sparked by the various presentations.

While the presentations were the focus of the weekend, some of the most illuminating moments came in chance conversations with the speakers and participants. Listening to two journalistic critics arguing the merits and future of a particular new music ensemble, discussing problems of programming with the music director of an opera company, hearing about the plans for a new publication on music criticism — these encounters combined with the presentations and panel discussions illuminated the realities and opportunities which await us as we enter the field of music criticism.

In October, *Opera Canada* contacted me to write a CD review of the newly released *The Death of Klinghoffer* by John Adams. Writing for a specialty audience was a distinct change of focus after several months of writing for the far more general audience of *The Hamilton Spectator*. The process was complicated by the fact that the CD was available for review, but the accompanying booklet containing libretto and information about the production had not yet been printed. Consequently, the project took a great deal more time and research than I had originally anticipated.

After reading my copy, the editor handling this review asked if I could insert more of my personal response to the work into the review. The changes were easily made but marked a departure from the newspaper reviews I was accustomed to writing. I found it uncomfortable to insert a personal pronoun into the review. They also requested that I give the recording a "star grade" — e.g. five stars for a flawless recording and/or a masterpiece or a single star for a poor recording and/or a dismal work. The star-system of rating recordings makes me very uncomfortable. The system seems to me to be arbitrary and completely unrelated to field of music.

Points are given to canine contestants in dog shows but seem totally out of place in the world of classical recordings.

The review appeared in the "Opera at Home" section of the Winter, 1992 issue of *Opera Canada*. "Opera at Home" is a regular section of the magazine which covers operas presented in audio and video recordings. Each recording is allotted a limited amount of space. In the case of *Klinghoffer*, it was necessary to speak about the opera itself, since it was quite new and had not yet played on stages in Canada. It was also important to include a note about the composer and lyricist, which would not have been required in handling an opera by more familiar artists. All of this and the review had to be contained in 250 words.

Adams: *The Death of Klinghoffer*. Sylvan,
Maddalena, Friedman, Hammons, Opera de Lyon
Orchestra, English National Opera Chorus, Nagano.
Nonesuch CD 79281 (2 CDs)

Opera lovers the world over have heard rumblings about John Adams's *The Death of Klinghoffer* since its 1991 premiere in Brussels, at the height of the Persian

Gulf War. The opera is a contemplation of Mideast unrest and its realization in the 1985 high-jacking of the cruise ship Achille Lauro and the murder of wheelchair-bound, Jewish-American passenger Leon Klinghoffer.

Adams and librettist Alice Goodman, collaborators on Grammy Award-winning *Nixon in China*, staunchly refuse to take sides in their presentation of both the Achille Lauro incident and the Middle Eastern conflict. The composer refuses just as staunchly to take musical sides. *Klinghoffer* is a musical collage of minimalism, romantic lyricism, amplified acoustic instruments and synthesizers. Adams weaves a rich, homogeneous tapestry of sound and emotion from these seemingly disparate elements.

Adams' expansive phrases and minimalist accompaniment are mesmerizing as they underscore the timeless anguish of this ancient conflict of faiths and cultures. I recall the television images and reports of the Achille Lauro high-jacking. Until hearing this wrenching lament, I had not seen the events as a tragedy in which all parties were victims of a greater evil.

Kent Nagano, who conducted the premiere performances, deftly handles the demanding score. He allows the performers expressive time without letting the overall pace drag. The superb ensemble includes Sanford Sylvan (Klinghoffer), James Maddalena (The Captain), Stephanie Friedman (Omar/Alma Rumour) and Thomas Hammons (Rambo).

Klinghoffer is a musically exciting, emotionally devastating piece. The subject matter touches all of our lives and the music, like its composer, is clearly a product of our eclectic age.

Opera has been called a dying, irrelevant art form. With *Klinghoffer*, Adams takes opera by the shoulders, shakes it a bit, and spins it around to face the coming century with purpose and direction.

Section VI

Programme Notes

Writing programme notes is a bit like providing a brief history lecture about a given composer, via a single selection from the artist's oeuvre. Programme notes must be interesting in order for the audience to take the time to read them. The writer must be careful about making assumptions of too little or too much musical knowledge on the part of the audience to avoid offending or boring them. All of the above must be achieved in a limited space.

In the case of the McMaster University Celebrity Series, the student writing programme notes is instructed to assume that the audience has some musical sophistication. This leaves the writer free to explore the work at hand in some detail and free to use specific musical language without the need for constant explanation.

Within this section, programme notes for the McMaster University Celebrity Series appear first, followed by notes for Symphony Hamilton — each series presented in chronological

order. The programme notes are followed by artists' biographies.

McMaster University Celebrity Concert Series

The Lafayette Quartet

Sunday, October 6, 1991

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

String Quartet, Op. 94 No. 3 (1975)

The *Third String Quartet* of Benjamin Britten was written in October, 1975. It was premiered on December 19, 1976, just 15 days after the composer's death. The piece was written for and premiered by the Amadeus Quartet and dedicated to Hans Keller, a long-time colleague of the composer. In 1973, Britten was forced to undergo heart surgery from which he never fully recovered. Aware that his life was drawing to a close, he made a final visit to Venice, a city that he had always loved. It was here in Venice that Britten composed his third and final string quartet, which would also be the last instrumental work he would write. Britten had come to terms with his illness and its inevitable end by this time, and one can hear the serenity of his thought throughout this work.

Each of the five movements of this quartet bears a title pointing out a technical facet or mood. The first movement, "Duets," and the last movement, "Recitative and

Passacaglia," are greater in intensity than the inner three movements. Movements two and four, "Ostinato" and "Burlesque," serve to isolate the ethereal third movement, entitled "Solo." Written for Norbert Brainin of the Amadeus Quartet, this is a serene, almost ethereal, melody for the first violin supported by appoggiaturas from the other players. The melody leads to a quiet cadenza in the central episode. The solo returns, now accompanied by harmonics. The marking at the beginning of the movement is "very calm." The last movement, entitled "Recitative and Passacaglia," is subtitled "La Serenissima." In this movement Britten makes use of themes from his earlier opera, *Death in Venice*. It is a haunting yet not sad farewell.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

String Quartet in F Major, Op. 18, No. 1 (1801)

Raised in Bonn, it was in Vienna that Beethoven encountered the ideas of the Enlightenment and came into his own as a composer. The six quartets of Op. 18 are perhaps the most ambitious project of these early years in Vienna. While Beethoven's tragic hearing loss would not be public knowledge for some time, it was while writing these quartets, from 1790 to 1801, that he first began to notice the decline. These quartets were not originally composed in their present order. The piece we know as number one was actually written second in the series and was also heavily revised by the composer before publication.

The first movement opens with a syncopated figure, which in earlier sketches appears in 4/4 time rather than the revised 3/4 time signature. The movement progresses with thematic material which is both interesting and inventive. The second movement, an Adagio, is a dramatic, emotional piece. Beethoven commented that in writing it he had been thinking of the scene in the burial vault in *Romeo and Juliet*. This movement was written as a farewell to a dear friend. The third movement is a scherzo with a decidedly chromatic element and shifting accents which tie it to the more serious tone of the first two movements. The finale opens with what sounds like a rondo theme but then leads into a polyphonic development. Beethoven introduces a lyrical theme which is actually an inversion of a figure introduced earlier. Of the six Op. 18 quartets, this is the most varied in emotional expression and most cohesive in design.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

String Quartet in D Major, Op. 11 (1871)

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in 1840 in Votensk, Russia and died in 1893 in St. Petersburg. His was a troubled life. By the time of his death, at the age of 53, he had the appearance of a man of 70. Always a sensitive child, the loss of his mother when he was 14 had a profound effect on him. Years later he would write of this trauma, saying that had it not been for music he would have gone mad. His first attempt at composition dates from the month of his mother's death. Tchaikovsky

seems to have been most comfortable in writing for larger ensembles as he published only eight chamber works. Of these works, three are string quartets.

