

Strings Attached Orchestra

9th Annual Holiday Concert

5:00 pm Sunday, December 11th, 2022

In-Person and on Zoom



Leah Posluns Theatre



We fill our lives with music and we share it with others

www.stringsattachedorchestra.com



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#SAOplays

Strings Attached Orchestra



violin - viola - cello - bass - percussion - piano - bass - cello - viola - violin

Do you play
one of these?

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Attached Orchestra
Is Looking
For You!

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The Strings Attached Orchestra

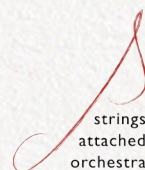
We fill our lives with music and we share it with others

Rehearsals are Mondays evenings
September through June

email us at: info@stringsattachedorchestra.com

Musicians of all levels are welcome to join our community orchestra

Welcome to Today's Performance



Welcome to SAO's 9th Annual Friends and Family Holiday Concert! We are so happy that you are joining us today!

So far, our 2022-23 season has included both the old and the new. The main "old" thing is returning to playing community concerts in retirement homes, schools and hospitals for the first time since before the pandemic. We have played three community concerts so far this fall, and have one more this week, and we look forward to playing for more audiences that usually wouldn't be able hear live orchestra music in the winter and spring.

And there is so much that is new! First, we are excited to introduce you to our new Music Director and Conductor, Jonathan Wong, whom you will meet today. We have eight new members this fall, which helps take us to another "old" thing, which is a fuller orchestra with a fuller sound. As you see, we are playing in a new theatre. And tonight, we are premiering a new composition, played for the first time in public by a string orchestra, "From Darkness into Light on Hanukkah" by Kitchener based composer Itamar Danziger.

We really appreciate your support in joining us for this concert – your tickets help to fund our community concert series. For more information about Strings Attached Orchestra, if you'd like us to perform in your community, if you know any amateur string players who are looking for a musical home (or if you are one yourself), or if you'd like to make a donation to our orchestra, please contact us through our website at www.stringsattachedorchestra.com or by email at info@stringsattachedorchestra.com.

Whether this is the first time you are joining us, you have been here for every concert since 2014 or something in between, whether you are here with us in the theatre or watching online at home, we hope you enjoy the concert!

Follow SAO on Twitter and Instagram [@SAOrchTO](https://twitter.com/SAOrchTO) or check out our concert postings through [#SAOplays](https://www.facebook.com/StringsAttachedOrchestra). Like us on Facebook at [Strings Attached Orchestra](https://www.facebook.com/StringsAttachedOrchestra).

The Strings Attached Orchestra is a Canadian Registered Charity. Registration No. 83585 3599 RR0001

SAO - Orchestra with a Mission

We fill our lives with music and we share it with others.



Strings Attached Orchestra (SAO) is a member-based group of dedicated amateur string musicians located in Toronto. Whether we learned to play a string instrument as a child or took it up as an adult, we share a love for playing music and a desire to keep growing musically. Music is not only special for ourselves, but sharing that music in a way that touches others and brings happiness to the world is an integral part of why this is so special for us. Ask any of our members and you will hear how important being part of this group is to them.

Under the baton of conductor and music director Jonathan Wong we play repertoire from a broad range of styles and periods, from the 17th century to the 21st, and from popular music to jazz and classics. The majority of our musical season focuses on performing live concerts in retirement homes, community centres, and schools. Where venues cannot accommodate our full orchestra, we send chamber groups. This is to fulfill our mission of bringing joy to audiences who have limited opportunities to experience live musical performances.

To help raise funds for these community concerts, our orchestra performs two concerts annually for you, our friends and family. This is also a time when we get to showcase what we have been working on to our audience and we are proud of the work we have put in and the growth our orchestra has experienced over the years.

We are strong believers in the importance of community orchestras and the positive impact they make. Strings Attached Orchestra is a member of Orchestras Canada, CAMMAC (Canadian Amateur Musicians – Musiciens Amateurs du Canada), and is a Canadian Registered Charity (Registration No. 83585 3599 RR0001).

