

MEDIA RELEASE
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ANNOUNCING LONDON SYMPHONIA'S MOST EXCITING SEASON YET!



Beethoven's Towering 9th Symphony Opens 2023-24 Season

LONDON, October 3, 2023 – London Symphonia is kicking off its 2023-24 Season in spectacular style on Saturday, October 14 at 7:30 p.m. at Metropolitan United with a performance of one of the greatest works ever written, Beethoven's monumental Symphony No. 9. The concert, featuring the talents of four brilliant soloists and 200 singers from Amabile Choirs of London, The London Singers and the H. B. Beal Secondary School Singers performing the "Ode to Joy", is emblematic of the thrilling year to come.

"There is perhaps no more impactful way to begin London Symphonia's season than with Beethoven's Ninth," said Andrew Chung, Artistic Producer of London Symphonia. "This is powerful music that may be very familiar but never loses its "wow" impact on the listener!"

The scale of Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" is an ideal opportunity to showcase some of the outstanding vocal talents here in the City.

"In addition to providing an opportunity for choristers of all ages to perform this thrilling work, we're delighted that two of the soloists, soprano Bethany Hörst and mezzo-soprano

Sophie Louise Roland are members of the faculty of the Don Wright Faculty of Music at Western University; tenor Bud Roach is a Western University grad, and bass Giles Tomkins is returning once again to perform with us.”

The concert opens very fittingly with *Ambe*, an Ojibway welcoming song composed by Andrew Balfour, a Winnipeg-based composer of Cree descent. The song asks everyone to come in, gather round and enjoy the good life.

Matthias Maute, a favourite conductor of London Symphonia audiences and musicians, known for his energy and the spontaneity of his interpretations, returns to lead this musical tour de force.

Each of the eight concerts in this season has been crafted as a unique musical journey of discovery. Throughout the season, concertgoers will experience a diverse array of extraordinary artists, those who are well known, alongside 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. Storytelling and the London connection weaves in and out throughout the year.

Concertgoers can choose to attend each performance in person or view the Livestream with On Demand Access for 14 days after the date of each performance.

2023-24 CONCERT HIGHLIGHTS

FORBIDDEN MUSIC: November 4, 2023

Amazing stories behind some of the music forbidden to be played during the Third Reich, including the Canadian premiere of a work written in 1935 and rediscovered in London in 2019. Narrated by CBC's Tom Allen and performed by the London Symphonia String Quartet.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE McAULEY BOYS: December 9, 2023

A concert for the whole family to enjoy. London's most famous R&B vocal quartet will perform with London Symphonia and the Choirs of Metropolitan United Church in this concert of festive favourites assembled by Composer-in-Residence Scott Good.

JANINA FIALKOWSKA PLAYS CHOPIN: January 27, 2024

The internationally acclaimed pianist Janina Fialkowska will play Chopin's magnificent Piano Concerto No. 1, a piece with which she has an incredibly long and storied history.

FREEDOM: THE SPIRIT AND LEGACY OF BLACK MUSIC: February 24, 2024

The multi-talented performer, composer and music director Beau Dixon brings his magnetic stage presence and an all-Black cast of seven performers to celebrate the triumphant sounds of gospel, blues, jazz, rock 'n' roll, R&B, reggae and rap in the context of their time. Storytelling at its best.

A BOHEMIAN LIFE: April 6, 2024

In April, we take a trip to Bohemia with Dvořák's Eighth Symphony and a world premiere of *Lasker-Schüler Songs* by Scott Good. This song cycle was written for soprano Midori Marsh who returns to London Symphonia for this very special performance.

AN ELEGANT FIRE: May 4, 2024

Cellist Elinor Frey, 2023 JUNO award winner, leads this performance of works by three celebrated 18th-century musical stars: Haydn, C.P.E. Bach, and Boccherini.

TRANSFORMED: May 25, 2024

To wrap up our season, principal trumpet Shawn Spicer has curated a program of great music that is transformed in wonderful and sometimes unexpected ways for the brass and winds of London Symphonia. This eclectic concert places the music of Renaissance master William Byrd next to Charles Ives, Francis Poulenc next to Amy Winehouse, and Percy Grainger next to rapper Macklemore.

The 7:30 p.m. concerts can be heard in person or livestreamed online. In-person tickets are \$52 Regular seating, \$70 Premium Seating, and \$50 for Livestream / On Demand access plus fees and HST. Tickets are available online at londonsymphonia.ca.

