

# HEAR YE HEAR YE



DECEMBER 2009

MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAPPY HANUKKAH & SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM CBSO

## SECOND CONCERT OF THE SEASON DR. MURRAY FINKELSTEIN CBSO BOARD PRESIDENT & PRINCIPAL CBSO OBOIST

Those of us who like, on occasion, to sample something a little different will be pleased by the music programmed for the December 19<sup>th</sup> concert. We will be joined by organist Shawn Grenke who will bring the organ to the forefront both as solo and as orchestral instrument. Among the musical effects of the secularization of French society following the Revolution was the liberation of the organ from its function as a strictly ecclesiastical instrument to one that was also integral to the nation's secular concert life. French composers embraced the organ as an instrument with the potential to rival the power, subtlety and tonal range of the or-

chestra. In the first half of the program we will hear the Poulenc Organ Concerto. Although this concerto is a secular work, its vocabulary is allied to the "spiritual" side of Poulenc's creative persona. In 1936 Poulenc underwent a rejuvenation of his religious belief brought about by the death of a friend in a horrendous automobile accident. Poulenc composed this concerto principally in 1938, the sober year during which the French nervously watched German mobilization. The Organ Concerto is cast in a single movement comprising seven sections differentiated by tempo and texture, a formal concept derived from the Baroque keyboard fantasia.

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## NOTES FROM THE PODIUM NORMAN REINTAMM CBSO CONDUCTOR

Being a conductor is a bit of an odd profession, especially here in North America. Quite frankly, I think some of my colleagues in Europe would be quite shocked to hear about some of the things that I, and my colleagues do.

However, it all belongs to the "packet" here in Canada. One thing is for sure, I am getting a lot of "on the job" training in some of the nuances of "conductorial" work. For instance I will be doing my first stint as a team member for one of our weekly bingo fundraisers in a short while.

Indeed, what you see on the podium is a fraction of what goes on behind the scenes.

Conducting is also quite a solitary job at times. I spend much time with the score of the music in hand, hearing the music in my mind, sometimes for hours at a time. When somebody sees me doing this, they must think that I am quite mad. Quite often, people pose the question: "How do you hear the whole orchestra in your head??" It's quite an odd phenomenon, much akin to hearing a book in your mind when you read it. It is a skill that must be learned.

At times, it certainly is not a solitary job, making music with one's colleagues, both on and off the podium. I think one of the most enjoyable sides of music making as a

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### LAST CONCERT

**Saturday, November 14th**

The program of our November concert was as follows:

Richard Wagner- Flying Dutchman Overture  
Max Bruch- Violin Concerto in G Minor. Soloist: Amir Safavi  
Elgar- Serenade for Strings  
Sibelius- Symphony #1

### NEXT CONCERT

**Saturday, December 19th**

Once in Royal David's City  
Holst, Christmas Day  
Poulenc- Concerto for Organ, Strings and Timpani  
Hark the Herald Angels Sing  
Handel- Rejoice Greatly  
Saint-Saëns- Symphony No 3  
O Come all Ye Faithful

Featuring Xiao Ping Chorus  
Shawn Grenke- Organ  
Jenaviève Moore, Soprano  
Cameo appearance of the Beaches Suzuki School of Music

### CONCERT DATES

2009

- ✓ 8pm Saturday November 14
- 8pm Saturday December 19

2010

- 8pm Saturday February 6
- 8pm Saturday March 13
- 8pm Saturday April 17  
"Annual Fundraising Concert"
- 8pm Saturday May 29

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**SECOND CONCERT OF THE SEASON (CONT.)****DR. MURRAY FINKELSTEIN  
CBSO BOARD PRESIDENT & PRINCIPAL CBSO OBOIST**

The sections are alternately slow, with chordal scoring, and fast, with a dynamic, *moto perpetuo* quality. To bring unity to the structure, there are thematic relationships among the various formal parts, most notably a great peal from the solo organ, which occurs in both the first and last sections. The scoring is a piece of expert craftsmanship, with the timpani reinforcing and delineating the bass line, while the strings are combined with the careful registrations of the organ to produce sonorities that are, by turn, brilliant and hymnal.

After intermission, we hear the organ (and piano) as orchestral instruments in

Saint-Saëns' famous Symphony #3. Neither a conventional symphony nor a true tone poem, the Organ Symphony borrows elements from both traditions. The Symphony shows Saint-Saëns' use of thematic transformation; he takes his principal theme through transformations throughout the Symphony. After an Adagio introduction, the strings perform the main theme of the first movement, which incorporates the chant at the beginning of the *Dies Irae*. Strings, supported by organ chords, perform the main theme of the second movement, Adagio, the best-known section of the Third Symphony. Near the end of

the movement, we hear a brilliant mixture of woodwinds with reed stops on the organ. The finale opens with a powerful chord played on the organ. After a development section, the piece closes with all the available forces in C major.