Upcoming Concerts

Join Us for Our Friends & Family Concert Series

2023 Friends & Family Season Finale Concert

- Evening, Sunday, June 25th, 2023 – Leah Posluns Theatre

2023 Friends & Family Holiday Concert

- Afternoon, Sunday, December 17th, 2023 – Location TBD

2022-23 Community Concert Series

As part of our giving within the community, the majority of our concert season is devoted to performing for residents of retirement homes, hospitals, and other such venues where people would not normally have the opportunity to hear live orchestra music. In a typical year, we play 5–6 full orchestra concerts and 6–8 chamber concerts.

During the pandemic, our community concerts were presented digitally. Though it is not the same as a live concert, we are glad to note that we were able to reach more venues than ever before!

As restrictions ease up, we are excited to start to be able to perform live again this season, and we are ready to work with our communities in any manner in which we can. This fall alone we will have already performed 4 community concerts and we have more lined up for the winter of 2023.

To get an idea of what we can do and to let us know of a venue that would appreciate a community concert, please

visit our website at: www.stringsattachedorchestra.com

or send us an email at: info@stringsattachedorchestra.com.

If you would like to help us continue to bring music into the community by sponsoring SAO in our 2022-23 season, please contact us at donations@stringsattachedorchestra.com.

Meet Our Members

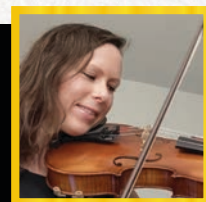
SAO Season 9 - 2022-23



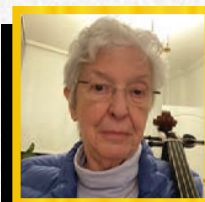
Braden Hommy
violin



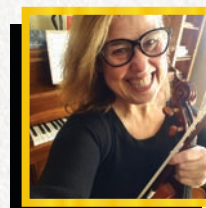
Christopher Petrucci
violin



Claire Hibbert
viola



Claire Nunes-Vaz
cello



Andrea Pines
violin



Andrea Rush
cello / viola



Bonnie Wasser
violin



Emily He
violin



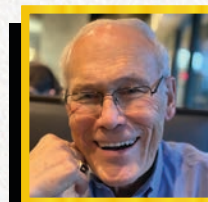
Ethan Shapiro
bass



Gabriel Rouer
viola



Hélène Lussier
violin



Ivan Lavine
violin



Jerry Loterman
violin



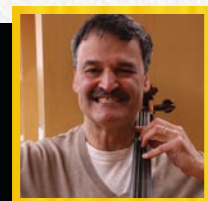
Jill Fraleigh
violin



Laurie Hayden
violin



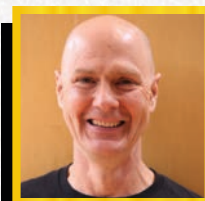
Lee Coplan
violin



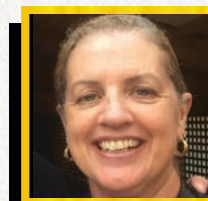
Len Silverberg
cello



Linda Byron
violin



Malcolm Noble
cello



Marg Kerr
violin



Matthew Poon
bass



Morrison Brill
violin



Myriam Shechter
piano



Paul Collier
violin



Peter Grant
cello



Rhonda Haznof
violin



Russell Spencer
violin



Ruth Levenstein
violin / viola



Sarah Morgan
violin



Sofia Vendittelli
violin



Jonathan Wong

Conductor & Music Director



We are thrilled to have Jonathan Wong as part of the SAO family as our conductor and music director. Jonathan joined us this year in our 9th Season and this is his debut Family & Friends concert with Strings Attached Orchestra.

