



Concert Programme



A Field Full of Folk

Sunday, June 8, 2025

Season Finale Concert

Strings Attached Orchestra

stringsattachedorchestra.com

WELCOME!

Thank you for joining Strings Attached Orchestra for our 11th Annual Season Finale Concert!

Strings Attached Orchestra is dedicated to the advancement of both our members' musical education and the community's appreciation for string orchestra music. We fill our lives with music and we share it with others. Our mission is to bring music into the community through performances at retirement homes, hospitals, community centres, and other events. These community concerts are specifically designed for audiences who would not typically be able to attend live orchestra performances. You can see photos from some of this year's community concerts on the inside back cover.

Our 2024-25 season has flown by, and we have added some new activities to our schedule. Last August, we were part of the Earl Bales Summer Concert Series for the first time, playing to a full, appreciative audience right on our home turf. We'll be back again this summer on Tuesday, July 29 — come enjoy a beautiful summer evening with us! We also provided players for select special events this year, and we are preparing to offer smaller groups on a more regular basis. Don't hesitate to contact us if you are looking for music for an event.

And our final new activity is playing a complete symphony for the first time ever - the second half of our concert this evening will feature Symphony No. 8 in G major by Antonín Dvořák. We hope you enjoy it!

Whether you're here at the concert in person or watching on livestream, thank you for supporting us by being part of our audience today! If you would like to support us further, donations are always welcome on our CanadaHelps page at <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/strings-attached-orchestra/>

For more information about Strings Attached Orchestra, or if you'd like us to perform in your community or at your special event, please contact us at info@stringsattachedorchestra.com or visit our website at:

www.stringsattachedorchestra.com

We hope you enjoy the concert!

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



CONCERT PROGRAMME

A FIELD FULL OF FOLK

LITTLE SUITE FOR STRING ORCHESTRA

HARRY SOMERS (1925-1999)

- I. Lukey's Boat
- II. She's Like the Swallow
- III. Ah! Si mon moine voulait danser! (Come and Dance With Me!)

ENGLISH FOLK SONG SUITE

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958) ARR. STEPHEN BULLA

- I. March – “Seventeen Come Sunday”
- II. Intermezzo – “My Bonny Boy”
- III. March – “Folk Songs From Somerset”

FOR CHILDREN, SZ. 42: TEN PIECES

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881-1945) ARR. LEÓ WEINER

[INTERMISSION]

SYMPHONY NO. 8 IN G major, OP. 88, B. 163

ANTONÍN DVORÁK (1841-1904)

- I. Allegro con brio, arr. Robert D. McCashin
- II. Adagio, arr. Robert D. McCashin
- III. Allegretto grazioso, arr. Robert Sieving
- IV. Allegro ma non troppo, arr. Todd Parrish

PROGRAMME NOTES

LITTLE SUITE FOR STRING ORCHESTRA (1955)

HARRY SOMERS (1925-1999)

Harry Somers was one of Canada's most prolific and internationally renowned composers. He wrote works of all sizes, from solo pieces to major orchestral scores for the concert hall and television. His opera *Louis Riel*, written for Canada's 1967 centennial, remains the best-known Canadian example of its genre.

Somers' compositional style shows a diversity of influences, from the Gregorian chants of the Medieval era through the twelve-tone and serial techniques of the twentieth century. The first movement "Lukey's Boat", based on a Newfoundland folk song (you may know it from Great Big Sea's cover), uses Baroque stylings in its stately introductory prelude followed by a vigorous fugue. Somers treats the second movement's song "She's Like the Swallow", also from Newfoundland, more romantically, spinning rich harmonies while using the veiled sound quality of muted strings. The final movement is a short set of contrasting variations on "Ah! Si mon moine voulait danser!", a popular song in Francophone Canada originating from Renaissance France.

ENGLISH FOLK SONG SUITE (1923/2005)

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958) ARR. STEPHEN BULLA

Folk song influences are a key thread through the compositions of Ralph (rhyming with *safe*) Vaughan Williams, Britain's greatest symphonist. Vaughan Williams' labours as a collector and arranger of the songs of the English countryside would help shape his distinctly English musical character.

Originally scored for military band and one of the earliest serious compositions for that instrumentation, the *English Folk Song Suite* (or, as originally titled, just *Folk Song Suite*) includes at least nine songs across its three movements. The outer movements are both toe-tapping marches, using fulsome doses of repetition and contrast between melodies for the solo violin, the upper strings together, and the lower strings. The middle movement is most evidential of Vaughan Williams' personal style, featuring his favoured modal harmonies in a rich and delightful setting of two songs about lovers forsaken.

