

Songs from Toronto



March 21 & 22, 2024

Heliconian Hall
Toronto

Confluence
Concerts

Andrew Downing
Curator

A Message from the Curator

I'm one of the luckiest musicians I know.

My career as a musician has been based mainly in Toronto for the past thirty years, and being a bass player I've always had work (everybody needs a bass player!). And work usually leads to *more* work, and that usually leads to an incredibly diverse set of musical experiences that span many musical styles and practices. And many musical styles and practices lead to many musical communities. Many musical communities lead back to more diverse musical experiences. And so on, and so on.

One of my favourite communities is a loosely knit group with whom I've had the pleasure of working over the years as a musician, arranger, collaborator, and friend. They are songwriters with immense respect for the craft and art of connecting words and music into a perfectly shaped object that is more than the words, more than the music.

Tonight, we celebrate four of these songwriters and their songs: John Southworth, Lydia Persaud, Rebecca Campbell, and Justin Orok are some of my favourites. They represent the seasoned and the burgeoning, and draw from life in Toronto and in the world for their art. Joining in to honour their work (and the work of a few other local heroes) are three fantastic interpreters of song—Teiya Kasahara 笠原 貞野, Patricia O'Callaghan, and Maggie Keogh. To round out the team, our little “chamber ensemble” will lovingly allow the music to shine ... and I get to be in the midst of all of it. Indeed, I am one of the luckiest musicians I know.

— Andrew Downing

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land we are gathering on is the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabe, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit. As an organization dedicated to bringing artists and artistic traditions together, it is our duty and privilege to recognize the original caretakers of the land on which we live and work, to listen and to learn about how we can contribute to the spirit of reconciliation and resurgence, and to move forward in a good way.

Program

Pure Song of the Children	John Southworth
Charlie Meet Gracie	Justin Orok
I've Said It All Before	Rebecca Campbell
When Should I Speak	Lydia Persaud
Amethyst	Justin Orok
Loving You	John Southworth
Words for Her	Lydia Persaud
Three Beats	Rebecca Campbell
Life Is Unbelievable	John Southworth

INTERMISSION

Alchemy	Rebecca Campbell
Flowers for Displaced Alumni	Justin Orok
All I Can Do Is Try	Lydia Persaud
Burning of the Notre Dame	John Southworth
The Whole Way Home	Maggie Keogh / Andrew Downing
The Spark	Rebecca Campbell
Think of Me	Lydia Persaud
Honeymoon at St. Helen's	Justin Orok
Love's Magic	John Southworth
This Is What I Want	Mary Margaret O'Hara

Performers

Larry Beckwith
 Rebecca Campbell
 Andrew Downing
 Tania Gill
 Aline Homzy
 Teiya Kasahara 笠原 貞野
 Maggie Keogh
 Hoi Tong Keung
 Bevis Ng
 Patricia O'Callaghan
 Justin Orok
 Lydia Persaud
 Don Rooke
 Beth Silver
 John Southworth

viola
voice
double bass
piano
violin
voice
voice
vibraphone
vibraphone
voice
voice and guitar
voice
guitar
cello
voice

Our Artists



Larry Beckwith

Larry Beckwith has been a creative and varied contributor to Toronto's musical life as a conductor, violinist, singer, writer, educator, and programmer for over 30 years. He studied violin and musicology at the undergraduate and graduate levels at the University of Toronto, and has since performed and worked with most of this city's leading musical organizations. In 2003, Larry founded Toronto Masque Theatre, which under his tireless and imaginative artistic leadership from 2003 to 2018 presented over 70 innovative programs of interdisciplinary performing art, including a cycle of the five major music theatre works by Henry Purcell and stage works by Molière, Stravinsky, John Blow, John Beckwith, Monteverdi, Handel, Charpentier, and others. Through TMT, Larry commissioned and premiered new works by Canadian composers Abigail Richardson, James Rolfe, Omar Daniel, Juliet Palmer, Dean Burry, and Alice Ho, with texts/libretti by James Reaney, André Alexis, Steven Heighon, Pablo Neruda, Anna Chatterton, and Marjorie Chan. Ho's *The Lesson of Da Ji* won the 2013 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Best New Opera and was released on the Canadian Music Centre's Centrediscs label in a November 2015 recording conducted by Larry. Larry has appeared at a number of Ontario's summer music festivals, including Chamberfest in Ottawa, the Elora Festival, the Westben Festival, Toronto Summer Music, and the Festival of the Sound. In the summer of 2018, he conducted the successful Festival of the Sound world premiere and subsequent Ontario tour of *Sounding Thunder: The Song of Francis Pegahmagabow* by Timothy Corlis and Armand Garnet Ruffo; it was successfully remounted in the summer of 2022. Larry is a committed educator and runs the celebrated strings program at the arts-intensive Unionville High School in addition to conducting the Mooredale Senior Youth Orchestra.

