

Editors Corner:

Welcome to the first edition of Consortium News, our information letter about all things Consortium Aurora Borealis. As we proceed in planning our 33rd season, The Directors on the Board and Music Director Elizabeth Ganiatsos want to do our very best to provide you, our listeners and supporters with some of the finest concert experiences in Thunder Bay.

My favourite music is chamber music. Chamber music demands the very best performance possible from the musicians on stage. To be part of an organization that exalts the human experience through music is a richly rewarding experience. I hope our concerts will keep you on the edge of your seat.

Each edition will feature descriptive articles about upcoming concerts, the musicians who play them and some of the unsung pleasures and joys of being part of the Consortium family.

We invite you to visit our website.

<http://www.consortiumauroraborealis.org/>

Bert Rowson (Editor)

Bow Master Steven Marvin

It is part of Consortium Aurora Borealis' mandate to foster music education and development in our community. On November 16, 2009, at Lakeview Presbyterian Church, Consortium Aurora Borealis presented a workshop for interested Thunder Bay string players, both professional and amateur, and I was lucky enough to be among their number.

The workshop was led by master bow maker Stephen Marvin. A big name in historical bow construction, Mr. Marvin treated us to a presentation about changes in bow construction and function through the ages. He has a

collection of beautiful photographs of historical bows from some of the world's most exclusive



museums.

After the talk, we all gathered together to play some French Baroque music, using Baroque replica bows Mr. Marvin had brought with him. Bows used during the Baroque period were a bit shorter and a lot more curved than their modern equivalents, giving them a different balance and feel. Musicians performing with CAB use Baroque replica bows during concerts to give the music a lighter, more authentic sound, and we are thrilled when a true expert like Mr. Marvin can share with us some tricks on how to maneuver them. A violinist himself and a regular player with Tafelmusik, he focuses on gestures and phrasing in his physical approach to the instrument.

We are grateful to Mr. Marvin for giving his time to the Thunder Bay string community for this inspiring workshop, and to Consortium Aurora Borealis for facilitating it.

Michelle Zapf-Belanger, Violinist and Vice-president

What is a theorbo?

All will be revealed at our January 22, 2011 concert of Italian baroque music! In the meantime, we may say that the theorbo, a plucked stringed instrument belonging to the lute family, was developed during the late 16th-century in Italy. It was a type of long-necked bass lute, reaching up to two metres in length! It developed as a result of the demand for an extended bass range in opera, as was produced by the Florentine Camerata. It also functioned as a continuo instrument along with organ or harpsichord in vocal and instrumental works from the 16th to the 18th century. It may be heard in performances of music from Monteverdi to Vivaldi, and is enjoying a revival today.



Consortium is delighted to welcome Lucas Harris to Thunder Bay. Our concert audience will have the unique privilege of hearing the rich sounds of this instrument as played by a master. The addition of a theorbo to a baroque ensemble adds a distinctive sound that cannot easily be replaced. Joining Lucas in the concert entitled "Italian Extravaganza: Ravishing Baroque" will be sopranos Michele DeBoer and Dawn Bailey, also of Toronto. They will be supported by the violins, cello and harpsichord of our regular ensemble of local professional musicians. Come and enjoy a delightful musical treat!

Elizabeth Ganiatsos, Artistic Director

Special Free Educational Event

Friday, January 21, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

McNulty Recital Hall, LU Department of Music, main floor

Join Lucas Harris for a workshop-presentation on the theorbo.

Open to all: students, teachers, musicians, and the general public

Of special interest to guitarists. Sponsored by the Lakehead University Department of Music.

Why do we come to Consortium concerts?

Everyone will have somewhat different motivation, put personally, when I put myself this question, two good reasons jump to my mind.

Firstly, the music we hear at these concerts is special and able to satisfy our deepest needs not met by most other forms of entertainment and culture. In this age, not just our work and household chores but also entertainments, sports and travel demand speed and efficient output and utility and under pressure of time, we are often multitasking. The chamber music of these earlier centuries which Consortium is specializing in is an antidote to pressures and tensions of our daily lives. It is the kind of music which- if we open ourselves to it can induce peace, calm, serenity and joy. These are qualities which our hearts and souls thirst for but which are somehow in short supply. Some intriguing questions are being asked about what goes on when we enjoy a chamber music performance, such as: can the music of baroque period with its particular mathematical relationship between the notes have a healing effect?