The *Quartet in D Major*, Op. 11 is the first of Tchaikovsky's string quartets and is commonly considered to be the most interesting of the three. The work gained a great deal of popular fame due to the second movement, which is based on a great Russian folk song. The quartet opens with an interesting syncopation which recurs throughout the movement as both thematic and accompaniment material. The second movement, while loved for its familiar content, is compositionally the weakest of the quartet. The third movement is a delightful scherzo, well written for the medium. The finale is quite reminiscent of the first movement but is a good deal livelier. This movement, with its excellent imitative counterpoint, is a good example of Tchaikovsky's compositional skills.

McMaster University Celebrity Concert Series

Valerie Tryon (piano)

Friday, November 1, 1991

Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944)

"Automne," from *Études de concert*, op. 35 (1886)

Cécile Chaminade was born into a musical Parisian family. Though her father deemed Conservatory training unsuitable for a young lady of her class, he did consent

to private studies for her with various members of the Conservatoire faculty. There is a cloudy story of Chaminade having played for Franz Liszt in the late 1860's. He is supposed to have found her playing similar to Chopin's. Chaminade was known both as a pianist and composer, often performing recitals of her own works. Through tours of Europe and a highly successful tour of the United States in 1908, she developed an international reputation and many admirers. Near the end of her life, the bedridden composer often expressed great concern about being forgotten.

Of the nearly 400 published works, including orchestral pieces, chamber music, songs and a wealth of piano music, it is the piano literature which is most often performed today. "Automne" is the second piece of 6 *Etudes de Concert* op. 35, composed in 1886. The 6 Etudes are technically challenging works. The style of the pieces has often been compared to that of Chabrier. "Automne" was one of Chaminade's internationally most popular works, one which she herself performed often.

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Jeux d'eau (1901)

Alborada del gracioso (1905)

Gaspard de la nuit (1908)

Maurice Ravel was raised in a cultured, well-to-do family. Always receiving support and enthusiasm from his family, Ravel began his piano lessons at age 7.

Ravel was neither a prodigy nor a particularly diligent student. At the Conservatoire, his studies were erratic, protracting his tenure there to a period of 14 years. Ravel was rejected several times for the Prix de Rome, the last time causing a public outcry as he was already an established and quite popular composer. Ravel played an important role in what Erik Satie referred to as removing the "sauerkraut aesthetic" from French music. He was independent, searching not only for his own unique voice, but also for a unique French voice, breaking away from German tradition. He came of age under the influence of the Impressionists and literary greats — the likes of Emile Zola and Marcel Proust.

Jeux d'eau is hailed as Ravel's first piano masterpiece. Ravel stated in his autobiography, "*Jeux d'eau* ...stands as the point of departure for all new pianistic expressions one may find in my works." The work is dedicated to Ravel's "beloved master Gabriel Fauré" The influence of Franz Liszt is visible in the technical difficulties and the searching for new piano sonorities; in fact it is reminiscent of Liszt's *Les jeux d'eau à la Villa d'Este*. Ravel continued in his autobiography: "This work, inspired by the bubbling of water and the musical sounds of fountains, waterfalls and brooks, is built on two themes in the manner of the first movement of a sonata, without, however, being subjugated to the classic tonal formula."

Alborada del gracioso is the fourth work in Ravel's collection *Miroirs*. "Alborada" is literally "Song of the Dawn", and "Gracioso" is the jester in Spanish comedy. Here Ravel blurs the line between serious thought and parody. Tonal

ambiguity and chords containing three chromatic neighbouring tones characterize this work.

Gaspard de la nuit is a collection of three pieces for piano, based on poems by Aloysius Bertrand. Alfred Cortot, a fellow student of Ravel, called this work "one of the most astonishing examples of instrumental ingenuity to be found in the work of any composer."

Ondine consists of waves of arpeggios woven with a quiet melody singing like a sad voice. "I thought I heard music vaguely in my sleep, and near me the murmur of a tender sad voice singing."

Le gibet is constructed around a recurrent B flat, suggestive of the tolling bells in the poem, the intricate harmony winds and swirls. "Ah! What is that sound I hear? Is it the night wind howling, or the sighing of the corpse that hangs from yonder gibbet?"

Scarbo describes a malicious ghost darting about, growing first small then huge and finally disappearing. "... The little dwarf would grow taller and taller and stand towering between me and the moon like a cathedral spire with a golden bell jingling at the tip of his pointed cap. ... Then suddenly he would vanish." It is the rhythmic invention in this work which is most distinctive. Ravel called the *Gaspard* "pieces of transcendental virtuosity." The 3 pieces were dedicated respectively to Harold Bauer the pianist, Jean Marnold the critic, and Rudolph Ganz the pianist.

Hugh Hartwell (b. 1945)***Piece for Piano* (1968)**

Born in 1945, Hugh Hartwell received his undergraduate education at McGill University and his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. His composition teachers have included Istvan Anhalt, Richard Wernick and George Rochberg. Former Chairman of the Music Department at McMaster University, Hartwell has taught here since his return to Canada in 1976. He has received numerous awards, and commissions through the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council.

Hartwell's *Piece for Piano* was written in 1968, and received its premier performance at the Place des Arts in Montreal as part of a programme presented by the Société de Musique Contemporain de Quebec in 1968. It has since been performed and broadcast on numerous occasions in the United States and Canada. *Piece for Piano* was written to exploit the lyric and dramatic nature of the piano. It was revised this year to add more body to the lyrical passages. The work makes use of the piano's middle pedal in conjunction with silently depressed keys. It contains a coda consisting of fragmented bursts of virtuoso playing which effectively recapitulate and exploit all of the musical material which has gone before.

Andrzej Panufnik (b. 1914)***Six Miniature Studies, Vol. 2 (1964)***

Born in Warsaw, Sir Andrzej Panufnik was the son of a Polish violinist/theorist and an English violinist. He began to compose at age 9, later studying composition at the Warsaw Conservatory. Sadly, all of his compositions previous to 1944 were burned during the Warsaw uprising of that year. He later reconstructed a few of these lost works. Prior to World War II, Panufnik pursued a career in conducting and composition in London and Paris. As war became inevitable he returned to Warsaw where he weathered the Nazi occupation, playing in underground and charity concerts and writing patriotic songs under a pseudonym. After the war, Panufnik moved to England, becoming a naturalized British citizen in 1961. He stopped conducting in 1959 and devoted his time to composition. Earlier this year he received a knighthood.

In 1947, Panufnik composed a set of pieces entitled *Circle of Fifths*. In 1964 he revised these pieces which are divided into two volumes. Panufnik said of these pieces: "Each piece would strongly contrast with the previous one in terms of tempo and dynamics; however, to achieve unity, all were based on the same melodic line, rising and falling like a double wave, with a different key for each study."

Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

Sonetto 104 del Petrarca (1854)

"La Leggerezza" and "Un Sospiro," from *Trois Études de concert* (1848)

Franz Liszt was born in 1811 in Hungary and died 75 years later in Bayreuth. He was renowned during his lifetime as a concert pianist who possessed astonishing technique, but he was also acclaimed as a composer and conductor. Liszt was drawn to the piano at the age of five. His father had the musical knowledge to teach him rudiments of music but realised early that his son needed far more than he could offer. The family moved to Vienna so that Liszt might study with Carl Czerny, a former pupil of Beethoven. The intensive study lasted only 18 months, but it was to provide the basis of the technique for which Liszt was so famous. Liszt created the notion and also the term "recital". He raised the level of piano performance in his day from mere technical showmanship to a valid artistic experience. As a young man Liszt entertained notions of becoming a priest, a dream he partly realised in later life through taking minor orders, always retaining the option to retract. Franz Liszt made an indelible mark on piano performance practice: the standards he set still serve as a gauge for pianists today. In his later years, Liszt would reach into the future through compositions which explored Impressionism and which pushed back the boundaries of tonality.

The *Sonetto 104 Del Petrarca* is found in the second volume of *Années de Pèlerinage*, the 'Italian' volume which was completed in 1853. Liszt wrote three

Petrarch Sonetti in homage to the Italian poet. They were originally written as songs based on the sonnets, but Liszt later arranged them for solo piano. *Sonetto 104* speaks of the poet's quest for inner peace. The music opens with a lyrical theme moving to a dramatic statement and then closing in quiet resignation. Of the three Sonetti, this is the best known. Though Liszt based this work on the Petrarch poem, it is not hard to find an autobiographical cast in the idea of a quest for peace, a quest which led Liszt towards holy orders in his later years.

La Leggerezza and *Un Sospiro* are Numbers 2 and 3 of Liszt's *Trois Études de concert*, written about 1848 and published in 1849. Chopin had taken the genre of the etude into a new realm by writing etudes which were not only technical exercises but beautiful music as well. Liszt took the etude into still another realm with his creation of the concert etude. These are pieces designed to display rather than develop technique. *La Leggerezza*, in F minor, is one of Liszt's finest concert studies. Opening with legato triplets marked "quasi allegretto", the piece soon moves to the leggiero runs from which it derives its name. *Un Sospiro*, in D flat major, is the most popular of the three etudes simply due to its engaging melody. It is technically demanding in the frequent hand crossings it contains. The subtitles for these works were given to them by Liszt himself.

Fryderyk Chopin (1810-1849)***Fantasy in F Minor, Op. 49 (1841)***

When Fryderyk Chopin left Poland in 1830, he began a sad longing for his homeland which continued throughout his life. As a child of 9, Chopin began to perform publicly as a pianist. His pianistic style and ability as an adult, like that of his contemporary Franz Liszt, redefined piano performance standards. Chopin was one of the first composers to incorporate Slavic expression into Western music. His musical output primarily consisted of piano works, chamber music, songs and a few pieces for piano and orchestra. Chopin is known as "the greatest of all Polish composers and the most Polish of all great composers." During World War II, Chopin's music became a proud symbol of the Polish resistance.

Written in 1841, the *Fantasy in F Minor*, op. 49, is commonly regarded as the finest of the four Chopin fantasies. Moving from a slow march to a syncopated allegro to lush melodies, this piece is intricate, dynamic and fascinating. We are shown some of Chopin's most pianistic writing.

McMaster Celebrity Concert Series**Ingemar Korjus (bass baritone) and Valerie Tryon (piano)**

Sunday, November 10, 1991

John Dowland (1526-1626)**"Come again"****"Flow not so fast ye fountains"****"What if I never speed?"**

John Dowland was an English composer and lutenist. At the age of 17, Dowland went to Paris as a servant to the British Ambassador to the King of France. In 1588 he was admitted to the BMus at Christ Church, Oxford. Several times in his life, he applied for the position of Court Lutenist, and was turned down. After one such rejection, he began to travel abroad. Finally returning to England, he received his long awaited court appointment to The Kings Lutes in 1612.

In 1597 he published *The First Booke Of Songes Or Ayres Of Foure Parties With Tableture For The Lute*. In 1600 the second volume of this work was published and the third appeared in 1603. "Come Again" is contained in volume one. The full title of the song is "Come Again: Sweet love doth now invite." This song consists of six verses numbered 1,2,1,2,3,4. The curious numbering combined with the fact that the first two verses have a different number of syllables per line than the last verses,

suggest that there were two separate poems set to the same music. Both "Flow not so fast ye fountains" and "What if I never speed?" appear in volume three.

"Flow not so fast ye fountains" is a deeply felt masterpiece with its gradually falling line and the repeated dotted quarter-eighth note pattern on the word 'dropping'. "What if I never speed" is a fast moving setting of a half ironic poem. It gives the appearance of having been composed for four voices and later given a lute accompaniment.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

From *Schwanengesang*:

"Liebesbotschaft"

"Kriegers Ahnung"

"Der Doppelgänger"

"Die Taubenpost"

Franz Schubert wrote masterpieces of music for orchestra, piano, chamber ensemble, and voice and piano. Schubert trained as a teacher, following in his father's footsteps, and indeed worked as his father's assistant for a time. He studied with Anton Salieri from 1812 to 1817. Schubert's tremendous output includes over 600 songs for voice and piano. Benjamin Britten felt that the last eighteen months of Schubert's life were the most richly productive of European musical history. In that period, Schubert completed his C Major Symphony, C Major String Quintet, three

piano sonatas, the E flat piano trio, many smaller pieces and songs, and two major song collections, *Die Winterreise* and what came to be known as *Schwanengesang*.

The title *Schwanengesang* (Swan Song) was given to what would be the last solo songs Schubert would write. Schubert did not write these songs as a cycle but rather as a set of six songs based on poems by Ludwig Rellstab, and a separate set of seven songs based on poems of Heinrich Heine. He encountered the work of both of these poets for the first time during the last year of his life. The charming "Liebesbotschaft" (Love's Message) and "Kriegers Ahnung" (Soldier's Foreboding), are the first two pieces of the Rellstab set of poems. "Der Doppelgänger" (The Double), is the finest song of the set, the piano presenting the drama of the poem as importantly as the voice. This is the last song of the original set of the Heine poems. "Die Taubenpost" (The Pigeon-Post) is a song which many believe to be the last that Schubert ever wrote. It is based on a poem by Johann Gabriel Seidl. Schubert's publisher included it in the score of *Schwanengesang*.

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)***Michelangelo Lieder:*****"Wohl denk ich oft"****"Alles endet, was entstehet"****"Fühlt meine Seele"**

Hugo Wolf was vital to the evolution of the song, bringing to it a synthesis of vocal statement, keyboard technique and harmonic nuance. Wolf had a colourful educational history, being expelled from several schools before finally entering the Vienna Conservatory. At the Conservatory, he was no more prone to accept criticism or develop discipline than at the previous schools. He was finally expelled from the Conservatory for insulting and threatening the school masters. Wolf's composition habits were erratic, he would work feverishly on a project when inspired and abandon it when the moment passed. His early school experiences had left him with a feeling of alienation and self pity. He spent his last days in an insane asylum, completely mad, after a suicide attempt.

The three songs of the *Michelangelo Lieder* were the last songs Wolf wrote; he suffered his final mental breakdown shortly after their completion. They are based on settings of poems by Michelangelo. In "Wohl denk ich oft," the poet remembers the past before he was burdened by the responsibilities of love and fame. "Alles endet, was entstehet" is the finest of the set. It creates a mood of pessimism and gloom, remembering life but then returning to disillusion and death. "Fühlt meine Seele"

was the last song Wolf was to complete. It is a complex love song which seems to question the very concept of love.

