



2015-2016
OUR 59TH SEASON

ISTVÁN VÁRDAI, cello

ASSISTED BY
MARCEL BERGMANN, PIANO

WITH
THE JOHN AVISON CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
CONDUCTED BY MR. BERGMANN

FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 2016

About the Artists



István Várdai

Since his debut concert in 1998 in The Hague, the young Hungarian cellist, István Várdai has performed with major orchestras and in concert recital in New York, London, Paris, Prague, Vienna, Frankfurt, Munich, Moscow, Florence, Tokyo, Kobe, Beijing. Now for the first time he comes to the West Coast of North America with concerts in White Rock and Tucson, Arizona.

Since mid-2015 István Várdai has appeared in Budapest, St.Petersbourg, Oslo, New York, Geneva, Dobbiacho, and Bucharest. In July and August he will again be in Tokyo, Dublin and Jerusalem, and in October he returns to Vancouver to play for the *Vancouver Recital Series*. Clearly, Mr. Várdai, is among the busiest soloists on today's international touring circuit. Now on the Masters' faculty of the Kronberg Academy, and also artistic director of the Emanuel Feuermann Konservatorium, István Várdai is recognized as a leading figure among the world's younger cellists.

Born in Pécs in 1985, István Várdai was admitted to the famed Franz Liszt Academy at the age of 12. He studied in Vienna with Reinhard Latzko and participated in master classes with Natalia Gutman, János Starker, Natalia Shakhovskaja, Gideon Kremer, Yuri Bashmet and András Schiff.

He won the David Popper International Music Competition in Budapest three times (in 2000, 2003 and 2004). In 2006 he was awarded a special prize at the Grand Prix Emanuel Feuerman in Berlin as well as first prize in the International Johannes Brahms Competition in Pörschach, Austria. In 2007 he was a laureate at the International Tchaikovsky Competition and in 2008 at the Geneva International Music Competition. István Várdai plays a Montagnana cello from 1720.



Marcel Bergmann

For the last 20 years, Marcel Bergmann has enjoyed an active musical career as a performer, composer, improviser, conductor and teacher. Marcel and his wife Elizabeth are the newly appointed Artistic Directors of White Rock Concerts.

They are laureates of several international competitions, as the acclaimed Bergmann Piano Duo. Marcel has been nationally and internationally active as a soloist, chamber musician, clinician, juror, lecturer and vocal coach. In

2004/2005 Marcel and Elizabeth were Artistic Directors of the Murray Dranoff International 2-Piano Competition in Miami, Florida. From 2009-2013, Marcel was Professor of Music at Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ontario, and is currently Director of Program Advancement at the Langley Community Music School, where he also teaches piano, composition and chamber music. Marcel has written numerous works for two pianos, film, theater and cabaret productions, as well as choral and chamber music. Marcel's works have been commissioned by the CBC, the Murray Dranoff Int. Foundation, the Land's End Chamber Ensemble, the Spiritus Chamber Choir and the San Francisco International Music Festival. He is an Associate Composer of the Canadian Music Centre.

John Avison Chamber Orchestra

Conducted by Marcel Bergmann

Leader

Mark Ferris

Violin 1

Mark Ferris

Lawrie Hill

Rick Dorfer

Violin 2

Domagoj Ivanovic

Ken Lin

Viola

Manti Poon

Peter Ing

Cello

Harold Birston

Bass

Brian Arkell

Oboe

David Owen

Emma Ringrose

French Horn

Laurel Spencer

Nick Anderson



White Rock Concerts

Annual General Meeting Monday, June 6 2016

The Club House, 15550 - 26th Ave., Surrey, B.C.

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Message from the Artistic Director

Dear White Rock and South Surrey Musical Friends:

This is my last opportunity to greet you as Artistic Director of the White Rock Concerts series. I have had the pleasure and the challenge of helping maintain this programme for almost sixty years, and I could not think of better hands to whom to pass this responsibility than Elizabeth and Marcel Bergmann who now succeed me.

