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From the New World

DVOŘÁK NEW WORLD SYMPHONY | RACHMANINOFF PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2 | KAUYUMARI

FEATURING **VICTORIA ZENG**, 2023 DVO-HAALSA YOUNG MUSICIAN AWARD WINNER
PREMIÈRE OF *THE STORM* BY **BENJAMIN FRASER**, 2025 DVO STUDENT COMPOSITION WINNER

CONCERT PROGRAM

Dundas Valley Orchestra
Laura Thomas, Music Director

DUNDASVALLEYORCHESTRA.CA | MAY 25, 2025

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Land Acknowledgement

The Dundas Valley Orchestra recognizes that we rehearse, perform, and gather today at St. Paul's United Church, on the traditional territory of the Chonnonton People, also known as the Neutral People. This region later became the shared territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We recognize that the town of Dundas, Ontario, lies within the bounds of the Between the Lakes Purchase, Treaty 3, signed in 1792, and we express gratitude to the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation as stewards of these lands. This area also lies protected within the "Dish with One Spoon" Wampum, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. This agreement provides an example of how Indigenous and Settler peoples can peacefully coexist, as we work towards reconciliation for the actions of our past and present. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to live and make music on this land.

About the Dundas Valley Orchestra

The Dundas Valley Orchestra offers amateur musicians the opportunity to experience the joy of performing orchestral music. Musicians of all ages develop their skills and share their talents through community concerts and free performances at local institutions, including retirement residences and long-term care homes.



Dundas Valley Orchestra
at St. Paul's United Church
29 Park St. W, Dundas, ON L9H 1X3

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Donations gratefully accepted.
The Dundas Valley Orchestra is a CRA registered
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Music Director

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The Dundas Valley Orchestra relies on donations to support the purchase of music and instruments, engage soloists, and rent rehearsal and performance spaces. We are deeply grateful for the generosity and support of our patrons and partners.

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Dundas Valley Orchestra, 2024

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Laura Thomas, Conductor



Laura Thomas is a conductor, arranger, composer, percussionist and teacher. In addition to being the Music Director of the *Dundas Valley Orchestra*, she is also the Artistic Director of the Hamilton/Niagara area *WomEnchant Chorus & Drummers* and Conductor of Hamilton's *Hope & Harmony* choir. Her past positions include Music Director of the *Niagara Youth Orchestra*, Artistic Director of the Niagara-based chamber choir, *Choralis Camerata*, and Director of the *Niagara College Jazz Band*. She is the Principal Percussionist of the *Niagara Symphony Orchestra* where she also served as Associate Conductor for thirteen years.

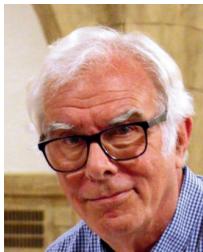
Ms. Thomas holds a master's degree in conducting from New York's prestigious Bard College, where she studied with Harold Farberman. She is also a graduate of Hamilton's Mohawk College and McMaster University, where she studied percussion and composition. She has performed with and conducted many orchestras and ensembles around the Golden Horseshoe and Southern Ontario.

A member of Niagara's popular eclectic folk/blues band, *BroadBand*, she also performs regularly with her *Vintage Jazz* ensembles. Her compositions and arrangements can be heard in the music of *Flutes en Route!* featuring Douglas Miller and the recordings and performances of *BroadBand*, *WomEnchant* and other ensembles. She has written for stage, orchestra, choral and jazz ensembles including a *Concerto for Jazz Trio and Orchestra* and *A Kinder Concerto* for students and orchestra. Her recording credits include the *Aradia Ensemble* CD for Naxos Records, "Ballet Music for the Sun King," the *Niagara College Jazz Band*'s "On the Move," Rich Blend's self-titled CD, *sisterLune*'s "Wonder," and *BroadBand*'s "LIVE at the Black Sea Hall" and "*BroadBand*."



Dundas Valley Orchestra, *Centuries of Dance* (2025)

Larry Allen, Associate Conductor



Associate conductor Larry Allen (B. Mus., B. Ed.) has been a member of the Dundas Valley Orchestra brass section under Dr. Glenn Mallory and Ms. Laura Thomas, and is pleased to assist Ms. Thomas in conducting the orchestra.