Henri Duparc (1848-1933)

"Le manoir de Rosemonde"

"Extase"

"Chanson Triste"

Henri Duparc originally studied law, later studying piano and composition with Cesar Franck. In 1885 he had to abandon composition due to a crippling hypertensia. Though no longer composing, Duparc retained an avid interest in music. He also developed an interest in visual art, producing water colours and sepia drawings until he lost his eyesight. Sensing the artistic trends of the future, he at one time tried to persuade Wagner to use symbolism rather than realism. He suggested that Brünnhilde might be surrounded by a ring of light rather than actual flames. Duparc gave to the French *mélodie* a substance and unity of lyrics and music that would not be seen again until the later works of Faure. Duparc composed only fourteen songs and a handful of other works. His reputation is based on the songs.

"Le manoir Rosemonde" is dedicated to Robert de Bonnières, who wrote the poem. This is a vivid and dramatic setting. "Extase" and "Chanson Triste" are based on poems by Jean Lehor. These are the most beautiful songs Duparc wrote. "Extase" is a lovely melody, exquisitely set. "Chanson Triste" was the earliest of

Duparc's songs. The vocal tessitura is raised from stanza to stanza as the passion of the work mounts, subsiding somewhat in the final stanza.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

From *Songs of Travel*:

"The vagabond"

"Bright is the ring of words"

"The roadside fire"

Ralph Vaughan Williams was one of the foremost English composers of the first half of the twentieth century, writing nine symphonies and other orchestral pieces, songs, operas and quite a few choral works. Until 1904, none of Vaughan Williams' works were particularly noteworthy. By this time he had begun doing research into old English folk music and it was influencing his compositions. Vaughan Williams began to collect and preserve English folk songs, painstakingly writing them down as they were sung to him. He was concerned that as more and more of the working class became literate, the oral tradition that had preserved these songs would disappear and the songs would be irretrievably lost.

The *Songs of Travel* are Vaughan Williams' best known songs. They have been compared with Schubert's *Die Winterreise* in the shared theme of a wanderer philosophically accepting his fate.

Songs of Travel is not a song cycle but rather two smaller sets of three and four songs each. "The vagabond," "Bright is the ring of words" and "The roadside fire" are the three members of the first set. This first set is the more popular of the two. These songs are among the composer's most individual and picturesque creations.

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976), arr.

"La belle est au jardin d'amour"

"Le roi s'en va t'en chasse"

"O Waly, Waly"

"Oliver Cromwell"

Benjamin Britten had written a symphony, six quartets, ten sonatas and many smaller works by the age of sixteen. His mother wanted him to become the fourth "B", after Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. Later in his life he took some of the melodies from these childhood works and incorporated them into his Simple Symphony. Though Britten gained international fame as a composer of symphonic, choral, chamber and vocal works, his most famous compositions were his dramatic works. Britten possessed the unusual ability to write equally well for the voice in both the operatic and song contexts. He enjoyed conducting or playing the piano accompaniments to his works when ever possible.

The four songs arranged by Britten which appear on this programme are among the few he set his pen to. Though his songs are not numerous, the best of

them are as good and as important as anything he wrote in the larger forms of the opera and symphony.

McMaster University Celebrity Concert Series

Raphael Sommer (cello) and Valerie Tryon (piano)

Sunday, November 1, 1992

Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1644)

Toccata

Frescobaldi was born in Ferrara, Italy in 1583, and was perhaps the greatest organ virtuoso of his time. He wrote profusely for his instrument. Many of his pieces, like this *Toccata*, have been transcribed or arranged for other instruments.

This *Toccata* works particularly well as a solo cello piece. After a short, slow introduction, there follows a set of variations which give the soloist opportunity for brilliant display.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Sonata for Piano and Cello in F Major, Op. 5, No.1 (1796)

In 1796, when Beethoven was completing this *Sonata for Cello and Piano*, the cello was just coming out of its difficult adolescence. Years of identity crisis between the cello and its predecessor the viola da gamba, had largely relegated the instrument

to a position of accompaniment. Beethoven was among the first composers to write for the cello as a solo instrument, and even so it is a guarded attempt. He favours the piano in this sonata, assigning the cello accompaniment figures and only occasional melodic lines. A curious feature of this sonata is the absence of a complete slow movement in favour of a slow introduction.

Beethoven dedicated the *Sonata* to King Friedrich Wilhelm II of Prussia, who was an amateur cellist. Beethoven himself performed the piano part of this piece at its premier, accompanying cellist Jean-Marie Duport.

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

***Introduction and Polonaise Brillante, Op. 3* (1830, 1829)**

We know Chopin as a pianist and composer of music for that instrument. Every piece of music he wrote includes the piano. While Chopin wrote only three pieces for cello, it is his second most often-used solo instrument. Most of the composer's works are still performed regularly, yet this is one of the few works that remains fairly unknown.

Chopin wrote the *Polonaise* in 1829, in one week. He described it as an Alla Polacca with violoncello accompaniment. In a letter to a friend he called it, "...nothing more than a glittering trinket, for the salon." The *Introduction*, an afterthought, was composed in 1830. They were published together and dedicated to Joseph Merk, principal cellist at the Vienna Opera. In a letter to his family he

commented, "Merk tells me that he likes playing with me, and I like playing with him, so together we must produce something good. He is the first cellist whom I can admire on closer acquaintance."

Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959)

Variations on a Slovak Theme (1959)

Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů was living in Paris in 1940. Blacklisted by the Nazis, he was forced to flee the country, leaving all of his manuscripts and belongings behind. After 9 months of sleeping in railway stations on the run, he and his wife were finally able to flee Europe, making their way to New York City in 1941. Speaking no English and having no manuscripts to show as proof of his ability, Martinů's first years in North America were a struggle. Ultimately, he made a name for himself as a composer of everything from orchestral music to radio, television and film scores.

In 1956, Martinů returned to Europe. Though unable to return to his homeland, he reflected his deep affection and longing for his native Czechoslovakia in these *Variations on a Slovak Theme*. Many of the composer's more than 400 works reflected this same homesickness, quoting Czech folk tunes, and material which he felt was "coloured by style and spirit of Czech folk idiom." He cited his greatest musical influence as "the national music of Czechoslovakia." Fully aware that he was dying of cancer, Martinů wrote this piece during the last months of his life.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)***Sonata in G Minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 19 (1901)***

Sergei Rachmaninoff, born ten years after Debussy and ten years before Stravinsky, remained an anachronism throughout his compositional career. While the new music of the twentieth century appeared all around him, he clung to the musical language of the nineteenth-century Romantics. A member of Tchaikovsky's circle at the Moscow Conservatory, he is seen as continuing that great composer's musical tradition. If his musical output was rooted in the past, his life was anything but removed from current events and trends. Rachmaninoff was born into a Russian family of ancient lineage. During his childhood, his family's wealth disappeared through mismanagement. Years later, during the Russian revolution, he was stripped of his landholdings and possessions. Uprooted by political change, Rachmaninoff, one of the last of the Romantics, died in 1943, in Beverly Hills, California.

The *Sonata*, op. 19, one of Rachmaninoff's most popular compositions in Russia, is his only major work for the cello. Although the composer considered it to be an equal partnership between the two instruments, the cello is often subdued to make way for the piano. He makes use of the piano's capability to produce varied textures and colours, at times treating it much like an orchestra accompanying a concerto.

