

# THE ALBERTA STRING ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



## May 2013: Spring Issue

### A Grand String Event in Grande Prairie

Learning and Showcasing with the Grande Prairie string community - A gratifying event for our growing Association.

### Members in the News

*Members Inspiring Youth - The Early Music Scene - Upcoming Events - Conferences - Symposium - EPSB Music Cancellation - And many more submissions by members like you!*

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### To Cellist János Starker (1924-2013) by Tanya Prochazka



The Guardian (UK) stated in May 2013 that "*János Starker, who has died aged 88, was a true aristocrat of the cello. Not only an impeccable virtuoso with more than 5,000 concerts and 160 recordings to his name, he was also a devoted teacher and passed on his technical and interpretative insights to students at Indiana University Bloomington for more than half a century.*" You can find many thousands of blogs, reminiscences, and tributes to this great cellist from students and colleagues from all over the world (one example: <http://tinyurl.com/klmaola>).

A giant of the cello in the 20th century, Starker was one of the last of the greats to emerge in the footsteps of Pablo Casals (b. 1876, d. 1973), along the likes of Fournier, Navarra, Tortelier, Cassadó, Rostropovich, Gendron, du Pré, Feuermann, Rose, Piatigorsky, Janigro, Maréchal, Nelsova, and Shafran. Imagine now the musical world without these giants, without their accomplished and passionate styles, or without the compositions that would have never been written without them, or without the splendid recordings they released and the students they trained...

I had the privilege to study with Starker, and played for many of his masterclasses or attended his seminars on cello playing in Australia, Europe and North America over a period of many years. As part of a graduate project with my chamber ensemble from Vienna, I studied intensively with him in Bloomington for one semester in 1975, and continued to receive instruction whenever we could meet in between concert tours. In 1997, the cello community of Edmonton was fortunate to learn directly from him in three days of guest masterclasses. Starker always said: "*Spread the word!*" to his students who were graduating and launching their varied careers. This we will continue to do wholeheartedly.



## **Our Very Active Grande Prairie Strings** *by Krista McLaughlan*

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It was a busy year at the Grande Prairie Public School District String Program: our hundreds of string students and 3 string teachers were involved in many concerts, Saturday String Club, Arts showcase nights, and conferences (two of our teachers went to the American String Teachers' Association Convention in Providence, RI), the local music festival, and - of course! - the ASA/EPSB visit.

Our high school students (all 88 and their 15 chaperones) toured the UK this year, performing every day (even outdoors, with snow falling...), developing a wonderful sense of ensemble and companionship. Our grade 4 and high school beginner students are hard at work preparing a showcase for peers and parents. All of us teachers are grateful for the opportunity to share the love – in the words of one colleague, “It’s my dream job”. I wouldn’t give this up for the world!

## **A Grande Prairie ASA/EPSB Extravaganza** *by Brooklyn Biegel*

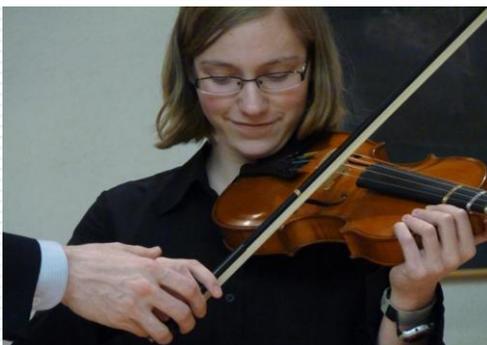
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February 22–24, 2013 was an exceptional and fun-filled weekend for members of the Alberta String Association and the Grande Prairie community.

What happened? To start, on Friday afternoon, at the Composite High School, GPPSD and EPSB orchestras joined for a fast-paced afternoon of musical activities: rehearsals, masterclasses and workshops with Guillaume Tardif, John Fedor, Ted Tessier, and Petar Dundjerski. The following morning, more orchestra rehearsals and masterclass instruction prepared that evening’s Strings Showcase concert. A great Saturday afternoon of string music was also presented at the Grande Prairie Public Library, featuring two young orchestras from EPSB (dir. John Fedor and Matthias Silveira) and various soloists from Grande Prairie in selections ranging in style from classical music to Celtic and Fiddle. The Library provided refreshments.

