



BRAM GREGSON, MUSIC DIRECTOR

www.brassroots.ca
bramgregson@rogers.com
226.448.7821

The Brassroots INSIDER

Vol. 10, Issue 3 • Spring 2015

"South Western Ontario's Favourite Brass Ensemble"



London Arts Council

FAMILY OF MILTON & VERNA
GOOD FOUNDATION INC. SINCE 1974

From our music director Bram Gregson

I HAVE CONDUCTED hundreds of concerts in the past fifty years but rarely was one so much fun as Brass and Ivory., the third concert of our 2014-15 series.

From the organ's glowing C major chord at the Finale of Saint Saëns' *Organ Symphony* to the blazing final bars of Mussorgsky's *Great Gate of Kiev*, this concert was just a blast! In a recent survey our audience left us in no doubt that they wanted eclectic programming. Judging by the many comments we received, they got what they wanted!

So to Angus Sinclair (organ and vocals), Peter Clements (electric piano) for his super arrangements and Stephen Holowitz (piano & Hammond Organ) our thanks



for their prominent roles in a stunning evening of musical entertainment.

More than one person told me "You should take this show on the road!"

It was a unique concert! And now we have another in Dizzy Fingers, our final concert of the season (see the poster on page 4). We are delighted that Canadian flute virtuoso Laurel Swinden is our special guest in two world premiere arrangements for flute and brass ensemble. In 1994, English composer Mike Mower wrote *Sonata Latino*, an entertaining work for flute, wind ensemble and piano.. Laurel received permission for Jeff Christmas to transcribe this virtuoso piece for this concert. Laurel will also perform a haunting melody, "Flower of Port William," composed by Canadian Chris Norman and arranged by Susan Follows.

Brassroots will feature John Monkhouse in "Over the Rainbow," Paul Stevenson and Julia Vaughan in "Memories of You" and we will try to keep pace with the dizzy fingers of Michael Medeiros in his tuba solo, "Czardas"! We will also give our first performance of "Tientos Y Danzas," a virtuosic work that conjures up a breezy, festive atmosphere. "A Spin Through Moscow" is a vigorous romp by Shostakovich and Charles Ives' *Variations on America* is an imaginative treatment of the tune that some will know better as "God Save the Queen." The concert will conclude with Chuck Mangione's thrilling "Children of Sanchez."

Why not celebrate the arrival of Spring with Brassroots? We promise you a concert full of variety and great music!
Bram



DR. LAUREL SWINDEN maintains an active career as a performer, pedagogue and researcher. Principal Flute of the Stratford Symphony Orchestra, she has performed with numerous orchestras across Ontario and in the United States.

Described as having "a sweet and distinct tone...breathtaking in colour " (Whole Note), Laurel's recent recital presentations include performances at the National Flute Association Convention, the Sichuan Conservatory in China, the inaugural Canadian Flute Convention, the Perimeter Institute, and chamber music series throughout her home base in Ontario.

Laurel is the Applied Instructor of Flute at the University of Guelph School of Fine Art and Music and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Western University's Don Wright Faculty of Music. Dr. Swinden's CD, *Celebrating Women: Music for Flute and Piano by Women Composers* with pianist Stephanie Mara has garnered critical acclaim and is available on CD Baby and iTunes.

Laurel earned her DMA in Flute Performance as a Fellowship recipient at the University of Toronto, where she studied with Nora Schulman and traverso with Alison Melville.

MAKE A NOTE OF THESE DATES FOR 2015-16

Brassroots at Western U for Brass Day
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2015

Brass Encores!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2015 | 2:30 PM

Christmas at Westminster

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2015 | 2:30 PM

The Music Drives the Action

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2015 | 7:30 PM

Horns for Spring

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 2016 | 7:30 PM

All Concerts (except Brass Day) at St. James Westminster Anglican Church 115 Askin Street, London

TICKETS Adults \$20 | Seniors \$15 |

Students with ID \$5 | Children under 12 Free

available from Tuckey Home Hardware (136 Wortley Rd)

| on line at onstagedirect.com/brassroots | or purchase at the door, subject to availability.