McMaster University Celebrity Series**Passage Ensemble (piano quintet)**

Sunday, November 29, 1992

Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805)***Variazioni sulla Ritirata Notturna di Madrid* (1799)**

Luigi Boccherini, well known to his contemporaries as a successful cellist, wrote nearly 500 hundred instrumental compositions. While Boccherini saw the publication of most of these works during his lifetime, he requested that the *Piano Quintet no.6 of Op. 57* not be published. The composer feared that the programmatic work, one of only two ventures he made into the world of descriptive music, would not be understood by audiences or performers. Originally written in 1775, the work was arranged by Boccherini for double viola quintet, guitar quintet and, in 1799, for piano quintet.

Boccherini placed the following note at the head of his manuscript: "The night music of the streets of Madrid. This quintet describes the music that one hears, at night, in the streets of Madrid, beginning with the bell of the Ave Maria and ending with a military retreat. ...Ave Maria of the parishes — Ave Maria of the quarters of the town. Then Minuet of the beggars. The violoncellist will hold the instrument across their knees and, using the nail of their hand, imitate the sound of a guitar. ...It leads on into the Rosary, but without strict time being beaten. Rosary —

Passacaglia of the street singers, a manner of singing and playing which is called by the Spaniards Passacalle, that is to say "Pass along the street," with which ...people amuse themselves in the streets at night, singing and playing. Retreat of Madrid with variations. One will imagine that the retreat begins to be heard in the distance, so that it must be played piano, so softly that it is scarcely audible; the indications crescendo and marcando must then be strictly observed."

Sergei Taneyev (1856-1915)

Quintet in G Minor, Op. 30 (1911)

Sergei Taneyev was born into a cultured, well-educated Russian family. He entered the Moscow Conservatory at age nine as a pianist, where he studied composition with Tchaikovsky. The two developed a fast friendship. In 1875, Taneyev gave the premiere of Tchaikovsky's *First Piano Concerto*. In the years that followed, he played the solo part in the premieres of all of Tchaikovsky's works for piano and orchestra.

Taneyev was the pianist at the premiere of this quintet in 1911, on a concert given under the auspices of the Moscow Chamber Music Society. The quintet was performed repeatedly by Taneyev and the Czech Quartet during a tour of major German cities in 1911. A concert review of the work from that year noted the "enthusiastic and unanimous ovation" which followed the work. Like many of

Taneyev's works, this quintet contrasts light, joyful sections with prevailing darkness, gloom and tension.

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Quintet in A Major, Op. 81 (1887)

Antonín Dvořák was born the son of a Bohemian innkeeper. He inherited his love of music from his father, an enthusiastic amateur violinist, singer, and zither player. During his childhood at his father's inn, young Dvořák never tired of listening to the folk music of the many visiting travellers. When Dvořák was sent off to learn German in preparation for entering his father's trade, he began to study music as well. His father saw music as a suitable avocation, but certainly not a career. To that end, he moved his son to new surroundings when he became aware of the musical studies. Dvořák persisted, finally winning the support of an uncle who would fund his studies in Prague over the objections of the composer's father.

Friends of the composer stated that this quintet was a living portrait of the man himself. They saw in it his joy in nature, his moods, his undercurrent of happiness and his fascination with folk melodies. Dvořák's biographer, Alec Robertson, wrote of the piece, "It is simply one of the most perfect chamber-music works in existence: perfect in that it accomplishes perfectly what it sets out to do, perfect as a whole and in all its parts. Here there is not a note too many — and there are plenty of notes! ...The melodies are of the greatest beauty and freshness, and a joyous springtime

happiness flows through the music. As a revelation of Dvořák's Czech soul it has moments of sadness, but they are soon replaced by his native optimism and cheerfulness."

In order to write programme notes for a performing group's audience, one must know something about the demographics of the audience in question. In the case of Symphony Hamilton, a community orchestra, the audience is largely made up of friends and family of the volunteer players. The orchestra does draw some of its audience from the community at large, but it is a less sophisticated audience than is expected at the McMaster Celebrity Series or the Hamilton Philharmonic. It is therefore important to avoid making assumptions regarding the musical knowledge of the audience. The programme notes for Symphony Hamilton had to be interesting, engaging and understandable to an audience who may well not be familiar with the composers and pieces offered.

One of the most difficult considerations in writing program notes is that of space. In the case of Symphony Hamilton, the orchestra devotes no more than two paragraphs

to the notes for a single piece of music. In the case of Johannes Brahms' *A German Requiem*, the orchestra chose to have only one paragraph, as they were including the entire text.

Brahms and his *Requiem* hardly fit into a single paragraph.

Symphony Hamilton

Clyde Mitchell, Conductor and Music Director

Saturday, November 9, 1991

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

***Egmont Overture* (1809)**

In 1809, Beethoven was asked to provide incidental music for a revival of Goethe's drama, *Egmont*. Beethoven had long been an admirer of Goethe and gladly took on the project. Goethe's *Egmont* tells the story of the military occupation of the Netherlands in the 16th century. Count Egmont is imprisoned for his role in the fight, and condemned to death. On the night before his execution, he is visited by a dream figure which foretells that his death will trigger the rebellion through which the Netherlanders will regain their freedom. At daybreak, Egmont is marched off to face his death, calmed by faith in his dream.

The *Overture* is the last piece which Beethoven completed for the drama and indeed he was so late in finishing it that he missed the opening and added the piece a

few months later. The piece opens with a very slow, heavily accented Sarabande rhythm. Lyrical phrases then build to a full orchestra climax. There is a momentary pause then a swell to victorious fanfares. The overture is a musical synopsis of the plot of Goethe's drama.

César Franck (1822-1890)

Symphonic Variations (1885)

Belgian by birth, César Franck was initially denied entrance to the Paris Conservatoire due to his nationality. He became a naturalized French citizen, studied at the Conservatoire and went on to have a profound effect on French music in the late nineteenth century. Franck was known as a composer, teacher and organist. However, he began his training and also his solo career as a pianist. After many years away from the instrument, he experienced a reawakening of interest in it during the last 15 years of his life.

Franck's symphonic poem *The Djinns* was premiered in 1885. The pianist who was to perform the work was suddenly taken ill and Louis Denier consented to step in at the last moment. To thank him Franck said, "I shall write you a little something." That "little something" was the *Symphonic Variations*.

Godfrey Ridout (1918-1984)***Fall Fair* (1961)**

Maestro Mitchell refers to Godfrey Ridout as the "Canadian Aaron Copland." *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* refers to him as the "eccentric traditionalist among Canadian composers." His music has also been labelled "uniquely North American." Born in Toronto, Ridout was an eclectic in his musical interests. He had a great interest in Victorian and Edwardian music, yet loved jazz and respected pop music. He composed many film scores while working for the CBC. He said of himself that he liked fun in music and could not resist working with a good tune.

Fall Fair was commissioned by the CBC Orchestra and premiered in the General Assembly of the United Nations on United Nations Day in 1961. *Fall Fair* appeared in the program simply as "Overture" as the programs were written before the title of the piece had been announced. This is a breezy, straightforward piece, consisting of "...scraps of fiddle tunes and one big tune which is an elaboration of the first four notes of the start," as Ridout described it. *Fall Fair* is dedicated to Geoffrey Waddington, one-time CBC Music Director and radio personality.