Jonathan is a Toronto-based conductor, keyboardist, clarinetist, singer, and educator. His wide-ranging work in concert, opera, and musical theatre contexts is unified by a love for music's communicative power and its ability to build communities in inimitable ways.

This season Jonathan serves as Music Director and Conductor of the Strings Attached Orchestra, Artistic Director of the Serenata Singers, Conductor of the Toronto Chinese Orchestra, and Instructor of conducting at Tyndale University. He was twice a conducting fellow with the Denis Wick Canadian Wind Orchestra, Apprentice Conductor with Orchestra Toronto, and a recipient of the College Band Directors National Association Mike Moss Conducting Study Grant.

Jonathan's experience as an award-winning clarinetist includes solo, chamber, orchestral, and wind band playing. Career highlights include performing at Carnegie Hall as concertmaster of the Toronto Youth Wind Orchestra and a concerto performance with the University of Toronto Wind Ensemble as a winner of the University of Toronto Winds Concerto Competition. As a keyboardist, Jonathan plays both modern and historical instruments. He particularly enjoys collaborative and continuo work on piano, harpsichord, and organ.

Jonathan is fiercely committed to education in community, classroom, and private settings. In addition to teaching at Tyndale University, he teaches and coaches clarinet, piano, and voice, and he can be found leading sectionals, clinics, and masterclasses across the Greater Toronto Area and beyond. Engaging beyond the local community, he is a Research Fellow with the Institute of Composer Diversity, examining works for wind band by underrepresented composers, and is a volunteer editor of The Wind Repertory Project.

Jonathan holds an Advanced Certificate in Performance, Early Music (harpsichord) and a Bachelor of Music with Honours (music education, clarinet) from the University of Toronto.

Meet Our Guest Artists

Itamar Danziger, Composer



Itamar Danziger is a composer, based in Kitchener, Ontario.

Growing up in a musical family in Toronto, Itamar began playing the Clarinet at age 7. As a child, he was exposed to Srul Irving Glick - a composer and family friend. Srul, as well as his compositional style, inspired Itamar to compose in earnest. Itamar is inclined to compose tonal music integrating Classical, Folk, Klezmer, Ladino, and Easy Listening styles.

Itamar has studied composition with Dr. Michael Damian, Michael Leibson, Jonno Lightstone, Amanda Lowry, and Arie Verhuel van de Ven. Further Orchestration studies took place with Dave Davidson and George Holmes. His compositions have been performed publicly all over the world, including Canada, the USA, Europe and Israel.

When not composing, Itamar enjoys his career as a social worker.

Myriam Shechter, Piano



Myriam Shechter started her musical education in her native Romania and completed it at the Rubin Academy of Music at the University of Tel Aviv. She specialized as collaborative pianist and opera coach, and has worked with many artists, touring and recording in Israel, the United States and Canada.

After completing an MA in Linguistics at the University of Toronto, Myriam worked as a Linguistics Instructor at the University of Toronto and at York University, as well as doing research at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Myriam has lectured in classical music and opera for different venues, including the Royal Ontario Museum. She has collaborated with her husband, travel photographer and lecturer Robert Shechter, and has written extensively on travel for The Chicago Tribune, the Toronto Star, the Globe and Mail, and the Canadian Jewish News.

Myriam is very involved with the Aphasia Institute where she is a long-time volunteer, and she loves making music with the Strings Attached Orchestra.

Our Music Director Writes

Dear Guests,

I am delighted and honoured to welcome you to SAO's 9th Annual Holiday Concert—my first with this wonderful orchestra! It has been a whirlwind start to our season, with always industrious rehearsals and SAO's finally returning to our mission of performing community concerts.

