

Dear Listeners,

Welcome! We are in for a treat this afternoon with the intricate and adventurous stylings of “Café Music” by Winnipeg’s own Borealis Piano Trio. Minna Rose Chung, Judy Kehler Siebert, and Oleg Pokhanovski are movers and shakers here in our community and around the world. They meet as a trio with a common flare for intelligent virtuosity. What a pleasure to have the chance to learn from their research and to be moved by their musicality this afternoon.

Today’s program of primarily 20th century music—including a world premier by Sid Robinvitch!—is written in beautiful styles and forms any classical music lover may enjoy. This masterful music by composers of a variety of cultures and communities eloquently expresses Virtuosi’s mandate to present canonic classical works as well as new commissions, unheard voices of the past and present, and composers who challenge the status quo.

A special welcome to violinist Elizabeth Seale and pianist Georg Neuhofer who are opening the concert as participants in our Young Artist Program.

Many thanks to our Executive Director Heather Lewis, her team of volunteers, and our committed Board of Directors who make this programming possible. A special thank you to the Manitoba Arts Council for their generous support of this concert through a project grant.

With a fresh perspective, Virtuosi Concerts continues our tradition of presenting unforgettable musical experiences for curious listeners.

Enjoy!

Sincerely,



Jennifer Thiessen
Artistic Director,
Virtuosi Concerts



Concert Etiquette

Good Scents Policy

Due to the allergic sensitivities of some of our performers and patrons, we ask you to refrain from using perfumes, colognes, hairsprays or other fragrances when planning to attend Virtuosi Concerts performances.

Electronics

Please turn off your cell phone. No recording or photography permitted during the performance.

Candies

Please unwrap lozenges before the music begins. If you are concerned about a persistent cough, please see us at the Patron Services table and we will try to accommodate a seat closer to the exit.

A little late?

Please wait at the rear of the Hall. Latecomers will be seated at a suitable interval.

Virtuosi Concerts

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We acknowledge the place in which we gather is on Treaty 1 territory, the homeland of the Red River Métis, and the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Ininiwak, and Dakota Oyate peoples and our water originates in Shoal Lake 40 First Nation Territory. Virtuosi Concerts acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

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P.O. Box 2982 Station Main, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 4B5
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A Message from our Board President

Welcome to today's Virtuosi concert, another exciting offering in our 2023-2024 season!

This afternoon, Virtuosi is delighted to present Winnipeg's own Borealis Piano Trio: Oleg Pokhanovski, violin; Minna Rose Chung, cello; and Judith Kehler Siebert, piano. These three renowned musicians formed the Trio after meeting at the University of Manitoba's Desautels Faculty of Music, where they guide and teach new generations of talented performers.

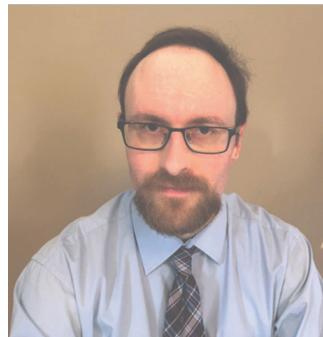
Today, the Trio brings to us a lively and varied program inspired by the café music of Buenos Aires, the markets of Marrakesh, the island of Bali, and many other musical destinations around the world. Their chosen selections include pieces by Astor Piazzolla, Christos Hatzis, Georgy Sviridov, Paul Schoenfield and Alexander Rosenblatt, and a world premiere by celebrated Manitoba-based composer Sid Robinovitch. Our concert also features multi-talented Winnipeg soprano Sophie Caron, performing an enchanting work by pioneering 1930s African-American composer, Florence Price.

Virtuosi Concerts deeply appreciates the unwavering support and patronage of our wonderful audience, our funding organizations, and individual donors. We particularly acknowledge the Manitoba Arts Council, whose generous support made this concert possible. We thank our Artistic Director Jennifer Thiessen, Executive Director Heather Lewis, and our Board of Directors for their hard work and leadership. Their commitment to excellence has resulted in an outstanding programme we will enjoy today.

Thank you for attending today's event, and we look forward to seeing you at our season-closing concert in May!