Symphony Hamilton**Clyde Mitchell, Conductor and Music Director**

Saturday, February 15, 1992

Pierre Mercure (1927-1966)***Kaleïdoscope* (1948)**

Montreal-born Pierre Mercure was known in his lifetime as a composer, bassoonist, TV producer and an administrator. As a young man he studied conducting, hoping to become an orchestral conductor. In his work, he strove to achieve an integration of the various creative media. Pierre Mercure died in an auto accident near Avallon, France, shortly before his fortieth birthday.

Kaleïdoscope, as the name suggests, is a constantly changing piece. Written in 1947-48, the work contains lyrical melodies, changing meters and accented syncopations. Although the effect is one of continually shifting colours and patterns, there is a remarkable clarity of both texture and form.

Henryk Wieniawski (1835-1880)***Violin Concerto No. 2 in D Minor, Op. 22* (1862)**

Henryk Wieniawski was best known as a violinist, having had a tremendous impact on the Russian school of violin playing. His playing, shaped by French schooling and Slavic upbringing, contained both technical agility and great emotional

depth. Although Wieniawski suffered from a severe heart condition, he was a tireless teacher and performer. While performing the *Kreutzer Sonata*, Wieniawski collapsed on stage. His death, not long afterwards, came at age 44, shortly before the birth of his youngest daughter.

The *Violin Concerto* No. 2 in D Minor, written in 1862, is an indispensable part of the violinist's repertoire. Full of Romantic sweep and emphatic expression, it demands great expressiveness, an elegant style and technical skill on the part of the soloist. The Romance is often performed as a separate piece.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67 (1808)

Beethoven took four years to complete his Fifth Symphony. During an interruption of his work on this piece, he composed his Fourth Symphony, Violin Concerto, and Fourth Piano Concerto. The Fifth Symphony received its premiere on December 22, 1808 in Vienna. The concert contained all new Beethoven works: The Fifth Symphony, the aria "Ah! Perfido," three selections from his Mass in C Major, the C Minor Fantasy for Piano, Chorus and Orchestra, and the Fourth Piano Concerto with Beethoven appearing as soloist!

The Fifth Symphony, more than any other piece of music, is typical of the thematic unification which Beethoven developed to such a high degree. The famous opening motif is heard throughout the first movement and appears in modified form in

the other movements. In 1830, young Mendelssohn played the first movement on piano for the aged Goethe. The great poet responded by saying, "That is immense, stupefying, it makes one afraid the house is falling down."

Symphony Hamilton

Clyde Mitchell, Conductor and Music Director

With the Mohawk College Singers

Friday, April 3 1992

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

***A German Requiem* (1868)**

A German Requiem, written between 1857 and 1868, represented a breakthrough for Brahms in the combination of vocal and instrumental music. The seven sections of the Requiem, set to Biblical texts chosen by the composer, centre around faith in Resurrection rather than fear of Judgement Day. It is significant that Christ's name is not mentioned in the *Requiem*. Though deeply affected by the deaths of his mentor, Robert Schumann, in 1856 and his mother in 1865, Brahms stated that the *Requiem* had no individual application. Having "the whole of humanity in mind," Brahms noted that "life robs one of more than death does."

Barbara Pentland (b. 1912)***Lament* (1940)**

Recognized as one of Canada's foremost contemporary composers, Barbara Pentland celebrates her 80th birthday this year. Ms. Pentland began to write music at age 9. Though her parents strongly disapproved of her musical endeavours, she was finally allowed to study composition while a student in Paris. In 1936 she received a fellowship for graduate studies at the Juilliard School. While in the United States Ms. Pentland studied with Aaron Copland at the Berkshire Music Centre.

In 1934, Ms. Pentland wrote a piece for voice and string quartet entitled *Lament*. During the winter of 1940 she took the score to Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony, for ideas on scoring the work for full orchestra. *Lament* received its premiere in August 1940 in Winnipeg, meeting with a mixed reaction. One critic called the work "interesting in its modern, colourful harmonies," while another noted that "Miss Pentland has strayed from the beaten path...she has overweighted the piece..." *Lament*, an expression of Ms Pentland's reaction to the horrors of war, sparked a controversy over the artist's role in society. Critic Chester Duncan defended her work, noting "the sincere and thereby original success she has had in setting down what she meant... Her work may well be a landmark in Canadian music."

Writing an artist's biography for programme notes is often a tricky business. The artist, ensemble or their management agency sends a press packet to the concert presenter to assist with publicity for the concert. The packet often contains pages of biographical information in an unusable state and no particular order. It is the job of the biographer to sift through this information and extrapolate the useful bits. In the case of established artists, this means determining which of their credits are important enough to be included in the biography and which can be eliminated. Younger performers will usually list their principal teachers and festivals at which they have studied or performed. It is the task of the writer to determine which of these people and festivals listed are the most important and should be included.

Biographies of performers often contain what amounts to propaganda. Artist management agencies like to refer to the process of dressing up artists' biographies as "fleshing them out." The writer who has to weed through these fleshed-out biographies — sometimes several pages in length — often finds very little substance beneath the flowery prose.

In the case of an ensemble, it is customary to include a biography of the group as well as of each individual in the group. The writer must balance the biographies so that no one artist is given significantly more space than any of the others and so that none of them appear to be more experienced or more highly qualified than the others. But if there is a featured soloist performing with the ensemble, that performer's biography is expected to be longer than those of the ensemble members.

McMaster University Celebrity Series

Lafayette String Quartet

Sunday, October 6, 1991

The **Lafayette String Quartet**, formed in 1984, has gained recognition as one of America's most exciting chamber ensembles. The musicians met when they were members of a Detroit-based chamber orchestra, and today are hailed among the leading string quartets of their generation. They have performed throughout North America, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, England and the Netherlands.

In 1988 the Quartet won the Grand Prize at the **Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition**. Additional prizes were awarded at the 1988 **Portsmouth (England) International String Quartet Competition** and the **Chicago Discovery**

Competition. They were also cited among the "Young Artists to Watch of 1988" by Musical America.

The Lafayette Quartet has worked extensively with the Cleveland Quartet — a relationship that began after winning the Cleveland Quartet Competition at the Eastman School of Music. Other notable coaches have included Rostislav Dubinsky, Lynn Blakeslee and members of the Alban Berg and Amadeus Quartets. The musicians of the Lafayette Quartet are Artists-in-Residence at the University of Victoria School of Music, Faculty of Fine Arts, Victoria, B.C. Exclusive North American representation is by Mariedi Anders Artists Management, Inc., San Francisco.

Ann Elliott-Goldschmitt, violin — A native of New Brunswick and graduate of Boston University in 1983, where she studied with her principal teacher, Victor Yampolsky. While there, she was twice awarded the Certificate of Honor for Outstanding Performance and was also the winner of the 1983 Concerto-Aria Competition. She was also the first violinist of the Graduate Honors Quartet. In 1981, she won the Canadian Music Festival.

Sharon Stanis, viola — Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Ms. Stanis studied under Hanryk Kowalski at Indiana University, where she was an associate instructor of chamber music and history. She has performed at Meadowmount, Blossom Chamber Music Festival and with the Colorado Philharmonic.

Joanna Hood, viola — Ms. Hood is a native of Seattle, Washington. She earned her Bachelor's degree in music at the San Francisco Conservatory, where she studied with Isadore Tinkleman. Later she went to Indiana University as an associate instructor in violin and viola, while earning her Master's degree. Her major teachers were Abraham Skernik, Rostislav Dubinsky and baroque violinist Stanley Ritchie. Ms. Hood has performed in the Spoleto Festival in Italy, and has been a member of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Santa Rosa Symphony and the award-winning Villaume String Quartet.