LISTING INFORMATION

The Ninth

London Symphonia

Matthias Maute, guest conductor

Bethany Hörst, soprano

Sophie Louise Roland, mezzo-soprano

Bud Roach, tenor

Giles Tomkins, bass

The Amabile Choirs of London

The London Singers

H. B. Beal Secondary School Singers

Sat Oct 14 at 7:30 pm

Doors open at 6:30 pm

Metropolitan United, 468 Wellington St, London, ON N6A 3P8

The concert can be heard in person or livestreamed online. In-person tickets are \$52 Regular seating, \$70 Premium seating, and \$50 for Livestream / On Demand Access plus fees and HST. Free tickets are available for Post Secondary, High School and Children aged 6 to 12. Compose Your Own subscriptions, Family-Flex Packs and tickets to individual concerts can be purchased online at londonsymphonia.ca.

London Symphonia is deeply grateful for the support of our government partners, London Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts, and the Ontario Arts Council.

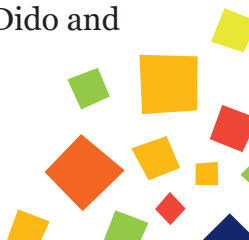
ABOUT BETHANY HÖRST

Bethany Hörst is quickly establishing herself on the stage in both opera and concert, appearing 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 is a Lecturer at the Don Wright Faculty of Music at Western University.

ABOUT SOPHIE LOUISE ROLAND

Hailed for her “excellence, purity of voice and emotional intensity,” Sophie Louise Roland’s lush voice, dazzling coloratura, engaging stage presence, and deeply expressive musicality have captivated audiences throughout North America and abroad. Her operatic credits include Dido and



the Sorceress in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and as Storge in Handel's *Jephtha* with American Opera Theater (Baltimore, MD) and Madonna Capuleti and Tebaldo in the International Opera Theater's world premiere of *Romeo e Giulietta in Città della Pieve* (Italy),

She has appeared in concert with ensembles such as Orchestre symphonique de Trois-Rivières, the Windsor Symphony, the Guelph Chamber Choir, the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra, The Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, Hamilton Philharmonic, London Fanshawe Symphonic Orchestra, and the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony. Ms. Roland recently was featured singing in Jean-Claude Labrecque's film, *Infiniment Québec* and on the artist Jorane's compilation CD, *Jorane X*.

Dr. Roland is Associate Professor of Music at the Don Wright Faculty of Music at Western University.

ABOUT BUD ROACH

Since he began singing as a tenor in 2005 he has developed a varied career that spans oratorio, opera, new music projects, and most often, reviving the art of self-accompanied, seventeenth-century vocal music with the theorbo and baroque guitar. His three solo recordings for the Boston-based Musica Omnia label have been recognized internationally as significant achievements in historical performance practice. Bud also leads Capella Intima, a baroque vocal ensemble based in Hamilton that serves as the ensemble-in-residence for Hammer Baroque, a monthly early music concert series now in its tenth season.

Born in Woodstock and a Western University grad, he played with Orchestra London frequently as an oboist and has sung previously with London Symphonia.

ABOUT 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.

Recent concert performances include Messiah with Hamilton Philharmonic, and Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra as well as Beethoven's Missa Solemnis with Chorus Niagara.

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*.

Giles Tomkins has performed with London Symphonia previously.

ABOUT MATTHIAS MAUTE

Two-time JUNO Award winning conductor, composer, recorder and flute soloist Matthias Maute has achieved an international reputation. In 2016 he was named artistic director of the Bach Society of Minnesota and in 2019 of the professional choir Ensemble vocal Arts-Québec. Impressed by his artistic approach, 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.

ABOUT LONDON SYMPHONIA

London Symphonia is a professional symphony orchestra committed to performing vibrant and bold musical experiences for London and the region. With a core of 30 players, our versatile group meets the community’s needs for quality programming by presenting well-known symphonies, Canadian premieres, and collaborations with some of Canada’s finest singer-songwriters. We deliver a rich, artistic experience by seeking out the most accomplished performers and conductors representing a blend of locally, nationally and internationally recognized talent. A registered charitable organization, we perform a number of outreach and music education engagements each season for students and seniors in our community.

Website: **londonsymphonia.ca**

Social media: Join the conversation on Facebook | Instagram | Twitter | YouTube

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