Our Artists



Rebecca Campbell

Rebecca Campbell is a freelance singer, musician, choral and background vocal arranger, songwriter, live event producer and crew member, voice teacher, studio coach, choir conductor, board member, visual artist, and activist. She plays Stella guitar, percussion, harmonica, and melodica. But mostly, she sings. She is first and foremost an interpreter and a collaborator, creating music in multiple genres, up front and backup, on stage and behind the scenes. Whatever the setting, Rebecca brings passion, humour, hard groove, and a visceral musicality to all that she does.

She began her career in Ottawa, and has called Toronto home since 1996. She has performed alongside countless individuals and ensembles for four decades, on stages large and tiny, across Canada, the US, and the world. Her voice has graced the big and small screen, her choral arrangements have been performed by choirs across the world, and she has sung on over 140 recordings.

Notable musical collaborations include, in alphabetical order: Bec and Rusty, the Black Donnellys, the Bubbles, the Circumstantialists, Jay Douglas, Fat Man Waving, Lennie Gallant, Justin Haynes, Hold the Bus, King Cobb Steelie, Fides Krucker, Ronley Teper and the Lipliners, Microbunny, Lynn Miles, Walter Moffat, Meredith Monk, Parachute Club, Porkbelly Futures, Radio Dial, Ernest Ranglin, Royal Ottawa, Collette Savard and the Savants, Jane Siberry, the Skydiggers, Frank Patrick and Soul Medicine, the SPECIAL INTEREST group, Sultans of String, Ben Sures, Ian Tamblyn, Three Sheets to the Wind, Megan Jerome Together Ensemble, Isabel and the Uncommons, Carol Ann Weaver, the Woodchoppers Association.

Our Artists



Andrew Downing

Andrew Downing is a Toronto-based double bass player, cellist, composer, and educator who was born in London, Ontario, in 1973. He plays primarily in the creative jazz scene in Canada, but also performs classical chamber music, improvised music, folk and roots music, and world music. He practises the unusual craft of tuning his bass in fifths an octave lower than a cello. His teachers include Jack Winn, Dave Young, Don Thompson, Shauna Rolston, and Joel Quarrington.

His own projects span a wide variety of styles and practices. Most recently, he has started a “quiet jazz” ensemble of cello, alto saxophone, lap steel guitar, vibraphone, bass, and drums. Called Otterville, they released their first recording in the fall of 2016, and it was nominated for a Juno Award. It was also on the Longer List for the 2017 Polaris Music Prize. Their second record, *Lovesome*, was recorded and released during the Covid-19 pandemic, 2020–22. He also has a collaborative project in Istanbul, Turkey, with ud (Turkish lute) player Güç Başar Gülle, which incorporates Ottoman classical music in a collection of new compositions for ud, cello, percussion, and kaval (a Turkish folk instrument). Their first album, *Anahtar*, was released in 2013 to critical acclaim. He also collaborates on a multimedia project with Canadian songwriter John Southworth and visual artist Yesim Tosuner called Easterween, featuring songs written by John and arranged by Andrew for his seven-piece chamber ensemble. In addition, Andrew leads his chamber-jazz ensemble Melodeon, which plays live scores for silent films such as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, *Phantom of the Opera* (with choir), *Nosferatu Maciste in Hell*, *Impossible Voyage*, and *The Shock*.

As a composer, Andrew has written pieces for the Nordic folk group Ensemble Polaris, banjo player Jayme Stone, the Vancouver Bach Choir, Ensemble Meduse, Toca Loca, Ensemble Made in Canada, and Toronto Masque Theatre, and has written arrangements for Patricia O’Callaghan, the Gryphon Trio, the Annex Quartet, John Southworth, and the Art of Time Ensemble. He has won two Juno awards, one for his own recording *Blow The House Down*, with his former group Great Uncles of the Revolution, and one with the Vancouver-based group Zubot and Dawson. He has also won two West Coast Music Awards, a Socan Award, and the Grand Prix de Jazz from the Montreal Jazz Festival.