The weekend culminated with the 2013 Grande Prairie Strings Showcase, in front of a capacity audience at Christian Fellowship Assembly. Seven string orchestras performed in alternation with various soloists. A remarkable spirit of collaboration and enthusiasm was visible and felt among students, parents, and teachers, and the supporting audience. We are all grateful for the efforts spent by the many volunteers who made this this event such a success.

*Photos courtesy of Amberlin Biegel*



## Early Music Alberta Festival 2013 *by Josephine van Lier*

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Early Music Alberta held its third annual Early Music Festival on April 12-13, with renowned baroque violinist Elizabeth Wallfisch. The Saturday night concert at Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Edmonton featured a unique performance of the complete Rosary Sonatas by H.I.F Biber, with continuo accompaniment provided by Josephine van Lier (viola da gamba), and Marnie Giesbrecht (keyboard). A candle-lit church created the perfect setting for this remarkable and rare concert where the violinist faces a different scordatura tuning for every sonata (in this case adjusting two violins on stage, with Biber's own A=392Hz and 6th-comma mean-tone temperament).

Ms. Wallfisch had in the morning given a most enjoyable masterclass, commenting expertly on performances by Arlan Vriens, Daniel Gervais (both on baroque violins) and Miriam Ferguson (viola).

Sunday evening featured baroque-instrument performance of Purcell's opera *Dido and Aeneas* under the clear and empowering direction of Elizabeth Wallfisch. Purcell's *Abdelazar Suite* and string music from Matthew Locke's *The Tempest* completed this memorable performance. We are already looking forward to Mrs. Wallfisch's return in 2015!



## National Arts Centre's *Music Alive in Alberta* *by Daniel Gervais*

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As a teaching musician for the National Arts Centre's *Music Alive* Program, I had the opportunity to promote music education in schools throughout Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba (recently performing in ten AB schools in Beaumont, Edmonton, Calgary, Lloydminster, and Grande Prairie). NAC's program sends some nine teaching artists in Alberta and Saskatchewan to reach c. 9000 students in over 90 schools, this year presenting on the theme of 'Mozart, Family and Friends'. Not only did I introduce various works by Mozart and talked about his life and career, I could also ground my presentation around my own musical career and introduce cultural elements that I find very interesting, while enjoying interactions through discussion, sing-along, and even playing wooden spoons and my own (cherished)

Swedish **nyckel-harpa** (pictured, right). It is exciting to see students visibly thrilled by live music and interested in such a program that impacts our Canadian culture and inspires our future generations. The program sponsors Encana, SaskTel, and Total, should be thanked for this investment. Please visit [www.artsalive.ca](http://www.artsalive.ca).



## On Music Connecting People, Playing Together *by Martina Smazal*

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Music not only comforts the soul of the performer and the listener, it also connects people by evoking emotions which words could not fully express either between the performer and the audience, or between performers themselves. This makes ensemble playing so special, and that's why I place my students in ensembles in which they can interact with one another and communicate musically and socially with one another. They develop strong friendships and **important skills** (such as quick reflexes, grasp of musical structure and harmony, heightened focus, and effective teamwork, leadership and decision-making processes, and productive communication). Playing together means that we depend on each other, and for this a good amount of trust exchanged- not to mention the sheer thrill of playing and discovering the music together. Students and professionals alike are often inspired by one another in chamber music settings - and never cease to improve their skills in this sort of environment. I advise that students reap the benefit of participating in one or more ensembles alongside their private instruction programs.



