LONDON SYMPHONIA 2023-24 SEASON

OCTOBER 14, 2023 | 7:30 pm | Metropolitan United

THE NINTH

Guest Artists

- Matthias Maute, conductor
- Bethany Hörst, soprano
- Sophie Louise Roland, mezzo-soprano
- Bud Roach, tenor
- Giles Tomkins, bass
- Amabile Choirs of London
- The London Singers
- H.B. Beal Secondary School Singers

London **Symphonia**



October 14, 2023



Dear Friends,

On behalf of London City Council, let me welcome you to the London Symphonia's 2023-24 Season. As we gather together in the name of music and art, we celebrate not only the remarkable talents of this orchestra but also the vibrant cultural tapestry of our beloved city.

London, often referred to as the Forest City, is indeed a place where music runs deep within its veins. We stand tall as the first UNESCO City of Music in Canada, a distinction that underscores the profound significance of music in our community.

London Symphonia has long been a shining star in our artistic constellation, serving as a creative catalyst that ignites our collective passion for excellence, the love of music, and innovative collaborations. Through inclusive programming, you provide us with a unique opportunity to explore and celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures that call London home.

I join with you in celebrating the dawn of London Symphonia's 2023-24 Season. May this season be a symphony of unforgettable moments, a crescendo of creativity, and a fortissimo of artistic excellence. As we come together in the name of music, let us embrace the harmonious melodies that unite us and the shared vision of a culturally enriched London.

Best wishes to all for another positive and memorable experience!

Kind regards,

Josh Morgan Mayor, City of London

300 Dufferin Avenue P.O. Box 5053 London, ON Canada N6A 4L9

CITY OF LONDON T. 519.661.4920 F. 519.661.5308 mayor@london.ca

LONDON.CA



WELCOME to London Symphonia's 2023-24 Season!

We are proud to present 8 outstanding concerts this season, each of which will take you on a unique musical journey of discovery.

Join us as we welcome a diverse array of extraordinary artists, some of whom you may know, and a new generation of performers and composers. Programming includes cherished orchestral masterworks, works by living composers, including two Premieres, and an eclectic mix of jazz and modern musical genres.

Our audience members are vital to the continued success of London Symphonia. On behalf the musicians, staff and Board of Directors, thank you for your support.

Great music and amazing artistry await you, starting tonight with Beethoven's monumental 9th Symphony!

We look forward to seeing you often in the year to come.

April Voth Executive Director

1 den Chr

Andrew Chung



THE NINTH

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Andrew Balfour

Ambe

Ludwig van Beethoven

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

- I. Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso
- II. Molto vivace Presto

INTERMISSION

- III. Adagio molto e cantabile Andante moderato Tempo I
- IV. Presto Allegro assai Presto (Recitativo) Allegro assai Allegro assai vivace: alla marcia Andante maestoso Allegro energico Allegro ma non tanto Poco adagio Poco allegro, strigendo il tempo Prestissimo

This program runs approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes, and will be performed with a 20-minute intermission.

MEET THE GUEST ARTISTS AFTER THE CONCERT

Come to the Great Room, immediately behind the stage and speak with the musicians.

Texts and Translations

Ojibway song gifted by traditional drummer and singer Cory Campbell to Andrew Balfour and the University of Manitoba Concert Choir.

Ambe

Ambe Anishinaabeg Biinindegeg Anishinaabeg Mino-bimaadiziwin omaa Ambe

Come in

Come in, two-legged beings Come in all people There is good life here Come in! The text is largely taken from "Ode to Joy" written by Friedrich Schiller, with a few additional introductory words written specifically by Ludwig van Beethoven.

Ode an die Freude

O Freunde, nicht diese Töne! Sondern laßt uns angenehmere anstimmen und freudenvollere! Freude! Freude!

Freude, schöner Götterfunken, Tochter aus Elysium, Wir betreten feuertrunken, Himmlische, dein Heiligtum! Deine Zauber binden wieder, Was die Mode streng geteilt; Alle Menschen werden Brüder, Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

Wem der große Wurf gelungen, Eines Freundes Freund zu sein, Wer ein holdes Weib errungen, Mische seinen Jubel ein! Ja, wer auch nur eine Seele Sein nennt auf dem Erdenrund! Und wer's nie gekonnt, der stehle Weinend sich aus diesem Bund.