Novelty, yes. But tradition also! During the concert, we will be joined by the Xiao Ping Chorus, and a cameo appearance of the Beaches Suzuki School of Music, in a selection of Christmas songs. The audience is invited to join chorus, Suzuki strings, and orchestra in these wonderful carols.

**NOTES FROM THE  
PODIUM (CONT.)****NORMAN REINTAMM  
CBSO CONDUCTOR**

conductor is coaching young musicians in honing their craft. Another thing, which I enjoy very much, is playing chamber music. However, I think one of my most favourite collegial forms of music making is the relaxation times in the local pub after orchestral rehearsals!

These are all little gifts that have been given to me over the years. Christmas is fast coming upon us, and I always take time at this time of the year to be thankful for the little blessings that have come to me over the years.

I wish you all the best for the Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!

Your friend, Norman

**LETTER FROM THE CBSO HEAR YE PUBLISHER****"25 AND GOING STRONG- CONTINUED"****PAMELLA FELL, HEAR YE PUBLISHER & CBSO VIOLINIST**

The history of Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra is a rich one. As you read in the November issue of Hear Ye Hear Ye, CBSO began under the superb leadership of Maestro Clifford Poole.

When Maestro Poole decided it was time to hand over his baton to a new conductor, the Board of Directors of CBSO, through a reviewing committee, began looking for a person to fill the position. Five conductors were short-listed. Each one had to prepare and conduct one concert, including the corresponding rehearsals.

After the last concert at the end of the season, all CBSO musicians were asked to fill in a form as to which conductor they preferred. One of the five conductors, Maestro Robert Raines, was overwhelmingly chosen by the

musicians. He came with excellent credentials, experience and lots of enthusiasm.

After conducting the CBSO for several years, Maestro Raines also took on the position of Principal Conductor / Artistic Director of the Brampton Symphony Orchestra (the BSO). He conducted both the CBSO and BSO for a few years with some of the musicians playing in both orchestras. Eventually it got to the point where he needed to devote more of his time to just one of the orchestras and he opted for the BSO. CBSO wished him all the best with the BSO. Several of the CBSO musicians continue to play in both orchestras to this day.

The CBSO flourished under Maestro Raines' leadership. His joy of music was (and of course still is) contagious.

He added a different dimension of colour, fun and enjoyment of music for the musicians and audiences alike during the years of 1999 to 2006. As the musical standards of performance increased substantially during Maestro Raines' tenure, CBSO achieved the opportunity to perform varied and technically-challenging repertoire, not previously performed, to the greater enjoyment of our audiences at concerts.

In 2006 the quest for another conductor began once again with a request for applicants, following the same procedure that took place after Maestro Poole left. That was when the CBSO musicians overwhelmingly chose Maestro Norman Reintamm and in 2007 he began as the new conductor, which was also the first year CBSO began performing in the P. C. Ho Theatre. Maestro

Reintamm brought to CBSO his warmth, experience and leadership skills, and as well as continuing the opportunity of including new repertoire, such as Mahler Symphony 2 (Resurrection), that was performed by CBSO and a choir of approximately 150 voices last April. CBSO has been very fortunate with having exceptional conductors to lead its talented, dedicated, and warm musicians.

As was written in the November Hear Ye, next year we look forward to sharing a wonderful 25th anniversary season with the orchestra, our subscribers and the public at large. Your assistance as a volunteer is sure to help us to achieve the 25th anniversary magic that we are so looking forward to.

**MEET SAMIR ABD-ELMESSIH —  
OUR NEW PRINCIPAL HORN PLAYER**  
ALBERTO BEHAR, HEAR YE EDITOR & CBSO VIOLINIST

This season we are lucky to have Samir Abd-Elmessih as our principal horn player.

Samir comes all the way from Regina, Saskatchewan, where he started his musical career. He left his native province and went to Montreal, to study at the McGill University. His time in Montreal was broken up by a period of study at the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music here in Toronto.

Samir started playing French horn when he was about 12 years of age. He was involved with a community band where he originally was playing the trumpet. Later he was asked to switch to the French horn because the band needed horn players.

The change of instrument wasn't a challenge. Samir was drawn first by its sound, especially in movie soundtracks. As he got better, he had to learn new repertoire, especially in the orchestra, where the horn has a more prominent role. Overcoming the challenges of the instrument and maintaining the abilities

he has developed are some of the things that kept him motivated.

Samir is trained also as an instrument music teacher. He is currently teaching Grade 8 home room, at Portage Trail Community School, a middle school of the Toronto District School Board.

