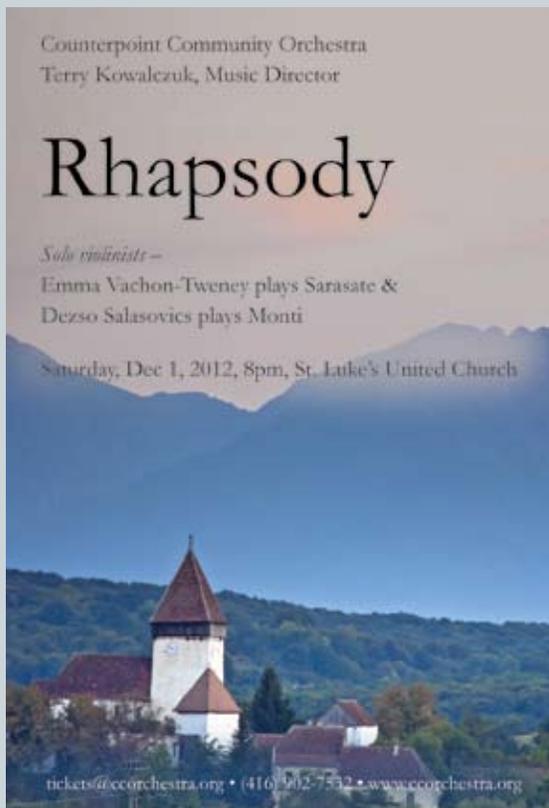


Counterpoint Community Orchestra December Concert Rhapsody

Saturday
December 1
2012
8:00 p.m.
Saint Luke's
United Church
353
Sherbourne
Street
(Southeast corner
of Carlton and
Sherbourne)



Programme includes:

Pablo de Sarasate
Zigeunerweisen "Gypsy Airs"
with Emma Vachon-Tweney, violin

Vittorio Monti
Czardas
with Dezso Salasovics, violin

Emmerich Kalman
Arranged by **Marlon Brown**
Gypsy Princess "Overture"

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Symphony No. 39

Dvorak
Slavonic Dances Op. 46, No. 2

Georges Enesco
Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1

Bela Bartok
Roumanian Folk Dances No. 3: Pe Loc



Emma Vachon-Tweney

performs with Counterpoint
Community Orchestra

Counterpoint Community Orchestra is pleased to showcase Emma Vachon-Tweney in Pablo de Sarasate's Zigeunerweisen "Gypsy Airs".

A graduate of music performance at the University of Toronto, Emma has been a regular contributor and player with Counterpoint for seven years, playing as both first and second violin and also viola.

During her time at the University she was awarded four consecutive years of the Barry White String Scholarship and has been twice the recipient of the Foote String Scholarship. She was also Principal Viola for her fourth year with the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Emma has attended many summer music festivals including the National Academy Orchestra (Boris Brott Music Festival),

Toronto Summer Music Festival and the Tafelmusik Summer Music Festival.

This year Emma regularly plays viola with the Sudbury Symphony, the Boris Brott Orchestra, Sneak Peek Orchestra, Masterworks of Oakville, Peterborough Symphony, Orchestra Toronto and the North Bay Symphony. She has played violin solos with the Counterpoint Orchestra in Toronto. In addition to her orchestral experience, Emma currently plays with two of her own chamber ensembles for various weddings and corporate functions in the city of Toronto. Emma has also played solo recitals in St James Cathedral, Music Gallery of Toronto, Victoria Chapel and Walter Hall.

This is Emma's second solo performance with Counterpoint Community Orchestra.

Counterpoint Community Orchestra is an incorporated nonprofit organization in the province of Ontario, Canada.

Established 1984, Counterpoint was the world's first lesbian/gay/gay positive orchestra. Counterpoint now has a 28 year tradition of orchestral performances in the downtown Toronto community.

The Counterpoint Community Orchestra Newsletter is published 3 times per year (Fall, Winter and Spring).

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Saturday December 1, 2012 at 8:00 p.m.
Saint Luke's United Church
353 Sherbourne Street at Carlton

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Interview

with Annette Gruno
by David Beattie

An interview with Counterpoint's tubist Annette Gruno by trumpet player David Beattie

David: How long have you played with Counterpoint Community Orchestra?

Annette: I started playing with the orchestra when they hired me to play a couple of the concerts sometime in the late 1980's when I was still a student. It was a wonderful opportunity for a young musician and the orchestra was very warm and welcoming. As a nascent musician the income was also very welcome. I remember one cheque paid for some music and another towards a much needed new tux and bowtie. And as a young, queer, female tubist, the CCO was also one of the first places I felt truly comfortable wearing that tux and bowtie. The orchestra began at a time when the possibility of queer civil rights was still on the distant horizon, so the queer positive nature of the orchestra was especially important.