Freude trinken alle Wesen An den Brüsten der Natur; Alle Guten, alle Bösen Folgen ihrer Rosenspur. Küsse gab sie uns und Reben, Einen Freund, geprüft im Tod; Wollust ward dem Wurm gegeben, Und der Cherub steht vor Gott!

Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen Durch des Himmels prächt'gen Plan, Laufet, Brüder, eure Bahn, Freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen. Diesen Kuß der ganzen Welt! Brüder! Über'm Sternenzelt Muß ein lieber Vater wohnen. Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen? Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt? Such' ihn über'm Sternenzelt! Über Sternen muß er wohnen.

Ode to Joy

Oh friends, no more of these sounds! Let us sing more cheerful songs, More full of joy! Joy! Joy!

Joy, bright spark of divinity, Daughter of Elysium, Fire-inspired we tread Thy sanctuary! Thy magic power reunites All that custom has divided; All men become brothers Under the sway of thy gentle wings.

Whoever has created An abiding friendship, Or has won A true and loving wife, All who can call at least one soul theirs, Join in our song of praise! But any who cannot must creep tearfully Away from our circle.

All creatures drink of joy At nature's breast. Just and unjust Alike taste of her gift; She gave us kisses and the fruit of the vine, A tried friend to the end. Even the worm can feel contentment, And the cherub stands before God!

Gladly, like the heavenly bodies Which He set on their courses through the splendor of the firmament; Thus, brothers, you should run your race, As a hero going to conquest.

You millions, I embrace you. This kiss is for all the world! Brothers, above the starry canopy There must dwell a loving Father. Do you fall in worship, you millions? World, do you know your Creator? Seek Him in the heavens! Above the stars must He dwell.

TONIGHT'S MUSICIANS

Violin 1

Joe Lanza Mikela Witjes Mel Martin Natasha Penny Calvin Tsang Alyssa Stevenson Andrew Bensler Jillian Yang David Shewchuk

Violin 2

Sarah Wiebe Michele Domoulin Andrew Chung Chia-Hsuan Chen** Sophie Drouin Jessica Elliotson Clare Pellerin Nic Carlucci

Viola

Marie-Eve Lessard Jody Davenport Roman Kosarev Tasman Tantasawat** Jeffery Komar Meika Sonntag Jacqueline Milne

Cello

Ben Bolt-Martin Sonya Nanos Patrick Theriault Eve Thompson** Joel Tangjerd

Bass

Joe Phillips Brian Baty Fil Stasiak

Flute

Laura Chambers Amelia Lyons Stephen Tam^{*}

Oboe

Graham Mackenzie Jennifer Short

Clarinet

Graham Lord Ross Edwards

Bassoon

Spencer Phillips Julie Shier Cathi MacDonnell* *Contra- bassoon

Horn

Ron George Kate Stone Sasha Gorbasew Tim Lockwood

Trumpet

Shawn Spicer Scott Harrison

Trombone

Mike Polci Rob Stone Peter Collins

Timpani Dan Morphy

Percussion Allison Bent Richard Burrows Bryan Malito

**London Symphonia Fellows from Western University

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

London Symphonia wishes to acknowledge and honour the land on which we are meeting as the traditional territory of the First Nations peoples; the Chippewa of the Thames First Nation (part of the Anishinaabe), the Oneida Nation of the Thames (part of the Haudenosaunee) and the Munsee-Delaware Nation (part of the Leni-Lunaape). Let us reflect on how we as individuals and as a community can carry this spirit of gratitude into everything we do to honour the work that all the First Nations peoples of the Turtle Island have done, and continue to do, for the land that supports us all.



