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SERIES III
A CAROL SYMPHONY

A HOLIDAY CELEBRATION LIKE NO OTHER

AERIS BRASS
& THE LETHBRIDGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

DECEMBER 11, 2023 – 7:30 PM
SOUTHMINSTER UNITED CHURCH |
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Programme Order

My Spirit Be Joyful
Aeris Brass

Johann Sebastian Bach/arr. Chuck Siepp
(1685-1750)

A Carol Symphony

Victor Hely-Hutchinson
(1901-1947)

- I. *Adeste Fideles - Allegro energico*
- II. *Scherzo: God Rest You Merry Gentlemen - Allegro molto moderato*
- III. *Romance: Coventry Carol & The First Nowell - Andante quasi lento e cantabile*
- IV. *Finale: Here We Come A-wassailing - Allegro energico come prima*

Contrapunctus I & III
Aeris Brass

Johann Sebastian Bach/ed. Robert King

Concerto for Brass Quintet and Orchestra *George Frederick Handel/arr. Gerard Schwarz*
(After Handel's Concerto Grosso, Op. 6 No. 9) (1685-1759)

- I. *Largo*
- II. *Allegro*
- III. *Larghetto*
- IV. *Allegro*

Good King Wenceslas

Trad. English/arr. Don Gillis/orch. Mark Rodgers

INTERMISSION

Contrapunctus V & IX
Aeris Brass

Johann Sebastian Bach/arr. Robert King & John Glasel

Westminster Carol

Trad. French/arr. Don Gillis/orch. Mark Rodgers

March of the Toys from Babes in Toyland

Victor Herbert/arr. Otto Langey
(1859-1924)

How the Grinch Stole Christmas

arr. Jerry Brubaker

Christmas at the Movies

arr. Bob Krogstad

In the Bleak Midwinter

Gustav Holst/arr. James M. Stephenson
(1874-1934)

Bells of Christmas Suite for Brass Quintet and Orchestra *arr. James M. Stephenson*

2023/24

GROUP PROGRAMS



STRINGS

STRINGENDO ORCHESTRA	WEDNESDAYS	4:30 - 6:00PM
VIOLIN GROUP LESSONS (SUZUKI)	SATURDAYS	10:00 - 11:15AM

CHOIR

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (AGES 5 - 8)	TUESDAYS	4:30 - 5:15PM
YOUTH SINGERS (AGES 8 - 12)	TUESDAYS	5:30 - 6:30PM
ALEGRE CHOIR (AGES 12 - 17)	WEDNESDAYS	5:30 - 7:00PM
INCANTO SINGERS (AGES 17+)	WEDNESDAYS	7:00 - 9:00PM
SING FOR JOY (AGES 40+)	THURSDAYS	7:00 - 8:30PM
VENTUS WOMEN'S CHOIR	MONDAYS	7:00 - 9:00PM

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MINI-U TODDLER (18M - 3Y)	TUESDAYS	9:30 - 10:15AM
MINI-U TODDLER (18M - 3Y)	SATURDAYS	10:00 - 10:45AM
MINI-U PRE-SCHOOLER (3 - 5Y)	SATURDAYS	11:00 - 11:45AM

UKULELE

GROUP UKULELE (AGES 6 - 9)	MONDAYS	4:30 - 5:20PM
ADULT GROUP UKULELE	MONDAYS	5:30 - 6:20PM

PERCUSSION

YOUTH TAIKO (AGES 8 - 12)	THURSDAY	4:45 - 6:00PM
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About the Special Guests

Aeris Brass

Aeris Brass, comprised of five accomplished musicians from Lethbridge, is in its thirteenth year of collaborative artistry. Members of Aeris Brass, formerly the University of Lethbridge Faculty Brass, share a goal of performing brilliant music for brass together.



Trudi Mason and Keith Griffioen share the trumpet duties within the quintet.

Trudi, a long-time figure in the Lethbridge music community, brings extensive experience, having taught and performed across the United States and Canada.

With a two-decade tenure as Principal Trumpet in the Lethbridge Symphony, she currently serves as the Dean for the Centre for Justice and Human Services at Lethbridge College.

About the Special Guests

Keith Griffioen, a music educator and performer in Lethbridge for twenty-five years, boasts an international performance history spanning seventeen countries, including North America, Europe, and Taiwan. In the upcoming year, he will defend his doctoral dissertation at the University of Glasgow, Scotland.



Gerald Rogers on trombone and Nick Sullivan on bass trombone have collaborated in various Lethbridge ensembles for decades.

Gerald Rogers has performed in numerous musical groups in the city for several decades. He has been the principal trombone of the Lethbridge Symphony Orchestra since 1987, is a longstanding member of the Lethbridge Big Band, and a frequent performer with the local funk band Hippodrome.

Nick Sullivan began his music education in Lethbridge and pursued graduate studies at both the University of Victoria and the University of British Columbia, where he earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree. Currently, he is a faculty member at the University of Lethbridge, overseeing the low brass studio and serving as the Recruitment and Retention Specialist for the Faculty of Fine Arts.



