

## Upcoming Concerts

- ❖ Join in the fun at the first POPS! Concert of the year – a Halloween Spook-tacular! We'll hear the glorious music from *Star Wars*, *Phantom of the Opera*, and *Pirates of the Caribbean*.  
Saturday Oct. 22 at 7:30 p.m.  
Sunday Oct. 23 at 2:30 p.m.
- ❖ Marvel at the prowess of renowned pianist, Jeffrey Biegel, as he plays the Canadian premiere of Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's *Shadows*. Before the concert and during the intermission, you'll have a chance to bid on a wonderful selection of terrific items in time for holiday gift-giving at our annual Silent Auction.  
Sunday Nov. 27 at 2:30 p.m.
- ❖ Get your tickets right away for the December POPS! Concert. What a concert this is going to be! Chorus Niagara (of Flash Mob fame) will sing for us, as will TiannaH. Barbara Budd will narrate the seasonal favourite – *Brother Heinrich's Christmas*.  
Saturday Dec. 10 at 2:30 p.m.  
Saturday Dec. 10 at 7:30 p.m.  
Sunday Dec. 11 at 2:30 p.m.
- ❖ Enjoy the romance of classical guitar, brought to you by our very own Bradley Thachuk at our Bonus MasterWorks concert.  
Sunday Jan. 29, 2012 at 2:30 p.m.

✦ ✦ ✦

## FOR TICKETS:

Call the Box Office

**(905) 688-5550 ext. 3257**

**1 866-617-3257**

Monday to Friday 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Holiday hours vary

Cheques payable to the

**Centre for the Arts**

should be mailed to:

**Centre for the Arts Box Office**

**500 Glenridge Avenue**

**St Catharines ON L2S 3A1**



## Can You Help?

The musicians and staff of "Your Niagara Symphony" are delighted with the growth in our audience sizes over the past few years, and look forward to providing more musical enjoyment for your life, as well as delivering inspiring educational programmes for young people throughout Niagara. Bringing wonderful music to Niagara residents is our goal, but we need your help to achieve it.

Niagara Symphony enjoys stronger-than-average income from Box Office sales and other earned revenues compared to other North American orchestras, but this income covers only about half of the cost of producing concerts. Our other income comes from public funding and from donations from people who enjoy and value the contributions Niagara Symphony brings to the region. We still have a little way to go to achieve balanced budgets on an annual basis.

There are several ways you could help:

- ❖ We raise money by administering Bingo Nights at the Delta Bingo (Queenston St & Church St in St. Catharines), and we need volunteers to be the Team Captain and Team Members one Saturday evening and one Sunday evening every month. If you'd like to join in the fun and help with this, please contact Gaby Arato (905) 682-6005.
- ❖ Donate an item for our Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> Silent Auction.
- ❖ We need volunteers to make calls on our upcoming Fundraising Telethon to be held several evenings in November.
- ❖ Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to Niagara Symphony. You can donate with cash, cheque or credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express) either by calling our office (905-687-4993 ext. 221) or online (click on the "Donate Now" button at [www.NiagaraSymphony.org](http://www.NiagaraSymphony.org)).

## Please accept our thanks for your support for *Your* Niagara Symphony!

**Niagara Symphony Administration**

**101 King Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor**

**St Catharines ON L2R 3H6**

**(905) 687-4993**

**Email: [info@NiagaraSymphony.org](mailto:info@NiagaraSymphony.org)**

**Website: [www.NiagaraSymphony.org](http://www.NiagaraSymphony.org)**

## MasterWorks 1

**Sunday Oct. 2, 2011**

**2:30 p.m.**

## A Welcoming Celebration

MacMillan, Sir Ernest

**Overture**

*(6 minutes)*

Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Ilyich

***Romeo and Juliet:***

***Fantasy Overture***

*(23 minutes)*

✦ Intermission ✦

Dvořák, Antonín

**Symphony No. 9, in E minor**

***"From the New World"***

I. Adagio – Allegro molto *(8 minutes)*

II. Largo *(12 minutes)*

III. Scherzo. Molto vivace *(8 minutes)*

IV. Allegro con fuoco *(12 minutes)*

## Bradley Thachuk's Highlights:

One of the most famous and poignant moments in all of the symphonic repertoire is from the English Horn\* in the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement. Its lower, warmer register can almost be likened to that of the human voice, which is all the more apt due to the "spiritual" nature of the melody. So inspired & successful was the composer's spiritual writing, the melody went on to become a quintessential part of the American songbook. Words were later added by Dvořák's pupil, William Arms Fisher, and the spiritual "Goin' Home" was born.

The final movement features the French Horn quite prominently, especially near the end. After the 1<sup>st</sup> Horn presents a subdued reminder of the theme from the 1<sup>st</sup> movement, the rest of the section joins in with what almost sounds like a hunting call, and together they move the tempo of the movement from contemplative back to fiery. Even in the dying moments of the finale, this lyrical instrument is there to present a hymn-like representation of the last movement's main theme.

\* *The English Horn is a double-reed instrument in the woodwind family which is slightly larger than an oboe and thus has a lower sound.*

## Sir Ernest MacMillan: *Overture*

Sir Ernest MacMillan was one of Canadian music's true elder statesmen: Principal of the Toronto Conservatory of Music (later the RCM), Dean of Music at the University of Toronto, and long-time conductor of the Toronto Symphony, the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir, and innumerable ensembles in Canada, the United States and Great Britain.