TONIGHT'S CHOIRS

Amabile Youth Singers: Soprano-Alto Choir

Miraya Agrawal Sarah Arndt Chloe Bayona Adeline Beynon Isabella Bu Anivah Buchanan Brooke Del ellis Keira Denver Averv Grimmer Hannah Gutierrez Bronwyn Heard Sophie Hillis Stella Kamil Keitlvn Kato Kat Konecny Chloe Laporte Shay Luo Kate McHugh Alexis Nunes McKenzie Kendal Morrison Shivani Rai Amelia Ross Scarlett Schram Rebecca Skellv Hannah Slaght Marley Slaght Julianna Spence Madeline Spence Meahan Stuifbergen Milla Tamas Brooke Tsotras Bettina Vandenbera Mya Wolfe Kayla Zelibka

Katrina Zadorsky Spence, conductor Brenda Zadorsky, conductor Hayoon Kim, accompanist

Prima: Amabile Women's Choir

Sarah Abado Mary Beth Anderson Cheri Anthony Tricia Baratta Frin Bateman Jennifer Boag Wanping Chen Ashlev Cuthbert Miranda Denver Lynne Dharma Jovce Dobronsky Leora Fades Kiersten Elliott Nikole Emma Georgina Galba Breianna Hatfield Jane Havaris Magdalena Hentl Solveig Jainitis Diane Jamieson Sarah Jevnikar Jill Kennedy Lisa Kovac Sarah Krause Bohdana Liashko Rebecca Lubos Lisa Mace Alvssa Nichols Sarah Norman Lauren McAltea Phillips Melody Pilon Bridget Plumb Jamie Prodanovic Heidi Proprotnik Michelle Rigato Patti Dunn Robinson Aruni Samaranbandu Abigail Stewart Christine MacDonald Stirrat Courtney Sherman Emma Steele

Nana Tirolese Heather West Lindsey Wong Jiabi Yang Mariah Zalitach HannaH Zubot

Jacquelyn Norman, conductor Brenda Zadorsky, conductor Hayoon Kim, accompanist

Amabile Youth Singers: Tenor-Bass Choir

Luke Anderson Cristian Bayona Hayden Beynon Felix Borchert Daniel Butler Evan Conn Ace Jarred Del Mundo Olivier Hewitt Kevin Joseph lan Kwon Carter McIntyre Nolan McKee Asher McNorgan Lubos Kashi Nair Malte Plokhaar Maximillian Pollanen Andrew Richardson Quinn Simpson Jacob Sullivan Rufaro Taruvinga Quinn Tufts **Benjamin Vanderveen** Benjamin Yáñez Jacob Yáñez

Jeff Beynon, *conductor* Denise Jung, *accompanist*

TONIGHT'S CHOIRS

Primus: Amabile Men's Choir

Mauricio Aquilar Eaton Asher Wade Baillie Anthony Baratta Mark Bernat Adrian Bumstead Sheldon Bumstead John Cookson Jason Dannock Gilbert de los Santos Larry Farguharson Adam Guthrie Bruce Hewitt Colin Hiemstra Rob Hiemstra Jeff Holbrough Andrew House Aaron Humphrey Robert Hutson Michael Inman Robert Inman Georg Jolink Aaron Lee Andrei Matusa Malte Plokhaar David Rosner **Thomas Samson-Williams** Jack Spence Kerry Stover Jacob Sullivan Gabe Traczuk

Carol Beynon, conductor Mark Payne, conductor Debbie Grigg, accompanist

H. B. Beal Secondary School

Riana Banks **Emily Campbell Oliver Caughell** Araline Couchaine Hayden D'Amour Sophie Dewar Echo Euentes **Everest Gardiner** Nicholas Good Iris Hambleton Kaitlin Hatfield Jaxson Hill Ash llgert Sarah Jenkinson Emma Jenner Beatrice Keav Dylan Kim Eva Kim Sihyoung Kim Axel Laskey James Lightowler Pearl MacRae Hov Marshall Mateus Gordon McAlpine Aeris Mejil-Fuentes Lily Miners Paxton Nair Sarah Onvango Charlie Patriquin Marina Polouchina Vera Rosales Llavaneras Kazimierz Santos Millie Sedlacek **Kiyan Semple** Heeseong Shin **Rubyn Smalls** Daniel Tennant Makayla Tinney Simone Tyler

David. B. Weaver, director Grace Yip, *pianist* Ross McDonald, *organist*

The London Singers

Olivia Austin Elza Bielfeld Jennepher Cahill Jan Danowski Shirley Fearns Darien Fraher Declan Fraher David Gillis Andrea Jellicoe Susan Krause Ken Kuhl Caroline Lightowler Andrea Loewen Nair Jen MacRae **Sharleen Phillips** Emma Power Melanev Raheb Marlene Seachrist Susan Smvthe Burkhard Spangenberg Arielle Storring Debbie Tackabury Kaylin Toner Renny Thomson Eavan Travers Jane Wicks **David Whiting**

David. B. Weaver, *director* Grace Yip, *pianist* Ross McDonald, *organist*



MUSICIAN BIOS



A favourite of audiences and musicians alike, Matthias Maute returns to London Symphonia to conduct **The Ninth**.

