

Counterpoint community orchestra



Newsletter

v10.3

25th Anniversary Gala

Terry Kowalczyk, music director

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 9 in D minor

with

BELL'ARTE SINGERS

and guest artists from Atelēa S

Jennifer Rasor, soprano

Martha Spence, mezzo

Patrick Huang, tenor

Stuart Graham, baritone

C. P. E. BACH

Flute Concerto in D minor

Jennifer Langton, flute

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 8PM

MacMillan Theatre (Museum Subway)

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Message from the Chair

Paul Willis, board chair

Welcome to the high point and culmination of Counterpoint Community Orchestra's 25th Anniversary Season: our May 30th Gala Concert at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music's MacMillan Theatre.

Our music director, Terry Kowalczyk, has spent several months guiding and inspiring the players of the Orchestra towards our performance of Beethoven's monumental 9th Symphony. We thank, as well, the Bell' Arte Singers, principal vocal soloists and Jennifer Langton (in a CPE Bach flute concerto) for their participation at this concert.

There are 815 seats in the MacMillan Theatre and we need your help in filling each one of those seats. We have a variety of ticket options to fit you or your group's needs. We look forward to your support in helping the Orchestra players perform to as full a house as possible.

As Counterpoint Community Orchestra looks back over its 25 years as the world's longest lasting lesbian and gay orchestra, there are many, many people who have helped us both as players and volunteers. Your present board thanks everyone who has helped the Orchestra reach its present level.

As we move towards our exciting 26th season, Counterpoint Community Orchestra is in constant need of volunteers to help in all the behind the scenes work as well as the fundraising that allows the Orchestra to provide these performances. This coming year, in particular, people who have provided crucial help towards the Orchestra's development will not be continuing their level of involvement. We need your help as the Orchestra starts its next 25 years.

Thank you, our audience, once again for your support and I look forward to your enjoyment of our May 30th Gala Concert.

Roy Dean Design



In honour of and in celebration of Counterpoint Community Orchestra 25th season, jewellery designer Roy Dean of Roy Dean Design has exclusively created icon pins for the entire orchestra.

This year has brought a great honour to Roy Dean Design. The Canadian Aids Society in Ottawa has been looking to put a symbol to their new fundraising efforts. They have chosen Roy Dean to create and manufacture the new stylized Maple Leaf Ribbon icon as their registered trademark. Look for this new symbol in the future and help support The Canadian Aids Society by purchasing a lapel pin.

Roy Dean Design specializes in recycling jewellery from treasured items and heirlooms. He creates unique, one of a kind pieces for a discerning clientele from around the world. Before you decide what to do, sign up for the new free jewellery newsletter "Bijou/Jewellery et al". Send in your request to subscribe to roydeandesign@yahoo.ca.

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Introducing Group Rates!

Here is an excellent pricing opportunity for school groups, the music community, community organizations, corporate groups, colleagues, friends and family to hear the Beethoven 9th Symphony!

Our goal is to fill the capacity of the hall of 815 with the help of our audience and guests. To reach our target, we are introducing group rates for groups of 10 or more persons. For student groups, the price is \$8 per ticket. For adult groups, the price is \$12 per ticket.

How to Buy Group Tickets:

Please email or phone to book your group tickets. Payment may be made by cheque or cash, and must be received by Friday May 22, 2009 by mail or through an orchestra member.

Please include your group's contact name, phone number, email, and the name of the organization. Prepaid tickets can be mailed to you or may be delivered by an orchestra member. Tickets may also be picked up at the door. Book your group tickets early! We look forward to seeing you!

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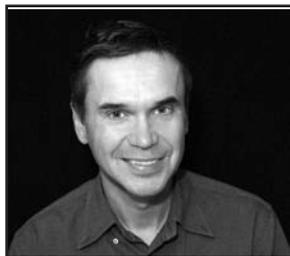
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10 Years With Counterpoint

Terry Kowalczyk, music director



As I reflect on the last 10 years of the CCO, I think of the impact this group has had on me both personally and musically. Over these ten years, the Orchestra has steadily grown to a community orchestra tackling some of the most mature orchestral repertoire there is. It seems like just yesterday I started rehearsing the Orchestra on Mozart's Magic Flute overture for my first concert with Counterpoint and now, the colossal Beethoven Ninth is waiting in the wings to conclude our 25th season and begin the challenges of the seasons to come.