For my final concert, I am pleased to introduce the brilliant young Hungarian cellist, István Várdai, and also, it is another opportunity to bring you the John Avison Chamber Orchestra. You will be interested to know that the Vancouver Recital Series is planning to bring Mr. Várdai back to the Lower Mainland in October. We can proudly say that White Rock presented him first!

Clearly, White Rock Concerts owes its remarkable sold-out success to the strength and enthusiasm of a splendid Board of Directors, who have guided the series wisely and securely over the years. But even they could not have succeeded without you, the members. You have subscribed and re-subscribed, year after year after year, and in that way made sure that these concerts have a permanent place in the musical life of the Lower Mainland.

Together, we have all made sure that this series remains committed to its two immutable principles: maintaining the musical quality and excellence of each programme, and adhering to the basic concept that no single tickets are sold at the door. Everything depends on advance subscription. Look at it this way - the concerts are actually entirely free. They are available to all of you who acquire membership.

I want to wish you continued musical and membership pleasure from the series for many years to come. I shall look forward to being among you as an ordinary subscriber - helping, along with each of you - to make possible the ongoing success of this splendid (and quite unique) concert programme. We are indeed lucky here in White Rock-South Surrey, and I am honoured and proud to have guided the series through its first 60 years!

Sincerely,

George Zukerman, O.C., O.B.C.

Artistic Director Emeritus

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White Rock Concerts P.O. Box 45089, RPO Ocean Park, Surrey, BC V4A 9L1

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ISTVÁN VÁRDAI, CELLO

ASSISTED BY

MARCEL BERGMANN, PIANO

WITH

THE JOHN AVISON CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTED BY MR. BERGMANN

Suite No. 1 in G Major for Solo Cello BWV 1007 Johann Sebastian Bach [1685-1750]

Prelude - Allemande - Courante - Sarabande - Minuets I and II - Gigue

Pezzo capriccioso Op. 62 Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky [1840-1893]

cello and piano

Concerto No. 1 in C Major Hob.VIIb:1 Franz Joseph Haydn [1732-1809]

Moderato - Adagio - Allegro Molto

with the John Avison Chamber Orchestra

INTERMISSION

Rondo Op. 94 Antonin Dvorák [1841-1904]

Vocalise Op. 34, No. 14 Sergei Rachmaninov [1873-1943]

Fantasy on a theme from the opera Nicolo Paganini [1782-1840]

Moses in Egypt by Rossini

cello and piano

Andante cantabile Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky [1840-1893]
from String Quartet No. 1, Op. 11

Elfentanz "Dance of the Fairies" Op.39 David Popper [1843-1913]

with the John Avison Chamber Orchestra

Programme Notes

Suite No. 1 in G Major for Solo Cello BWV 100 | Johann Sebastian Bach [1685-1750]

Bach wrote his six suites for solo cello during the period 1717-23, when he served as Kapellmeister in the town of Köthen. They were revived and first recorded by Pablo Casals in the early part of the 20th century. Each of the suites consists of a prelude and a series of baroque dances.

Pezzo capriccioso, Op. 62 | Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky [1840-1893]

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky composed his Pezzo capriccioso, Op. 62, for cello in a single week in August 1887. Despite its title, the work has much in common with the Pathétique Symphony which was written only a few years later. The "capriciousness" emerges in Tchaikovsky's delicate and fanciful treatment of the work's simple theme.

Concerto, No. 1 in C Major Hob.VIIb:1 | Franz Joseph Haydn, [1732-1809]

The Cello Concerto No. 1 in C Major, Hob. VIIb/I was composed around 1761-1765 for Joseph Franz Weigl, principal cellist of the renowned Esterházy Orchestra. It shows Haydn as a master of instrumental writing, and already writing idiomatically for the cello. In his catalogue, Haydn referred to this concerto; but curiously, until well into the 20th century, the work had never been published and was presumed lost. Musicologists discovered a copy of the score at the Prague National Museum in 1961. Significantly, neither Beethoven nor Mozart wrote concerti for the cello, and not surprisingly, twenty years later, Haydn expanded the cello repertoire even further with his better known D Major concerto.