A graduate of the University of Western Ontario, Mr. Allen taught music for the Peel Board of Education, where he conducted concert bands, jazz bands

and choirs. During his career, a love of musical theatre inspired him to compose and direct the music for several original student productions.

After retiring from teaching, Mr. Allen played trumpet, keyboard and blues guitar in amateur bands, and has continued to pursue a life-long interest in songwriting. With his wife Sharon, he has written and performed sacred pieces for their church.

Victoria Zeng, Pianist



Victoria Zeng is a dedicated pianist currently studying with Lang-Ning Liu at the Phil and Eli Taylor Academy of the Royal Conservatory of Music. She is passionate about her craft and is always looking for new ways to deepen her understanding of music, both on and off stage.

In 2024-2025, Victoria will have the privilege of performing at Carnegie Hall in New York, Koerner Hall in Toronto, and The Meridian Arts Centre with Sinfonia Toronto, among other venues. Her musical achievements have earned her accolades in competitions like the Canadian Chopin Competition, the Hartford Chopin Competition, Music International Grand Prix, and the Classical Stars International Competition. She has also been fortunate enough to attend the Frost Chopin Festival, Vivace Music Festival, and the Inaugural Mannes Piano Festival on scholarship.

Victoria's musical journey has been shaped by the guidance of several renowned mentors including; Jeremy Denk, Vladimir Feltsman, Stanislac Loudenitch, John O'Conor, Stewart Goodyear, Marina Lomazov, and Dina Yoffe. Previously, she also studied with Alexei Gulenco and Tanya Gernburg.

When she's not at the piano, Victoria can be found watching *MasterChef*, skiing, or perpetually clearing out her phone storage to make room for her ever-growing photo collection.

Benjamin Fraser, Composer



Benjamin was twelve when his parents told him he couldn't be a Jedi when he grew up. So, Benjamin decided he was going to be a film composer.

Since then, Benjamin has worked as the composer on many short films including *Cash Cow* by Shubham Chhabra (2023) and *Where I Left You* by Kennedy Stevens (2024). Additionally, Benjamin wrote music for the Coca-Cola commercial, Auditorium 4, as part of the Refreshing Films program. He was selected to be part of the New Generation Film Composers program where he studied

with composer, Maria Molinar, and attended the Screen Music Program in Pavia, Italy where he studied with Alison Plante, and lectures from Carlos Rafael Rivera, Sonya Belousova, and Giona Ostinell.

Outside of film, his pieces have premiered in the Nocturne Halifax Arts Festival (2023) and the OpenWaters Festival (2024). As well as writing for the Alkali Collective (2023) and The Rostova Quartet (2024).

Currently, Benjamin studies Composition with Amy Brandon at Dalhousie University, where he received the Judith A. Grant Bursary from the Nova Scotia Talent Trust.



From the New World

Laura Thomas, Conductor

Larry Allen, Associate Conductor*

Victoria Zeng^

Program

Sunday,
May 25, 2025
3 p.m.

Aaron Copland

Fanfare for the Common Man

Gabriela Ortiz

Kauyumari

Benjamin Fraser

The Storm

Sergei Rachmaninoff^

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C-minor, Op. 18

I. Moderato

Intermission

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Op. 95 "From the New World"

I. Adagio – Allegro molto

II. Largo

III. Molto vivace

IV. Allegro con fuoco

"The Storm" by Benjamin Fraser is the 2025 DVO Student Composer Competition winning composition.

The DVO gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Student Composer Competition by Dr. Peter Banting.