Long-lost music A recent re-discovery

DR. KEVIN SWINDEN

is enjoying a sabbatical leave from his position as Associate Dean of Music at Wilfrid Laurier University. It was long believed that Victor Ewald was the first composer to write serious chamber music for brass quintet, in 1890. The recent rediscovery of a set of twelve, multi-movement brass quintets from Paris, 1850 by J.F.V. Bellon has corrected this belief. Kevin is spending the year studying and writing about these works, assembling a biography of the composer from the fragmented records of the period, and getting inside the mind of the man who first saw the great artistic potential of a homogenous brass ensemble. Poring over the online repositories of 19th century Parisian newspapers isn't for everybody, but at least Kevin's having fun! Bellon also wrote 10-piece works for eight brass and two double basses—can we consider this close enough to be a distant ancestor of Brassroots? Too bad these nine *Symphonies for Brass* haven't been found! ...Yet!



Out and about

- ◆ Tony Snyder recently played the Strauss *First Horn Concerto* with Wellington Winds. Now he is preparing his Cameron Heights School Band for the Second Annual Swing Dance and the Stage Band to share an evening with an All Star High School Band.
- ◆ Bob Phillips and Tony are members of the Guelph Symphony Orchestra, which will be performing Rimsky Korsakov's *Scheherazade* and Stravinsky's *Firebird* in upcoming concerts.
- ◆ Susan Follows celebrates 25 years conducting Ebytown Brass, a twelve-piece ensemble comprised of brass players in the Waterloo Region. Megan Follows, Susan's stepdaughter, was nominated for best performance by an actress in a continuing leading dramatic role (Reign). Megan was also the presenter of the Canadian Screen Awards.
- ◆ Susan, Tony and John Monkhouse played in the Wellington Winds premiere of *U.F.O.* by Johann DeMeij, featuring euphonium soloist Robert Miller
- ◆ and as we write, John is out of the country again enjoying the sun and hospitality of Mexico in San Miguel De Allende, a beautiful city a four hour drive north of Mexico City. Apparently the locals are wondering if he has more than one shirt because he proudly displays his Brassroots' attire wherever he goes. He has enjoyed listening to the Mariachi but says the beer is horrible!
- ◆ ...and on the subject of beer, Bob says his favourite beer is the next one!
- ◆ Then there's Julia Vaughan! She has so much going on that we haven't got room for it. In addition to her musical activities with other ensembles and orchestras she is a recreation freak and she is training for the World Triathlon Championships in Chicago later this year!
- ◆ Bram's six year old grandson called him a few days ago and asked: "Papa, can I call you Bram because that's your real name."



BRASSROOTS IS SEEKING A BUSINESS MANAGER

For details, scan this code to go to our website, then click on the link to our Facebook page. (Or go directly to www.brassroots.ca and click the link.)



Acknowledgements

Dr. Fil Cappa donated the music for the Saint Saëns' *Organ Symphony*. Mrs. Thelma Trethewey and Dr. Laurel Swinden also have donated generously, enabling the purchase of new music and arrangements for our April 18 concert.

Brassroots relies on the financial support of our friends to replenish our library. New music is stimulating for our musicians and consequently for our audiences.

Good Foundation Inc. awarded Brassroots a generous grant that will see us in the recording studio on September 25 and 26. Additional donations toward this CD would be greatly appreciated.

An excellent way of donating to Brassroots is through CanadaHelps.org

Charitable Tax Credits: How much will you get back?



Charitable giving is vital to making our communities, country and world a better place. The Canadian government recognizes this, and as a result offers significant tax credits encouraging all Canadian to give generously. At CanadaHelps, we make it easy to calculate your savings using our tax calculator. Reduce your tax bill by:

- Up to 35% of your donations totalling \$200 or less
- Up to 53% of your donations totalling more than \$200
- New to claiming charitable donations? Get an extra 25% back!