About the Special Guests



Thomas Staples, Professor Emeritus (retired) at the University of Lethbridge, dedicated over three decades to teaching horn, brass, and conducting at the university level. An accomplished hornist, Staples remains actively engaged, contributing his talents to two regional orchestras. Additionally, he has served as the conductor of the University Wind Orchestra and various chamber groups.

Thank you to Southminster United Church, home of the Lethbridge Symphony.

For Everyone's Enjoyment

Please remove all hats to preserve sightlines.

Please set all electronics to silent and lower the screen brightness.

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Latecomers are seated at a suitable break.

No outside food or drinks - Water is available in the lobby.

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The Lethbridge Symphony Association acknowledges that we are gathered on the lands of the Blackfoot, Stoney, and Tsuut'ina people of the Canadian Plains. We pay respect to the Blackfoot, Stoney, and Tsuut'ina peoples' past, present, and future, while recognizing and respecting their cultural heritage, beliefs, and relationships to the land.

The City of Lethbridge is also home to the Metis Nation of Alberta Region III.

Orchestra Roster

SYMPHONY SERIES III

December 11 2023

“A Carol Symphony”

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Peter Visentin §

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Val Lazzaretto

Alayna McNeil

Oluwaseun Soneye

Connor Clark

Maria Geppert

VIOLIN II

Airdrie Ignas*

John Gilliat^

Jessica Groeneveld

Bethany Robinson

Catherine Thorsen

Kelsey Jespersen

Elizabeth Wilde

Lise Boutin

Shee Ling +

VIOLA

Gabriel Kastelic*

Mark Kadijk^

Marja Mijsbergh

Lily Hilgersom

CELLO

Mark Rodgers *

Sarabeth Baldry^

Lynn Gilliat

Julie Amundsen

George Fowler

Bonnie Wilde

Brenna Le May

Ava Baldry

BASS

Catherine McLaughlin *

Keely Evanoff^

Ross Lemon+

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Myla Krippel*

Kaylee Woods

OBOE

Jennifer Dosso*

Joelle Strang

ENGLISH HORN

Jennifer Dosso

CLARINET

Joan Rogers*

Ryan Miller

BASS CLARINET

Meagan Thorlakson

BASSOON

Robert George*

Timothy Janzen

HORN

Sarah Viejou*

Ashlee Dowdle

Karly Lewis

Helena Golinowski

TRUMPET

Josh Davies*

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* principal

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Programme Notes

Series III - A Carol Symphony

As part of a long-standing tradition with the Lethbridge Symphony, tonight we celebrate the joys of Christmas with a program devoted to some of the finest and most evocative music of the season. Our first piece, Victor Hely-Hutchinson's *Carol Symphony*, actually gives its name to the concert. Hely-Hutchinson, was born in Cape Town in 1901. (His father, in fact, was the last Governor of the British Cape Colony before it became part of the Union of South Africa in 1910.) The composer, however, received most of his schooling in England, including classes at the Royal College of Music. He returned to South Africa as a lecturer at the South African College of Music in 1922 but, after a few years, went back to England where he joined the BBC as an administrator and also became a professor of music at Birmingham University in 1934. His *Carol Symphony* from 1927 is undoubtedly his most popular work.

As the title indicates, the work is a four-movement symphony based on a number of traditional Christmas carols. According to Hely-Hutchinson himself, the first movement is modelled after J.S. Bach's chorale preludes. It begins with a lively melody in the strings against which is projected "O Come all Ye Faithful" in the horns as the chorale tune. Over the course of the movement the melody and its harmonization grow through the full brass section with joyful interjections from the orchestra. The second movement is a scherzo on "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen." First the winds, answered by the lower strings present the tune, then the full orchestra plays with it in different guises, including a mysterious rendition dominated by the upper strings. This movement leads directly into the slow movement, marked "Romance." Here the music consists of an alternation between "The Coventry Carol" and "The First Nowell," in which the grief of the Coventry Carol's lament over Herod's slaughter of the innocent children is answered by the comforting hope of "The First Nowell" with its magical accompaniment first heard on the harp and then taken up by the winds before passing through the full orchestra. Although the "Coventry Carol's" grief returns, it is the final strain of the "First Nowell" that has the last word. The fourth movement begins with the return of the opening melody of the first movement before launching into rollicking version of "Here We Come a Wassailing." The two lively tunes then alternate until the whole work is brought to a bright and powerful conclusion with a rousing return of "O Come All Ye Faithful" for the brass above the dancing strings.

Over the past century, film music has also provided a repertoire of beloved Christmas standards. The oldest piece in this category which we will hear tonight is "March of the Toys" from the American composer and conductor Victor Herbert's operetta *Babes in Toyland*, a family musical that featured various characters from the Mother Goose nursery rhymes and opened to a very successful run in Chicago in 1903. The march was then taken up in the Walt Disney Studio's reworking of the story in the film from 1961. Closer in time is Jim Horner's theme for the 2000 film "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," based upon the Dr. Seuss book of the same name and directed by Ron Howard with Jim Carrey in the title role.