Tonight we share a journey of seasonal perspectives, with some extra treats here and there. We'll celebrate finally arriving at the holidays with some Celtic-flavoured carolling and warm up in a quilt of Hanukkah tunes woven together by local composer and friend of SAO Itamar Danziger. We are particularly excited to have Itamar here with us tonight. Performing Canadian repertoire and collaborating with local composers and performers is a crucial way for SAO to situate itself within and connect across the musical landscape of our city and beyond. Crossing borders and centuries, we'll travel back in time to get a taste of upper-class festivities in Rome around the turn of the 18th century with Corelli's ever-popular Christmas Concerto. Reluctantly returning to the present, we'll savour Morten Lauridsen's beloved *O Magnum Mysterium*, with his musical language recalling the Renaissance composers who first set and popularized this ancient Christmas text. We'll enjoy a couple pit stops along the way to admire sparkling Ice Sculptures and some SAO-family entertainment in a special concerto-cum-melodrama. And finally we'll finish our journey on The Polar Express train to the North Pole, picking up some percussion toys to ring in the season.

Keeping a community orchestra running is no small feat—especially in these plague-inflicted times—and I wish to express my gratitude to SAO's Board of Directors and every individual player for their tireless work and dedication to keeping SAO alive and well. It is my honour to be SAO's new Music Director and Conductor, and our work together has only just begun! We look forward to welcoming you back on June 25, 2023, for our Season Finale concert.

Whether you are attending online or in-person, I hope you will feel and hear the warmth and collegiality that SAO brings to all that we do (and if you're a string player yourself, perhaps you'll consider joining us for our next cycle!). Thank you for being here tonight.

With warm wishes for the season,

Jonathan Wong

Strings Attached Orchestra

Performing Today

Jonathan Wong, Music Director

Violin

Concertmaster

Linda Byron

Principal Second Violin

Lee Coplan

Morrison Brill

Paul Collier

Jill Fraleigh

Laurie Hayden

Rhonda Haznof

Emily He

Braden Hommy

Marg Kerr

Jerry Loterman

Hélène Lussier

Sarah Morgan

Chris Petrucci

Andrea Pines

Russell Spencer

Sofia Vendittelli

Bonnie Wasser

Claire Watson

Viola

Principal Viola

Claire Hibbert

Cole Canaday

Wilfred Ho

Ruth Levenstein

Cello

Principal Cello

Ed Segalowicz

Peter Grant

Matthew Lei

Claire Nunes-Vaz

Double Bass

Ethan Shapiro

Piano

Myriam Shechter

Percussion

Bobby Ho

Brett Lipson

The members of the Strings Attached Orchestra would like to thank you for joining us for tonight's performance. We hope you enjoy the concert and we look forward to playing for you both today and in the future.

Concert Programme

Celtic Carol

Lindsey Stirling (b. 1986) arr. Sean O'Loughlin

Concerto grosso in G minor, Op. 6 No. 8

Fatto per la notte di natale

i. Vivace-Grave v. Allegro vi. Largo. Pastorale ad libitum

Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)

violin solos: Linda Byron, Lee Coplan

cello solo: Ed Segalowitz

From Darkness into Light on Hanukkah

Itamar Danziger (b. 1981)

violin solos: Morrison Brill, Lee Coplan

viola solo: Claire Hibbert

cello solo: Ed Segalowitz

bass solo: Ethan Shapiro

Ice Sculptures

Brian Balmages (b. 1975)

cello solo: Ed Segalowitz

O Magnum Mysterium

Morten Lauridsen (b.1943) tr. Sandra Dackow

The One Bow Concerto

Richard Meyer (b. 1957)

violin solo: Linda Byron

viola solo: Claire Hibbert

cello solo: Ed Segalowitz

The Polar Express

Alan Silvestri (b. 1950) arr. P. Lavender adp. L. Moore

Believe • The Polar Express • When Christmas Comes To Town • Spirit Of The Season

For those at the Leah Posluns Theatre

Absolutely no food or drink is permitted in the auditorium. Absolutely no smoking is permitted on the premises.

The use of a recording device is strictly forbidden and may constitute an infringement of Canadian copyright laws.