Musicians of the Dundas Valley Orchestra

VIOIN I

Naomi Dore Brown
CONCERT MASTER
Erika Bellhouse
Mary Anne Peters
Ron Sealy
Deborah Kanfer
Margaret Jamieson
Nicole Morino
Andrea Bandow
Brenda Hurlburt
Robert Brooks
Dorota Borovsky
Sabrina Ghadaouia
Camille DiFrancesco*

VIOLIN II

Andrea Armstrong
PRINCIPAL
Rory Fitz
Claire Morris
Suzanne Lindsay
Margaret Sherman-Bell
Suzanne McNeill
Leanne Cherian
Jane Newman
Jennifer Walker
Joelle Laroche
Claire Lechner
Darwin Allen
Franca Barry
Rudin Knights*

VIOLA

Glenn Welbourn
PRINCIPAL
Jim Jones
Clement Ng
Irene Walker
Barry Seligman
Priscilla Harding
Amrita Akhand
Rachel Hutchings

CELLO

Saskia van Arragon
Gideon Bell
Mary Ann Bastien
Kate Lynn Robles
Lianne Tan
Lyndsay Cartwright

BAYA VERTES*

Hannah Ince*
Oliver Wesley-James*^

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David Little
Brian Liberty
Suzanne Bell

FLUTE

Seiichi Ariga
PRINCIPAL
Mika Takahashi
Tina Brook
Sharon Millar

OBOE

Homer Seywerd
PRINCIPAL
Scott Duffus

ENGLISH HORN

Scott Duffus

CLARINET

Stan Alama
Amanda Hellie
Michael Westwood

BASSOON

Timothy Fox
PRINCIPAL

HORN

Ian Kivell
PRINCIPAL
Andrew Lappin
Winston Munro
Linda Thomas
Steven Hewis
Erin Grant

TRUMPET

Jeff Reynolds
PRINCIPAL
Robyn Pitts
Barbara Gatt
Elizabeth Carbonneau

TROMBONE

Dan Grieve
Rick Harper
John Stockton

TUBA

David Pearson

TIMPANI

Simon Woodside
PRINCIPAL

PERCUSSION

James Locke
PRINCIPAL
Patricia Ward
Debi Sproule
Ian Kivell

HARP

Diana Hill
PRINCIPAL

COMPOSER IN RESIDENCE

Mark Thomas

*On leave

[^]Founding member

Dr. Sarah Baker Psychologist

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Dundas Valley
Orchestra an
exciting concert
and successful
season!

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About the Music

Aaron Coplan (1900–1990)

Fanfare for the Common Man

Copland's bold and sonorous brass and percussion fanfare was composed in 1942, originally intended as a tribute to the sacrifice of those fighting the Second World War. Copland worked through several different titles, such as "Fanfare for Four Freedoms", before arriving at a label which was more personal and inclusive. The piece was an instant hit, and Copland later incorporated the theme into the final movement of his Third Symphony. The fanfare has served as an inspiration for film and television music, including John Williams' "Superman" and "Saving Private Ryan", and "Star Trek: the Next Generation". As was their custom, the prog rock band Emerson, Lake, and Palmer also recorded a version; it rose to #2 on the UK singles charts in 1977.

Gabriela Ortiz (b. 1964)

Kauyumari

Kauyumari was commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, to celebrate their return to the live concert stage in 2021. The Kauyumari, "blue deer" in the language of the Huichol people of Mexico, is a mythical character with the power to connect the people with their ancestors and manage their world. Every year the Huichol celebrate the Kauyumari with symbolic gifts, to seek healing of the soul. The piece is characterized by complex underlying rhythmic patterns, with a driving repeated melody which evokes the vast western desert landscapes. It begins placidly, with a trumpet fanfare, an echo of Copland's familiar classic but grows in intensity, with brassy flourishes of a distinctly Mexican flavor. Ortiz was born in Mexico City and teaches at the National School of Music at the UNAM in her native city. She is composer in residence at Carnegie Hall this year, and received a 2025 Grammy Award for the best contemporary classical composition, for her album "Revolución diamantina" with the L.A. Philharmonic.

The DVO is grateful to Mary Ann Bastien (Cello) for her generous donation in support of today's performance of *Kauyumari* by Gabriela Ortiz.

Benjamin Fraser (b. 1964)

The Storm

Benjamin Fraser is the winner of the 2025 DVO Student Composer Competition. He is currently a student in Composition at Dalhousie University, mentored by Amy Brandon, who was the 2018 DVO Student Composer award winner. The Storm is a dramatic piece which evokes the suspense and tension of popular movie themes. According to composer Fraser, "I wrote The Storm in late October for as a school project and I challenged myself to write the entire piece in two weeks. I ended up finishing it in twelve days. The structure of the piece follows that of a storm, a darker tone for the opening and the ending, and a calmness in the middle to represent the eye of the storm. As I was writing this piece I had just finished the Stormlight Archive book series and I drew a lot of inspiration from the epic fantasy styles and characters."

