



The cast of "Canada Roars" celebrates the musical and artistic history of uniquely Canadian arts and culture.

'Canada Roars' showcases Canadian music at Winterlude 2014

BY PAM MCLENNAN
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

With the 36th edition of Ottawa's annual Winterlude festival in full swing and lots of activities and events indoors and out, "Canada Roars" is a special show coming up on Family Day weekend celebrating the history of music in Canada that the whole family can enjoy.

This unique bilingual concert features more than 400 years of Canadian music, dance, and dramatic performances showcasing the culture of our big country. The presentation includes all the genres and styles, from traditional native dances, songs, and theatrical performances to scenes from the present day.

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The cast includes world-class musicians and dancers and this year will introduce an urban dance troupe led by Abby Ambrose.

More than 50 performers will take the stage throughout the

two-hour show, which is presented by Odyssey Showcase.

"This unique and exciting tourist attraction highlight is also an educational experience and an unforgettable musical treat. Featuring world-champion performers, this exclusive Canadian musical odyssey produces a rich and colourful tapestry. If Canada was a show, this is the show Canada would be!" states the TD Bank on its website. TD sponsors Odyssey Showcase year-round.

Odyssey Showcase is a registered charity that provides information to the public and presents live performances on the history of Canadian culture, arts, and music.

This year marks the 14th season of "A Musical Taste of Our Canadian Heritage" and

Odyssey Showcase's sixth year at the Canadian Museum of History, formerly the Canadian Museum of Civilization, where the two shows in April are already sold out.

Odyssey Showcase began in 1999 when Ottawa vocalist Deborah Davis created, produced, and starred in "A Musical Taste of Our Canadian Heritage/Notre patrimoine canadien, une odyssee musicale," for which she needed an ensemble of artists and skills.

Many of the same people continue to take part in the show today. Davis has received numerous awards for her community service efforts as an entertainer and producer.

"Canada Roars" will be presented at the Algonquin Commons Theatre, 1385 Woodroffe Avenue,

on Sunday, Feb. 16, at 7:00 p.m.

An interactive fur trading post will be recreated in the foyer that provides a free pre-show family-friendly event from 2:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

There, attendees can strike their own copper token, make bread, and engage in other fun activities. The Royal Canadian Mint will illustrate how payment methods have evolved over Canada's history.

Winterlude, which runs until Feb. 17, is Ottawa's premier winter festival of mainly outdoor events including skating and shows on the Rideau Canal—the world's longest skating rink. The activities are family-friendly and take place in Ottawa and in Jacques Cartier Park in Gatineau, Quebec.

Tackling the nature of art with ingenuity

FILM REVIEW: Tim's Vermeer

BY JOE BENDEL

The sheer scarcity of Johannes Vermeer's paintings is guaranteed to maintain the art world's fascination. It was partly why the notorious forger Han van Meegeren was able to pass off a reportedly terrible fake on his National Socialist buyers—demand always outstrips good sense.

However, one entrepreneur might just stand the polite art world on its ear when he suggests that he can paint brand new Vermeers using 17th century technology. Inventor Tim Jenison's buddy Penn Jillette basically dared him to prove it for posterity. Jenison's



Tim Jenison (R) demonstrates his first painting experiment to his friend, producer Penn Jillette.

results are duly documented in "Tim's Vermeer."

Building on the research of artist David Hockney and academic Philip Steadman, Jenison argues it is simply impossible for the human eye to perceive the photorealistic detail that distinguishes Vermeer's paintings. Using the scientific process circa

1650, Jenison develops a method to duplicate the Vermeer look. It is complicated, and like the best magic, it involves the use of mirrors.

Both Hockney and Steadman agree that Jenison is on to something, but to really prove the point, he embarks on an audacious experiment. He will re-

create the setting of Vermeer's "The Music Lesson" in a San Antonio warehouse, where he will use his proposed technique to re-create rather than forge the Vermeer masterwork. However, what started as an intellectual pursuit becomes an endurance challenge over time.

Director Teller and producer-narrator Jillette strike a shrewd balance throughout "Tim's Vermeer," injecting enough caustic humour to satisfy their fans, but never upstaging Jenison's story. Frankly, it is a surprisingly provocative film that questions many widely held assumptions regarding the nature of art.

Hockney's participation is a particular coup. When he more or less buys into Jenison's system, it carries considerable weight.

Essentially, Jenison argues that Vermeer was the original photographer. The composition

of "The Music Lesson" is still a work of art. He simply used a somewhat mechanical method to render it on canvas. Of course, he still had to do the work, which Jenison proves is a painstaking process.

Thanks to the developments in digital video, Teller and his associates were able to take an eccentric idea and fully follow through on it. It might shake up stodgier Academy members to hear Penn & Teller tipped for Oscar consideration, but they deserve to be in the mix.

Consistently entertaining and rather shockingly erudite, "Tim's Vermeer" proves documentaries can cover prestigious subject matter but still be fun to watch.

Joe Bendel writes about independent film and lives in New York. To read his most recent articles, visit: www.jbspins.blogspot.com

A chilling rendition of war's horrors

BY BARRY BASSIS

To honour what would have been English composer Benjamin Britten's 100th birthday—he died in 1976—Warner Classics released a magnificent new recording of his "War Requiem."

