

# Counterpoint

CCO COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA  
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## "Glitter and Be Gay"



### Dancing the Night Away

Terry Kowalchuk, conductor

Saturday ~ November 25 ~ 8:00 pm

St. Lukes United Church, 353 Sherbourne Street

Tickets: \$15 in advance at *This Ain't the Rosedale Library* or from members. \$18 at the door.

#### CONCERT PROGRAMME

Hansel and Gretel Overture  
by E. Humperdinck

Symphony #1, 2nd Movement - Winter Dream &  
Waltz of the Flowers from the Nutcracker Suite  
by P. Tchaikovsky

Rhosymedre  
by R. Vaughan-Williams

Double Violin Concerto  
by J.S. Bach, Paul Willis & Emma Vachon, soloists

Ballet Music from Faust  
by C. Gounod

Glitter and be Gay... from "Candide"  
by Leonard Bernstein, Sinead Sugrue, soprano

Una voce poco fa, from Barber of Seville  
by G. Rossini, Sinead Sugrue, soprano

#### Counterpoint Community Orchestra CONTACT INFORMATION

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#### DANCE, DANCE, DANCE

You have probably noticed that our November concert contains quite a bit of dance music: Tchaikovsky's Waltz of the Flowers from the Nutcracker ballet, and the dance sequence from Gounod's opera Faust.

Music and dance are inextricably connected. They have one very important element in common. Namely: rhythm, probably the common ancestor of both dance and music (to put it in evolutionary terms); without it there can be neither. To ask what came first, music or dance, is the proverbial hen and egg question and at the end of the day it probably doesn't matter. It is almost certain, though, that they developed in parallel, continuously influencing each other, both of them initially having had ritual functions, as can be observed in the aboriginal cultures here in North America, the Aborigine societies in Australia, and in various African tribes. It is easy to imagine, for instance, that melody may have been added to the beat to indicate new sequences to the dancers when the rhythm doesn't change. It is also interesting to observe that our visceral reaction to music is dance (we can often observe this in babies and small children, how they react by movement not only to rhythm, but also to the character of the music - which leads us to posit that movement and melody are biologically connected). That's perhaps one of the reasons why composers continue to write dance music: the dance suites in the baroque era (most notably those of Bach), Chopin's polonaises, waltzes, and mazurkas, etc. Even though these works were not intended to be actual dance music, they do induce the "dance itch" in our legs and feet. So, if during our playing you feel the urge to start dancing in the aisles, it means we've done a good job interpreting the works!

Joseph Nachman

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to our 24th season. As we turn another page in Counterpoint's history, it is encouraging to see the Orchestra's success and audience grow each year. The hard work invested by our volunteers and orchestra members over the past years are the direct cause of that success. Increased audiences and resources have given us encouragement to build on Counterpoint's talents and allow us to continue bringing you the performances that have made Counterpoint the leading gay and lesbian community orchestra in Canada.

In its inaugural year, the Board of Directors worked very hard to develop new methods of organizing ourselves to enhance artistic development, community and audience relationships, and fundraising. But the work isn't finished. In addition to continually seeking more players for the orchestra, we are also looking for persons who may have innovative ideas or suggestions for our organization. There are many volunteer opportunities available that do not require a significant time investment but are of as equal an asset. We invite you to speak to any one of the Board Directors, or our Music Director, Terry Kowalczyk about joining our organization as a performer or volunteer.

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the strong financial assistance we receive from our private donors, as well as from organizations such as the Lesbian & Gay Community Appeal Foundation and the Toronto Arts Council, and the incalculable support in kind from The 519 Church Street Community Centre. Your financial contributions make it possible for us to enter our next concert season with great optimism and excitement. It is our hope and our plan to add more organizations in partnership in the coming year - in funding, collaboration, and community outreach.

I hope you will join us at our upcoming performances and on behalf of Counterpoint, thank you for your continued support.

David Spek, Chair

### GLITTER AND BE GAY



The theme our fall concert, Glitter and Be Gay is the title of the mock-coloratura aria from Leonard Bernstein's operetta *Candide*, one of the only two well known numbers from that work (the other one being the popular overture).

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) was an iconic figure of American musical life: pianist, conductor, composer, educator, he was the first American born and American educated musician to achieve not only international recognition but to become one of the greatest conductors of the 20th century.

*Candide* is based on the eponymous picaresque novel by the 18th century writer and philosopher Voltaire, a biting satire of Leibniz's philosophy, and also a gentle parody of the literary genre in which it is written. Sardonic in outlook, it follows the naive protagonist *Candide* from his first exposure to the precept that "all is for the best in this, the best of all possible worlds," and on through a series of adventures that dramatically disprove that precept even as the protagonist clings to it and it exposes the cruel realities of 18th century social order.