The two-time JUNO Award winning conductor, composer, recorder and flute soloist has achieved an international reputation. *The New York Times* described the orchestra he conducts in Montreal, Ensemble Caprice, as being "an ensemble that encourages the listener to rehear the world." Maute's recording of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos juxtaposed with his own arrangements of *Preludes* from Shostakovich's Op. 87 was hailed by *The New Yorker's* Alex Ross as standing out "for its fleet, characterful approach" and "its fresh, vibrant colors".

Regularly invited to perform at major international festivals, Maute has also been guest conductor with London Symphonia, Nova Scotia Symphonia, I Musici, Apollo's Fire and the Portland Baroque Orchestra. He has made some 30 recordings on the ATMA Classique label as well as on Analekta, Vanguard Classics, Bella Musica, Dorian, and Bridge labels.

Maute's compositions are published by Breitkopf & Härtel, Amadeus, Moeck and Carus. In 2014 and 2015, Maute's first violin concerto was performed by soloist Mark Fewer with the St. John's Symphony and with I Musici de Montréal. Matthias Maute's compositions are featured on 75 videos on the Mécénat Musica YouTube channel. In 2021, Ensemble ArtChoral began a project like no other: Art Choral, the history of choral singing from the Renaissance to today, in partnership with ATMA Classique and Mécént Musica.



Bethany Hörst

Described as possessing "a bright, round and supple sound," (Kitchener-Waterloo Record), soprano Bethany Hörst is quickly establishing herself on the stage in both opera and concert. Ms. Hörst has appeared in numerous productions with opera companies across Canada, France and the Netherlands. Her roles include multiple Baroque operas, many Classical works and 20th-century repertoire. Equally comfortable in concert, Ms. Hörst has sung oratorio works with orchestras and major choirs across Canada and the U.S.

Ms. Hörst has won several international competitions, including the Lyndon Woodside Oratorio Solo Competition at Carnegie Hall in New York City. She was twice honoured as a district winner and regional finalist at the Metropolitan Opera National Auditions. She has received the Encouragement Award at the Met Regional Finals, and also at the Palm Beach International Opera Competition. Ms. Hörst is also a recipient of the prestigious Canadian Opera Grant, the Jacqueline Desmarais Award. She placed first in the Advanced Singer's category at NATS and NATSAA (Chicago and Indianapolis), the NYCO Mozart Competition, the International Aria Competition, the Opera Lyra Ottawa Studio Competition and Conservatory Canada's Vocal Competition. Ms. Hörst recently placed second at the Brian Law Competition in Ottawa. She has been honoured with Western University's Board of Governor's Award, the A. E. Rose Award, the Doris E. Tanton Award and the Abner Martin Music Scholarship.

Ms. Hörst holds a Master of Music in Literature and Performance from Western, where she currently teaches. She is a frequent guest instructor at Singers Theatre, Eastwood Collegiate and Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, and is in high demand for masterclasses and adjudicating throughout Ontario.



Sophie Louise Roland

"...Sophie Louise Roland's Carmen was both powerful and delightfully seductive ... In the end, Carmen proves to be a perfect mirror of its namesake, a spirited, intoxicating and seductive performance."

- Glenn Kaufmann, The Herald Times

Hailed for her "excellence, purity of voice and emotional intensity," Sophie Louise Roland recently sang the roles of Dido and the Sorceress in Purcell's *Dido and Æneas* and as Storge in Handel's *Jeptha* with American Opera Theater (Baltimore, MD), Carmen and Suzuki with Ente Concerti Città di Iglesias, Cornelia in *Giulio Cesare* with Orchestra London, Maddelena in Verdi's *Rigoletto* with Opera York (Ontario), Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* for Pellegrini Opera (Ottawa), Madonna Capuleti and Tebaldo in the International Opera Theater's world premiere of *Romeo e Giulietta* in Città della Pieve (Italy), *Carmen* with both American Opera Theater and Opera Lirica Italiana, Nicklausse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with Opera Brasov, as well as the title role in Carmen with both Janiec Opera Company and Indiana University Opera Theater. Future engagements for Ms. Roland include a reprise of Maddelena, Mauyra in Vaughan Williams' *Riders to the Sea*, *Carmen* a recital with acclaimed pianist Stéphan Sylvestre, as well as other performances in Baltimore, London, Hamilton, Québec, Toronto, Amsterdam, and Italy.

