Strings Attached Orchestra

10th Annual Season Finale Concert

Celebrating Our Musical Families

7:30 pm, Sunday June 23rd, 2024 • Trinity-St. Paul's Centre • Toronto, ON



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

www.stringsattachedorchestra.com





Strings Attached Orchestra: Filling our lives with music and sharing it with others for ten years

Strings Attached Orchestra (SAO) is a vibrant community of amateur string players based in Toronto. Whether our members learned to play as children or picked up an instrument for the first time as adults, all are welcome. Our core requirements for membership are a love of music, a desire to grow musically, a commitment to support one another, and a passion for sharing our art with the community.

Under the dynamic leadership of our Music Director and Conductor Jonathan Wong, we perform a diverse repertoire that spans from the 17th century to contemporary works. Our programs include classical masterpieces, beloved movie scores, video game and anime music and even world premiere performances of works by emerging Canadian composers.

Our mission is deeply rooted in sharing the gift of live orchestra music with those who may not be able to attend traditional concerts. Throughout the year, we perform for retirement homes, assisted living communities and other groups who face barriers to attending live performances. This year we also collaborated with middle school string students, creating enriching experiences for young musicians. These outreach concerts are most rewarding, as they allow us to bring joy and connection through music to those who need it most.

To support these community initiatives, we hold two major fundraising concerts each year: our Holiday and Season Finale Family and Friends concerts. These events provide us the opportunity to showcase our hard work and dedication, giving our members a goal to strive towards and allowing us to share our musical journey with you, our family and friends. We take great pride in the effort we invest in our music and the positive impact we have on our community.

SAO is proud to be a member of Orchestras Canada and CAMMAC (Canadian Amateur Musicians, Musiciens amateurs du Canada), and we are a registered Canadian charity (Registration No. 83385 3599 RR0001). If you would like to support SAO through a donation, enabling us to continue bringing music to the community, please visit our Canada Helps page at https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/strings-attached-orchestra/ or contact us at info@StringsAttachedOrchestra.com.

Welcome to Tonight's Performance

strings attached orchestra

Welcome to Our 10th Annual Season Finale Concert - Celebrating Our Musical Families!

Dear Friends, Family, and Music Lovers,

Welcome to this special evening where we celebrate not just a concert, but a journey that has been a decade in the making. As we gather here tonight, we reflect on ten remarkable years of music, growth, and the incredible bonds we've formed along the way.

Music has a unique capacity to connect us all. It transcends boundaries, evokes emotions, and brings us together in ways nothing else can. Over the past ten years, our orchestra has been a testament to this amazing power. We've shared the stage, our stories, and our passion for music, creating memories that resonate deeply for each of us.

This milestone is not just about the notes we've played, but about the people who have been with us on this journey. Our orchestra is more than just a group of musicians; we are a family. We've supported each other through countless rehearsals, performances, and even a pandemic, always coming out stronger and more unified. Each member, from the seasoned players to the newest additions, brings a unique voice to our group.

Equally important, our family extends beyond the stage. You, our audience, are an integral part of this family. Your presence, your applause, and your unwavering support have been our backbone. You've been with us through every crescendo and diminuendo, celebrating our successes and encouraging us through every challenge.

Tonight, as we perform our 10th Season Finale concert, we not only honour our past but also look forward to the future. We celebrate the dedication and hard work of every individual who has contributed to our story. We thank all the musicians who have played with us throughout the years, our Music Directors Ric Giorgi, Matthew Poon and Jonathan Wong, families and friends who have cheered us on, and the audiences who have supported us through every performance.

Thank you for being part of our musical family. Your presence here tonight is a testament to the enduring power of community and the unifying force of music. As we embark on the next chapter of our journey, we carry with us the lessons, the joy, and the love that the last ten years have given us.

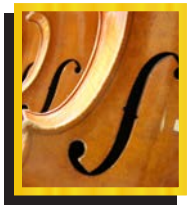
Enjoy the music, celebrate with us, and let us look forward to many more years of music together!