He was one of the last Canadians to receive a knighthood from George V in 1935 (the final year Canadian titles were given) for "services to music in Canada." Though less known as a composer, he leaves a legacy of over 60 works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, keyboard, choir and solo voice.

An early work (written in 1924 when MacMillan, at age 31, was teaching piano and organ at the Canadian Academy of Music, later to amalgamate with the Toronto Conservatory), the *Overture* owes much to the orchestral styles of contemporary English composers such as Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams, but with a distinct air of Canadiana.

The work brings to mind imagery of the vast expanse of the Canadian landscape: pristine lakes in the morning sunshine, golden prairie plains, majestic mountain ranges & thunderous ocean waves, as if one were taking a cross-country aerial tour on a bright cloudless day. Beginning lightly with timpani and soft cellos, and moving slowly into more broad and lush harmonies with full strings, horns & winds, only in last few minutes does the *Overture* seem to take on the guise of a triumphant ceremonial procession with trumpets blaring.

*Notes by Brian E. Power*



**Sir Ernest MacMillan** (1893-1973) was born in Mimico, Ontario, the son of a Presbyterian minister. He was visiting Germany when World War I broke out and was interned as an enemy alien in a detention camp near Berlin throughout the war. He returned and lived for 40 years near Massey Hall in Toronto, his most frequent performance venue.

His musical works and arrangements feature elements of French-Canadian and Scottish folklore, as well as Canadian First Nations music. Important works include: *Fantasy on Scottish Melodies* for orchestra, *Two Sketches for Strings*, *Six Bergerettes du Bas-Canada* for chamber ensemble, *England and a Te Deum* for choir, a *String Quartet in C Minor* and the opera *Prince Charming*. His personal papers and music are included in the Library and Archives Canada collection.

## Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet (Fantasy Overture)*

Tchaikovsky, while not a member of the famous "Russian Five," was praised by one of their sympathetic critics, Vladimir Stassov, when *Romeo and Juliet* (Fantasy Overture) was first performed in 1870. The idea of using the Shakespearean love story as a model for a lush, passionate orchestral setting came from Tchaikovsky's mentor Balakirev, for whom he had the utmost respect, and whose approval or disapproval was the ultimate test. In fact, Tchaikovsky had to be pushed forcibly by Balakirev out of a lull of inactivity to compose the work. The mentor seemed to feel that the younger, often brooding composer, needed a new project to occupy his mind and talents. Tchaikovsky dutifully prepared several versions of the score and revised it considerably, particularly in the introduction, under Balakirev's stern criticism. Tchaikovsky's final version actually resembles in many ways Balakirev's own *King Lear Overture*.

Unfortunately, the premiere of *Romeo and Juliet*, conducted by Nikolay Rubinstein in Moscow, went almost completely unnoticed by the public, even though Tchaikovsky received no end of accolades from his colleagues in the "Five." The work did not begin to gain acclaim in wider circles until the conductor Rubinstein managed to persuade a Berlin publishing firm to distribute it.

Today, use of this Romantic overture in countless recordings and film scores seems to have ensured its permanent popularity in the classical concert scene.

*Notes by Brian E. Power*



**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** (1840-1893) was a Russian composer of the Romantic era. He wrote symphonies, operas, ballets, instrumental, chamber music and songs. His works include some of the most popular concert & theatrical music in the classical repertoire, including the ballets *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*, the *1812 Overture*, and the opera *Eugene Onegin*.

## Dvořák: *Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 "From the New World"*

Antonín Dvořák's Ninth Symphony is famously subtitled "From the New World," a reference to the years he spent in America where he composed this, his final symphonic work, in 1893. Although he did not intend this symphony to be particularly evocative of American imagery, one cannot help but notice the abundance of melodies, particularly in the first two movements, that are based on the type of pentatonic (5-note) scales found in Negro spirituals and Amerindian tunes. Still, this kind of melody is the basic structure of the folk songs of many cultures, including the peasant tunes of Dvořák's native Bohemia. Small wonder then that, on his return to Europe, he was eager to downplay the American references to his Symphony, choosing instead to emphasize its reliance on Bohemian folk music! This sort of interracial appeal, he felt, would help assure his popularity on both sides of the Atlantic.

Two such folk-inspired tunes form the main themes of his first and second movements. The opening theme serves as a point of reference throughout the Symphony, recurring at points near the end of the second and third movements (where some critics have said that Dvořák simply ran out of new ideas).

The haunting theme of the second movement, played first on English horn, seems to evoke best the imagery of the title, and indeed has become the Symphony's hallmark. Leaving no doubt about the idea of thematic unification, the finale incorporates brief excerpts from the three preceding movements, much in the tradition of Beethoven's Ninth (the archetype of the Romantic Symphony).

Always a work with popular appeal when included in a concert season, the eminently "hummable" tunes of the "New World" Symphony too often overshadow its more subtle compositional details: finely crafted contrapuntal and rhythmic techniques and consistently masterful orchestration.

*Notes by Brian E. Power*



**Antonin Dvořák** (1841-1904) was a Czech composer, born near Prague, Bohemia, who chose a music career rather than following his father's footsteps as a butcher. He played viola and organ, as well as composing, until his work attracted international attention in the early 1880s. He conducted orchestras in England and Russia many times. In 1892, Dvořák became the Director of the

National Conservatory of Music in New York City, and used the opportunity to discover and engage in "American Music" until he returned home in 1895.