Ms. Roland's lush voice, dazzling coloratura, engaging stage presence, and deeply expressive musicality have captivated audiences throughout North America and abroad. In addition to her operatic credits, Ms. Roland has appeared in concert with ensembles such as Orchestre symphonique de TroisRivières under the baton of Jacques Lacombe, the Windsor Symphony with John Morris Russell, and the Guelph Chamber Choir. She recently was featured singing in Jean-Claude Labrecque's film, *Infiniment Québec* and on the artist Jorane's compilation CD, *Jorane X*.

Ms. Roland holds an Honours BMus from Wilfrid Laurier University, an MA in Musicology and MMus in Vocal Performance from the University of Western Ontario and a DM in Voice Performance at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music.

In addition to maintaining an active directing career, Dr. Roland currently holds the rank of Associate Professor of Music in the Don Wright Faculty of Music at the University of Western Ontario. She is the General Director of both the Canadian Operatic Arts Academy (London, Ontario) and the Accademia Europea Dell'Opera (Italy), operatic training programs for emerging professionals featuring world-class faculties.



Bud Roach

Woodstock native and Western University graduate Bud Roach began his professional career as an oboist, performing often with Orchestra London before holding positions with the Toledo Symphony, Michigan Opera Theater, and Buffalo Philharmonic. He began singing tenor in 2005, and has developed a varied career that spans oratorio, opera, new music projects, and most often, reviving the art of self-accompanied, 17th-century vocal music with the theorbo and baroque guitar. His three solo recordings for the Musica Omnia label are recognized internationally as significant achievements in historical performance practice. Bud also leads Capella Intima, a baroque vocal ensemble that is the ensemble-in-residence for Hammer Baroque, a monthly Hamilton-based early music concert series now in its 10th season.

Recent and upcoming engagements include Musik für das Ende (Claude Vivier, for Soundstreams Canada) in Berlin and London, residencies at Pacific Opera Victoria and the Canadian Music Centre in Vancouver with Jeffrey Ryan and James Fagan Tait ("Songs of a Former Criminal", song cycle for tenor/hurdy gurdy), solo recitals for Hammer Barogue and the Boston Early Music Festival Fringe Series, and concert appearances with the National Academy Orchestra, the Toronto Consort, the Spiritus Ensemble, and the Bach Elgar Choir. In November, Bud will perform solo concerts in Venice and Orvieto and continue his doctoral research in Bologna, Venice, and Rome. His work has been consistently supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, the City of Hamilton Enrichment Fund, and Factor.ca.



Giles Tomkins

Canadian/British bass-baritone Giles Tomkins is widely praised for his vocal virtuosity and lyricism in an impressive range of repertoire. His rich, resonant voice brings "authority and power" to the concert and operatic stage.

Giles' recent concert performances include *Messiah* with Hamilton Philharmonic, Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra as well as Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* in 2023 with Chorus Niagara. Further concert appearances include *Elijah* with Vancouver Bach Choir, Mozart's Requiem with Regina Symphony Orchestra, and *Dvořák's Stabat Mater* with Vancouver Symphony.

Acclaimed operatic roles for Giles include Timur (Turandot), Raimondo (Lucia di Lammermoor), Pistola (Falstaff), Superintendent Budd (Albert Herring) Leporello/Commendatore (Don Giovanni), and Sergeant of Police (Pirates of Penzance). His comedic talents as Don Basilio (Barber of Seville) have been the highlight of productions throughout Canada. A frequent performer with Canadian Opera Company, in 2024 Giles returns to COC as the Parson and Badger in their production of The Cunning Little Vixen (Janáček), Zuniga in Carmen with Manitoba Opera and Fafner in Edmonton Opera's Das Rheingold.

Contemporary works include Gandalf in *The Hobbit* (Burry) with Canadian Children's Opera Company, and Khodozat in *The Overcoat* (Rolfe/Panych), a co-production of Canadian Stage/Tapestry Opera/Vancouver Opera.



