

# Counterpoint

CCO COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA  
www.ccorchestra.org

*Springtime*



*Rhapsodies*



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR: LOOKING BEHIND TO LOOK AHEAD

The CCO marches ever closer to our quarter century milestone after a highly successful 23rd season. This is an opportunity to reflect on our many accomplishments. Founded in 1984, the CCO was the first secular, Lesbian and Gay orchestra organized in Canada and internationally. Under the visionary leadership of Music Director Terry Kowalczyk, and the many and varied talents of performers and community volunteers, Counterpoint has made a place for itself as Canada's oldest and longest running orchestra serving Toronto's LGBT community.

While Counterpoint's success is not solely a product of its musicians, it is the musicians, who's talent and commitment to the organization, provide the music we all enjoy and help meet the standards of a symphony orchestra. I am encouraged by the enquiries from interested musicians, but continue to invite you to spread the word, both to musician friends, and orchestra enthusiasts. As an amateur orchestra of professional quality, we seek new players, but welcome all levels of playing experience.

When the Board of Directors was formed two years ago, its goal was to continue and extend the energies of the organization and its members. We have strived towards a structure that will allow the CCO to pursue enhancing artistic development, community and audience relationships, and importantly, fundraising.

We recently received funding from the Toronto Arts Council to embark on a goal-setting and strategy planning project to see us well past our 25th anniversary and as a result, we have engaged Arts Consultant Linda Barnett to help us in this work.

We currently have vacancies on the Board of Directors. Please speak to any one the Directors about joining our organization as a Board member. We are also looking for persons who may have innovative ideas for our new direction, and there

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### Counterpoint Community Orchestra CONTACT INFORMATION

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### FINAL CONCERT OF THE SEASON!

Saturday, June 2, 2007

St. Luke's Church (Sherbourne & Carlton) at 8:00pm

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## FRANZ LISZT



Franz Liszt was an artist who bewildered, inspired and inflamed the imaginations of his era. Born in Hungary in 1811, he was first taught piano by his father. By the age of 12, Liszt had earned a reputation as a remarkable concert artist. He went to Vienna and Paris to study, and later traveled across Europe to perform for audiences of thousands. He even got a pair of trained bears as a gift from Czar Nicholas I after a performance in Russia.

Known for his flamboyant style and virtuosic talent, Liszt was a true showman. In the 1840s, with his piano recitals in high demand, "Lisztomania" began. The young composer had many fans praise him and ladies who reputedly fought over his handkerchiefs and gloves as souvenirs. Some of Liszt's contemporaries saw this worship as vulgar, and eventually came to despise the composer because of it.

Liszt was involved in a few stormy, scandalous affairs with married women as well, including one with whom he fathered three children while she was married to someone else. One of Liszt's daughters eventually abandoned her marriage to a famed conductor for the celebrated composer, Richard Wagner.

Though none of his shows were ever recorded, Liszt is commonly credited with redefining how the piano is played. He was the first solo pianist to play entire programs from memory, and the first to perform with the piano at a right angle to the stage with its lid open, to better project sound across an auditorium.

Many of Liszt's piano compositions have become standard repertoire, including the Hungarian Rhapsodies. His transcendental piano technique was imaginative, springing from a desire to make the piano sound like an orchestra, or at least as rich in scope as one.

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 encompasses Liszt's charm as a composer – exhibiting beautiful melodies, electrifying rhythmic passages, and fluid, breathtaking keyboard runs. Based on Hungarian gypsy music, the piece uses these traditions in its rhythmic spontaneity and seductive, expressive passages. The song is written in two parts: the first part is slow, improvisational, and marked by feeling; while the second part is fast, fun, and catchy.

Katya Diakow (violin section)

### MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

#### From the Community

Addison Tallman (Treasurer), Colin MacAdam, David Spek (Chair), Jeff Schmidt, Peter Reeve-Newson (Secretary).

#### From the Orchestra

Jennifer Langton, Paul Willis, and William McQueen (Vice-Chair).