Out of respect for the performers, photographs may only be taken with no flash. Late comers will be seated at a suitable break in the performance.

For those attending online

We hope you enjoy this concert from the comfort of your homes. Please keep your microphone on mute so that everybody can enjoy the music.

Recording this zoom session is strictly forbidden and may constitute an infringement of Canadian copyright laws.

Programme Notes

Celtic Carol (2011/2017)

Lindsey Stirling, arr. Sean O'Loughlin

Like many musicians, American performer Lindsey Stirling started lessons at an early age, starting on the violin at the age of five. Unlike many musicians, in 2010 she became a quarter-finalist on America's Got Talent, gaining a reputation as a superstar "hip hop violinist." Now she is known internationally for her dazzling pop-style music videos of her violin playing, complete with costumes and choreography. Thanks to her mix of impressive playing and eye-catching visuals, her YouTube channel boasts 13.5 million subscribers and counting. This entertaining medley combines traditional carols with high-energy Celtic dance rhythms and colours, typical of Stirling's extroverted style.

Concerto grosso in G minor, Op. 6 No. 8 (1690)

Arcangelo Corelli

Arcangelo Corelli was a dominant figure of the Italian Baroque era, working as a composer and violinist of cross-continental repute. His work crucially impacted the development of the genres of the sonata and concerto, of the violin, and even of tonality and functional harmony altogether.

Unlike the solo concerti we typically associate with the genre, this concerto is an example of a concerto grosso: a work pitting a soloistic "concertino" group (in this case, 2 violins and a cello) against the rest of the orchestra. You will hear this solo group versus orchestra distinction most prominently in the second movement we are playing for you today, a typical rapid-fire call-and-response Allegro.

From Darkness into Light on Hanukkah (2021)

Itamar Dangizer

Itamar Dangizer's music includes influences ranging from classical to klezmer and folk traditions—all of which you will hear in this unique composition. Dangizer weaves together Hanukkah tunes, some more easily identifiable than others, in a constantly evolving tapestry that builds to an eminently danceable finish. From Darkness into Light on Hanukkah is dedicated to and originally written for the Beaverton Community Band in Oregon. SAO is honoured today to be joined by the composer in-person as we present the public premiere of the string orchestra arrangement of this work.

Ice Sculptures (2009)

Brian Balmages

In this piece, American composer Brian Balmages pays homage to the magnificence of ice sculptures. You may have seen great examples of such at the Bloor-Yorkville Icefest annually, gleaming on the streetside in the winter sun. Balmages was particularly inspired by the concept of ice hotels: entire buildings where you can sleep, dine, walk, and presumably slip on solid ice. The piano features prominently—hear it sparkle and glisten in the beginning and ending. In between, we hear the life and spirit of the art and people inside these ice hotels, coming together under rather extreme conditions to experience a unique adventure and artistry.

O Magnum Mysterium (1994/2006)

Morten Lauridsen, tr. Sandra Dackow

O magnum mysterium is the Gregorian chant in the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church for the Matins of Christmas Day. It has been set to music by centuries of composers, from Victoria and Palestrina in the Renaissance to Ola Gjeilo and Jennifer Higdon in this century. Morten Lauridsen's 1994 setting for a cappella choir has eclipsed all others in popularity, thanks to its ethereal harmonies and radiant climax. Its performances number in the hundreds annually, in all sorts of arrangements from solo voice and piano to trombone choir. Tonight we play an "elegant and faithful string orchestra transcription" (in the words of the composer himself) by Dr. Sandra Dackow, Music Director of the Hershey Symphony Orchestra in Pennsylvania and a prolific arranger.

The One-Bow Concerto (2003)

Richard Meyer

There isn't much to say about this piece without spoiling it further—the title already mostly gives it away. Sharing is caring. Enjoy!