Condolences

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Doug Stevenson, Paul's father. Doug was an enthusiastic supporter of Brassroots and we shall miss him. Our sympathy and thoughts are with the family.

Behind the Scenes

There are many people who devote time and effort to the success of Brassroots. We thank them for their dedication and commitment.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair Dave Davidson | Vice Chair Dr. Fil Cappa | Ann Monkhouse (bookkeeper) | Brent Sterner (webmaster) | Julia Vaughan (librarian & personnel manager) | Rob Inch (logistics) | Susan Follows (music researcher & arranger)

VOLUNTEERS Betty Murray | Brad Vaughan | Dave and Robbin Kirkpatrick | Dianne Cappa | Gloria Smithers | Patrick Smithers (assistant librarian)

ST JAMES WESTMINSTER ANGLICAN CHURCH We acknowledge and thank members of the church for their interest and support. In particular: Stephen Holowitz (music director) | Rebekah Reid (church secretary) | Sarah Mills and helpers (post-concert reception catering)

A Thought About Music

IN THE LAST NEWSLETTER we mentioned several definitions of music, some of which were a little quirky!

Listening recently to a podcast by Daniel Barenboim he defined music as "sound with thought." That is a succinct definition of music if ever I heard one. Performers can't make beautiful music without thought. That process rules all that we do. We are presented with symbols on a page and with our learned and developed skills we turn these into sound waves that reach a listener's ears. How much thought conductor and performers give to the process will determine the quality of the experience for the listener. The conductor hopefully will interpret meaningfully the symbols on the page to create a story in sound. Yes, he or she decides how quick or how slowly the music is played but that is only the start. If we think of the music as a beautiful fabric, the conductor will decide how the fibres will be arranged to create colour and in so doing will decide which threads will be more prominent than others to achieve the desired effect. In music performance we think of this as tone colour and balance and these are crucial for a satisfying performance. In our last concert we played the lovely "Warburton Arms". If the flugel horn soloist could not be heard because the trombones were too loud, the performance would have been a failure! Accordingly, musicians must always engage thought as pre-eminent in the music-making process.

It seems simple enough but it requires the musicians to employ their acquired skills not only to watch but also to listen to the person next to him or her and to the entire ensemble. If the listener's emotions are effected, the ensemble has been successful in portraying a satisfactory story in sound.

Gerald Moore was an English pianist considered as one of the finest accompanists of his generation. Singers and various instrumentalists clamored for his service so sensitive was he about his role as an accompanist. He wrote a book titled *Am I too Loud?*

Music is Sound with Thought!

We recommend the following concerts

AMABILE BOYS & MENS'CHOIRS

Just Sing Your Song

SUNDAY MAY 23, 2015, 7:30 PM

AMABILE DA CAPO CHOIR & JUNIOR SINGERS

Carmina Burana

SUNDAY MAY 30, 7:30 PM

30TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION CONCERT

The Gift of Song

SUNDAY MAY 31, 2:30 PM

Visit www.amabile.ca for more details

BRASSROOTS presents

Dizzy Fingers

A SPRING FESTIVAL

Featuring
Laurel Swinden

CANADIAN FLUTE VIRTUOSO

Denise Jung PIANO

In World Premiere Arrangements
for flute and brass



Sonata Latino | Flower of Port Williams *plus*
Over the Rainbow | Memories of You | Variations on America

Big Band charts with a Latin Flare

SATURDAY APRIL 18, 2015 | 7:30 PM

St. James Westminster Anglican Church | London
Adults \$20 | Seniors \$15 | Students \$5 with ID
Children under 12 free

Tickets available from Tuckey Home Hardware (136 Wortley Rd),
online at onstagedirect.com/brassroots
or at the door, subject to availability

2014|2015

BRASSROOTS

BRAM GREGSON, MUSIC DIRECTOR