While scientists are busy researching possible effects of music on cognition and emotional

wellbeing, learning and healing, we know already that immersing ourselves after hard day of work for fifteen minutes in a Vivaldi concerto or in a renaissance madrigal is a greatly refreshing and calming experience. A Consortium Saturday night concert is able to provide a balance to our lives and allow us to end the week on high note.

A baroque poet wrote:

*“Music, the greatest good that mortals know,
And all of heaven we have below “*

(Joseph. Addison, *1672)

But, still, why to go to a concert? Because a music performance can be recorded, stored and transmitted almost without limits the whole electromagnetic field of earth is full of music. Music is everywhere and as close to us as our iPod or cell phone. Not just a rock or pop sounds, a lover of baroque music can easily obtained hundreds of recordings by excellent performers. So why to go to the trouble and expenses of going to a concert? The reason is our musicians. The opportunity to not just to hear but also to see and feel, to sense with our whole body music as being created, fresh and just for the audience in the room. We have the opportunity to watch skillful artists striving to express the essence of the composition as they interpret the message of a composer remote from us by centuries but sharing with us same humanity. Each performance is unique, each time striving for excellence, performers must take risks and we in the audience may witness a lapse but we may also enjoy a sudden emergence of a unique beauty of expression. This is a deeply satisfying experience, which most sophisticated electronic media cannot provide.

See you at a concert,

Jaro Kotalik

January 3, 2011

Your Support Matters

By the time you receive this newsletter the 2010-11 Consortium concert season is well underway. It brings a deep and lasting pleasure that we have been able to presents such great concerts, such as the “Romantic Muses” concert in the fall.

At one concert one of our patrons was asked to come out to our next concert because it will be so much better. The patron replied, “No it won’t, it can’t get any better”. That patron was Thunder Bay North’s MP Bruce Hyer.

If you received a hard copy of this newsletter it is because you have supported the Consortium in the past. Through the distribution of this newsletter we want to communicate to you how your donation has made a difference. By becoming a Consortium supporter you have joined a select group of people who share music with others.

We thank you for your past support and look forward to your assistance in the future. Consortium is a charitable organization, and as such, you will be issued a tax receipt for your contribution. The best support we can hope for is your attendance at our concerts. If you wish to make a further financial contribution, please send your cheque to:

**Consortium Aurora Borealis
PO Box 21027, 640 Red River Road
Thunder Bay ON P7A 8A7**

January 22nd – Extravaganza Italiana



Ravishing Italian Baroque music featuring Lucas Harris Theorbo, soprano Michele DeBoer (shown above) and Dawn Bailey (below) and our own Consortium musicians.



“The Baroque Jazz Connection”

On Saturday February 26th Consortium will be hosting a special concert, “The Baroque Jazz Connection”. The repertoire on the program will

explore the similarities between baroque continuo playing and modern Jazz improvisation: a kind of „same but different“. To our knowledge this is a first ever Baroque/Jazz fusion concert to be held in Thunder Bay and it will be the sort of unique concerts that only Consortium offers. Mood Indigo Jazz Trio joins the Consortium ensemble, as Baroque pieces in traditional scoring and style are then performed with a Jazz spin. Bach, Handel, Telemann, Vivaldi, and a few other surprises.

Come hear Glenn Jennings, keyboard, Mark Thibert, saxophone, and Jim Differ, drums share the stage with Doris Dungan, flute, Martin Blanchet, bass, and string ensemble. Tickets are available at Colosimo’s Music on Algoma



Street, Calico’s Coffee on Bay St. Hull’s Family Book Store on Brodie street and Coran’s Music on Victoria, as well as from any Consortium Board member. We are charging for this event. Students and Senior admissions are \$15.00, and Adult admission is \$20.00

Saturday, March 12, 8:00 PM, St. Paul’s United Church

Music For 1, 2, 3 and 4 Flutes

Delight in the sweet sounds of flute ensemble, in this “fun” evening of music from the Baroque, Classic and Romantic periods by Telemann, W.F. Bach, Kuhlau, Reicha and Doppler. Doris Dungan, Nancy Hennen, Robert Van Wyck, and Margaret Hawkins, flute, with Heather Morrison, piano

Admission to most concerts is by donation at the door