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943)

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C-minor, Op. 18, Mvt. 1-Moderato

Rachmaninoff was born into a musically talented, aristocratic family in Tsarist Russia in 1873. He was a star pupil at the Moscow Conservatory, where he debuted his First Piano Concerto and one-act opera "Aleko", which earned praise from Tchaikovsky. However, Rachmaninoff's confidence was shattered by the hostile reception received by his First Symphony, reportedly badly performed by conductor Alexander Glazunov (who may have been drunk.) Deep in depression and mired in alcoholism, he took four years to complete the Second Concerto, which had been commissioned by the London Philharmonic Society for an 1899 performance, but which debuted two years later in Moscow. The Second Concerto was a wild success, and established his reputation as composer on the international scene. The first movement begins memorably, with the solo piano playing octaves; first softly, then progressively stronger, like the tolling of a church bell. The main theme, deep and resonant, comes from the lower strings and clarinet. A second melodic theme is introduced by the piano, with a climax of arpeggios. The movement settles into a march, and finishes with dramatic, fortissimo flair from the piano. A deeply emotional, romantic piece which has been an audience favourite and which can be heard in many movies of Hollywood's golden age.

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Op. 95 "From the New World"

In 1892, Dvořák was engaged as director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York with a generous salary, twenty-five times what he was paid as a professor in Prague. The Conservatory was very liberal for its time: it enrolled women and Black men as students. Dvořák's compositions were always grounded in Czech folk music, and he took it as his mission in New York to identify and promote an American folk tradition. He decided that the most authentic music of the New World came from African-American spirituals and from the Native American tradition, and that those should form the basis of a truly American sound. Dvořák approached a student at the Conservatory, Harry Burleigh (later one of the first African-American composers), to instruct him in Black spirituals.

On his arrival in New York, Dvořák was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to write a symphony, which was performed in December 1893. In composing the symphony, Dvořák sought an American flavor which was different from the Bohemian-Slavic tone of most of his earlier work. The influence is most strongly heard in the second movement, with its iconic English Horn solo simulating a slow, melancholy spiritual. In an interview after the concert, he stated that the energetic Scherzo movement was inspired by an indigenous wedding feast described in Longfellow's "Song of Hiawatha", which Dvořák had read. Whatever the inspiration, the New World Symphony is overflowing with sublime, unforgettable melodies and an astounding variety of solo voices. It was loved by audiences and critics at its debut, and remains one of the most popular and instantly recognizable classical pieces in the repertoire.

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Upcoming DVO Concerts



Peace

Sunday, June 22, 2025 at 7 p.m. | Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum 9280 Airport Rd, Mount Hope

The DVO and Chorus Hamilton will join forces again to present a peace themed concert at the Warplane Heritage Museum. The concert will feature Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* (Grant Us Peace), written and first performed in 1936 as Europe reflected on the horrors of the First World War and feared the possibility of a second. The performance will take place in the main hangar of the museum, surrounded by historical airplanes and educational exhibits. This special event is supported by the incite Foundation.

2025/26

The DVO presents The Nancy Cassels Christmas Chamber Music Concert

Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 3 p.m. | St. Paul's United Church, Dundas

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The Dundas Valley Orchestra is a group of over 75 talented amateur musicians that brings extraordinary musical experiences to the community through free live and virtual concerts. As a registered charity, the DVO is supported by our patrons, grant funders, donors, sponsors, and through voluntary donations from our audience and musicians of the orchestra.

Last year, we launched the Friends of the DVO campaign to raise funds in support of specific needs identified by the orchestra.

For the 2024/25 season, the campaign focused on funding the important work of our ensembles, which bring music to retirement residences and long-term care homes, and showcasing the DVO at community concerts and events throughout the year.

Thanks to your generosity, this year's campaign raised over \$2,400.

On behalf of the DVO, thank you to everyone who contributed to this initiative.

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