Andrew currently teaches double bass, composition, jazz theory, jazz ear training, and improvisation at the University of Toronto, and has taught at Wilfrid Laurier University, the Jazz Workshop at the Banff Centre, and the Creative Music Workshop in Halifax.

Our Artists



Tania Gill

Tania Gill has worked as a pianist, composer, improviser, and educator in Toronto for the past 25 years. She has developed a distinctive improvisational language in jazz and improvised music, and her unconventional versatility keeps her engaged in an eclectic array of styles. She leads the Tania Gill Quartet, and is a member of the Brodie West Quintet, The Titillators, and Susanna Hood Trio. She is a past member of bands that include the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band, the See Through Trio, St. Dirt Elementary School, and Deep Dark United; and has performed with such artists as Steve Reich, Anthony Braxton, Andrew Downing, Fides Krucker, and the Weather Station, among many others.

Our Artists



Aline Homzy

Aline Homzy is an award-winning violinist and composer based in Toronto. Her unique sound blends improvisation and through-composed music. Her influences stem from collaborators such as Juno- or Grammy-nominated artists David Occhipinti, Munir Hossn, Michael Davidson, and Allison Au. Aline's original music has been played by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and on multiple stages across the country, as well as at the Daegu Festival, South Korea, the Stockholm Jazz Festival, the Edinburgh Festival, and most of the Canadian Jazz festivals.

In 2022, Aline was a finalist for the Toronto Emerging Jazz Artist Awards. She was also awarded a Distinguished Fellowship from the prestigious artist residency, Hambidge Center for the Arts, in Georgia. Continuing with her deep relationship of music versus nature, she will spend two months in Taos, New Mexico, writing and creating music at the Helene Wurlitzer Residency.

Our Artists



Teiya Kasahara 笠原 貞野

Nikkei Canadian settler [Teiya Kasahara 笠原貞野](#) (they/them) is a queer, trans non-binary opera singer and interdisciplinary theatre creator based in Tkarón:to/Treaty 13, and was recently featured in a CBC short-doc [OPERA TRANS*FORMED](#). Heralded as “an artist with extraordinary things to say” (The Globe and Mail), Teiya comes from a background of over a decade and a half of singing both traditional and contemporary operatic roles across Turtle Island and Europe, recently having performed their critically acclaimed operatic-play [THE QUEEN IN ME](#) at the National Arts Centre, among others roles at Canadian Opera Company (*Pomegranate*, *Salome* cover).

In their practice they explore the intersections of identity through their original works such as THE BUTTERFLY PROJECT (Confluence Concerts; Toronto Summer Music Festival); LITTLE MIS[S]GENDER (2021-2022 Artist-in-Residence, Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies, University of Toronto); and RIVER ISLAND (in development with re:Naissance Opera), among others. Teiya is a co-founder of [Amplified Opera](#), an artistic associate with Confluence Concerts (*Dichterliebe: Whose Love?*) and long-time collaborator with re:Naissance Opera. More appearances this season include a recital with ChamberQueer (Brooklyn, NY), and the soprano solo in Verdi’s *Requiem* with the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir. For more information and to subscribe to Teiya’s quarterly e-newsletter, visit www.teiyakasahara.com.

Our Artists



KÖNG Duo

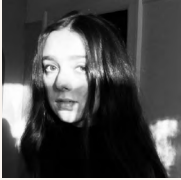
Photo by Bo Huang

Originally from Hong Kong, the award-winning KÖNG Duo (Bevis Ng and Hoi Tong Keung) is a Toronto-based percussion duo specializing in contemporary classical music. They strive to expand the possibilities of the genre through instrumentation and the incorporation of multimedia. In addition to thoughtful programming, they collaborate actively with composers to expand the percussion duo repertoire.

The Confluence Concerts Young Artistic Associates for 2023–24, KÖNG Duo demonstrates creativity in curating imaginative programs, with the hope of broadening their audience’s perception of percussion chamber music. As a reflection on home, KÖNG Duo curated a multimedia performance titled “good morning, hong kong,” which was debuted as the culmination of their summer residency at the Banff Centre in 2022. Following its initial success, KÖNG Duo was invited to present excerpts from “good morning, hong kong” locally at the University of Toronto’s Thursday at Noon Series and internationally at TROMP Percussion Eindhoven. In May 2023, they presented a new set titled “Percussion Music from Everyday Life” at Music TORONTO’s inaugural Celebration of Small Ensembles series.

