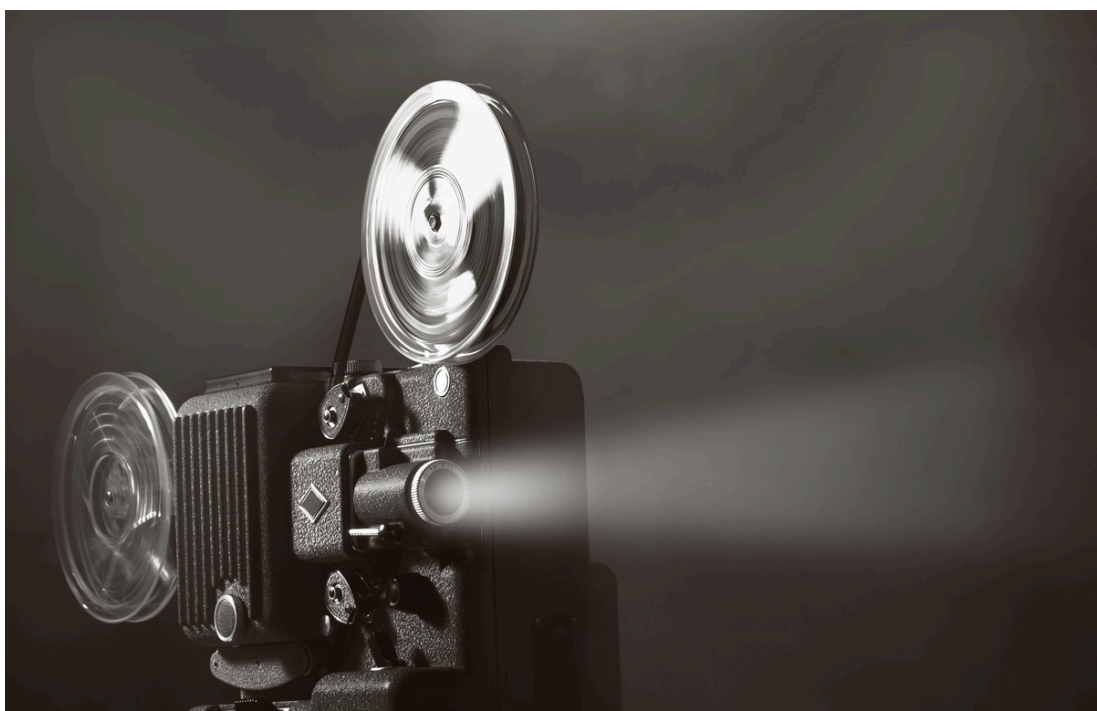




Not-so-Silent Film:
Phantom of the Opera



PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 16

The Arboretum
200 Arboretum Road, Guelph, ON N1G 2W1

GUELPH CHAMBER CHOIR
Dr. Charlene Pauls, Artistic Director
Alison MacNeill, Pianist
with
Robert Cooper, guest conductor
Christopher Dawes, guest organist

The Guelph Chamber Choir acknowledges and honours the land upon which we gather, rehearse, and perform as home to many past, present, and future First Nations. The people of Guelph reside on the territory of the “Between the Lakes Treaty No. 3”, which was signed between the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Crown in 1792. This acknowledgement of the land is a declaration of our collective responsibility to this place and its peoples’ histories, rights, and presence.



MUSIC FOR PHANTOM

Our guest conductor, Robert Cooper, curated the music for this evening's film soundtrack and wrote the following about his selection of music for "Phantom of the Opera":

"Set in Paris' grandiloquent opera house, the magnificent Palais Garnier, "Phantom" opens with the debut of a new season at the Paris Opera: Gounod's Faust is being performed. Immediately, we are taken through the splendour of the opera hall's grand staircase and into the Chagall-festooned theatre. The house is full, and the large pit orchestra and busy stage action thrust us into the Romantic world of French grand opera.

"As the drama unfolds, we enter backstage scene shops, wings, the fly gallery, through trap doors to dressing rooms, and further into the darker world of the catacombs, tunnels and sewers that lie beneath the spectacle above.