FOR CHILDREN, SZ. 42: TEN PIECES (1908-09/1952)

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881-1945) ARR. LÉO WEINER

Béla Bartók's *For Children, Sz. 42* [Hungarian: *Gyermeknek*], was written from 1908-1909 as a cycle of short piano pieces. Comprised originally of 85 pieces in four volumes, each is based on either a Hungarian or Slovakian folk tune, and were written as student pieces that progress slightly in difficulty through

the cycle. Bartók revised the set in 1945, removing six works for either being inaccurately transcribed or because he discovered they were not original folk tunes. Also substantially changing some of the harmonizations, the new cycle of 79 pieces were reissued in two volumes. Hungarian music educator and composer Leó Weiner (1885-1960) took ten of the pieces from the cycle and transcribed them for strings in 1952.

Programme note from the publisher

SYMPHONY NO. 8 IN G MAJOR, OP. 88, B. 163 (1889)

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904) ARR. VARIOUS

Antonín Dvořák was a Czech composer recognized for infusing the flavours of the folk music of Moravia and his native Bohemia into the symphonic idiom. His Slavonic Dances, Cello Concerto, Symphony No. 9 in E minor, "From the New World", and many other works remain irreplaceable staples for orchestras worldwide.

Amongst Dvořák's nine symphonies, the Eighth stands out as a particularly cheerful work, with endless pastoral and lyrical themes stuffed into its four movements. Dvořák made quick work of sketching the symphony at his beloved country retreat in Vysoká u Příbramě, starting work on it around the end of August 1889 and completing the full score on November 8 in Prague. The 1890 premiere there under the composer's baton was an instant success, with one reviewer calling him the greatest symphonist since Beethoven.

All four movements clearly sound out Dvořák's love for nature and the countryside. The first movement starts in ostensibly serious fashion, with the cellos singing a dramatic minor-key first theme, but this soon gives way to a chirping violin that summons the sunshine and foot-stomping good times that pervade the remainder of the movement. The second movement, traditionally a slow movement in a classical symphony, does start with a somewhat melancholy string chorale, but the whole movement rotates through musical and emotional extremes, all while keeping folk-like elements of rhythm and harmony throughout. Incredibly unique in effect is the third movement, overall a kind of waltz form that contrasts a wistful minor-key first theme to a major-key second theme so sweet it could fit perfectly in some Disney ballroom—and then Dvořák ends the movement with a suddenly fast coda [an ending passage], bubbling up a party that fades away as quickly as it began.

The final movement, opening with a brilliant fanfare, has vexed many a music theorist with its somewhat rambling form. Dvořák had no shortage of good melodies and the talent to develop them, and the movement progresses as a fascinating series of thematic variations. After some dizzying harmonic shifts, the music settles for a period of calm and nostalgic reflection on all the beauties encountered, before culminating in a blazing, beyond exuberant finish.

Programme notes by Jonathan Wong unless otherwise attributed



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DOUBLE BASS

Nyall Jalali
 Matthew Poon
 Ethan Shapiro

Thank you to our guest musicians
 for joining us tonight:

Frank Song, violin
 Brett Lipson, percussion
 Haruki Sugita, percussion
 Danielle Sum, percussion

**concertmaster

*section principals

THANK YOU!



A big thank you to all the volunteers who contributed their time and talent to Strings Attached Orchestra this season!

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Thank you to Lowry King, Mary Anne Santiago and Daniel Turner at Earl Bales Community Centre for supporting our rehearsals.

And most of all, thank you to our family, friends and audience members for your ongoing support!

JONATHAN WONG

CONDUCTOR AND MUSIC DIRECTOR



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

This season Jonathan serves as Conductor and Music Director of Strings Attached Orchestra and Conductor of the Toronto Chinese Orchestra. Jonathan also serves as 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. His principal conducting teachers have been Dr. Gillian MacKay and Ivars Taurins.

Jonathan's experience as an award-winning clarinettist 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 can be found adjudicating at festivals and leading clinics and masterclasses across the Greater Toronto Area and beyond.

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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US AT

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STRINGS ATTACHED ORCHESTRA (SAO) brings music into the lives of musicians and the community alike. We are strong believers in the importance of community music-making and the positive impact it makes on our audiences as well as the orchestra members. This season we performed community concerts at:



**DELMANOR
NORTHTOWN
NOVEMBER 13, 2024**

**CASTLEVIEW WYCHWOOD
TOWERS
LONG-TERM CARE HOME
MARCH 30, 2025**



**CHARTWELL GIBSON
RETIREMENT RESIDENCE
APRIL 27, 2025**

**CUMMER LODGE
LONG-TERM CARE HOME
MAY 25, 2025**



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to help us keep performing for community audiences!



Folk songs from Canada, England, Hungary, and Slovakia will lead us to Antonín Dvořák's Symphony No. 8, an exuberant work filled with the bucolic joys and folk rhythms of the Czech countryside. Thank you for joining us!