I stopped playing with the orchestra in the mid 1990's when the Multiple Sclerosis I first contracted in 1987 forced me to first stop playing the tuba professionally and then in any capacity. I also had to give up teaching classroom music as well. I didn't even try to play any instrument for a good ten years as it was just too painful to deal with the loss. A couple of years ago a student of mine saw an ad in Whole Note for the tuba position with the orchestra and pointed it out to me. When I explained that I could no longer play and why, my student said "You always taught me never to quit, never to give up, never to let anything stop me, and never to stop trying. How am I supposed to follow that if you don't follow that? You would never let me get away with the excuse you just gave. I'm dialing the number." And so three days after that I was at the dress rehearsal and within the week I was playing at the concert, something I'd thought I'd never do again. I think it is a great testament to the orchestra's commitment to diversity and inclusiveness that they have someone with fairly advanced M.S. and a host of other disabilities as their tubist. The orchestra welcomed me when I was a young professional musician and gave me a wonderful opportunity to play and much later welcomed me back as an amateur musician with severe physical disabilities



and gave the world one small but very real demonstration of true inclusivity.

David: What is it you like best about the orchestra?

Annette: I have always appreciated and admired the orchestra's diversity, inclusivity, and commitment to a queer positive environment. It's warmth and friendliness are unparalleled.

David: How long have you played the tuba? Where did you study and with whom?

Annette: I first fell in love with the bassoon and played that for two years until I realized that I would have to spend half my time making reeds, something I was not particularly good at. In Grade 9 I switched to tuba as they needed one and I wanted to play something that was 'different'. I also liked that it made cool sounding low notes and rested on the chair so that I didn't have to hold it up. Little did I know that years later I would end up with it strapped to my shoulder for hours a day in an army marching band. My parents got me lessons (for which the neighbours were eternally grateful) with J. Scott Irvine of the Opera Orchestra. Lessons with Scott were never just an hour long, but could last all afternoon, with Scott teaching brilliantly not just about playing but about all aspects about music and much about life. I remember he never charged more than \$5 for this and when I asked if it shouldn't be more he said that he didn't teach for the money or play for the money but for the love of doing so and that someday I would understand. Later when I taught, I also charged little or nothing, and so was able to help underprivileged kids, seniors and refugees in some small way. I studied with Scott until I went to the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto where my primary teacher was Mark Tetreault of the Toronto Symphony. I also studied with the Canadian Brass and Roger Bobo at the Banff School of Fine Arts when I was fifteen. While in Banff I remember climbing up the mountain as far as I could with my tuba and I finally stopped when I encountered actual mountain climbers who were rather surprised to find me at that altitude. They took some pictures of

me playing alphorn tunes while sitting on a ledge with my feet dangling merrily over the precipice. Later I studied with Ivan Hammond when I went to graduate school in Ohio. I also had the privilege of having a few lessons with Arnold Jacobs. I remember shlepping the tuba all the way to Chicago on the bus. The bus driver let me take it on the bus with me where it would be safer, but not before he had me play numerous pieces right there in the bus depot with the waiting passengers and drivers gathered around to hear. It was definitely one of the oddest recitals I've ever given but was excellent prep for the lessons with Jake.

David: You played in the armed forces. Are there any stories you would like to share?

Annette: My first audition for the army was in 1984 when things were much different for female brass players. They liked my playing but were very concerned that I couldn't manage things physically and began to question me extensively. I presented them with the photos of myself playing the tuba on the mountain ledge in Banff. They stopped asking questions. I played happily with the army for several years, though to this day my right shoulder is still slightly lower than my left from having carried the weight of the tuba.

David: What are you looking forward to in the next season?

Annette: I am just very happy and grateful to be playing with the orchestra at all. My Multiple Sclerosis is worsening, so I'm just hoping that I'll be able to complete the season and I look forward to playing with the many fine musicians and even finer people of which the orchestra is comprised.

David: You have become deeply engaged in your faith. Would you like to say anything about that?

Annette: On a sheerly practical level it has actually had a rather negative impact on my tuba playing. For the last several years my synagogue has granted me the privilege of playing the shofar (ram's horn) for Rosh Hashanah. Although the shofar is not hard to play in comparison to a brass instrument, its' mouthpiece is very tiny, much smaller than even a trumpet mouthpiece, and rather the polar opposite of a large tuba mouthpiece. Consequently it takes me a while to recover every year, especially with the M.S. I thank the orchestra for its patience.

David: How can friends help you continue to achieve your dreams, without compromising your independence?

Annette: So many people have helped in so many ways. The orchestra and its conductor have been extremely supportive, encouraging and patient, even though my physical disabilities have noticeably impacted my playing. Frequently the help needed and given is of a practical nature: carrying the tuba, setting up music stands, picking up fallen objects, and rides to rehearsals and concerts when I am unable to drive. I owe untold thanks to so many who have helped in these and other ways. Without their assistance I couldn't play and the opportunity to play in the orchestra has meant more to me than words can possibly express.

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Board Bulletin

The Board of Directors continues to be concerned about the state of the orchestra's finances. We greatly value all of our patrons and benefactors and are grateful for their contributions, and we hope to build upon their donations through other fundraising initiatives. For example, the Board is very proud to recognize Larry Reid, violinist and board member, who raised more than \$500 with his second garage sale for the orchestra in the spring of 2012. We hope that more events and ideas of this sort will be forthcoming.

One or more Board members will be participating in a day-long workshop in November for small-budget orchestras organized by Orchestras Canada, at which we can discuss issues we have in common and try to help each other out.

The Board is also in need of new members from the community. If you would like to share your time and efforts with the running of our orchestra, please consider joining the Board for 2012-2013.



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