"With these visual riches in mind, the world of French opera and some of its greatest composers – Gluck, Gounod, Bizet, and Saint-Saëns, along with Boito and Tchaikovsky – became my sources for complementary background music to the film. In addition, further works by more traditional choral composers – Lauridsen, Morricone, Ravel, Sisask, Orff, Stravinsky – were chosen to act as specific mood enhancers as the scenes shift quickly from comedy to intimate tenderness, from undercurrents of suspicion to overt tension, and from sorrowful empathy to high dramatic action.

"The result will, I hope, introduce you, our audience, to both traditional and non-traditional choral music, and allow you to hear and appreciate the innate emotional context of these scores in a new and different way through the medium of film."

The musical selections are listed in order. Guelph Chamber Choir is joined by the talents of Christopher Dawes on organ, improvising transitions between selections (a staple of silent films in many early movie theatres) and our own Alison McNeill on piano.

"Poor, unhappy Erik! Shall we pity him? Shall we curse him? He asked only to be 'someone,' like everybody else. But he was too ugly! And he had to hide his genius or use it to play tricks with, when, with an ordinary face, he would have been one of the most distinguished of mankind! He had a heart that could have held the empire of the world; and in the end had to content himself with a cellar. Surely we must pity the Opera ghost!"

— *Gaston Leroux, The Phantom of the Opera*

PROGRAM

<i>Oremus (from Gloria Patri)</i>	Urmas Sisask
<i>"Ainsi que la brise légère" (Faust)</i>	Charles Gounod
<i>Oremus</i>	Urmas Sisask
<i>"Ange purs, anges radieux" (Faust)</i>	Charles Gounod
<i>"Trois beaux oiseaux du Paradis"</i> <i>Karla Oxley, soprano; Lexi Michaelidis, mezzo-soprano; Lanny Fleming, tenor; Eran Rozenszain, baritone</i>	Maurice Ravel
<i>Jewel Song (from Faust)</i> <i>Rebecca McKay, soprano</i>	Charles Gounod
<i>"Miser Catulli" (Catulli Carmina)</i>	Carl Orff
<i>"Viens dans ce séjour paisible" (Orphée et Eurydice)</i>	Christoph Willibald Gluck
<i>Nella Fantasia</i> <i>Karla Oxley, soprano</i>	Ennio Morricone arr. Audrey Snyder
<i>"Dies Irae" (Requiem)</i>	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
<i>Waltz (Eugene Onegin)</i>	Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
<i>Sure on this Shining Night</i>	Morten Lauridsen
<i>"Gloire a Dagon" (Samson e Dalilah)</i> <i>Rebecca McKay, soprano; Eran Rozenszain, baritone</i>	Camille Saint-Saëns
<i>"Il était un roi de Thulé" (Faust)</i> <i>Rebecca McKay, soprano</i>	Charles Gounod
<i>"Quelle voix nous appelle?" (Les Pêcheurs de Perles)</i> <i>Eran Rozenszain, baritone</i>	Georges Bizet
<i>"Exaudi" and "Laudate" (Symphony of Psalms)</i>	Igor Stravinsky
<i>"Ave Signor, Signor Egli Angeli" (Mefistofele)</i>	Arrigo Boito

PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Within the catacombs of the Paris Opera is a resident phantom who demands tribute in the form of his own private box for every performance, and when crossed, tends to leave a trail of strangled bodies. The phantom's desire has turned to a beautiful, understudy soprano, Christine (Mary Philpin), who is also the lover of nobleman, Raoul (Norman Kerry). A spectral music teacher promises to make Christine the prima donna of the opera, and as she becomes increasingly drawn to the allure of this mysterious presence, Raoul feels increasingly jealous.

It turns out that her music teacher is the masked Erik (Lon Chaney), aka The Phantom of the Opera, who lures Christine into his underground lair, confesses his love and proposes. Christine cannot resist her curiosity and against Erik's wishes, unmask him. We all know how well that goes.