Andrew Balfour b. 1967: Ambe

The Ojibway text means "Come in two-legged beings. Come in all people. There is good life here."

This piece is based on an original song in Ojibway that was gifted by traditional drummer and singer Cory Campbell to Andrew Balfour and the University of Manitoba Concert Choir. Cory describes the song as "a call to the people to the ceremonial way of life or to the red road or, quite frankly, to whatever we have going on, because everything happens with spirit and in spirit."

Andrew has created an original composition inspired by Cory's song, which uses the same text and echoes the steady rhythm of the drum, unifying the piece. The melodies of Andrew's piece are all original but hints of Cory's song remain. For Andrew, the steady beat throughout represents the heartbeat of Mother Earth and the lyrical first soprano melody that emerges from this rhythmic texture at measure seven conveys the powerful totem of the eagle which represents the teaching of love, wisdom and strength.

Many dialects and local writing systems for Ojibway exist. The pronunciation of the text is based on the dialect spoken on Sagkeeng First Nation in Cory's home province of Manitoba. Specifically, the pronunciation of the word Anishinaabeg [a'nis:i na:bek~g or phonetically a-nis-ee-uh-nah-bek/g, reflects one of the teachings that have come to Cory involving the etymology of the word in representing not only the Ojibway people, but people of all nations, or two-legged beings.

This commission was made possible through a creative works grant from the University of Manitoba. Andrew, Cory and Catherine met during the compositional process to discuss the cultural context of the piece, the form of the original song, the meaning of the text, and the needs of the choir, and to learn from one another. Cory was offered ceremonial tobacco for his gift of the song. Thank you also to Patricia Ningewance and Dianne Morrisseau for help with pronunciation, translation and representation of the language. This composition stands as an example of respectful and meaningful dialogue between Indigenous artists and culture bearers, and composers, conductors and choirs.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827): Symphony No.9 in D minor, Op.125, "Choral Symphony"

Who remembers Haydn's Ninth? Or Mozart's? Possibly not even they themselves could have specified which of their many symphonies was Number Nine; in the 18th century composers were heedless of the matter, for few symphonies were published and their distribution was haphazard. The more historically-oriented 19th century established a pantheon of recognized musical masters, inevitably leading to study and enumeration of their works – and consequently Beethoven's 1824 "Grand Symphony with Solo and Chorus Voices entering in the finale on Schiller's Ode to Joy" became known as his Ninth, which was easier anyway.

The unprecedented addition of voices to a symphony ignited a controversy that could only be extinguished by a century of pontification. Richard Wagner, seizing on the fact that voices climaxed Beethoven's final orchestral composition, proclaimed that in the Ninth Symphony Beethoven had renounced mere instruments as inadequate: that the superior expression of words wedded to music spelled the death of the symphony and the birth of the Music Drama. On the other hand, conservatives, less famous than Wagner now but no less vociferous then, repudiated Beethoven's choral finale as unnatural and eventually claimed Brahms' purely instrumental First Symphony to be the refutation of both Wagner and Beethoven. In the middle were a number of composers - Berlioz, Liszt, Mahler

who continued to write symphonies with added vocal forces. 20th century theorists marshalled ingenious systems of analysis to "prove" that Beethoven had been right after all. But by then, the Ninth Symphony was beyond serious challenge anyway, a cultural icon, its 'Joy' melody to be enshrined in the hymn book (Joyful, joyful we adore Thee) and adopted as the Anthem of Europe.

In 1988 Beethoven's symphony was performed in a satellite link-up simultaneously in Montreal, San Francisco, Moscow and Geneva. The purpose was to stimulate African aid, for which the message contained in Friedrich Schiller's text was ideal: all men become brothers under the influence of Joy or divine love. Schiller's original poem, An die Freude ("To Joy"), was written in 1785 as membership in the 'brotherhood' of Freemasonry peaked in Europe. Revised in 1802, it contains more verses than Beethoven set (some of the omitted stanzas express a more bibulous Joy, others a political viewpoint). Beethoven's editing and reordering of Schiller's semi-pagan poem gave it a non-denominational spirituality which has only increased the symphony's appeal to a shrinking globe. As a measure of how the work's value has appreciated, consider this: in 1822, the Philharmonic Society of London paid Beethoven £50 to write the Ninth Symphony; in 2002, a few of his sketches for it were auctioned in the same city for nearly \$2 million U.S.