## Upcoming Concerts & Events

**May 24, 2013** 7:30pm, Muttart Hall, Edmonton AB

Vaughan String Quartet: Works by Mozart, Shostakovich, and Rival. Formed by two Brazilians and two Italians, the quartet brings a new flavor to the stage. The group focus on the performance of pieces that are not well-known by the large audience as well works by the great masters for the genre. ([www.vaughanquartet.com](http://www.vaughanquartet.com))



**May 25, 2013** 7:30pm, Convocation Hall, Edmonton AB

The Wild Rose String Quartet: Company. An exploration of companionship and conflict in chamber works by Mozart, Haydn, Glass, and Archer. ([www.facebook.com/wildrostringquartet](http://www.facebook.com/wildrostringquartet))

**June 1, 2013** 8pm, Edmonton Moravian Church, Edmonton AB

George Andrix Plays Baroque Violin Music, with Josephine van Lier and Judy Loewen. The program includes works by Bach, Buxtehude, and Telemann. With special guest baroque violinist Daniel Gervais.



**June 14, 2013** 8pm, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Edmonton AB

The Strathcona String Quartet: Baroque Trio Sonatas

This concert will feature rarely heard trio sonatas by Purcell, dall'Abaco, de Fesch and finally Couperin's spectacular grand trio sonata "Le Parnasse, ou L'apothéose de Corelli (Parnassus, or the Apotheosis of Corelli). Featuring: Jennifer Bustin & Shannon Johnson, baroque violin, Josephine van Lier, viola da gamba/baroque cello.

([www.strathconastringquartet.com](http://www.strathconastringquartet.com))

**June 9, 2013** 2:30pm, Anglican Church, Jasper AB

**& June 16, 2013** 2pm, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Edmonton AB

La Folia ensemble: Vivaldi's The Four Seasons

Antonio Vivaldi's four seasons are among the most well-known and popular pieces of music of all time. It is a rare occasion to hear all of them performed in one concert. La Folia, Edmonton's baroque string ensemble, will be doing just that in on June 9 and 16 in Jasper and Edmonton under the artistic direction of early music specialist Josephine van Lier. ([www.lafoliaensemble.ca](http://www.lafoliaensemble.ca))



### A Baroque Presentation at the MCA by Chrysanthema Pashunkova

ARMTA is inviting violinist Chrysanthema Pashunkova and harpsichordist Christopher Bagan to discuss and demonstrate the interpretation of Baroque ornamentation at Music Conference Alberta in Red Deer, Nov. 1 – 2, 2013. ASA members are welcome to attend. Music samples will be taken from works by Marini, Geminiani Couperin, and Corelli. ARMTA acknowledges the kind support of Remenyi House of Music, Early Music Alberta, Long & McQuade, and Steinway Pianos of Calgary.

### 2013 Canadian Music Competitions by Guillaume Tardif

This year, I had the opportunity to be part of the adjudication team for the Montreal-based nationwide competition. The jury panel stopped for regional and provincial rounds in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Halifax, Ottawa, Kitchener, Toronto, and is now heading to the last provincials, in Chicoutimi, Quebec. The national level competition will take place in Sherbrooke this year. This important all-around test for the next generation of talented musicians usually attracts the most advanced students across the country, by age category (from 8 to 25 in strings, piano, winds, with many winners of yesterday's competition now evolving as leaders of their discipline today. There is indeed some remarkable, wonderful talent nurtured by exceptional teachers across this country!



Members - Please send updates! Your volunteer team is looking for content

**Next Newsletter  
Submission Deadline:  
August 25, 2013.**

The ASA is supported by



the and by members like you. Your donation to the ASA is tax-deductible!