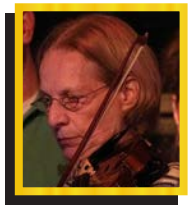
Meet Our Members

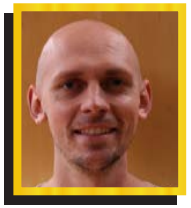
SAO Season 10
2023-24

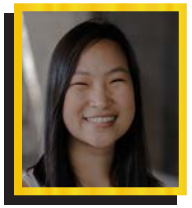

Andrea Pines
violin

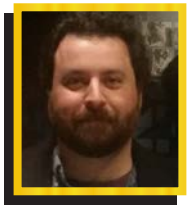

Andrea Rush
viola/violin/cello

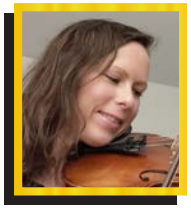

Anne Cabildo
violin

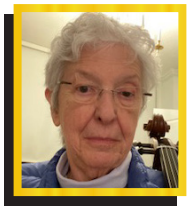

Bonnie Wasser
violin


Braden Hommy
violin

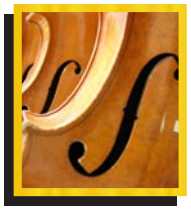

Caroline Pai
violin


Chris Petruccelli
viola/violin/cello

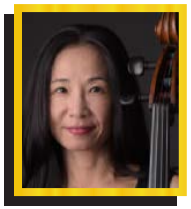

Claire Hibbert
viola


Claire Nunes-Vaz
cello


Claire Watson
violin

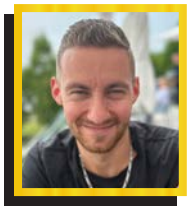

Daniel Naccarato
cello

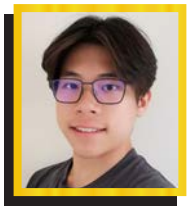

Danielle Figov
cello


Elaine Liao
cello


Emily He
violin

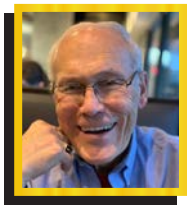

Ethan Shapiro
bass


Gabriel Rouer
viola


Gareth Au
viola


Gary Tom
violin

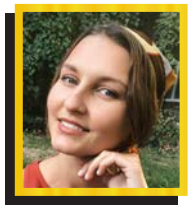

Hélène Lussier
violin

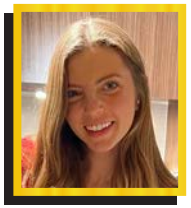

Ivan Lavine
violin


Jenna Lee
violin


Jerry Loterman
violin

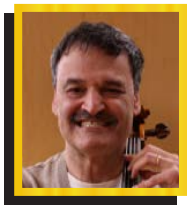

Jill Fraleigh
violin


Kirsten Svitich
violin

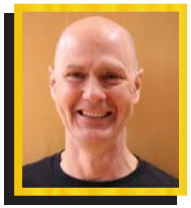

Laura Walkovich
violin


Laurie Hayden
violin


Lee Coplan
violin


Len Silverberg
cello


Linda Byron
violin


Malcolm Noble
cello

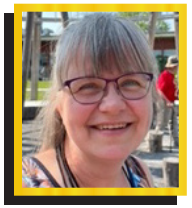

Margaret Kerr
violin


Matthew Poon
bass


Myriam Shechter
piano


Myriam Dilindi
violin


Nadia Romito
violin


Nelly Sinclair
violin


Olivia Baker-Sullivan
violin


Paul Collier
violin


Peter Grant
cello


Rhonda Haznof
violin

Rita Shahin
cello

Rudolf Abel
violin

Ruth Levenstein
cello/viola/violin

Sarah Morgan
violin

Sofia Vendittelli
violin

Susan Chan
violin

Venita Sitahal
viola

Zee Chan
violin

Jonathan Wong

Music Director & Conductor



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 Music Director and Conductor 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.

Our Music Director Writes

Dear Guests,

Welcome to SAO's 10th annual Season Finale Concert!

Tonight we are Celebrating Our Musical Families—families of all shapes and sizes! Our orchestra's musical family has grown year by year, and every season it expands to include the new composers, performers, and audiences we are so fortunate to share our music with. Add to that the family members who love-tolerate our endless practicing, the teachers who guide us, the community concert venues that welcome us in to fulfill our charitable mission, the donors who make these concerts possible…and we have a lot of people to celebrate!

