

Winnipeg Free Press

Opinion

Synching sight with sound

BRANDON-BASED PIANIST BRINGING UNIQUE SHOWCASE MUSIC 4 EYES & EARS TO WINNIPEG

By: Holly Harris

Posted: **03/7/2018 3:00 AM**

GroundSwell promises an evening of "virtuosic delights" with its next concert, Music 4 Eyes & Ears, featuring six contemporary works by Keith Hamel, Kotoka Suzuki, Patrick Carrabré and Randolph Peters. The program, guest-curated by Brandon-based pianist Megumi Masaki and titled after her fall release of the same name, is March 15, 8 p.m. at the University of Winnipeg's Eckhardt-Gramatté Hall. The concert will feature Masaki, cellist Leanne Zacharias, flutist Paolo Bortolussi and live electronics by Hamel.

"What excites and fuels my artistic work is exploring the interactive relationships between sound, image, movement and text in acoustic instrumental and multimedia live performance," Masaki said via email. "*Music4Eyes+Ears* refers to my artistic brand, including many programs resulting from these explorations and collaborations with composers, visual-media artists, writers and choreographers on the creation of new compositions and trans-disciplinary works. Just as chefs believe that we eat with our eyes, I believe that what we see enhances what we hear and experience in live music performance."

For tickets (adults \$24.50, seniors \$19.50, students \$13.50) or further information, visit gswell.ca.



SUPPLIED

Pianist and teacher Jacqueline Ryz (top) and pianist Nika Martinussen study a manuscript of a John Melnyk Sr. composition.

• • •

The 100th annual Winnipeg Music Festival (WMF), which runs through March 18, is in full swing. Many in our arts community recall the late John Melnyk Sr. as one of the city's pre-eminent music teachers for many decades, with his North End piano studio producing a remarkable 20 Aikins Memorial Trophy winners over a 37-year period from 1945 to 1981.

However, many might not realize that the soft-spoken artist, who died in April 2009, had other musical talents. Audiences will be treated to his WMF debut as a composer tonight at 7 p.m., when local pianist Nika Martinussen performs Melnyk's *Prelude No. 1, Op. 3* during the Grade 10 Canadian Composers piano class being held at St. Mary's Road United Church.

"This work was composed in 1939 in the neo-romantic style," said Melnyk's son, John Melnyk Jr., who is working on getting his father's compositions published.

Martinussen also studies with Melnyk Jr.'s wife, Jacqueline Ryz — herself a protégé of Melnyk Sr.

"It's gently lyrical with moments of passion, which is an apt reflection of my dad," Melnyk Jr. said of the piano solo. "I'm sure he'd be pleased to be 'at the festival' in this way."

• • •

I've always had a soft spot in my heart for musicals. Perhaps it's in the blood, with my parents regularly taking my four sisters and me to the Hollow Mug Theatre Restaurant (remember that?) to see the latest show that my dad, Neil

Harris, had produced, arranged, directed and even at times played piano with house band Monty Levine and his Orchestra (remember that?). Heck, I even co-wrote a musical, *The Tower*, with Winnipeg composer Sid Robinovitch, which received a staged presentation by the Winnipeg Jewish Theatre some years ago. I remember that.

The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (WSO) premières the orchestral version of the musical *A Chorus Line*, in collaboration with Rainbow Stage and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School Recreational Division, which includes such classic hits as *What I Did for Love*, *One*, and *I Hope I Get It*.

The three-show run with the WSO, led by Julian Pellicano and directed by Rainbow's newly minted artistic director Carson Nattrass, also features Winnipeg's real-life Broadway star Catherine Wreford, with choreography by Alexandra Herzog.

"The sound will be rich and very present and creates a very dynamic backdrop for the singing and dancing," Jean-François Phaneuf, the WSO's vice-president of artistic operations, said in a release. "This is what we love about working with Rainbow Stage — being able to deliver an exceptional musical performance that partners the best musicians in our city with incredible actors."

The production takes place on March 15-18 at the Centennial Concert Hall. For tickets or more information, visit wso.org.



And on a last note, WSO concertmaster Gwen Hoebig and assistant concertmaster Karl Stobbe join forces to perform J. S. Bach's *Concerto in D minor for Two Violins* Friday and Saturday night at the Centennial Concert Hall, led by maestro Alexander Mickelthwate. The program also includes Anton Bruckner's towering *Symphony No. 9 in D Minor*.

The pair have recently released their inaugural duo album on the Analekta label, featuring Jean-Marie Leclair's *Six Sonatas for Two Violins, Op. 3*, with the baroque composer regarded the father of French violin repertoire.

They also perform a different program, *Mozart & Haydn: A Chamber of Delights* at Brandon's Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium on Sunday as the WSO Chamber Ensemble, which also includes WSO principals Yuri Hooker on cello, Daniel Scholz on viola and pianist David Moroz.

See wso.ca for further details.

holly.harris@shaw.ca

You can comment on most stories on The Winnipeg Free Press website. You can also agree or disagree with other comments. All you need to do is be a Winnipeg Free Press print or digital subscriber to join the conversation and give your feedback.

Have Your Say

BE THE FIRST TO COMMENT

New to commenting? Check out our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

The Winnipeg Free Press does not necessarily endorse any of the views posted. By submitting your comment, you agree to our [Terms and Conditions](#). These terms were revised effective January 2015.

Popular In the Community



LABOUR ARBITRATOR SURPRISED BY CITY



tiredtaxpayer

1d

the city could cut the firefighter numbers by

TAKING STEPS TO HELP MANITOBA KIDS IN



brs22

2h

Why in the world are the authorities and

LAINE, MASON TAKE A BITE OUT OF THE BIG



RayS

13h

I never thought I was ever going to say this

'MISTAKE' LEADS CANADIAN FORC



Teh don

1d

Very excited to IOMS (now Ent

Music
