



Chamber Chatter

21 November 2012



Chamber Chatter columnist Don Anderson also writes the MCO's program notes

CONDUCTOR SCOTT YOO has been a regular and very welcome presence on the MCO podium since 2004. The musicians enjoy working with him, as he does with them. "And I really like the MCO people," he says. "It feels like a family. Managing Director Vicki Young and Concert Manager Boyd MacKenzie are two of my favourite people in the music industry, and I consider Concertmaster Karl Stobbe a real friend."

In his eight previous engagements, Scott has conducted music by more than 40 composers. The styles have ranged from Baroque (Bach, Purcell, Handel) through Romantic (Brahms, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Grieg) to recent (in some cases, newly-commissioned) works by John Adams and Alfred Schnittke. Canadian composers he's programmed have included Jeffrey Ryan, John Burge, Jim Hiscott, André Prévost, and Serge Arcuri.

Asked to name his most memorable MCO experience, he cited the tour of rural

Manitoba that they made together in April 2011. "We played for very receptive audiences," he said, "mostly people who don't hear live music that often. The program included a newly commissioned Canadian work, *Cantus Borealis: Song of the Forest*, by Winnipeg composer Sid Robinovitch. There was a lot of really genuine camaraderie with the musicians during that tour, including the chorus that sang the Robinovitch. And the country was really beautiful. It felt like being at the top of the world."

In 2007, Scott conducted the MCO in the world premiere of another Canadian work (and MCO commission): Jocelyn Morlock's *Nostalgia*. He's leading it again at this concert. "I'm happy to repeat it," he said. "There's a saying in music that it's almost easy to get your piece a premiere; it's lining up the second performance that's hard. I'm happy to do that tonight for Jocelyn. She's becoming a really big name on the world stage."

New music is vitally important to Scott. "It's not that we don't have enough music to play," he said, "but it's important for our culture to have music that reflects what's happening in the world to-

Manitoba Chamber Orchestra

Anne Manson / Music Director and Conductor

day. And it's not a bad thing for music to stretch one's ears.

After all, people were bewildered at first by Beethoven's late string quartets, and they've long been recognized as enduring masterpieces."

Scott has had an unusually thorough relationship with the Mozart violin concerto that's on tonight's program. He's conducted it, performed as soloist in it, and even worn both these hats in the same performance. "I know every part of it," he said. "These days I prefer conducting it for someone else.

"I've known Karen Gomyo for quite a while, and I'm a big admirer. I heard her when she won one of her very first competitions, back when she was 12 or 13. Even then, I thought, 'She's gonna be great!'

We've never worked together, and I'm really looking forward to it."

Scott was trained as a violinist. He was taken on by a major musicians' management company, Young Concert Artists, when he was 17. A year later, he was engaged to perform one of Bach's Brandenburg concertos with the Orchestra of St. Luke's in New York. Pinchas Zukerman, one of his heroes, was conducting. One day out of the blue, Zukerman said to him, "Why don't you conduct it yourself?" Conducting captivated him from that day forward.

Scott offered the MCO this fortieth anniversary greeting: "The MCO is a Canadian musical institution, and it's so gratifying to see it flourish. Here's to 40 more vears."



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Manitoba Chamber Orchestra

Anne Manson, Music Director 7:30 pm, 21 November 2012 Westminster United Church

Scott Yoo, guest conductor Karen Gomyo, Violin

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First violin

Karl Stobbe Mary Lawton Darryl Strain Shao Jun Rodica Filipoi Kristina Bauch

Second violin

Mona Coarda Barbara Gilroy Boyd MacKenzie Laura Chenail Julie Savard Louise Pauls

Viola

Daniel Scholz Richard Bauch Suzanne McKegney Merrily Peters

Cello

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