Rondo, Op. 94 | Antonin Dvorak [1841-1904]

Dvorák wrote his Rondo in G minor for cello and piano, Op. 94 in a single day in 1891. He had just returned from a tour with the cellist, Hanus Wiham, who had complained that there was a dearth of solo literature to show off the instrument and the soloist's virtuosity. Dvorak obliged and filled the gap. He was so pleased with the work and its many performances, that four years later when he wrote his cello concerto [Op 104] he also dedicated it to Mr. Wiham.

Fantasy on a theme from Rossini's opera *Moses in Egypt* | Nicolo Paganini [1782-1840]

According to legend, Paganini was giving a recital when one string after another broke, first the E, then the A, and finally the D, leaving him only with the lowest, the G string. Refusing to give up - or pause to re-string his instrument - Paganini is said to have improvised on his one remaining string. Perhaps recalling this traumatic moment, Paganini wrote his Moses Fantasy [originally for himself, to perform on violin] solely for the G string. Such restriction gave even the high notes a dark coloring that could lead listeners to believe they were hearing a deeper instrument. It is not surprising that violists, cellists and even double bass virtuosos have adopted this work. The Fantasy consists of an introduction and three variations.

Elfentanz [Dance of the Elves] Op.39 | David Popper [1843-1913]

David Popper was a prolific composer of music for the cello, writing four concertos, and countless smaller pieces including this ever-popular Elfentanz (Dance of the Elves). These shorter showpieces were written to highlight the unique sound and style of the cello, and he successfully extended the instrument's range to previously unknown heights. Popper is also famous for his book of Studies, used almost universally -

even today - by advanced cello students. Born in Prague in 1843, Popper made first tour as a virtuoso cellist at the age of 20. At a time when the cello was seldom heard as a solo instrument with orchestra, he was guest with the Berlin Philharmonic under Hans von Bülow. He toured extensively with the Hellmesberger Quartet, and settled in Vienna where he became principal cellist at the Opera. Later, on the recommendation of Franz Liszt, he headed the string department at the Conservatory at Budapest, where he appeared in many important chamber music concerts, including a premiere performance of one of Johannes Brahms' trios, with the composer at the piano.



The 16-17 Concert Season is already over 60% renewed.

- 1 | The Lafayette String Quartet | September 30, 2016
- 2 | The Poulenc Trio, Winds and piano | October 21, 2016
- 3 | André Laplante, pianist | November 18, 2016
- 4 | The Canadian Guitar Quartet | January 20, 2017
- 5 | Vancouver Chamber Choir | February 17, 2017
- 6 | The Gleusteen Duo, Violin/piano | March 10, 2017
- 7 | La Bohème - a night at the Opera | March 31, 2017

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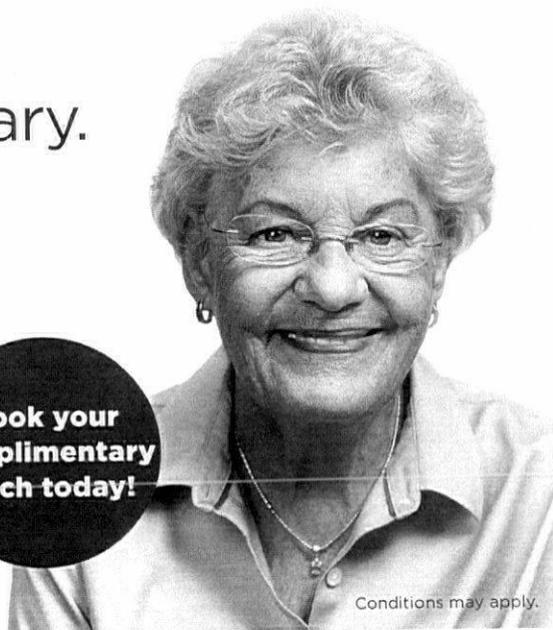


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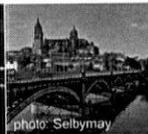


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