Bookending tonight's program are works by Mozart and Grieg, composers who are no strangers to SAO. Their beloved works give us a chance to witness how far our orchestral family has come over the past decade. We open with the classic to end all classics: Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. Next come two very different works, both composed for student musicians. Holst's *St Paul's Suite* is a four-movement tour de force; the final movement you will have heard if you joined us at our Home for the Holidays concert in December, but it never grows stale! Daehn's *A Song for Friends* is much simpler, a beautiful tribute to the friendships we have forged, especially with the young musicians whom we have had chances to perform for, collaborate with, and provide performance opportunities to. We end the first half with a special arrangement of music from the anime series *Sword Art Online*, conducted and arranged by SAO bassist and former Music Director Matthew Poon and featuring special guests from SAO's past and present.

Working with living composers and performing new works are crucial ways we continue expanding our musical reach within the musical ecosystem of Toronto and beyond. We are delighted to open the second half of our concert with the world premiere of Clovis Pinsonnault's delightful and cheeky *Wild Canadian Goose Chase*. This will be an especial premiere, as it just so happens that the composer's mother plays violin with us. Next, every note of George Walker's achingly beautiful *Lyric for Strings* oozes with the love of family. George Walker dedicated the work to his cherished grandmother, and we perform the adaptation by his son Gregory Walker. Finally, we end with Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*, an easier arrangement of which featured in the orchestra's repertoire in the early years. Tonight we are proud to perform the complete suite with two movements in Grieg's original forms and two movements in new, more musically complete arrangements.

Thank you for being part of SAO's first decade! I hope you will be inspired to join us as we continue filling our lives with music and sharing it for the decades to come.

Musically yours,

Jonathan Wong

Thank You!

It takes a lot of help to run an orchestra, and we'd like to thank the following people who have contributed their time and talent this year:

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Jerry Loterman *Secretary*
Claire Nunez-Vaz
Andrea Pines *Community Concerts Co-ordinator*
Nadia Romito
Bonnie Wasser *Managing Director*

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Promotion and Social Media:

Olivia Baker-Sullivan
Anne Cabildo
Danielle Figov
Venita Sitahal
Kirsten Svitich
Sofia Vendittelli

Fundraising:

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Myriam Dilindi
Laurie Hayden
Elaine Liao
Jerry Loterman
Kirsten Svitich

Rehearsal Setup: Marg Kerr

Concert Volunteers:

Laurie Hayden
Mike Liu
Janet Loterman
Nicholas Macaro
Ryan Marshall
Matthew Poon
Gary Rose
Dante Troiani

Help where help was needed:

Jill Fraleigh
Claire Watson
Rhonda Haznof

Board Advisors:

Linda Byron
Matthew Poon

A special thank you to Earl Bales Community Centre for hosting our rehearsals, and to Lowry King for all of his help every week.

And thank you, our audience members - family, friends, music lovers - for your ongoing support!

Strings Attached Orchestra

Performing This Evening

Jonathan Wong, Conductor

Violin I

Concertmaster Linda Byron
Susan Chan
Paul Collier
Braden Hommy
Ivan Lavine
Jerry Loterman
Hélène Lussier
Nelly Sinclair
Gary Tom
Sofia Vendittelli

Violin II

Principal Second Violin Lee Coplan
Rudi Abel
Myriam Dilindi
Jill Fraleigh
Laurie Hayden
Marg Kerr
Jenna Lee
Sarah Morgan
Kirsten Svitich
Laura Walkovich
Bonnie Wasser
Claire Watson

Violin III

Zee Chan
Caroline Pai
Nadia Romito

Viola

Gareth Au
Claire Hibbert
Christopher Petruccelli
Gabriel Rouer
Venita Sitahal

Cello

Danielle Figov
Peter Grant
Claire Nunes-Vaz
Malcolm Noble
Len Silverberg
Michael Wong

Double Bass

Matthew Poon
Ethan Shapiro

Percussion

Bobby Ho
Brett Lipson

Ruan

Tracy Chan

Flute

Victoria Roa

Piano

Caroline Pai

Thank you for joining us this evening!