Pamela Highbaugh, cello — Originally from California, Ms. Highbaugh received her music degrees from Indiana University and California State University/Northridge in Los Angeles. Her principal teachers include Janos Starker, Peter Rejto and Raya Garbousova. Before joining the Renaissance City Chamber Players in 1984, she served on the faculty at California State University, appearing as soloist with several Los Angeles orchestras. She has been principal cellist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Institute Orchestra, and performed with the Carmel Bach Festival, the Pasadena Symphony and the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra.

McMaster University Celebrity Series

Passage Ensemble

Sunday, November 29, 1992

The **Passage Ensemble** (pronounced **pah-sahj'**) is a Toronto based Piano Quintet developed to celebrate the fine art of chamber music performance. They believe that working together as a Quintet, and in smaller groups within the ensemble, fosters greater unity and musicianship for the players, greater flexibility for concert presenters and superior performances for audiences.

Violinist Arkady Yanivker, born in Odessa, U.S.S.R., made his first major solo appearance in 1959, with the Odessa Philharmonic. In 1978 he left behind a prestigious career as a performer and teacher to come to Toronto. He is currently a member of the Toronto Symphony and a member of the faculty at York University.

Angela Quiring, violinist, has performed with The Toronto Symphony, Hamilton Philharmonic, Chamber Players of Toronto, CJRT Radio Orchestra, National Chamber Orchestra of Canada, Lyra Borealis Chamber Orchestra and others. She holds a Bachelor of Music Performance Degree from the University of Toronto. She currently resides in Toronto.

Violist Ronald Hurwitz is a native of Cleveland, Ohio, where he began his studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Currently a member of the Toronto Symphony, he has held positions with the Indianapolis Symphony, Rotterdam

Philharmonic and was viola soloist with the United States Marine Corps White House Orchestra in Washington D.C.

Cellist Clare Carberry is a native of Cork, Ireland. She has studied at the Cork School of Music, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music in Glasgow, the University of Texas at Austin and Boston University. She has appeared as soloist with many orchestras and has made numerous recital and chamber music appearances in North America, Germany and the British Isles.

Pianist Alla Zaccarelli was born and educated in the Soviet Union. Upon completing her studies at the Leningrad and Odessa Conservatories, she became a soloist, chamber musician and teacher. Ms. Zaccarelli has performed extensively in Russia and Europe. Since her arrival in Canada in 1976, she has appeared on CBC TV and performed widely throughout Ontario. She is a member of the piano faculty at McMaster University and the Royal Conservatory of Music.

McMaster University Celebrity Series

Raphael Sommer (cello) and Valerie Tryon (piano)

Sunday, November 1, 1992

Raphael Sommer has performed with major European orchestras and has worked with such international conductors as Barbirolli, Dorati, Munch, Foss, Comissiona and Vladimir Ashkenazy. In April, 1990, he performed the World

Premier of his transcription for cello and violin of Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante in Northern Ireland with Yan Pascal Tortelier and the Ulster Orchestra.

He is a member of juries for numerous International Cello Competitions and some of his engagements include conducting the Berlin Symphony Orchestra and Folkwang Chamber Orchestra in Essen Germany, giving master classes and performing at the Naantali Festival in Finland. He has recorded for the French label Lyrinx, the BBC and the Israel Broadcasting Corporation.

In the case of an experienced performer, the biography writer must be careful to include some sort of current information. Without it, even the most glowing résumé will look dated and can leave the audience wondering if they are about to hear a "has been." If the performer's press packet does not contain anything particularly recent, the writer can rely on the artist's management agency for information. If there is simply nothing current to list, the writer can rely on past reviews and fashion a glowing collection of excerpts.

McMaster University Celebrity Series**Ingemar Korjus (bass baritone) and Valerie Tryon (piano)**

Sunday, November 10, 1991

A singer of international status, Ingemar Korjus has performed throughout North America and Europe. In May 1988, Korjus and his wife, mezzo soprano Sandra Graham, embarked on a tour of China, where they conducted master-classes and presented a number of joint recitals. Career highlights have included multiple engagements with the Canadian Opera Company and Deutsche Oper am Rhein. He performed in Eugene Onegin at the Aldeburgh Festival in England, and appeared in the Guelph Spring Festival's highly successful production of Britten's *Curlew River*.

Winner of the 1973 Hugo Wolf International Lieder Competition in Vienna, Korjus is regarded as one of today's most respected recitalists. He has presented programmes throughout Canada and was featured in the Royal Conservatory's 1987 Centennial Gala. Last year Korjus appeared as Yamadori in the National Arts Centre's concert production of *Madame Butterfly*. In December 1989, he joined Toronto's Opera in Concert for a rare performance of Saint-Saen's *Samson et Dalila*.

Mr. Korjus combines his concert career with his responsibilities as Head of the vocal department at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Music.

**List of *Hamilton Spectator* Articles
July 28, 1992 - April 7, 1993**

Articles which appear in this document are marked with an asterisk.

July 28, Now Section. **Tryon Highlights Lunch with Ludwig.**

Review of lunch-time recital segment of the Boris Brott Summer Music Festival.

August 4, Now Section. **Festival Pianist Clears Olympic Musical Hurdles.**

Review of Valerie Tryon in concert with the Boris Brott Summer Music Festival.

* August 8, Now Section. **A Laywer in Toe Shoes Comes to Town.**

Profile of dancer Cynthia Westaway prior to her appearance with the Boris Brott Summer Music Festival.

* August 10, Now Section. **Viennese Waltzes Have Audience Dancing in Aisles.** (Beethoven Lives Upstairs).

Combined review of two Boris Brott Summer Music Festival concerts.

August 11, Now Section. **Young Musicians Play with Conviction.**

Review of Boris Brott Summer Music Festival concert featuring the Technics Classical Academy Orchestra.

* August 12, Now Section. **Lynden Girl Conquering Continents.**

Profile of soprano Marjorie Patterson prior to her concert with the Boris Brott Summer Music Festival.

* August 13, Life Section. **Program of Ballet and Music Delightful.**

Review of dancer Cynthia Westaway featured in concert with the Boris Brott Summer Music Festival.

* August 15, Now Section. **Violinist Lenny Solomon Goes the Gamut of Styles.**

Review of jazz violinist Lenny Solomon presented, with his trio, by the Boris Brott Summer Music Festival.

- * August 17, Now Section. **The Four Seasons Sing at the Olde Mill/combined with review of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, the final concert of Boris Brott Summer Festival. Two reviews of the Boris Brott Summer Music Festival.**

- * September 19, Weekend Section. **Glenn Gould Celebrated.**
CD review of Sony's release of the collected works of Glenn Gould.

- September 25, Now Section. **Electronic Harpsichord Surprise of New Season.**
Review of Mozart Chamber Orchestra in performance at the Royal Botanical Gardens.

- * September 26, Weekend Section. **There's Never Been a Finer Time for Music: The Rules — and the Audience — for Classical Music are Changing.**
Center spread article on CD collections. Designed to kick off the weekend section's focus in the arts, as well as the CD review column.

- * October 3, Weekend Section. **Bernstein's Final Appearance is a Superb Recording.**
CD review of Bernstein's final appearance. Recorded at the Tanglewood Music Shed.

- * October 10, Weekend Section. **William Alwyn Recordings a Pleasant Surprise.**
CD review of three discs of music by British composer William Alwyn.