Samir enjoys listening to the CBC radio 3 podcasts. He likes listening to a wide variety of genres including world, jazz, rock, and of course plenty of classical music

When asked where he sees himself in 5 years time, his answer was "This is always a tough one". He expects to continue teaching and being active musically.

There have been many teachers that have helped motivate him to develop his musical abilities. He mentioned that keeping his options open and studying both music and education (an idea pushed both by his parents and his wife), have helped him get to where he is today.

**THE MUSICAL SCALE —  
MAXIMOS FARMIKIDIS, CBSO BASS**

The history of the musical scale from the antiquity to today is most interesting and fascinating. Many books and studies have been written on this subject and its related mathematics throughout the centuries.

The story starts with the Greek mathematician Pythagoras around 550 BC. He was the first ever to derive and record the mathematical relationships of the natural scale. To conduct his experiments he used a single stringed instrument with a movable bridge, called the monochord. Without the bridge, the string of the monochord produces a specific sound. When the bridge is inserted in the middle of the string the sound goes up one octave. When the bridge is moved to the 4/3 of the string length or to the 3/2 of the string length it generates the fourth and the fifth note of the

scale respectively. Pythagoras continued his experiment in this manner for all the notes of the scale. In such a manner, he recorded all the ratios and relationships that were occurring within the scale.

The result is that in the Pythagoras scale (called "natural"), the semitones that divide the distance from one note to the next does not split the note into two equal halves. We actually get a smaller and a larger half (semitone). Therefore, as an example C sharp and D flat are not the same.

This unequal spacing between the scale steps of the natural Pythagorean scale did lead to serious problems. For example, performance with multiple instruments is not possible the same as transpositions (moving a musical piece up or down the scale). Mathematicians

There have been two most memorable musical accomplishments that he quotes. The first was to earn his Master's degree in Music. During the course of earning that degree, he was fortunate to have earned scholarships to attend the Aspen Music Festival for two summers, and that was his second memorable accomplishment. It was memorable, not only for attending many great concerts, and hearing great artists from around the world, but also for having the opportunity to play beside them, with and under the direction of several great musicians.



Samir has travelled to quite a few great places. Among his favorites so far, are Egypt, Banff (Canadian Rockies), Salzburg (Austria) and the Amalfi coast of Italy. He would like to visit South America, Africa, and Australia and the South Pacific at some point.

Besides playing the horn, Samir enjoys cycling and mountain biking.

from the ancient time could see the need of a more equally divided scale but they could not build one. To calculate and build an equally divided scale they would require knowledge of logarithms which were not invented until the 17th century.

Another reason for not creating an unequally divided scale was that ancient Greek music was monophonic and the use of an equally divided scale didn't present a problem.

With some additional small adjustments the Pythagorean scale was used in Europe up until the middle ages. The appearance of polyphony in Europe around the 16th century created the necessity for an equally divided scale.



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CBSO Website: [www.cathedralbluffs.com](http://www.cathedralbluffs.com)

All subscription concerts this year will be performed at the P. C. Ho Theatre, which is part of the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto—5183 Sheppard Avenue East, Scarborough, one block east of Markham Road

HEAR YE HEAR YE



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Publisher  
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THE MUSICAL SCALE (CONT.)  
MAXIMOS FARMIKIDIS, CBSO BASS

A Scottish mathematician, John Napier, invented and published his logarithms in 1614. This invention gave mathematicians the tool they needed to complete the very precise calculations and to divide the note into two equal semitones, and the scale into 12 equal semitones. However, the solution came with a compromise. Throughout the range of the musical sound, every fifth note of the equally divided scale must be tuned slightly flatter. This new scale is called the well tempered scale. With this scale different instruments can play together and melodies can be moved from one key to the other (transposition) without a problem.

J.S. Bach used this well tempered scale to compose his famous pieces for the Well Tempered Clavier. Mozart, Beethoven and many others added more masterpieces to the musical heritage. Human ear has rapidly adapted to the well-tempered scale, but for some people the equal temperament ruined the sonority and the mood of the natural scale forever.

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IMPORTANT NOTES

**Parking:** The parking lot for the P.C. Ho Theatre is shared with the Burrows Hall Community Centre and is located immediately south of the building with the entrance off Progress Ave. Parking is also permitted on Progress Ave.

**Donations & Tax Receipts:** CBSO is a registered charity (89036 4573 RR0001) and gratefully accepts donations of any amount to sustain and expand its programs. Your generosity will be acknowledged in our concert program, unless requested otherwise. You will be contributing to an organization with a solid financial track record, a reputation for artistic excellence and a Scarborough focus. Tax receipts for donations over \$10 will be forwarded once a year in December, or immediately upon request.

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**Perfume / Cologne / Scented Cream:** In consideration of those people who have allergies, it is respectfully requested that musicians and members of the audience refrain from wearing any perfume, cologne or scented creams at the concerts.