### COMMITTEES

Board Development, Bylaws, Concert, Fundraising, Program, Promotion, Marketing & Outreach

### *A Special Thank You*

The orchestra would like to thank Peter Reeve-Newson for generously donating the stage extension skirt and the two large banners you see on the stage. Peter has taken over the reigns of secretary of the Board from Jennifer Langton.

### HUGO ALFVEN

Hugo Alfvén is the best known Swedish composer and the only one to achieve international reputation. Much like Edvard Grieg in Norway or his exact contemporary, Jean Sibelius in Finland, Alfvén is a representative of the "national" style in music, an essentially Romantic style heavily influenced by the folk culture of his homeland.

Hugo Alfvén was born in 1872 in Stockholm. Between 1887 and 1891 he studied violin at Music Conservatory there, and between 1890-1897 he played in the Swedish Court Orchestra. His first compositions date from this period. The success of his Symphony No.2 in D earned him a stipend which enabled him to continue his studies in France and Germany between 1900-1903. In 1908 he was elected to the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, and in 1910 he became Music Director at the University of Uppsala and the conductor of the Orphei Drängar (The Initiates of Orpheus) choir, with whom he toured extensively until 1947, when he relinquished this position. Among his compositions are three orchestral rhapsodies, 5 symphonies, and many cantatas and other choral works. Alfvén was also a very talented water-colourist (he actually considered dedicating himself entirely to painting) and a gifted writer, who left an interesting autobiography.

The Swedish Rhapsody No.1, subtitled "Midsommarvarka" ("Midsummer Vigil") was composed in 1903-1903 upon his return from the 3 years long study voyage in Europe and it is one of the first Swedish compositions to use Swedish folk tunes. Such was its success that it was reworked into a ballet and he later wrote two more Swedish rhapsodies.

Joseph Nachman (violin section)

# Please welcome Counterpoint's guest artists

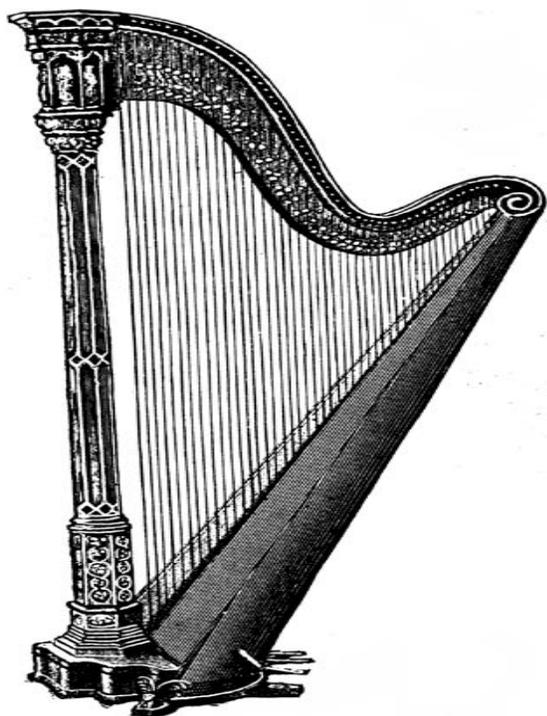
## JOHN ALONSO, PIANO



John Alonso was born in Nuremberg, Germany of Spanish parents. After immigrating to Canada, he studied extensively at the Royal Conservatory of Music and the University of Toronto, Faculty of Music. His teachers

have included the late Margaret Parsons-Poole, Patricia Parr, Boris Lysenko and Marc Durand. John is the winner of many awards including first prize in the Canadian National festival of Music. John's recordings include "Lullababy" as well as two original music recordings; "Remember When" and "The Gift".

For the past 17 years, John has been a teacher at Mississauga Private School. For the last four, he has been their choral and band director from grades 1 through 12. This is John's fifth concerto appearance with Counterpoint Community Orchestra.