For myself the CCO was a place to go and grow and create great music. There are few feelings greater to me than the directing of the sounds that come out of magnificent music, recreated right in front of me. I think that the importance of Counterpoint Community Orchestra stems from the fact that it is a community orchestra in the true sense of the word. It serves the purpose of providing an outlet for both amateur and professional musicians alike who come together one evening and bring something great, even for a moment, into a world that needs order.

On May 30th we are proud to perform a work that has been 'ordered' on a magnitude that is hard to comprehend, Beethoven's great Ninth Symphony. Yes, this work has the mighty 'Ode to Joy' theme in the finale but much precedes this moment. A work of the early 19th century, the opening of the symphony and the finale some 70 minutes later are as opposite as they can be, yet belong together - between the opening bars that begin on 'nothing' and darkness and the final bar of the entire work that ends on a great blaze of joy and light. Beethoven's Ninth is an incredible musical journey, a work where no note is taken for granted, where each idea is tied to something before or yet to come and organically grows within itself. The final movement to me is a great fantasy on joy. I encourage you the listener to read Schiller's famous poem to see how Beethoven captures the rapture of Joy.

I am thrilled on behalf of the CCO to present this great work to you. My mission has been to create an orchestra where people from many different walks of life and musical abilities come together and actually participate in creating a colossal work such as the Ninth Symphony. My personal joy is that we have come a very long way during these past ten years.

Symphony No. 9 in D minor, "Choral", op. 125

Joseph Nachman, violin



Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is arguably the most iconic work in the whole classical music repertoire. It is the summit of Beethoven's symphonic output, the work which brought the voice into the symphony, and influenced all subsequent composers, well into the 20th century. The "Ode to Joy", the choral section of the last movement, with its message of universal brotherhood has become the musical symbol of humankind's loftiest aspirations. The symphony has been performed on occasions that mark a perceived dawn of a new and better chapter in human history, such as the fall of the Berlin wall or the end of the war in Bosnia, while a wordless version of the "Ode to Joy" has become the anthem of the European Union.

From a musical point of view the Ninth Symphony is the synthesis of Beethoven's symphonic output. The symphony was originally commissioned in 1817 by the Philharmonic Society of London. Beethoven supposedly started work on his last symphony in 1818 and finished it early in 1824. However, the gestation of this monumental work was much longer. Beethoven wanted to set the "Ode to Joy" to music as early as 1793 and apparently did so; unfortunately, this early piece was lost. The tune that he eventually used to set the poem appears in a slightly modified form as early as 1808 in the Fantasy in C minor for Piano, Chorus and Orchestra, while the theme for the scherzo can be traced back to a fugue he wrote in 1815. The premiere, which took place on May 7, 1824 was a huge success: according to eyewitnesses he was accorded five standing ovations (the imperial couple was customarily accorded three ovations). Beethoven, by then completely deaf, watched the performance on stage, score in hand, facing the orchestra; therefore he didn't become aware of the cheers until one of the soloists gently turned him towards the audience.

The opening of the first movement seems to grow out of a void. Against the murmurings of the low strings emerge falling fifths in the violins that grow to a loud and imposing first theme; it has all been likened to the creation of the world and certainly no symphony before had sounded anything like it. The second movement is a furious scherzo; projecting humour and power, it was an instant favourite (and according to some witnesses, the great ovation at the premiere of the work took place after this movement). The third movement, a set of variations on a double theme is one of most personal and lyrical pages Beethoven ever wrote. With its falling fourths, the first theme of this movement echoes the opening of the symphony. The last variation is twice interrupted by episodes in which loud fanfares for the full orchestra are answered by double-stopped octaves played by the first violins alone.

The last movement opens with a dissonant and frantic passage ("terror fanfare" as Wagner called it) that leads into a "recitative" (marked as such in the score) for cellos and basses, during which the themes of the previous three movements are quoted and rebuffed by the strings, and the aria of the "Ode to Joy" is intoned (to which words will later be added). This aria is taken through a set of variations and then the movement starts again with the "terror fanfare", this time followed by a vocal recitative with the bass soloist singing "O friends, not these tones. But rather, let us strike up more pleasant and more joyful ones." The chorus and four vocal soloists take up the Joy theme, which undergoes a continuing series of variations, including a brief section in the Turkish manner. The music reaches a climax with a new theme: "Be embraced, ye millions!" which is later combined in counterpoint with the Joy theme and eventually builds to a frenzied coda.

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Our 25 Year History



Counterpoint Community Orchestra is unique in Canada, in North America and indeed in the world as the first secular LGBT orchestra. It had its humble beginnings in 1984 at the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto. Not long after, these young, ambitious gay and lesbian musicians formed their own independent organization in order to move closer to the gay community at large, and with this vision became the first secular Lesbian and Gay orchestra in Canada and the world.