## Breaking News: Violinist Luri Lee wins Shean Strings Competition *by Guillaume Tardif*

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I was also involved as a preliminary adjudicator for the Edmonton-based Shean Competition, a national strings competition. The candidates were evaluated in a blind process, via sound recordings. The final adjudication round was taking place May 17-19 in Muttart Hall and 6 candidates presented recital programs. This year's winner has just been announced: **Violinist Luri Lee** graduated from the University of Toronto, the Peabody Conservatory and the Glenn Gould School, attended the NAC Young Artist Program, Kneisel Hall, and The Banff Centre, among others. Ms. Lee made her Carnegie Hall debut in 2011 collaborating with Peabody faculty members, including cellist Michael Kannen. In the fall, Ms. Lee has been accepted in the prestigious Fellowship Program at the Glenn Gould School. As a fellow, her upcoming concert engagements include chamber performances collaborating with Barry Shiffman at the Music in the Morning in Vancouver, a part of the complete Beethoven violin sonata cycle with pianist Anton Kuerti and Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with the Royal Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Julian Kuerti. Ms. Lee plays on a fine modern violin made by Samuel Zygmuntowicz generously loaned by The Banff Centre.

## New String Instructors Join the University of Alberta Department of Music *by Guillaume Tardif*

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Violinist Yue Deng and Edmonton Symphony principal cellist Colin Ryan will complement the string faculty at the University of Alberta.



**Yue Deng** was born in Hebei, China. At the age of eight, she won First Prize in the National Violin Competition in China. She received her B.M. from the Oberlin Conservatory, and her M.M. from the Juilliard School. For two summers, 1998 and 1999, she attended the Music Academy of the West, studying under Zvi Zeitlin. She was the concertmaster and soloist for the Henry Mancini Institute in 2002 and 2003.

Roger Kellaway arranged and wrote an album for her "Both Sides Now". In 2006, she was the featured soloist in the tribute concert for John Williams and Ginny Mancini at Kodak theater. As a recording artist, she has recorded with Barbra Streisand, Barry Manilow, Diana Krall, Josh Groban, Johnny Mandel, Willy Nelson and Dionne Warwick, and on movie scores such as *Invictus* (2009) and *In Her Sleep* (2008). Her album with Jean-Yves Thibaudet

titled "Ogermann: Violin and Piano works" was released on Decca in 2007. She served on the jury for the strings competition hosted by American String Teachers Association and the Second and the Third Annual Henry Schwab Ventura County Violin Competition.



**Colin Ryan** graduated from McGill University in Montréal and continued his studies in the United States and in Europe. He was the Principal Cellist of the New Chamber Orchestra of Canada in Toronto before joining the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra in the same capacity. He has also performed with the Orford String Quartet, the Pacific Baroque Orchestra in Vancouver and the World

Philharmonic Orchestra, an orchestra comprised exclusively of principal players of orchestras from around the world. He has appeared as soloist with the Edmonton Symphony, the Alberta Baroque Ensemble, and other chamber orchestras in Edmonton. Colin was invited to join the National Arts Centre Orchestra for a summer season as Guest Principal Cellist and also plays baroque cello and viola da gamba.

## Upcoming Concert in Rome, Italy *by Guillaume Tardif*

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In early July, violinist Guillaume Tardif will be part of a Canadian delegation and perform solo selections at the Concert of Nations at the Accademia Filarmonica Romana Concerts in Rome, near the Pope's quarters. The concert is organized by legendary manager Ann Summers of IRCPA, and features the Borealis Quartet and clarinetist Kornel Wolak. Dr. Tardif is to present the famous transcription of Schubert's *Erlikönig* by Ernst, and *Aria* (1946) by Papineau-Couture. <http://www.sumarts.com/News.html>. Tardif will also perform a concert at the Beverly Hills International Music Festival, in early August.

## The New York-Cremona *MondoMusica* Violin Conference *by Guillaume Tardif*

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At this first large-scale event in March <http://www.mondomusicanewyork.it>, I tried instruments, talked to makers, dealers, bowmakers, string makers, attended performances and lectures and even participated in the blind *old vs new* violin test competition (in which old Antonio Stradivari did not make the top of the list...). To get a feel of the events, download the pdf - they are planning next year's event already.