The Ninth stands apart from Beethoven's previous symphonies not only in its vocal finale, but also in style and scale. Eleven years separated the Choral Symphony from its predecessor, during which the composer's hopes of marriage had evaporated and his deafness become near total. Forced inward, aging, Beethoven began to write in a more abstract and intellectually rigorous manner, seeking the utmost from his material. With greater profundity came length, contrapuntal and harmonic complexity and incidentally, difficulty of execution.

At its premiere on May 7, 1824 the Ninth presented a steep learning curve: a stylistically unfamiliar symphony lasting twenty minutes beyond Beethoven's previous longest (the fifty-minute *Eroica*), ending a program that included an overture and three sections of the equally challenging *Missa Solemnis*. Many of the mostly volunteer performers, having had just two rehearsals for the whole show, were overwhelmed by its demands: back desk players put down their bows while waiting to rejoin the proceedings, and not a few of the choristers simply omitted the stratospheric bits. Nonetheless, the audience – favourably predisposed – applauded heartily. Beethoven, beating time, unable to hear that the symphony had ended, was still turning over pages of his score when the contralto soloist touched his arm to indicate the acclaim, which he acknowledged with a bow.

The Vienna critics were positive (though disapproving of the length), but a second performance of the symphony two weeks later

was poorly attended and lost money. In March 1825, when the Ninth was introduced to London by its commissioners, reviews were harsher, one deploring "the obstreperous roarings of modern frenzy". Not until standards of rehearsal and instrumental technique were raised in the mid-19th century could the Ninth Symphony be accepted into the canon of acknowledged masterpieces.

If the message in Schiller's Ode is evident, what Beethoven was trying to convey in the eighty per cent of the work that is solely instrumental has provoked endless debate. Some read a record of his personal struggles into the first three movements, certainly possible on a certain level. Others dodge the issue by advising that any answer to the question of meaning can have no more than personal relevance. While this may ultimately be so, it is of no help to the uninitiated. Futility is therefore courted in offering the following personal view.

The section provoking the most comment is undoubtedly the instrumental portion of the Finale preceding the vocal entry. It begins with a dissonant fanfare followed by passages of "recitative without words" for the bass strings; then the opening subjects of all three previous movements are interspersed in order, followed by the gradual evolution of the famous "Joy" theme. After three variations of the theme, the fanfare suddenly returns, to be rebuked by the baritone soloist, "O friends, not these tones! Rather let us sing more pleasantly and more joyfully". The Joy theme obligingly returns. It appears that in seven minutes Beethoven has gotten nowhere.

Beethoven was a man who prized morality, as he was wont to remind people; he was also an artist, who sacrificed much to serve his Art. Expressing both principles, the completed Ninth Symphony acts as an allegory of the search for Schiller's Joy as seen by Beethoven: the blessed state which must come of Man's acceptance of "a loving Father...beyond the stars." In effect, each of the first three movements is a joyless state, or unsuccessful search for true Joy. All three of these are reviewed and rejected in the fourth movement prior to the apparently successful discovery of the long-sought way, through a theme of folk-like character (symbolically the Brotherhood of the Common Man). The unexpected return of strife or despair in the form of the opening fanfare and the rebuke from on high of the baritone voice, followed by Schiller's ode, demonstrates that through the message of the divinely inspired Artist, Joy may ultimately be attained.

Well, that's what it says here.

The incongruous tenor solo to Turkish-band music following the stupendous choral climax on the words "Vor Gott" (Before God) – featuring some rather rude noises from the bassoon section – was a frequent target of early critics whose sense of dignity and religious propriety was offended. But indeed, having ventured into the very presence of the Almighty, what more could Beethoven have done? On one level, the episode is reminiscent of the joke that is cracked to relieve unbearable tension; yet on another, it suggests that the Brotherhood of Man extends beyond the Christian world. The Ninth Symphony cast a long shadow. After it, few composers dared as many as nine symphonies. Those who did not only felt uncomfortable with potential comparisons with Beethoven's *magnum opus*, but, knowing that the Ninth was Ludwig's last, were superstitious about the implications of matching his output. Dvořák was safe – his first four symphonies hadn't been published, so his Ninth was only officially his Fifth; but Bruckner fulfilled his worst expectations and died while writing his Ninth (even though it was really his eleventh). Mahler knew this, and so called his actual ninth Song of the Earth; but it didn't help, as he still died after finishing his numbered Ninth. Schubert even predeceased his Ninth (the number was assigned posthumously). However, Shostakovich's brightly sardonic Ninth confounded Fate: the composer might have anticipated death after defying Stalin's expected glorification in a Beethovenian paean, but he was merely humiliated and ostracized instead.