Back then, rehearsals were held at the old Parasol Rehearsal Studios on Jarvis Street in downtown Toronto. At the Parasol Counterpoint also began giving frequent concerts which were well attended right from the beginning. The music presented at that time often consisted of Baroque and Chamber Music. As the orchestra grew in size and experience, it began to explore other forms of music and moved its rehearsals to the Auditorium of the 519 Centre on Church Street, where it rehearses to this day.



Conductors of
Counterpoint Past

Counter clockwise from
top left: Doreen Rao,
Rosemary Thompson,
and Judith Yan.

Over the 25 years of its existence, Counterpoint has benefited from a number of experienced conductors, most notably from the University of Toronto School of Music. This includes Dr. Doreen Rao, who holds the University of Toronto Elmer Iseler Chair in Conducting, and heads the Faculty of Music graduate program in conducting, among many other innovative contributions to the field of choral music in Canada and Internationally.

An early conductor of the Orchestra, Rosemary Thompson went on to be a Resident Conductor and member of the artistic staff of the Calgary Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra and is currently the Chorus master of Calgary Philharmonic Chorus. She is also an Assistant Conductor at the Canadian Opera Company. Another former conductor, Judith Yan went on to become a resident conductor of the Canadian Opera Company, was a staff conductor with the San Francisco Opera and

is currently an assistant conductor of the National Ballet of Canada.

During the last 10 years, under the music leadership of Music Director, Terry Kowalczyk, and the guidance of Concert Master, Paul Willis, who led the Orchestra for one season when we were without a formal director, Counterpoint has matured greatly. Terry has vitalized the orchestra by bringing in new soloists and performers and by developing a challenging music programme which has inspired Orchestra players.

In 2005 Counterpoint underwent a significant organizational change, building toward a promising future. By incorporating and forming a Board of Directors it was hoped that the Orchestra's ability to create a more effective organizing body as well as increase opportunities for funding future seasons would be greatly enhanced.

In the end, and because of the several hundred loyal and vigorous community musicians and volunteers who figuratively "passed through our doors" over the years, Counterpoint has continued a resilience for the future and continues to support the principles of the spirit and muses of music, and in the advocacy of equality and diversity that builds community.

JOIN COUNTERPOINT IN CELEBRATING PRIDE DAY

Come meet us and listen to members of the Orchestra perform at our booth, Sunday June 28.

Jennifer Langton, *flautist extraordinaire*



You could say it was inevitable that Jennifer Langton would spend her life as a musician. Raised by enthusiastically musical parents, she first sat at a piano at the age of three. While growing up in Brantford, her and her brothers were exposed to varied and eclectic music throughout their young lives and were always encouraged to learn and play and Jennifer went on to major in flute and piano at university.

At the upcoming silver anniversary Gala Concert of the Orchestra, Jennifer will perform the CPE Bach – Concerto in d minor. She says she has had a love affair with the CPE Bach concerto and not only did she choose the piece because of its rich tone, but she also believes it will make a lovely complement to the Beethoven 9th Symphony.

A school teacher by day, Jennifer joined the CCO five years ago when she was asked to substitute as principal flute for a player who was taking maternity leave. She has been an integral part of the group ever since, serving on the

Board of Directors, and continuing to serve on the Program Committee.

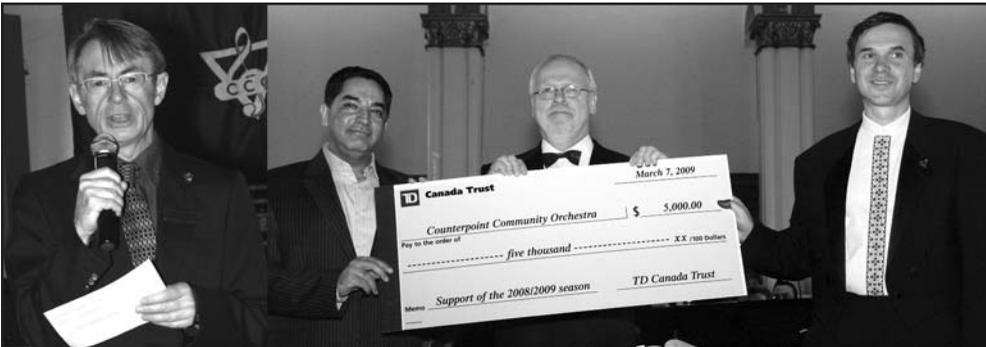
The camaraderie, superb repertoire and overall community ambiance is what keeps Jennifer coming back each season. Unlike many other district orchestras, Jennifer is pleased that the CCO truly reflects the community it is meant to represent, involving volunteer and amateur musicians from all levels. A very gay-positive supporter, Jennifer is proud to be a member of such a hard-working and talented orchestra.