Concert Programme

Celebrating Our Musical Families

Serenade no. 13 in G "Eine kleine Nachtmusik", KV 525 — *Wolfgang Amadè Mozart (1756-1791)*

I. Allegro

St Paul's Suite — *Gustav Holst (1874-1934)*

I. Jig
II. Ostinato
III. Intermezzo
IV. Finale (The Dargason)

A Song for Friends — *Larry Daehn (1939-) arr. unknown*

Sword Art Online — *Yuki Kajiura (1965-) arr. Matthew Poon*

Intermission

Wild Canadian Goose Chase — *Clovis Pinsonnault (2000-)*

Lyric for Strings: for Young Musicians — *George Walker (1922-2018) arr. Gregory Walker*

Peer Gynt Suite No. 1 — *Edvard Grieg (1843-1907), mvts.1+4 arr. Jonathan Wong*

I. Morgenstemning (Morning Mood)
II. Åses død (The Death of Åse)
III. Anitras dans (Anitra's Dance)
IV. I Dovregubbens hall (In the Hall of the Mountain King)

Programme Notes

Serenade no. 13 in G "Eine kleine Nachtmusik", KV 525, I. Allegro (1787)
Wolfgang Amadè Mozart (1756-1791)

Translating to "a little night music", *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* is the final and best-known of Mozart's serenades, instrumental works that were often commissioned as musical entertainment for outdoor events such as weddings. They are tuneful works, sophisticated yet accessible. As with every other genre he composed in, Mozart elevates and experiments with musical form and instrumental colour, creating music both satisfying to perform and to listen to. This first movement is filled with sunshine and Classical charm, a shimmering jewel of the string orchestra and chamber strings repertoire.

St Paul's Suite (1913) - Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Gustav Holst is best remembered for his orchestral suite *The Planets*, but throughout his compositional career he remained committed to teaching, including as a pioneering educator for young women at St Paul's Girls' School in the West London district of Hammersmith. There he taught for nearly thirty years until his death and composed many pieces for his pupils, including this four-movement suite.

The opening "Jig" and closing "Finale" are thoroughly English in character; Holst invented rustic-flavoured original themes for the first movement and used the folk tunes "The Dargason" and "Green Sleeves" in the fourth movement. The second movement is a quicksilver "Ostinato," an Italian term referring to a short musical idea that is repeated throughout a work: listen to the running eighth notes largely carried by the second violins. The third movement "Intermezzo" stands out as an example of the musical Orientalism of the era. It opens with a languorous violin solo using a hodgepodge of foreign-sounding scales and harmonies. The second theme is fiery and more authentic, based on an Arab song that Holst sketched in Algeria. Altogether, one can only imagine the surprise, delight, and perhaps trepidation felt by Holst's students when first presented with this now-renowned suite.

A Song for Friends (1997/2017) - Larry Daehn (1939-) arr. unknown

It is no simple task to craft a work of great musical quality that fits within the limitations of range, technique, and understanding of young players. This simple and beautiful tribute to friendship was originally written for middle school bands and has become popular with young bands across North America.

Sword Art Online (2012/2023) - Yuki Kajiura (1965-) arr. Matthew Poon

In many ways, my arrangement of *Sword Art Online* is meant to represent the Strings Attached Orchestra. First, there is the shared acronym. Then, there is the orchestration, which features instruments that have shared the stage with SAO's strings over the past ten years. Third, there is the tradition of SAO members arranging music that spoke to them. I weave these memories through Yuki Kajiura's masterful soundtrack that accompanies the 2012 anime series, in which our main characters (Kirito and Asuna) find themselves trapped in a virtual reality world. This world of swords is depicted in the first tune you will hear, appropriately titled "Swordland," which is followed by Kirito and Asuna's love theme ("A Tender Feeling") and battle theme ("Luminous Sword"). Sandwiched between the latter two is an allusion to my piano-playing friends—see if you recognize it!

– Programme Note by Matthew Poon

Wild Canadian Goose Chase (2023) - Clovis Pinsonnault (2000-)

As an undergraduate student at Western University, the composer had the perennially Canadian experience of encountering gaggles of wild geese and their rather un-Canadian behaviours: cheeky, aggressive, and ever hungry, these birds take no prisoners when defending their young and their territory (or wherever they have decided is their territory). The piece imagines a search for the legendary docile Canadian goose—an impossible task by most accounts…or, as one might say, a wild goose chase. The music vacillates between silly and serious, playful and foreboding, with some musical hide-and-seek and excitement for every instrument.