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London Symphonia is deeply thankful to the individuals whose generous support enables us to bring the love of music to the community through our concerts, schools and education programs, and outreach events such as our Family Cushion Concerts. Thank you!

Gifts of \$500 and more receive recognition in the Concert Program. We are most grateful to the donors listed below whose support was received from July 1, 2022 to September 7, 2023. If we have inadvertently omitted your gift, please contact giving@londonsymphonia.ca so we can make a correction.

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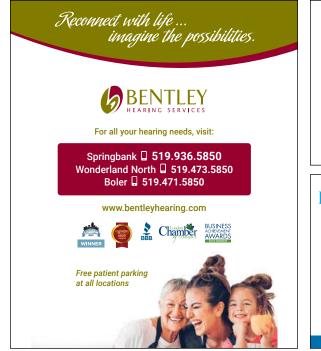
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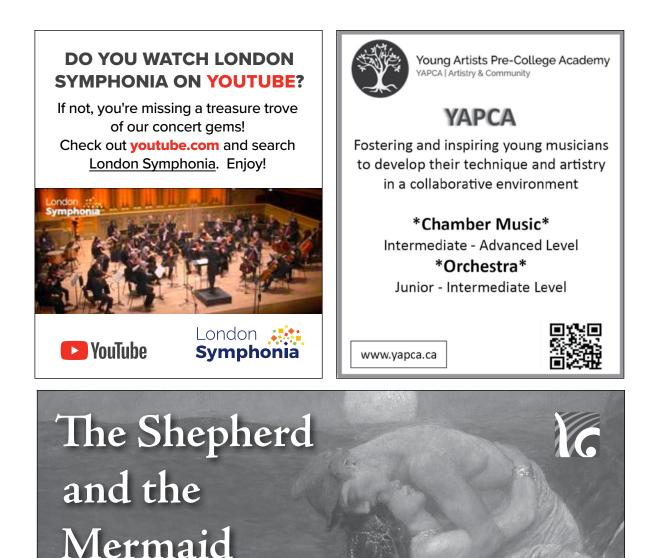
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We are pleased to continue our successful association with London Symphonia this season. Please join us:

Saturday, November 4, 2023, Forbidden Music with the London Symphonia String Quartet at Metropolitan United

Friday, November 10, 2023, The Musicians from Marlboro at von Kuster Hall, Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western University

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LONDON SYMPHONIA IN THE COMMUNITY

Family Cushion Concerts a Great Success!

The return of London Symphonia's popular **Family Cushion Concerts** this summer at four branches of the London Public Library and at Museum London during Doors Open was extremely well received by kids and parents and a thrill for the musicians performing.

Kids went on an adventure through music history from classical to rock, and jazz to tango in the Musical Time Machine concerts at the Library and experienced a range of instruments from banjos to cellos.

The concert at Museum London became a kitchen party at **Cooking Up A Concert**. The young chefs were introduced to a wide range of musical styles – classical, pop, folk, 1920s ragtime, even a Disney favourite – and instruments, some of which they learned how to make at home with items found in the kitchen.

The engagement of the young audiences brought the shows to life, to the delight of everyone!



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CONCERT POLICIES

- Photography and video/audio recording of any kind is not permitted during the Performance.
- Photos are permitted before and after the performance and during Intermission.
- Mask wearing is not currently required. Not everyone may have the same degree of comfort with the lifting of restrictions, and we ask that you please respect the personal space and comfort level of those around you.
- Please put your cell phone on silent and put it away.
- Please do not remove cushions from the Premium seating areas. Please see an usher to request one.

Discover London Symphonia's 2023-24 Season

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FORBIDDEN MUSIC Serenata Music NOVEMBER 4, 2023 at 7:30 pm

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