The history of Bernstein's operetta is almost as adventurous as the life of its hero, *Candide*. Its first incarnation was based on the book by Lillian Hellman and enjoyed only moderate success. The initial lack of enthusiasm is due partly to the fact that it was perceived as an operetta masquerading as a musical and partly due to Hellman's book: heavy handed, totally lacking Voltaire's subtle wit and irony and highly polemical. The show underwent a series of Broadway revivals under the direction of Harold Prince based a new one-act book commissioned from Hugh Wheeler. The show was then re-expanded again, this time under Bernstein's supervision; the new two-act opera version, with additional songs, was premiered in 1982 at the New York City Opera, and it is this, that is generally regarded as the "standard" performance version. Finally, in 1989 Bernstein undertook a recording project that expressed his final wishes regarding *Candide*, incorporating what he thought were the best lyrics from all the contributors (including Hellman) and what he thought were the best portions of music. (continued on next page)

### SINEAD SUGRUE

Sinéad's operatic appearances include Rosina in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Lucia in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Baby Doe in Moore's *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, The Queen of the Night in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*, and as Satirino in Cavalli's *La Calisto*.

In March 2003, Sinéad was the winner of the prestigious Christina & Louis Quilico Award from the Ontario Arts Foundation. Other accomplishments include concerts with the National Arts Orchestra in the National Arts Centre of Ottawa, Toronto Operetta Theatre, The Brott Summer Music Festival, twice in concert with conductor Boris Brott organized to highlight the outstanding career of the famous Canadian tenor, Ermanno Mauro, and as soloist with Counterpoint Community Orchestra, the National Academy Orchestra, The Oakville Symphony Orchestra, and York Symphony Orchestra. She has also appeared as soprano soloist in Mozart's *Requiem Mass* and Salieri's *Emperor Mass*, and as soloist with Toronto Classical Singers, The Irish Choral Society, Palestrina Chamber Chorus, and Harpist Sharlene Wallace. A special thank you to my family for their unwavering support in my life and in my singing.

## GLITTER AND BE GAY (CONTINUED)

Just as Voltaire's *Candide* is a parody of the picaresque novel, the aria *Glitter and Be Gay* is a parody of the grand coloratura aria. Its title looks tailor-made for a gay event - and this impression may not be incorrect, though we will never know if this was Bernstein's intention. We do know that he was bi-sexual and had many affairs with men; in 1956 when he wrote this work he certainly couldn't make his sexual inclinations public so the message in this case - if there is one - is probably not so much in the title as in the blatantly campiness of the music itself. So, let's *Glitter and Be Gay* and enjoy the concert.

Joseph Nachman

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### WALTZ OF THE FLOWERS

Besides snowflakes, ice skates, and fruitcakes, the music of the *Nutcracker* is recognized as a signature soundtrack for the holidays. With its delicate sweetness and whimsical colour, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's melodic tunes conjure wintery images of fairytales, fantasy and the innocence of childhood.

The composer, whose own life was marked by darkness and tragedy, took the lighter aspects of the original *Nutcracker* story to create a ballet version. Though he considered it to be one of his worst pieces, Tchaikovsky raised the status of ballet music with his combination of memorable and novel melodies, advanced harmonies and danceable qualities which inspired choreographers.

The *Nutcracker* suite, derived and abridged from the ballet, has now almost become more popular than the original work itself, thanks in large part to its inclusion in many television and film adaptations, including the Walt Disney movie, *Fantasia*. Generations of audiences have enjoyed this holiday number, which follows the story of a little girl's journey through a fantasy world of fairies, princes, toy soldiers and an army of mice.

In the *Waltz of the Flowers*, the ballet stage would be set with a garden backdrop and dancers would wear petal-like costumes, moving in formations symbolizing blooming bouquets in this dance. Inspired by the story's characters, the music in the waltz reflects the scene's twinkling, nimble and dream-like qualities. As it builds to the culminating moment of the *Nutcracker* suite, Tchaikovsky's famous melody shows evidence of his charm, virtuosity and inventiveness as a composer.

Katya Diackow

### GOUNOD'S DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

With no less than 19 operas written on the subject, the story of Faust's pact with the devil has inspired composers more than any other secular piece of literature. The adaptation of Goethe's work by Charles Gounod established him as one of France's most famous composers.

As a young man preparing to enter priesthood, Gounod found the lure of the theatre to be irresistible and quit writing religious music to focus on opera. It was said that with his need to convince theatre managers he was capable of writing for the stage, the composer's personality and good looks won him friends and professional musicians were impressed with his talent.

Considered more forced than inspired, the premiere of Gounod's *Faust* in 1859 did not earn immediate success; though with repeated concerts, the opera grew steadily in public favour and became a symbol of the flourish of French lyric art.

With its international fame solidified, tradition required that a ballet had to be added to the original score for *Faust* to be performed at the Paris Opera. The revised composition debuted in 1869 and took more than five hours to perform.

Gounod's ballet music bridges classical and popular styles, exhibiting the composer's knack for conveying delicate emotions with sincerity. Elements of sentiment, sweetness and sensuousness are found in the harmonies and orchestration. An elegant lyric drama, the grand tragedy of the *Faust* character reminds audiences that sensual pleasures can never satisfy the human soul, but neither can self-absorption and one-sided development.

Gounod spent the rest of his life attempting unsuccessfully to produce an opera as well received as *Faust*. In his memoirs, he wrote that, "the theater audience... measures only the passionate power and degree of emotion of [a composition], thus making it clearly a dramatic work, an expression of what happens in the personal or collective human soul. The result is that audience and author are mutually called to artistically educate one another."

Katya Diackow

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