In *Christmas at the Movies* the very successful American composer, conductor and arranger Bob Krogstad has brought together a series of popular tunes from contemporary Christmas movies. They include the theme from *Miracle on 34th Street* (the 1994 remake of the 1947 classic film of the same name, this time with Richard Attenborough as Kris Kringle), the nostalgia-laden "Somewhere in my Memory" from the John Williams' Soundtrack for *Home Alone* produced in 1990 and starring the young Macaulay Culkin, and "Making Christmas" from Tim Burton's brilliant stop-motion animation *The Nightmare before Christmas*. Here the film and television composer Danny Elfman wittily uses the famous Dies Irae from the Requiem as the citizens of Halloween Town make horrifying Christmas gifts for the inhabitants of Christmas Town.

Brass ensembles have a particularly festive sound associated with the holiday season, as can be experienced in the music on tonight's program featuring Aeris Brass. James M Stephenson's *Bells of Christmas*, for instance, is a very effective arrangement of four "bell" carols for orchestra and brass quintet. Stephenson is a professional trumpeter as well as a composer. A graduate in trumpet performance from the New England Conservatory, he has been composing since 2007 with a special flare for concertos. He has also written sonatas, chamber music and even an opera. The four "bell"

Programme Notes

carols consist of first “Carol of the Bells” followed by “Jingle Bells” then “Ding Dong Merrily on High” and finally “I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day” after which “The Carol of the Bells” returns to bring the work to a ringing conclusion.

Aeris Brass will also play two other beloved carols separately “The Westminster Carol” and “Good King Wenceslas,” arranged for brass quintet by the prolific American composer, conductor and trombonist Don Gillis. The original arrangements involved the organ in the first carol and the celeste in the second, but our own Mark Rodgers has developed these parts into an orchestral accompaniment.

Another professional trumpeter, Gerard Schwartz, is responsible for the arrangement of Handel’s Concerto Grosso opus 6 no. 9 for brass quintet and orchestra. Schwartz was co-principal trumpet in the New York Philharmonic from 1971 to 1976. He then turned to what would become a distinguished conducting career, above all as musical director of the Seattle Symphony from 1985 to 2011, during which time he made many recordings, including the Handel Concertos opus 6, for Naxos. (He is also an accomplished composer with a substantial list of works.)

The Handel Concerto we will be hearing in Schwartz’s arrangement is the ninth of twelve concertos published as opus 6 in London. All were originally conceived as entertainment for the interludes between the acts of his oratorios given during the 1739-40 season at the Theatre Royal in Lincoln’s Inn Fields. They are some of the finest concertos of the Baroque era and follow the concerto grosso tradition perfected by Arcangelo Corelli in which, rather than one soloist against the larger orchestra, there is a group of soloists allowing a constant play of light and shadow in the forte and piano dynamics between the orchestra and the smaller group. The opus 6 no. 9 concerto consists of six movements—a dark and halting Largo, a brightly infectious Allegro, a lilting Larghetto, a lively Allegro, which is actually an effortlessly worked out fugue, a stately Menuet and an energetic Gigue to round everything off.

Tonight’s program also contains excerpts from two great masterpieces by Johann Sebastian Bach, the bass and tenor duet from his magnificent Cantata no. 146 and four selections from his monumental *Art of the Fugue*. The Cantata no 146, *Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal in das Reich Gottes eingehen* (We must through many tribulations enter God’s Kingdom) was written for the third Sunday after Easter. As its title states, it traces the journey through suffering to God’s kingdom. The bass and tenor duet “My Spirit Be Joyful” is the penultimate movement of the Cantata and expresses the ultimate salvation of the worshipper through dance-like music of pure joy shared between the tenor and bass soloists. The arrangement for brass quintet features two trumpets for the duet with the ebullient supporting parts played by the rest of the ensemble.

Bach was not only one of the greatest composers of any period and the leading organist in Europe during the later Baroque Era, but also a brilliant teacher. Many of his published collections of pieces have a carefully worked out pedagogical program behind them in which the composer, rather than describing what to do in words, provided concrete examples in his own music. His great, sadly unfinished collection *The Art of the Fugue* is a case in point. Here Bach revealed some of the most complex fugal techniques in a series of exquisite fugues and canons all based on one fugue subject and its variations. The collection was meant to culminate in a quadruple fugue, based on four subjects, the last of which was omnipresent the main subject of the whole collection. Unfortunately, Bach died before completing this fugue. In fact, it breaks off precisely at the point that the main fugue subject was to enter and be combined with the three other subjects.

The collection was composed and printed in open score and can be performed on various instruments and ensembles. Tonight we will hear a brass arrangement of the first fugue of the set with the original form of the fugue subject; the third fugue with the inversion of the subject; the fifth fugue with both the original form of the subject and its inversion; and the ninth fugue with the subject in augmentation (longer note values) against new counterpoints.

Thank you to everyone who participated in Kids Choir 2023!

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- Collaborate partnerships with educational institutions, designed to support and promote music appreciation and education.
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