The terrified Christine rushes back to Raoul, but before they can run away together, Erik kidnaps and imprisons her, threatening to blow up the entire Paris Opera if she does not agree to marry. Raoul attempts a rescue, assisted by a mysterious secret policeman (Arthur Edmund Carewe) but soon falls victim to one of Erik's deadly traps and almost dies.

As an angry mob descends into the depths of the Opera House, Erik abducts Christine and escapes above ground, madly careening his carriage through the streets of Paris. As the horde pursues, Christine escapes, and the Phantom finally meets his demise on the banks of the Seine, where he is torn to pieces before being dumped into the river.

A few unusual words to clarify...

A "**barouche**" is four-wheeled horse-drawn carriage.

A "**Punjab lasso**" is a rope knot that was used by group of assassins in the Punjab, known as *Thugees* (the word 'thug' is also of this origin).

"If I am the phantom, it is because man's hatred has made me so.
If I am to be saved it is because your love redeems me." (Erik)

— *Gaston Leroux, The Phantom of the Opera*

THE STORY BEHIND THE MOVIE

“Phantom of the Opera” remains a beloved classic of silent cinema. Gorgeous sets and costumes, Lon Chaney’s charismatic performance, and the Phantom’s iconic makeup have cemented its place in film history.

Its origins trace back to 1922 when the president of Hollywood’s Universal Pictures, Carl Laemmle, took a vacation in Paris where he met author Gaston Leroux who gave Laemmle a copy of his 1910 novel “Le fantome de l` Opera”. Laemmle stayed up all night reading the book and proceeded to buy the rights immediately.

A new era of studio production was launched when filming at Universal Studios began in Hollywood in 1924. Whereas prior film sets had comprised of simple wooden platforms and muslin covers, a need to recreate the Paris Opera House and accommodate thousands of extras in the cast generated the construction of a full-size set built of steel and concrete, complete with trap doors and scene lofts to allow the movie-makers to stage an actual opera (this later became Studio 28 – home to many subsequent block busters such as “Dracula” and “The Sting”).



Other notable moments in the filming include the famous chandelier drop, which was created using an exact replica of the Paris Opera original – weighing 16,000 pounds and spanning 40 feet across. In order to avoid smashing such an expensive prop, the scene where the Phantom cuts loose the chandelier was filmed in stop-motion (watch closely and you’ll see this), lowering the massive construction a little at a time to just above the heads of the audience.

The Phantom’s red cloak was also a breakthrough moment in black and white films, with each frame hand-painted red to astonish the audience with a burst of colour.

The iconic look of Chaney’s Phantom is probably the most famous image of the film. True to his reputation, Chaney took meticulous care in creating his portrayal of the character – painting his eye sockets black, pulling the tip of his nose up and pinning it with wire, enlarging his nostrils with black paint, and wearing a set of jagged false teeth to create the iconic look.



“You are crying! You are afraid of me! And yet I am not really wicked. Love me and you shall see! All I wanted was to be loved for myself.”

— Gaston Leroux, *The Phantom of the Opera*

The scene in which Christine unmasks Erik was said to have made theatre patrons scream and faint, and has become one of the most famous moments in silent film, coming in at #52 in Bravo's 100 Scariest Movie Moments.

The other two leading roles were played by actors who have received far less critical acclaim for their portrayals of Raoul and Christine, Norman Kerry and Mary Philbin.

Stories around the filming indicate that Kerry had a less than stellar work ethic on set, which drove the perfectionist Chaney crazy.



Philbin also had her challenges. In a later interview, she noted, "I remember Norman Kerry very well. He was very naughty, on screen and off, but he was a very handsome and charming man despite his roving hands... They did the scene (at the top of the opera house) several times and he always found a new place to hold me. I could not react to this on camera... I finally had to take his hand and hold onto it to prevent it from wandering."

While watching the famous love scene on the roof of the opera house, you will see Philbin grab Kerry's hand in hers and pull it away from her back, exactly as she describes above.