Lyric for Strings: for Young Musicians (1990/2007)
George Walker (1922-2018) arr. Gregory Walker

George Walker was a trailblazing composer, pianist, and educator. As the first African-American composer to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music (for *Lilacs* for voice and orchestra, 1996), he was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, and others. As a pianist, he was the first Black solo instrumentalist with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the first Black graduate of the Curtis School of Music—and he accomplished both in the same year, 1945. The next year, he completed his String Quartet no. 1, dedicated to his beloved grandmother Malvina King. Born into slavery, Mrs. King escaped to live a long eventful life as the matriarch of the multi-generational home in which Walker was raised. She died just after the 24-year-old Walker had begun composing the quartet's second movement.

In 1990 Walker revised the second movement in a version for string orchestra, titling it first *Lament for Strings*, then *Lyric for Strings*. He kept the original dedication and always referred to it as "my grandmother's piece." In this form it became the composer's most performed work out of a wide-ranging oeuvre. The somber but ultimately hopeful piece has received a resurgence of performances amidst the past decade's increasing social consciousness regarding racial inequities within the arts and the world at large, and it has been performed at vigils for the victims of police brutality. George Walker died in 2018 at the age of 96.

Peer Gynt Suite no. 1 (1875/1888/2024)
Edvard Grieg (1843-1907), mvts. I and IV arr. Jonathan Wong

Edvard Grieg, the leading Norwegian composer of the Romantic era, was initially reluctant to compose incidental music for Hendrik Ibsen's 1867 play *Peer Gynt*. He found the subject "horridly intractable" and did not enjoy the limitations imposed upon him and his music by the mechanical needs of the theatre. Nevertheless, the premiere was a success, in great part due to Grieg's lush score that encapsulated the nostalgic and ironic Norwegian spirit. Perhaps to take back control of his work, Grieg returned to the music over a decade later, extracting from the 90-minute score two concert suites of four movements each. The opening "Morning Mood" grows from a pastoral dawn to a radiant sunrise, setting us back down gently to bathe in a beautiful day. The tragic "The Death of Åse" brings stark contrast, as Peer Gynt's longsuffering mother succumbs while her prodigal, oblivious son continues spewing his outrageous stories. In "Anitra's Dance," we meet a crafty Bedouin princess at a Moroccan oasis, as she dances a seductive yet crafty waltz in a mirage-like scene. Grieg ends the first suite with "In the Hall of the Mountain King," a grotesque ballet for the less-than-hospitable daughters of the troll king; one can surmise that Peer has no interest in sticking around any longer than necessary.

Programme Notes by Jonathan Wong unless otherwise attributed









SAO In Action









Featured Composer

Clovis Pinsonnault



We are honoured this evening to play the world premiere of *Wild Canadian Goose Chase*, a new work by Clovis Pinsonnault.

Clovis is a young and dynamic Canadian composer, currently pursuing his studies at the Université de Montréal, where he is immersed in the exploration of both contemporary and classical music composition.

Born with an innate passion for music, Clovis began his musical journey at a very young age, learning to play various instruments and developing a deep understanding of music theory. This early foundation laid the groundwork for his later pursuits in music composition.

Throughout his university education, Clovis has demonstrated a keen interest in pushing the boundaries of traditional music composition, blending elements of classical, contemporary, jazz, and electronic music into his works, resulting in compositions that are both technically sophisticated and emotionally resonant.

As Clovis continues to evolve as a composer, he remains committed to creating music that challenges, inspires, and humours his audiences. With each new composition, he invites the audience to embark on a sonic journey, transporting them into his whimsical worlds of musical expression.



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James Pasternak
Councillor | York Centre - Downsview

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905-832-5000 FamilyDentistryInMaple.com











7:30 pm, Sunday June 23rd, 2024 • Trinity-St. Paul's Centre • Toronto, ON

Celebrating 10 Seasons of Sharing Our Musical Adventure!