## ANDREW CHAN, HARP



We welcome at the CCO's June concert, Andrew Chan, harpist. He will perform the first movement (allegro) of the Concerto for Harp and Orchestra by Canadian Michael Conway Baker. Andrew has performed with many orchestras in the Vancouver area, including the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

His teachers include Elizabeth Volpé at the University of British Columbia, renowned pedagogue Judy Loman at the University of Toronto, and Alice Chalifoux at the prestigious Salzedo Harp Colony. In addition to the classical harp, Andrew also performs frequently on his Celtic harp and has performed for countless private events. In addition to performing,

Andrew is a very enthusiastic teacher and has introduced the harp to students of all ages. Andrew is currently the Principal Harp of the Oshawa Durham Symphony Orchestra and the Brampton Symphony Orchestra.  
[www.andrewchanharpist.com](http://www.andrewchanharpist.com)

## MICHAEL CONWAY BAKER



CCO continues its commitment to the performance of Canadian composers and at the June 2nd concert we will perform the first movement (allegro) of Michael Conway Baker's Concerto for Harp and Orchestra, op 117, (2000). It was originally written for Elizabeth Volpe who performed the entire Concerto with the Vancouver Symphony. She said it was "Poetic, and Magical." Michael Conway Baker also has written the theme, "Vancouver Variations" for the CBC Radio Daily Classical Request Show "Here's to You".

Michael Conway Baker is a leading composer with over 200 film, television and video music scores which owe much of their distinctive and award winning success to his extensive background in writing concert music. His compositions includes full length ballets for the National Ballet of Canada, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and a full length ice ballet for Dorothy Hamill's Cinderella. It also includes two symphonies, and concertos, for a wide variety of instruments, choral, and concert band. He has also created a library of 180 Latin dances for competitions.

His many awards include a Juno for his Piano Concerto, three Canadian Academy Awards (Genies) for film scores, an award (ACTRA) for best music for a television series, as well as being nominated 7 times for various film and tv awards including Best Song in a Feature. He was invested with the Order of British Columbia in 1997. Last year (2006) Michael was inducted into the British Columbia Entertainment Hall of Fame including a star on the sidewalk.



On May 6, the Board of the Orchestra continued its work on developing a strategic, three year plan for our future. With a grant from the Ontario Arts Council, Linda Barnett, seen on the right, has been employed to facilitate the work and an all-day session of Board members and Orchestra members was held to begin the process in all earnestness. Celia Chandler from the cello section is seen on the left, looking over key concepts for developing the board's vision, mission and next steps to developing the overall Plan.

Picture by Bill McQueen

## SEE YOU AT PRIDE DAY!

Counterpoint Community Orchestra is honoured that Michelle DuBarry, this year's Pride Parade Grand Marshall and a lover of classical music, will be attending our June 2nd concert. Pride Day is on Sunday, June 24, and as always your orchestra will have a booth in the Community Fair on Church Street between noon and 5pm. Please drop by and say hello.

# CONCERT PROGRAMME

## RHAPSODY ON A THEME OF PAGANINI FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA, OP. 43

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF

## CONCERTO FOR HARP & ORCHESTRA, OPUS 117

MICHAEL CONWAY BAKER

## HUNGARIAN RHAPSODY NUMBER 2

FRANZ LISZT, ARRANGED BY K. MÜLLER

## MOLDAU (VLTAVA) SYMPHONIC POEM

BEDRICH SMETANA

## SWEDISH RHAPSODY No. 1, FOR ORCHESTRA ("MIDSOMMARVAKA"), OP. 19

HUGO ALFVÉN

## SERGEI RACHMANINOFF



Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini is based on Paganini's Caprice No. 24 in A minor, the final caprice of his 24 Caprices for violin solo.

It is widely considered one of the most technically difficult works for violin and it consists of a theme with 11 variations and a finale.