This first adaptation of Gaston Leroux's novel, "Le fantome de l` Opera" remains the movie that inspired five remakes (in 1943, 1962, 1983, 1989, and 1990), numerous spin-offs or homages, such as "Phantom of the Paradise," and the blockbuster Andrew Lloyd Weber musical.



The production cost \$632,357 by the time the final print was previewed, including about \$50,000 in retakes. But it was, in the end, a box office success, earning more than \$2 million in revenue, one of the largest figures for any silent film.

And now, we welcome you to enjoy our special choral soundtrack screening of this movie classic.

[Program Notes compiled by Charlene Pauls based on articles by Robert Cooper and other online sources.]

GUELPH CHAMBER CHOIR



The Guelph Chamber Choir began in 1980 when a group of choral music lovers decided that Guelph needed a new choir dedicated to singing the finest works of the repertoire with skill and musical sensitivity.

Singers in the Guelph Chamber Choir represent various walks of life; their common bond is to foster community enjoyment and appreciation of choral music through performances, outreach, artistic collaboration, and community partnerships.

We remain an integral part of the strong musical heritage of Guelph. Our performances include repertoire from Renaissance masters to contemporary composers, from classical styles to Broadway and vocal jazz, and from unaccompanied choral gems to masterworks with full orchestra.

We often collaborate with other choirs from across Canada and within our own community. Our success has been recognized through a number of broadcasts on national radio and prizes in the CBC National Competition for Amateur Choirs. We have participated in festivals throughout Ontario and have toured Great Britain, Ireland, Germany and Sweden.

Dr. Charlene Pauls
Artistic Director,
Conductor

Alison McNeill
Pianist

* *Section Lead*
** *Emerging Artist*

Sopranos

Sarah Ansell
Havelah Carter
Jiyeon (Rebecca) Han
Jacqueline Kreller-
Vanderkooy
Rebecca McKay *
Melissa Scaramuzzo
Karla Oxley
Hannah Piercey **
Tammy te Winkel
Tricia Ward
Kate Wilson

Altos

Moira Ainsworth
Bailey Dugas
Laura Fleming* *
Enid Gough
Joanne Gonsalves
Megan Hodge
Lexa Michaelides
Paula Sather
Karen Slatkovsky
Susanne Schmidt-
McQuillan
Rachael Young
Alison Vicary

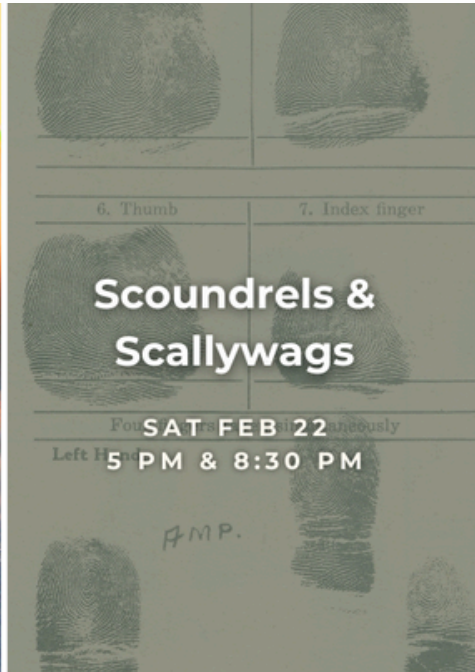
Tenors

Douglas Annett
Morgan Ballantyne *
Phil Buddle
Brad Halls
Lanny Fleming *
Dev Suresh
Rachel Schenk Martin
Mitchell Watt

Basses

Simar Basra
Dave Davidson
Brian Janzen
Eran Rozenszain
Graham Nancekivell
Neil McLaren
Maxim Levytsky
Matthias Schmidt
James A. Walke
Finn Steinke
David Wieler

GUELPH CHAMBER CHOIR



OUR PURPOSE

The Guelph Chamber Choir's choral music enhances the quality of life of those who experience concerts and performances. Choral music, as a form of artistic expression, enhances the health and well-being of individuals psychologically, socially, physically, spiritually and cognitively. The fabric of the community is enriched by this sense of well-being, artistic expression and life-long learning.