Britten was a pacifist and he had considered writing an oratorio about the horrors that had occurred during the first half of the 20th century, including the devastation of World War II, the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi.

These ideas gestated over a period of years, during which he completed operas and other works. In 1958, Britten was asked to write a piece to commemorate the consecration of a cathedral that was



CD cover of the release of "War Requiem."

being built in Coventry, England.

The church in that city had been standing since the 15th century but was destroyed during a bombing by the German air force in 1940.

The composer conceived a large-scale work for chorus, orchestra, and soloists. It was written, in Brit-

ten's words, "in memory of those of all nations who died in the last war." He decided to mix the Latin text with poems by Wilfred Owen, the English poet who died in the trenches during World War I. Ironically, the war ended one week after he was killed.

Britten quoted Owen on the title page: "My subject is War, and the pity of War. / The Poetry is in the pity ... / All a poet can do today is warn."

To convey the universality, for the debut performance, Britten chose soloists from three countries that fought in World War II: Russian soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, English tenor Peter Pears, and German baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (who had been drafted into the German army and spent two years as a prisoner of war by the American forces).

The Soviet government wouldn't allow Vishnevskaya to appear at the work's premiere in 1962, though she was allowed to take part in the recording the following year. Because she told the composer she could not sing in English, he had her perform the Latin texts.

The new recording features soprano Anna Netrebko, tenor Ian Bostridge, and baritone Thomas Hampson with the Orchestra and Chorus of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia conducted by Sir Antonio Pappano. Again, there is a Russian soprano and an English tenor but the baritone is an American rather than a German.

The recording stands up to the original. All three sing sensitively, with Hampson superior to Fischer-Dieskau in the projection of Owen's poetry.

Bostridge produces a bell-like tone making the more lyrical portions sound even more eerie—he is at home with Britten's music and coincidentally recorded the composer's songs with Pappano playing piano. Netrebko is a powerhouse, matching Vishnevskaya in dramatic force.

The sound quality is exceptionally clear. Whether the chorus is singing about the "day of wrath," the soprano and chorus are begging the "fount of pity" to save them, the baritone is contemplating "the great gun towering toward Heaven," or the tenor is singing of the "passing bells for those who die as cattle," the effect is one of absolute horror at war's devastation.

Unfortunately, the tragic work is as timely today as when it was written.

Barry Bassis has been a music, theatre, and travel writer for over a decade for various publications.

WHAT'S ON

FÊTE FRISONS

Start the day with a pancake breakfast. Enjoy free entertainment with Julia Dales from TVO kids. Make your own "scratch" animated film, take part in craft making, face painting and a Canadian classic toque parade. Saturday, February 8, 8:30 am Shenkman Arts Centre 245 Centrum Boulevard

BRIGHT NIGHTS: BALTIC NORDIC FILM FESTIVAL

The far reaches of the festival world – from Berlin and Cannes to Toronto and Montreal – have been gleaned for fresh and exciting perspectives in contemporary film. Ranging from fiction to documentary to animation. Ongoing until February 12 Library and Archives Canada 395 Wellington Street 613-232-8769

PATRICIA O'CALLAGHAN SINGS LEONARD COHEN

Patricia has been singing Cohen's songs since the beginning of her career, so the pairing of her warm, crystalline voice with his songwriting is a natural one. February 8, 7:30 pm NAC, 53 Elgin Street From \$33.00

BLACK VIOLIN

Black Violin has created the ultimate synergy between classical and Hip-Hop music and with an opportunity to reach young children. Saturday, February 8, 7:30 pm Centrepointe Theatre 101 Centrepointe Drive 613-580-2700 \$28.75

PETER AND THE WOLF

Without upsetting the maestro, symphony musicians and a conductor's assistant must outwit a powerful wolf who challenges orchestra and audience alike. Saturday, February 8 NAC, 53 Elgin Street From \$22.00

TWISTED! FEBRUARY FIBRE FESTIVAL

A celebration of Fibre, featuring artists: Carmella Karijo Rother, Noelle Hamlyn and Maggie Hogan. February 8 - 28 Wall Space Gallery 358 Richmond Road 613-729-0003

CLARINET VOICES THROUGH THE AGES AND CULTURE

Dragonfly and Libellule clarinet duet with Dave Renaud and Sylvie Duchesneau Dave and Sylvie will be performing a beautiful selection of clarinet music drawing on the clarinet culture from around the world. Sunday, February 9, 2:00 pm Gigspace, 953 Gladstone Avenue 613-729-0693 \$18.00

CUAG: DOUBLE MAJOR

Join Carleton University Art Gallery (CUAG) for the sixth installment of our lecture series Double Major, where we'll hear from two passionate experts, each speaking for 20 minutes about their subject Tuesday, February 11, 7-8:30 pm Carleton University Art Gallery St. Patrick's Building 613-520-2600 x 4219 Free

DOWN WITH WEBSTER

Toronto pop sensations Down With Webster make their long awaited return to Ottawa with special guests SonReal and D Pryde. Monday, February 12, 6:00 pm Bronson Centre 211 Bronson Avenue \$32.50

WINTER JAZZ FESTIVAL

This event is full of jazz artists of international acclaim as well as showcase of the best local talent on offer. February 14 - 16 National Arts Centre and other venues 613-241-2633