The Polar Express Medley (2004)

Alan Silvestri, arr. Paul Lavender, adapt. Larry Moore

The 2004 eponymous film starring Tom Hanks was an impressive feat for its time, combining live-action and motion-capture CGI animation in the first-ever all-digital capture film. Watching it today, the animation seems dated and at times downright creepy...but Alan Silvestri's soundtrack remains well-loved, including the Grammy-winning song "Believe" co-written with Glen Ballard and sung by Josh Groban. All aboard!

The History of SAO

Strings Attached Orchestra (SAO) started in the summer of 2014 when a group of dedicated amateur musicians decided to create a new musical group that would allow them to play together with like-minded adults who were driven to practice, play and perform. Most importantly, the goal was to bring music into the community, focusing on the importance of bringing a smile to those who couldn't easily go out to hear an orchestra in concert. Out of these efforts, SAO was born - an orchestra which was created and run by its volunteer members. Our primary goal - We fill our lives with music and we share it with others!

Under the wise and inspiring musical direction of multi-talented conductor Ric Giorgi, SAO commenced with an initial group of 18 string players in September 2014, ranging from those who hadn't played in over 50 years to aspiring amateur musicians. They had one common denominator: a strong desire to play music together, and to excel. From 2014 to 2019, Ric encouraged, cajoled and coached SAO to grow from that fledgling group of 18 to an enthusiastic community orchestra of 42, confidently mastering pieces by Bach, Beethoven and the Beatles. During those 5 years, SAO was repeatedly invited to perform at Sunnybrook Warriors Hall, City of Toronto Castlview-Wychwood Towers, B'nai Torah Synagogue, Ontario Shores, The Granite Club and many other venues, and our repertoire continued to expand ... from Abba, to Gershwin, to Mozart to Vivaldi. Ric also shone the spotlight on the hidden talents of SAO members, and vocal soloists, flutists, and bass guitarists from among our membership graced the stage during our concerts. Ric's personal quote says it all... "I love all music, and I love helping others experience the joy that making it brings to both them, and the audience. Each week, I get to stand before musically inspired adults, who put aside work and family....to join together to make beautiful music out of thin air. What could be more awesome than that? Nothing, period!

In the summer of 2019, Ric Giorgi retired and it was time to turn the page and begin a new phase. Our young orchestra took the leap, interviewed and auditioned new conductor candidates and were thrilled to find Matthew Poon. Matthew, a young conductor, was well-poised to take over the reigns and bring SAO to its next stage, both literally and figuratively.

After a great start to our 2019-20 season and Matthew's first community and holiday concerts with us, what none of us expected was that a global pandemic would hit our world and that our next stage would be digital. Matthew rose to the challenge of this forced new digital era and took us to wonderful new places, teaching us skills we never even knew we wanted! We learned how to rehearse on Zoom, taking turns in sectional breakout rooms and with the full orchestra playing to a clicktrack or metronome broadcast to everyone else from our phones or computers. We found headphones and phone and computer cameras and stands and tripods to put them on to record ourselves playing, and learned how to upload our videos to be assembled into full orchestra pieces. Matthew created the clicktracks playing all the parts and conducting by voice, counting us in and telling us when to slow down and take our bows off the string. He even made videos of himself conducting for us to practise to! It was also a great anchor to our pandemic weeks to be together every Monday evening and have a chance to chat with each other before and after rehearsal began.

Over the past three seasons we learned new ways to play together while forced to be physically apart and ultimately found new and different ways to share our music within our community. We strived to continue both filling our lives with music and sharing it - and we're proud to say that we were able to achieve this goal. We couldn't have done it without the countless extra hours that Matthew put in, pushing us to new heights in order to make these dreams a reality. In early 2022, Matthew successfully defended his doctoral dissertation and was awarded a prestigious faculty position at Oberlin Conservatory in Ohio. We are honoured to have had Matthew take us through the difficult pandemic years and though we were sad to see him go, we are happy to see him move on with such prestige.