VISION

Inspired choral music to stir the human spirit.



MISSION

As Guelph's preeminent avocational choral ensemble, we aspire to inspire through diverse and innovative programming, excellence in artistry, and community enrichment.

DR. CHARLENE PAULS

Dr. Charlene Pauls has enjoyed a varied musical career as a choral conductor, soprano soloist, clinician, adjudicator, academic, and pedagogue.

Over the course of her career, she has directed a wide range of adult, university and youth choirs and has appeared as a Soprano soloist on concert stages across Canada and internationally in Germany, England, France and Spain.

She maintains a private voice studio in Oakville, Ontario, adjudicates for choral and vocal festivals, and presents research at conferences. Since 2019, Dr. Pauls has been the Artistic Director of the Guelph Chamber Choir. She is also the Associate Artistic Director of the 200-voice strong Oakville Choir for Children and Youth.

Dr. Pauls holds a D.M.A. in Musical Arts (Vocal Performance) from the University of Toronto. She received a Master's of Arts from McGill University, and undergraduate degrees from the Universities of Winnipeg and Manitoba in theology, piano and voice.



ALISON MACNEILL

Alison is a University of Guelph grad, and an Associate of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Piano Performance. After graduate work at the University of Western Ontario, Alison returned to her hometown of Guelph to teach and fully immerse herself in its thriving music community. She has been a familiar sight on the concert stage ever since.

Over the years Alison has accompanied a great number of choirs including The Elora Singers, the Guelph Youth Singers, and the Rainbow Chorus of Waterloo-Wellington. Her passion for choral music is reflected in her decades as the Director of the Music and Arts Ministry at Harcourt Memorial United Church, and as conductor of other local community choirs. Alison became the Artistic Director of the Rainbow Chorus in 2018.

She has been the accompanist for the Guelph Chamber Choir for about twenty years, frequently performing and touring with the ensemble. She is featured on two previous CDs of the choir: Songs of the New World, and Goode Cheare.



ROBERT COOPER

One of Canada's foremost choral musicians, Robert Cooper is Artistic Director of Chorus Niagara, the Opera in Concert Chorus, and former Artistic Director of the Orpheus Choir of Toronto.

He has adjudicated internationally, including the international BBC choral competition *Let the Peoples Sing*, as well as *World Choral Games* in China, USA, Russia and South Africa. In addition to his work with choirs, Mr. Cooper has been involved with the presentation of more than 150 operas and has conducted symphony orchestras across Canada.

For 31 successful years, Robert Cooper brought fine vocal and choral music to Canadian listeners as Executive Producer of Opera and Choral Music for CBC Radio Two. He has served as President of both Choirs Ontario and Choral Canada, was on the Board of Chorus America, the Advisory Board of the International Federation of Choral Music and Canada's representative to the World Choir Council. Recipient of the St. Catharines' Trillium Arts Award, Robert Cooper has also received the 2016 Distinguished Service Award by Choral Canada, an Honorary Doctorate from Brock University, the Order of Canada as well as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for his significant contribution to the Canadian choral community.



CHRISTOPHER DAWES



CHRISTOPHER DAWES is a Toronto-based concert artist, collaborative performer, conductor and consultant. He is a frequent collaborator with many of Toronto's top institutions and currently serves as Organist and Director of Music at Rosedale Presbyterian Church.

For two decades, he has served as Collaborative Accompanist and Coach to the graduate and undergraduate instrumental and choral conducting programs of the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto, and as a Director of Canada's Summer Institute of Church Music.

Since 2018 he has also chaired the Executive of the Southern Ontario Chapter (SOCHS) of the Hymn Society of the US and Canada. Chris's graduate work in the area of Music Criticism and musical genre has led to occasional blogging and podcasting under the banner "Ideas About Music," speaking at conferences, and eventually founding the Celtic-crossover band Chroí in 2013.

He has enjoyed a decades-long association with the Guelph Chamber Choir, and lives with his family in nearby Georgetown, Ontario.

Our Guest Artists are generously sponsored by Che Anne Loewen.

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