- * October 14, Now Section. **Promising Talent: Young Violinist Stands Out with HPO.**
Violinist James Ehnes featured with the Hamilton Philharmonic.

- October 19, Now Section. **Baroque Unites Start of HPO Series.**
Review of HPO "Sunday In The City" series concert at James Street Baptist Church.

- October 20, Now Section. **Athena Chamber Players Captivate in Intimate Setting.**
Review of Athena Chamber Players presented in concert by Chamber Music Hamilton.
- * October 22, Life Section. **Duet Club Does Well with Brave Rendition.**
Violinist Paula Barsalou and pianist Ken Gee in recital.
- * October 31, Weekend Section. **Composers History Forgot: Early Music by Women Composers Who Drifted into Obscurity.**
Preview of Te Deum Singers concert of music by early women composers.
- * November 7, Now Section. **Choir Spotlights Early Women Composers**
Te Deum singers concert of early music by women composers. Richard Birney Smith, conductor, Mary Enid Haines soprano.
- * November 21, Weekend Section. **Three Boxed Sets are Worthwhile Experiences.**
CD reviews of The Mozart Experience, The Baroque Experience, The Strauss Experience.
- November 27, Now Section. **Cinderella at Sea: Nautical Setting Works Well for Rossini's La Cenerentola.**
Review of Opera Hamilton's updated production of Rossini's *La Cenerentola*.
- November 30, Now Section. **Musica Gloria Up to Challenge.**
Review of Blair Havers conducting his Musica Gloria chorus.
- * December 5, Weekend Section. **Say 'Merry Christmas' With the Gift of Music.**
Boxed Sets Make a Wonderful Classical Present.
Canada Leads the Field in Music for Children.
Center-spread trio of pieces on recordings available including: Christmas music, children's music, boxed sets as gifts.

- * **December 7, Now Section. Children's Choir Performs Like Pros.**
(Combined with review of Musica Camerata Montreal). The Hamilton Children's Choir in their annual Christmas concert - combined, for reasons of space, with review of Musica Camerata Montreal.

- December 9, Now Section. HPO Cellist Mendelsohn Stars in Solo Role.**
HPO with principal cellist Jack Mendelsohn featured as soloist.

- December 14, Now Section. Philharmonic's Messiah a Lively Yule Celebration.**
Wayne Strongman and the Bach Elgar Choirs annual presentation of Handel's *Messiah*.

- * **December 19, Weekend Section. Louis Lortie's Patience Pays Off.**
Feature article and CD reviews of Canadian pianist Louis Lortie.

- * **December 19, Weekend Section. New Recordings to Add to Your CD Collection.**
CD reviews which continue the Christmas music feature article.

- * **January 11, Now Section. HPO and Jones Trio Warm Up a Winter's Night with Hot Jazz.**
The Oliver Jones Trio and the HPO presented one of the orchestra's Pops series concerts.

- * **January 16, Weekend Section. Vinyl's Last Stand? New LPs May Be Hard to Find But Many People Refuse to Give Up on the Old Format.**
Feature article on the disappearance of vinyl and its replacement by the CD format.

- * **January 18, Now Section. Babar Spectacle Has a Magical Effect.**
Review of the HPO presenting a children's concert as part of their Sundae Symphonies series.

January 20, Now Section. **RBG Setting Provides Concert Tonic.**
Review of the HPO Candlelight Series concert at the Royal Botanical Gardens.

* January 29, Now Section. **Quartet's Performance Alive, Riveting.**
Review of the St. Lawrence String Quartet, presented by Chamber Music Hamilton.

* February 4, Life Section. **Kitt, Jones Slated for Pops Next Season.**
Brief news story on the launch of the 1993/1994 HPO season.

* February 6, Weekend Section. **The Endo Era Begins.**
Full length feature on the launch of 1993/1994 HPO season, with sidebar of highlights on individual concerts.

* February 8, Now Section. **Premiere Offered at Pops.**
Review of HPO Pops concert featuring David Amram as guest conductor. Concert included Canadian premiere of Amram's composition, *Celebration*.

February 11, Now Section. **Flutist and Soprano Make Musical Magic.**
Review of the Hamilton Duet Club's presentation of flutist Carolyn Stronks and soprano Beverly Leslie in recital.

* February 15, Now Section. **Mdivani's Deft Touch Pleasing to the Ear.**
Soviet pianist Marina Mdivani on the McMaster University Celebrity Series.

* February 20, Weekend Section. **Crossover Hit Symphony is Hauntingly Unforgettable.**
CD review of Henryk Górecki's *Symphony No. 3* Symphony of Sorrowful Songs.

February 22, Now Section. **Young Musicians Display Winning Form at Concert.**
Symphony Hamilton under music director Clyde Mitchell presents Stars of Tomorrow, featuring the winners of the orchestra's young artists competition.

- * February 26, Now Section. **Bail Out Bob a Blast: Mayor Indebted to Friends.**
Mayor Bob Morrow hosted and performed at a benefit concert to raise money for previous campaign shortfalls.
- * February 27, Weekend Section. **McMillan Follows the Lieder: Canada's 'Busiest Recitalist' Will Sing with the HPO.** Profile of Canadian, lyric baritone Kevin McMillan's appearance with the HPO.
- * March 3, Now Section. **Singer Helps Make HPO a Musical Feast.**
HPO Classics concert featuring baritone Kevin McMillan.
- March 8, Now Section. **Tepper's Latest Work 'From the Heart.'**
Review of Bach Elgar Choir and Nexus, and Vox Nouveau. The review appeared under the headline of Hugh Fraser's review of Siegfried Tepper's *Sonata for viola and piano*. Due to limited space, the paper chose to place both reviews under the single headline.
- March 15, Now Section. **Audience Applauded by HPO Players: Gesture to Patrons Who Braved Snowstorm.**
Review of HPO Pops concert.
- * March 22, Now Section. **Music, Magic, Good Times.**
Review of Hamilton Philharmonic's Carpet Series concert for children.
- * March 27, Weekend Section. **Classic Comedy: Meet Some Musical Legends Who are So Awful that They are Outrageously Funny.**
Feature article on comical classical CDs.
- March 29, Now Section. **Duet Club Showcases Young Talent.** Review of annual Duet Club Scholarship Concert present young scholarship winners.
- * March 30, Now Section. **Laing Singers 'Snow-Check' Concert Proves to be Well Worth the Wait.**
Review of the John Laing Singers with soprano Janet Obermeyer.

April 5, Now Section. Saturday Pops an Evening of Excitement.
Review of Symphony Hamilton under music director Clyde Mitchell.

April 7, Now Section. Appalachian Spring Welcome Reprieve.
Review of Hamilton Philharmonic under guest conductor Choo Hoey.

**List of Programme Notes
1991, 1992**

McMaster University Celebrity Series

October 6, 1991
Lafayette Quartet

October 20, 1991
Russell Sherman (piano)

November 1, 1991
Valerie Tryon (piano)

November 10, 1991
Ingemar Korjus (baritone) and Erich Trudel (piano)

October 18, 1992
Jeffrey Siegel (piano)

November 1, 1992
Raphael Sommer (cello) and Valerie Tryon (piano)

November 29, 1992
Passage Ensemble (piano quintet)

Symphony Hamilton

November 9, 1991

February 15, 1992

April 3, 1992

Profiles in Concert Programmes

September 20, 1992

A Celebration for Marta Hidy

Profile of Ms. Hidy

December 5, 1992

Opera In Concert

Profile of Rosemary Landry