Paul R.J. McCulloch

Paul R.J. McCulloch
*Board President,
Virtuosi Concerts*



Café Music

The Borealis Trio



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VIRTUOSI CONCERTS YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM

ELIZABETH SEALE, violin

GEORG NEUHOFER, piano

Sonata in G Minor, L. 140

II. Intermède: Fantasque et léger

III. Finale: Très animé

Claude Debussy

(1862–1918)

CAFÉ MUSIC

BOREALIS PIANO TRIO

**OLEG POKHANOVSKI, violin, MINNA ROSE CHUNG, cello,
& JUDITH KEHLER SIEBERT, piano**

With special guest SOPHIE CARON, soprano

Primavara-Spring (1969)

Astor Piazzolla

(1921–1992)

Arr. Jose Bragato

Romance (1975)

Georgy Sviridov

(1915–1998)

Arr. Oleg Pokhanovski

Night (1946)

Florence Price

(1887–1953)

Sophie Caron, soprano

Canción y Danza No. 6

Frederico Mompou

(1893–1987)

Judith Kehler Siebert, piano

Suite scaramouche - III. Brasileira

Darius Milhaud

(1892–1974)

Oleg Pokhanovski, violin; Judith Kehler Siebert, piano

Moods op.73

Edvard Grieg

II. Scherzo-Impromptu

(1843–1907)

Oleg Pokhanovski, violin; Judith Kehler Siebert, piano

Suite Brasileiras

André Mehvari

IV. La Valse

(b.1977)

Minna Rose Chung, cello; Judith Kehler Siebert, piano

Old Photographs (2000)

Christos Hatzis
(b. 1953)

INTERMISSION

Café Music (1987)

I. Allegro II. Andante
moderato
III. Presto

Paul Schoenfield
(b. 1947)

Distant Places (2024)

I. Balinese Dream
II. A Stroll Through the Market in Old Marrakesh
III. Over the Lapland Snows

Sid Robinovitch
(b. 1947)

Tango (1993)

Alexander Rosenblatt
(b. 1956)

Virtuosi Concerts is grateful to the Manitoba Arts Council for their support of this program.



Performer Biographies



Oleg Pokhanovski: Violin

Oleg Pokhanovski stands as an embodiment of virtuosity, not only as a violinist but also as a pianist and arranger.

Over the course of his illustrious career, he has transformed more than 200 pieces for various instruments, including the violin and piano. Furthermore, he has graced over 2000 stages as both a soloist and chamber musician, garnering critical acclaim. Critics often draw parallels between him and the legendary Paganini, lauding Pokhanovski's playing as "brilliant", "phenomenal", and "extraordinary".

Pokhanovski's skill and dedication have led him to claim top prizes in 10 esteemed international violin competitions, such as the Premio Paganini in Genova, Pablo Sarasate in Pamplona, and the Scheveningen in The Netherlands. Notably, in 2022, he clinched the Gold medal at the Grand Maestro International Competition and the Platinum medal at the Trinity International Musical Competition.

Oleg Pokhanovski is a member of the Borealis Piano Trio (recently renamed from the Desautels Piano Trio) with cellist Minna Rose Chung and pianist Judith Kehler Siebert.

Dr. Pokhanovski is also in much demand as a pedagogue and presently holds the position of Professor of Violin at the University of Manitoba.



Judith Kehler Siebert: Piano

Whether performing as a solo pianist or chamber musician, Dr. Judy Kehler Siebert has connected powerfully with listeners in European concert halls, rural Canadian school gyms, Bosnian galleries, and venues from Lithuania to Mexico and Brazil to Alaska. She performed regularly in the early years of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra's New Music Festival where her interest in contemporary music ignited and expanded. A champion of new music, she has performed and recorded many original compositions, including commissions, at festivals and series around the world. Her passion is to communicate the many languages of music, and to spark a connection with others. She was a founding member of Quarks! Trio, which performed 400 concerts between 1989 and 2005. Currently she performs and tours most frequently with violinist Oleg Pokhanovski and cellist Minna Rose Chung as the Borealis Piano Trio, with Minna Rose Chung as the Nacka Duo, and in various ensembles with local and international partners.