Jennifer plans to retire from teaching in 2010 and hopes to focus more on other creative projects, including stained glass and papermaking.

While her mother was her initial musical inspiration, variety and creativity motivate Jennifer as well, and she is looking forward to performing the CPE Bach at Counterpoint's silver anniversary gala.

Jennifer has dedicated her performance at the CCO Gala Concert to her late mother.

Thanks to all our donors!



Pictured:
(far left) Chair of the CCO Fundraising Committee, Paul Rodger

Group photo left to right:
Amin Sunderji, senior manager of corporate diversity, TD Bank;
Paul Willis, Chair of the Board;
Terry Kowalczyk, CCO Music Director

Without our donors The CCO could not have grown over its twenty-five years, nor able to put on splendid productions like the May 30th performance of Beethoven's 9th Symphony.

Paul Rodger, Chair of the CCO Fundraising committee introduces Amin Sunderji, senior manager of corporate diversity for TD Canada Trust. At the March Concert, Mr. Sunderji presented a mockup of a donation cheque for \$5,000 from TD Canada Trust to the Orchestra in support of our 25th Anniversary Gala.

Above, the cheque is presented to Paul Willis and Terry Kowalczyk, the CCO's music director.

Whether large or small, every donation is received with gratitude and deep felt appreciation. With your support and donations, we can continue our thrice annual performances.

Concerto for flute in D minor



Out of Johann Sebastian Bach's ten surviving children, Carl Philipp Emanuel was the most inventive and distinctive member of the Bach family. Unlike his father, C.P.E.'s music was noted for its intimate expressiveness, and its freedom and variety in structure. His forward-thinking style would influence future master composers such as Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven.

His music was considered so audacious at the time, that Bach was described as a sweaty, glazed-eyed musician who became "possessed" when playing the keyboard.

At 24, Bach's reputation earned him a spot as a harpsichordist to the Prussian crown prince, who later became King Frederick. After 30 years of service, however, he grew unhappy with his poor salary and wanted out. After reluctantly being released, C.P.E. succeeded his godfather, Telemann, as the music director for

Hamburg's five major churches. He held this position until his death, at age 74.

The music for this concerto goes far beyond anything the composer's father even attempted. In the opening, the orchestra lays out the dramatic theme while the solo flute provides a graceful melody. The second movement has a smooth and elegant flow. C.P.E. Bach's daring style is heard through the flute's gallant melodies, which progress from a charming beginning to increasingly dramatic sections. In the final movement, the flutist must be nimble in playing a wide range of notes in short passages against the orchestra's exploding motifs. The concerto's conclusion is unexpectedly thrilling, with remarkable speed and intensity.

C.P.E. Bach was respected as a composer and friend of some of the most distinguished writers and thinkers of his time. Interestingly, he received more recognition for his virtuoso performances and composing skills in his lifetime than his famous father.

BELL'ARTE

SINGERS



The Bell'Arte Singers is one of Canada's finest community choirs. Founded in 1988 by Dr. Lee Willingham of Wilfred Laurier University faculty of music, they have established themselves in all genres of repertoire and styles through concerts, recordings, and broadcasts.

The Bell'Arte Singers have toured in Europe on three occasions, first to England and France in 1993, then to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Austria in 1995. In 2001, the choir sang in Northern Italy, including concerts and masses in Florence (St. Maria del Fiore), Fiesole, Bologna, and Venice (St. Mark's Basilica). Prime Minister and Aline Chrétien were present for one of the performances.

Three recordings have been released, including *Awake, My Heart!*, a Canadian gallery of choral music by such composers as Ruth Watson Henderson, Stephen Hatfield, Imant Raminsh, and Eleanor Daley, *A Child is Born*, and *A Sacred Concert*. The Bell'Arte Singers have also appeared on a number of commercial recordings, including the best selling *Solitudes* recording, "In the Midst of Angels".

The choir participates in special benefit concerts for charity and church outreach organizations and in the past has been featured as part of the Toronto Star Christmas Children's Fund concerts.

During the 2008 - 2009 season The Bell'Arte Singers welcomed Margot Rejskind as Music Director. Dr. Rejskind serves on the faculty of The Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto.

For information on concerts, recordings, and Bell'Arte activities, visit the website at www.bellartesingers.ca

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