KÖNG Duo’s composer-performer collaborations include Fish Yu’s *Frolic* (2022–23) and Stephen Morris’ *Shadows and Fire* (2022–23). Their key collaborative project, *Frolic*, by Hong Kong-raised composer Fish Yu, is a 25-minute multimedia extravaganza that features Hong Kong culture. It was premiered at Bevis’s recital in April 2023 and had its US premiere at New Music Gathering in Portland, Oregon, in June 2023.

Our Artists



Maggie Keogh

Maggie Keogh is a Toronto-based vocalist, pianist, and songwriter. She is known for her improvisational, inventive, and sensitive approach to music-making. Taking inspiration from a love of jazz and folk, and a curiosity about electronic music, she aims to create something uniquely her own.

Maggie has collaborated with and supported musicians such as Don Rooke (The Henrys, Mary Margaret O'Hara), Andrew Downing, Justin Orok, Lucian Gray, Kevin Turcotte, Harry Vetro, Scott Rogers, Louie Short, Sienna Dahlen, and more.

Our Artists



Patricia O'Callaghan

Soprano Patricia O'Callaghan, a Confluence Concerts artistic associate, is something of a wandering minstrel, having released six solo albums and participated in many interesting collaborations along the way. A speaker of French, Spanish, and German, her early recordings focused on European cabaret, but one of Patricia's unique talents is the ability to blend a variety of languages and musical genres seamlessly in her concerts, and to completely embody whatever style she is singing at any given moment. "This Toronto soprano can sing a 100-year-old German tune so lustily that you almost don't need a translation to know that someone's about to get his throat cut or get laid or both" (*National Post*). "O'Callaghan sings her diverse material as if it was always meant to go side-by-side and by the end of the evening, it's easy to believe" (*Chart Attack*).

Our Artists



Justin Orok

Justin Orok is a Toronto-based singer-songwriter and guitarist, best known for his unique narrative songwriting and sensitive approach on both steel string and lap steel guitar. His debut album, *Kanata*, was released in 2022, independently in Canada and under the short-lived Paraphenalia Records in Japan. The record garnered a small but passionate fanbase, and made multiple year-end lists abroad. It features many Canadian jazz/improvised/folk mainstays, including Justin Haynes, Felicity Williams, Christine Bougie, Andrew Downing, Michael Davidson, and Jesse Zubot, and was produced by Jean Martin (Barnyard Records, Tanya Tagaq). Listening to *Kanata* evokes the same comforting feeling as getting lost in your favourite collection of short stories. The characters leap from your speakers just as they would from the page: there's an adopted dog, the newlyweds, Dave and Gail, and the ghosts of a championship winning hockey team. Paired with gentle folk instrumentation, Justin builds 10 miniature dream worlds that you are reluctant to leave behind.

Justin was also a key member of the Toronto new-folk group Decoration Day. Their only full-length album, *Makeshift Future*, was nominated for a Canadian Folk Music Award in the category of "Pushing the Boundaries," and was featured on CBC's *Fresh Air*, *Indie 88*, and more. Outside of his original projects, Orok has performed as a sideperson with John Southworth & the South Seas, Andrew Downing, Holy Oak Family Singers, Kim Barlow, Roddy Ellias, and many others. He also works as a freelance media composer, songwriter, and music teacher.

Our Artists



Lydia Persaud

A fixture of Toronto's music community and a sought-after collaborator, Lydia Persaud embodies a blissfully soulful experience with her latest album, *Moody31*. Marrying jazz, R&B, and folk to create soul music in its most literal sense, her new record is described by its producer, Scott McCannell, as "Roberta Flack sitting in with Bill Withers' band at a folk festival."

Lydia has also had a colourful decade performing to crate diggers with the Soul Motivators (2011–15), to folkies at festivals with The O'Pears (2011–19), to rock nostalgics with Dwayne Gretzky (2017–present), to orchestral-based Queer healing and liberation with the Queer Songbook Orchestra (2019–present), and to the unabashed LGBTQ+ reclamation of country/pop music with Shania Twink (2021–present). Lydia has had the honour of opening shows for Jann Arden, Martha Wainwright, and Diane Krall; has toured as a support act for Canadian band STARS; and has shared the stage with Lee Fields, Gordon Lightfoot, and Justin Nozuka, among many others.

Our Artists



Don Rooke

Don Rooke is a Toronto-based guitarist who specializes in lap-style steel guitar playing, either acoustic (Dobro, National, Weissenborn) or electric (lap steel). He leads his own band, The Henrys, and has played on many other artists' recordings, as well as playing and composing soundtrack music for TV shows and series and for feature and documentary films.