After teaching appointments at the University of Manitoba, Wilfred Laurier University, Syracuse University, and Brock University, Judy returned to Manitoba for a position at Brandon University in 1997, and in 2002, to the University of Manitoba. A Professor of Solo Piano and Collaborative Piano at the Desautels Faculty of Music, she is tireless in her efforts to support, nurture, and encourage the next generation of pianists, from the university students in her studio to the young pianists and their teachers in the Paraguay Project, a collaborative initiative she leads with a group of Paraguayan universities and Mennonite music conservatories.

In 2020 together with colleague, Laura Loewen, she co-founded Dream Big, a dynamic academic conference dedicated to the art of collaborative piano. In February 2024, a second Dream Big conference brought together collaborative artists from across North and South America and Britain, which included an ambitious evening of performances in collaboration with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

Judy completed a Masters of Music in solo piano at the University of Toronto, and received her doctorate in Collaborative Piano from the Eastman School of Music (Rochester University, NY).



Minna Rose Chung: Cello

Korean-American cellist Minna Rose Chung is Professor of Cello at the Desautels Faculty of Music at the University of Manitoba (Winnipeg, Canada).

In addition, she is co-author alongside Hans Jørgen Jensen (Northwestern University, Evanston Illinois)

of the internationally acclaimed CelloMind: Intonation and Technique, a discerning pedagogy method praised for its “dense and fascinating treatise focusing not just on the left hand, but almost exclusively on the aspects underpinning the most minute gradations of intonation...it takes written pedagogy to a new level” (Strings Magazine, April 2018).

Chung performs with the Borealis Piano Trio and the Nacka Duo, which tour extensively in recital and lecture performances at world music conferences, primarily focusing on the art of chamber music. Currently within Winnipeg, Minna performs regularly with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra and enjoys performing in various music collaborations.

International tours include Canada, UK, Sweden, Germany, Serbia, Poland, Brazil, Asia and the USA.

Since 2008, Chung has been the director of Project Rio, a multi-collaborative program that supports the Rio International Cello Encounter (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), the second largest free music festival in the world through masterclasses and faculty performances in Brazil. To date, she has returned to perform across Brazil in over thirty recitals and concerto performances. She will be returning to Rio de Janeiro this August to celebrate in multiple performances for the 30th anniversary of RICE.

Dr. Chung is a recipient of multiple national awards in the creative field and featured in Strad Magazine “Teaching & Playing”, April 2018 issue. Her latest pedagogy initiative is devoted to the intermediate, amateur, and up-and-coming teachers in the revised and expanded publication of Fun in Thumb Position alongside co-author and mentor Hans J. Jensen.



Sophie Caron: Voice

Sophie Caron is a fifteen year old soprano and cellist, prizewinner in local and provincial festivals including the Winnipeg Music Festival where she was recently awarded the Alma Wynne Memorial Trophy, awarded for the most outstanding performance in a competition of vocalists, 18 years of age & under.

Sophie has performed with the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra as a soloist and as part of the Pembina Trails Voices for the world premier of 'Jonah' by Sid Robinovitch. She has been studying with Valdine Anderson, a Canadian soprano who has performed nationally and internationally, and is now teaching at the University of Manitoba, where Sophie is looking forward to pursuing a Bachelor of Music. Sophie enjoys performing as a soloist, in chamber groups, orchestras, and choirs. She is also winner of the Winnipeg Youth Orchestra's Scholarship Competition in 2021, and is currently studying cello with Dr. Minna Rose Chung.

Virtuosi Young Artists



Georg Neuhofer: Piano

Georg Neuhofer (he/him) is from Inglis, Manitoba and has been playing piano since he was six years old.

Georg has played at local and provincial festivals many times, attaining first place at the provincial festival in 2013 and placing four other times. Prior to studying music at a university level, Georg completed his RCM Grade 10 in piano while studying with Penny Menzies.