In our 2022-23 season, we are excited to introduce Jonathan Wong, our new music director and conductor. Like Matthew, Jonathan comes to us from the Toronto Chinese Orchestra and he has strived to bring us to new heights. We are excited to see life in a pandemic starting to normalize and we are thrilled to say that we have already been able to perform 4 live community concerts in the first half of our 9th season. The fall has passed in what feels like the blink of an eye and here we are today, performing for you in our biggest holiday concert ever!



*SAO In
Action*



Thank You to our Holiday Concert Volunteers

SAO is a charitable organization that runs thanks to the extended efforts of some very dedicated volunteers. A special thanks to our holiday concert volunteers:

Conrad Rhéaume
Eddie Rhéaume
Max Rhéaume

Simon Payne
Isidor Kaplan
Zakhary Kaplan

The board of directors would also like to thank those both within and outside of the orchestra who work hard to help us throughout the year.

Thank you! We couldn't have done it without you!

SAO Board of Directors

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Vice President Bonnie Wasser
Treasurer Ivan Lavine
Secretary Jerry Loterman
Director Andrea Pines



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*Congratulations to
Ruth Levenstein and
the Strings Attached
Orchestra
on a wonderful nine
seasons.*

*Looking forward to more
concerts in Season 9!*

Linda Levenstein

C A  A C

CAMMAC (Canadian Amateur Musicians/Musiciens amateurs du Canada) is
a registered charity devoted to creating opportunities for people of all ages to
experience the joy of making music together in a supportive environment.

We offer monthly reading sessions for singers and instrumentalists to play
through large-scale works with a professional conductor with no preparation
required. The Toronto Region upcoming 2023 readings are:



Jan. 22

Feb. 12  March 26

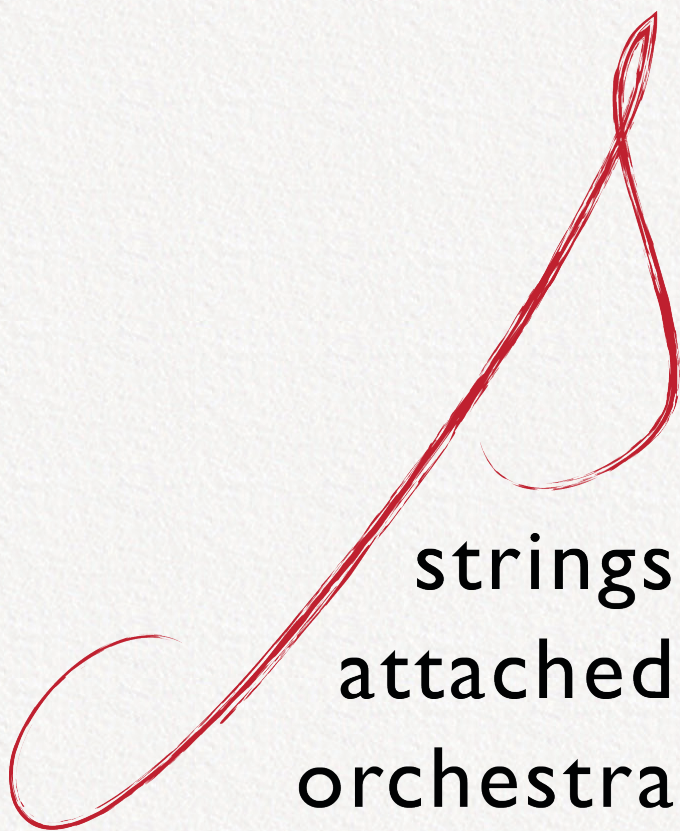
April 23  May 28

All Readings begin at 2:00pm sharp in Elliott Hall at Christ Church Deer Park,
1570 Yonge Street, and end at 4:30pm.

For further info on readings, please visit:

<https://cammac.ca/toronto/toronto-region-music-readings/>
or e-mail toronto@cammac.ca.

Thank You for Your Support!



We hope you enjoyed today's performance.