## **Enterprise Quartet** by *Guillaume Tardif*

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Edmonton Opera presented Tchaikovsky's opera *Eugene Onegin* in late April at the Jubilee Auditorium. In keeping with the spirit of this event, the Enterprise Quartet performed the first in a series of partnership concerts with the Edmonton Opera. The concert involved soprano coloratura Zoryana Orlova and pianist Michael Spassov, with a program alternating songs and quartet music. In addition, the Enterprise Quartet presented its 'Souvenir de Russie I-III' series to introduce Tchaikovsky's three quartets from



the same period, along with Borodin's Quartet No. 2, Arensky Piano Quintet (with Russian-born pianist Maria Protodyakonova), and one of Haydn's 'Russian' quartets nicknamed 'the Bird'. The Quartet also immersed its audience in the spirit of Good Friday with Haydn's *Last Words of Christ* op. 51, on Good Friday at City Hall. Excerpts from Enterprise Quartet's many concerts will be posted online this summer, along with a schedule of Fall performances. See audience reviews at [www.enterprisequartet.com](http://www.enterprisequartet.com)

## **The Genius of the Violin** by *Guillaume Tardif*

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The Genius of the Violin project is well underway, with a Banff Centre video production draft completed. Take a look at some of our taped performances and interviews at [www.geniusviolin.com](http://www.geniusviolin.com). The project is a panorama of the traditions of violin playing and features performances by Daniel Gervais, Lizzy Hoyt, Clinton Pelletier, and Guillaume Tardif. A video documentary will be coupled with an educational and interactive web application, produced by Michael MacDonald.



## **Students attend the Delay-Starling String Pedagogy Symposium** by *Guillaume Tardif*

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University of Alberta doctoral students Vladimir Rufino and Fabiola Amorim will participate in this pedagogical get-together at the Juilliard School (May 28-June 1, <http://tinyurl.com/lczoel>). Their attendance will be assisted by funding from the University and the ASA. We look forward to their account of the events in the ASA Newsletter. The 2013 Artist-Faculty will include Itzhak Perlman, Jorja Fleezanis (Indiana University), Ani Kavafian (Yale), William Preucil (Cleveland Institute of Music), and Sylvia Rosenberg (The Juilliard School), with pedagogy classes and topics: Brian Lewis (U.T. Austin - pictured left), Katie Lansdale (The Hartt School), Michael McLean (The Colburn School), Odin Rathnam, and Giora Schmidt. On a related topic of sponsorship, the ASA also sponsored this year's 16-year old viola award at the Edmonton Kiwanis Music Festival.

## **EPSB Music Enrichment Program Cancellation** by *Guillaume Tardif*

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The ASA recently posted on its website: *"The Alberta String Association is extremely sorry to hear of the unexpected decision to shut down the Edmonton Public School Board Music Enrichment program. Many of our members will be directly and negatively impacted by this sudden decision of breaking a decades-old program so vital to our community. The ASA board is now following the situation closely."* As of today, the matter is still discussed by administrators and stakeholders, and media articles and a petition has circulated widely to reach politicians' attention. We posted media articles on our Facebook page as they became available. Articles at <http://tinyurl.com/ltx6c4o> & <http://tinyurl.com/bw8yod6>.

## **Announcing Youth Orchestra of Northern Alberta Sistema** from *Edmonton Symphony Orchestra*

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The Edmonton Symphony Orchestra has embarked upon a partnership with the Edmonton Catholic School District, the Rotary Clubs of Edmonton Riverview and Sherwood Park, and the Inner City Children's Program (ICCP) to inspire a sense of community and empower Edmonton's underserved youth through music education outreach. YONA-Sistema will begin as a three-year pilot outreach program launching in September 2013 with approximately 20 Grade 2 and 3 students from Mother Teresa Elementary School participating in an intensive after-school orchestra program (3-hour group instruction five days a week) led by qualified teaching artists at no monetary cost to their families. Staff members from the Inner City Children's Program, already well-known to the students, will provide additional after school care support. The free program encompasses nutrition and academic support and incorporates physical activity into free play time.