He is currently attending Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg and will be graduating in 2024 with a Bachelor of Music degree majoring in Performance and Education. Georg is studying classical piano under Shirley Elias and was recently awarded 1st place in CMU's 2023 Verna Mae Janzen competition. This accomplishment earned Georg the opportunity to perform with the Mennonite Community Orchestra, premiering a piano concerto composed for him by a Manitoban composer in November 2023. Georg also enjoys collaborating with vocalists as well as instrumentalists and has accompanied vocalists at several festivals. During the 2022-23 season, Georg served as a MB Opera Student Ambassador and is currently the assistant conductor for the Westwood Community Church choir. In addition to his studies, Georg teaches piano through the Community School of Music and the Arts. Georg is honoured to have the opportunity to open a Virtuosi concert as part of the Young Artist Program.



Elizabeth Seale: Violin

Elizabeth Seale is a fourth-year performance major at the University of Manitoba. She grew up in a small town in southern Manitoba, and music has been a part of her life as long as she can remember. Elizabeth was introduced to the violin at the age of nine, and it has become her passion, pushing her toward a Bachelor's in violin performance.

During her degree, Elizabeth has been pushed in her technique, musicality, performing, and collaborative ensembles. Beyond her studies, for which she is preparing her graduating recital, she is also honoured to serve her musical community through performance opportunities, and her students in constructive teaching. Her most recent projects include a production of Handel's Messiah, performing with Michael Bublé during his tour to Winnipeg in 2022, her third-year performance recital, as well as an upcoming performance with the Virtuosi Young Artist Program in April, 2024. Her most recent projects include production of Handel's Messiah, and the opportunity to perform along side Micheal Bublé in 2023.

During her degree, Elizabeth has had the opportunity to work with many mentors, such as Gwen Hoebig, Karl Stobbe, Dr. Judith Kehler Siebert, Dr. Oleg Pokhanovski, and many others. Working with these mentors has given her insight into collaborative ensembles, teaching and solo performing.

*Coming up, join us on May 12th at the
Winnipeg Art Gallery for pianist Claire
Huangci.*

Florence Price, Night

*Night comes,
a Madonna clad in scented blue
Rose red her mouth
And deep her eyes
She lights her stars,
And turns to where,
Beneath her silver lamp the moon,
Upon a couch of shadow lies
A dreamy child,
The wearied Day*

Composers

Astor Pantaleón Piazzolla (March 11, 1921 – July 4, 1992) was an Argentine tango composer, bandoneon player, and arranger. His works revolutionized the traditional tango into a new style termed *nuevo tango*, incorporating elements from jazz and classical music. A virtuoso bandoneonist, he regularly performed his own compositions with a variety of ensembles. In 1992, American music critic Stephen Holden described Piazzolla as "the world's foremost composer of Tango music". In 1925 Astor Piazzolla moved with his family to Greenwich Village in New York City, which in those days was a violent neighbourhood inhabited by a volatile mixture of gangsters and hard-working immigrants. He began to play the bandoneon after his father spotted one in a New York pawn shop in 1929. In 1930, the family moved to Little Italy in lower Manhattan. In 1932 Piazzolla composed his first tango, "La Catinga". The following year he took music lessons with the Hungarian classical pianist Béla Wilda, a student of Rachmaninov who taught him to play Bach on his bandoneon. In 1934 he met Carlos Gardel, one of the most important figures in the history of tango. Gardel invited the young bandoneon player to join him on his tour. Much to Piazzolla's dismay, his father decided that he was not old enough to go along. The disappointment proved to be fortunate, as it was on this tour in 1935 that Gardel and his entire orchestra perished in a plane crash.

Georgy Vasilyevich Sviridov (16 December 1915 – 6 January 1998) was a Soviet and Russian neoromantic composer. He is most widely known for his choral music, strongly influenced by the traditional chant of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as his orchestral works which often celebrate elements of Russian culture.

Sviridov employed, especially in his choral music, rich and dense harmonic textures, embracing a romantic-era tonality; his works would come to incorporate not only sacred elements of Russian church music, including vocal work for the *basso profundo*, but also the influence of Eastern European folk music, 19th-century European romantic composers and neoromantic contemporaries outside of Russia. Sviridov enjoyed critical acclaim for much of his career in the Soviet Union and Russia.