The 19th century violin virtuoso Paganini is rightfully considered as the father of modern violin playing, as he completely revolutionized the technique of the violin. He became one of the first "superstars" of public concertizing and such was his virtuosity that it was rumoured he had sold his soul to

the devil in exchange for his amazing ability. His influence extended well into the 20th century and he left his mark on many musicians. Of all his compositions, the Caprice No. 24 is the most influential, becoming a source of inspiration for many subsequent composers, among them Liszt, Brahms, Dallapiccola, Lutoslawski, Andrew Lloyd Weber and, of course, Rachmaninoff.

Rachmaninoff was a piano virtuoso himself, but until he left Russia in 1917, in the wake of the Russian Revolution, he concentrated on composition. After his emigration however, he had to dedicate most of his time and energy on performing, partly in order to support his family, and became one of the top pianists of his

generation, a generation known as the Golden Age of Piano Playing.

The Rhapsody on Theme by Paganini was composed in the summer of 1934 in Switzerland, and premiered later that year in Baltimore, Maryland with the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. Like Paganini's Caprice No. 24, on which it is based, it preserves the theme and variations format, but with 24 variations (instead of Paganini's 11) and the variations are more extended and complex. The best known variation is the slow variation XVIII, used and abused in many Hollywood movies; in fact, Rachmaninoff himself was aware of its appeal, noting: "This variation is for my agent".

Joseph Nachman (violin section)

## BEDRICH SMETANA



At the end of his tragic life, after losing his wife, several children, his hearing and, finally, his sanity, Bedrich Smetana was mourned by the Czechs as a national hero.

Smetana ultimately believed musical composition was his patriotic mission. He began writing the cycle of six symphonic poems, entitled *Má Vlast* (My Fatherland), in 1872. The idea of composing programmatic music with true symphonic integrity was considered a hot subject of controversy at the time. However, Smetana's piece immediately electrified the Czech population.

The second poem, *Vltáva* – better known as *The Moldau* – is the most beautiful of the series for its melodic charm. The composer uses tone painting to evoke the sounds of the *Vltáva* river, which runs through Prague.

The piece follows the course of the river, which begins from two small springs, heard with a delicate rippling passage played by flutes, with pizzicato accompaniment from violins. The springs unify into a single current, which flows through the woods, where hunting calls can be heard in the horn section. The melody becomes livelier as the river passes by a peasant wedding; and later subsides when the woodwinds, strings, horns and clarinet call to mind nymphs dancing in moonlight. The listener can pick up sounds suggestive of proud castles and ruins found in the countryside by an impressive passage played by horns, trombones and tuba. The ripple theme of the river is heard again before building up to the section representing travel through a set of swirling rapids. The piece ends gradually as the river widens through Prague and majestically vanishes in the distance.

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While Smetana's life ended sadly in an insane asylum, he was revered as the founder of Czech nationalist music. He created a new musical identity by drawing on his country's legends, history, characters, scenery, ideas and presenting them with a sense of freshness, colour and highly dramatic musical style.

Katya Diakow (violin section)

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR (continued from page 1)

are many volunteer opportunities available that do not require a significant time investment, but can add real value to the success of the organisation. With the support of you, our audience, our donors, funding agencies, and the agencies who provide service in kind, such as the 519 Church Street Community Centre, Counterpoint has had a wonderful 23rd Season. We look forward to celebrating its 24th season this fall. On behalf of the orchestra, I thank you for your help in achieving our success and your continued support is both recognized and highly valued.

David Spek, Chair

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We also wish to thank those whose con-

All donations over \$10 receive a charitable tax receipt.

### thanks to our volunteers:

Alex Ng, Alex Scheel, Anita Mitchell, Bob Mitchell, Gerald Whyte, Grant Reynolds, Celia Chandler, Jack Chen, James Newson, Joseph Nachman, Jules Chiasson, Katya Diakow, Larry Reid, Lise Beaupre, Paul Tansley, Ralph Williams, Ron Mitchell, Ted Belke, Timothy Browne, Tony Moffat-Lynch

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