Our Artists



Beth Silver

Beth Silver (M.Mus) is thrilled to be part of a community where she can thrive on her intuition and creativity. A lover of many genres, Beth is equally at home in a traditional classical ensemble as she is in a band, arranging, improvising, and exploring new voices for cello.

Performances with various chamber projects have brought her to manifold festivals around the world, including Salzburg's Kammermusik Festival, Ottawa Chamber Festival, Toronto Summer Music Festival, Toronto Jazz Fest, Scotia Festival, Glatt und Verkehrt Festival in Austria, Glasgow's Celtic Connections Festival, Festival Napa Valley, Ashkenaz Fest, Okanagan Indigenous Music and Arts Festival, Tirgan Festival, Biglake Arts, and KlezKanada. She has been presented across Canada by Jeunesses Musicales, Prairie Debut, and Debut Atlantic as part of the [Ladom Ensemble](#), which she joined as the newest member in 2017.

Her ongoing research in Jewish and Eastern European music has time and again brought her to Romania, where she spent months working with traditional fiddle players all across Transylvania. These residencies have also given way to collaborations with Cluj-Napoca's Jewish History Museum to uncover and resurrect Maramuresean Jewish musical archives. She is the recipient of grants from the Canada Council, and her awards include the Ben Steinberg Musical Legacy Award recognizing musical achievement in the Canadian Jewish community.

Our Artists



John Southworth

John Southworth's artistry and style of song are highly singular—combining elements of Art Song, AM-radio era pop music, traditional folk, jazz, classical, and Music Hall with literary, cinematic influences to create a uniquely poetic expression, liberated from temporal boundaries, trend, and genre. Since his 1998 debut orchestral pop album, *Mars Pennsylvania* (hailed as “the most original debut album by a Canadian artist since Mary Margaret O’Hara’s ‘Miss America,’” *Exclaim Magazine*), his musical vision has remained unwavering and ever-evolving, with over 10 genre-transcending albums released. This includes *Rialto* (2021)—an alternative, multi-platform project (album/book/podcast/film-show) arranged by Andrew Downing for string quartet, featuring seven other Canadian singers. Previous releases include the lied-folk *Miracle in the Night* (2019), *Small Town Water Tower* (2016), and the magnum opus double album *Niagara* (2014), named Album of the Year in 2014 by Rolling Stone Germany and Canada’s *National Post*, and “Album of the Decade” by Austria’s *Falter Magazine*. His most recent recording, *When You’re This, This in Love*, was released in May 2023 (Tin Angel). John Southworth’s songs have been covered by or written for such artists as the Weather Station, Basia Bulat, Kevin Johansen, Sarah Slean, Buck 65, Hawksley Workman, and Martin Tielli, among others.

With Thanks

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Jennifer Collins, Managing Director

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Andrew Downing

Teiya Kasahara 笠原 貞野

KöNG Duo:
Hoi Tong Keung and Bevis Ng
(2023–24 Young Associates)

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Suba Sankaran

*Patricia O’Callaghan is generously
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Visit our website to watch treasures from our vault of online performances from the past three years. We'll be releasing short videos regularly so check back from time to time. Or better yet, [join our mailing list](#) receive all of our news.

Available now:

[*I'm Your Man*](#) (Leonard Cohen), featuring Patricia O'Callaghan and Robert Kortgaard

[*O! Fair Cederia, Hide Those Eyes*](#) (Henry Purcell), with Elisabeth Hetherington and David Mackor

[*This Pretty Planet*](#) (Tom Chapin)/*Fragile* (Sting), with Suba Sankaran and Dylan Bell

[*Lush Life*](#) (Billy Strayhorn), with Alex Samaras and a cohort of outstanding jazz musicians

Coming Next



May 3 & 4, 2024

A gender-expansive re-telling of Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, including additional musical settings by his contemporaries.

Drawing inspiration from the original poetry of Heinrich Heine's "Lyrisches Intermezzo," *Dichterliebe: Whose Love?* takes us down a queer, chosen journey rather than the expected 19th-century lieder recital of Robert Schumann's music.

Co-curated by Confluence Artistic Associate Teiya Kasahara 笠原 貞野 and pianist David Eliakis.

[Dichterliebe Tickets](#)



May 29 & 30, 2024

A season-ending concert of our musical favourites.

Featuring the entire Confluence team

[Confluence Songbook Tickets](#)

Confluence Concerts is grateful to many agencies for their ongoing support and encouragement.