Florence Beatrice Price (née Smith; April 9, 1887 – June 3, 1953) was an American classical composer, pianist, organist, and music teacher. Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, Price was educated at the New England Conservatory of Music and was active in Chicago from 1927 until her death in 1953. Price is noted as the first African-American woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer, and the first to have a composition played by a major orchestra. Price composed over 300 works: four symphonies, four concertos, as well as choral works, art songs, chamber music, and music for solo instruments. In 2009, a substantial collection of her works and papers was found in her abandoned summer home.

Christos Hatzis (born 1953) is a Juno Award-winning Greek-Canadian composer. Hatzis was born in Volos, Greece and received his early music instruction at the Volos branch of the Hellenic Conservatory. He continued his musical studies in the United States, first at the Eastman School of Music and later at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo (Ph.D. 1982). Hatzis immigrated to Canada in 1982 and became a Canadian citizen in 1985. He composed music related to Christian spirituality, particularly his Byzantine heritage, and the Canadian Inuit culture.

In addition to composing and teaching, Hatzis has written extensively about composition and contemporary music.

He won the Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music in 1996. Hatzis won his second Juno in 2008 for his work Constantinople; it combined music and visual media and is musically eclectic, featuring jazz, classical, and eastern elements.

Paul Schoenfeld, also spelled Paul Schoenfeld or Pinchas Schoenfeld,[1] (born 1947, Detroit, Michigan) is a classical composer. He is known for combining popular, folk, and classical music forms.

He began to take piano lessons at the age of six and wrote his first composition a year later. He holds a B.A. degree from Carnegie-Mellon University and a Doctor of Music Arts degree from the University of Arizona. Café Music was commissioned by the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra (SPCO) and inspired by Schoenfeld's turn as house pianist at Murray's steakhouse in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It premiered at an SPCO chamber concert in January 1987 with Schoenfeld at the piano. The piece uses the influences that were used by the Murray's trio and these include a wide variety of genres such as Viennese, jazz, Broadway, gypsy, Ragtime, Yiddish and some light classical.

Alexander Rosenblatt was born in Moscow on 31st July 1956 as the son of a violinist father and a pianist mother. He studied at the Moscow Conservatory from 1975 to 1982 with Pavel Messner (piano) and Karen Khachaturian (composition). From 1983 to 1990 he gave lessons at the Gnessin Institute in Moscow. Since then, he is working as a freelance composer and pianist. Rosenblatt has composed music for piano, cello, chamber orchestra and symphony orchestra. His compositions range from classical music to crossover and jazz.



Sid Robinovitch: Composer

Sid Robinovitch is one of Canada's most versatile and popular composers. Frequently broadcast on CBC radio, his works have been featured by a large number of musical ensembles including the Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal Symphony Orchestras, the Elmer Iseler Singers, and the Vancouver Chamber Choir.

*In addition to his concert music Robinovitch has written for film, radio and TV, where he is probably best known for his theme for the satirical comedy series, *The Newsroom*.*

A native of Manitoba, Robinovitch received a Ph.D in Communications from the University of Illinois and taught social sciences at York University in Toronto. Since 1977 he has devoted himself to musical composition, studying at Indiana University and the Royal Conservatory of Toronto. He presently lives in Winnipeg, Canada, where he works as a composer and teacher.

While many of Robinovitch's works are rooted in traditional or folk material, they often have a distinctly contemporary flavour as well. Dreaming Lolita, for example, is a dramatic retelling in poetic form of the famous Nabokov novel, while in Psalms of Experience the choral textures are infused with elements of Balinese music and rhythmic chanting.

Robinovitch has received 3 Juno nominations for his recorded work. In 2002, Klezmer Suite, a recording devoted entirely to his music and performed by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Bramwell Tovey, received a Prairie Music Award for outstanding classical recording. Sefarad, a CD featuring his music for guitar, was released in 2008 on the Marquis label and received a Western Canadian Music Award nomination for classical recording of the year. His latest CD, Choral Odyssey, was released in 2012 and features the Winnipeg Singers under the direction of Yuri Klaz.

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A beautiful bunch!*



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