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Thank You



Sisters, Cheryl and Mary Pedersen (1967)

DR. MARY PEDERSEN

This concert was made possible in part because of the generous support of Dr. Mary Pedersen, physician, veteran, and philanthropist. Mary relocated to New Brunswick in 2021 where she continues to support her love of music and the arts. Her most recent contribution is in partnership with Symphony New Brunswick to honour her late sister, Cheryl Ann Pedersen Sutton. This piece is being composed by Heather Schmidt, virtuoso pianist and composer.

River Run is a reflection of Mary and Cheryl's childhood and adolescent days growing up on a potato farm in Four Falls, and their school days in Aroostook and Perth-Andover, New Brunswick. A life with ample exposure to New Brunswick's waterways often including travelling along, over, or on the Aroostook, Tobique, and Saint John River.

"This composition is a celebration of Cheryl's life. Cheryl was a truly kind and radiant woman whose joie de vivre was contagious and will now continue to live through this bespoke piece of music. My mom Marion (Murchison) Pedersen and piano teacher, Sister Marie Estelle, created the environment for the beginning of my love for classical music and it only gets better as I can now give back and support musicians and artists. After all 'music is the medicine of the mind.""

- Dr. Mary Pedersen

IN MEMORY OF

Cheryl Ann (Pedersen) Sutton

1956-2018



Cheryl Sutton (nee Pedersen) was a bright shining light in the lives of many, always positive and grateful. "How lucky are we?" was exclaimed with every new experience. Cheryl Sutton built a reputation as a longstanding pharmacist, champion athlete excelling in tennis and golf, avid traveller with favourites being Lake of Bays and Fiji, and true friend to all.

She was born in Four Falls, New Brunswick and grew up on a beautiful and prosperous potato farm. She was daughter of Nickolaj and Marion Pedersen. She studied at Dalhousie University in Halifax, NS earning a degree in Pharmacy. This led to a forty year career of which she was always proud. She continued her dedicated work up to her final days at Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket, ON.

Cheryl always demonstrated deep love, loyalty, and support to her family. She was present for every important milestone, overflowing with warmth and encouragement. Cheryl is sorely missed by her husband David; her two daughters, Krista and Kimberly; her grandchildren Frederick and Matilda; and her sisters; Mary, Joyce, Joan, Dorothy, and Nikki.

It all comes down to kindness. Cheryl approached others with an open heart, seeing the best in everyone. She would always engage with strangers, truly interested in their stories.

Throughout her time, she built lasting relationships with innumerable people of all walks of life around the globe. She was known for her sun-hat wearing, animal-loving, vegetable-scrubbing, nature-seeking, fair weather-skiing, fastest potatopeeling, out of rhythm-dancing, spritzer-drinking, fun-loving joie de vivre. She will continue to live on in the hearts and minds of all of those who were fortunate enough to have Cheryl in their lives.



Born and raised in Calgary, Alberta, Heather began her musical studies at the age of 4 and pursued double majors in piano performance and composition throughout her musical education. She studied at Juilliard in New York City and at Indiana University, where, at age 21, she became the youngest student ever to receive a Doctor of Music degree.

As a virtuoso pianist, Heather regularly performs as a guest soloist with orchestras – including exciting performances of her own six piano concertos – as well as in numerous television and studio recordings. She has received First Place in the Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition, and First Place, the Audience Choice Award, and the Maestro's Choice Millennium Foundation Award at the Canadian Concerto Competition.

Heather's extensive catalogue includes works for solo instruments, chamber ensembles, orchestras, and vocal/choral groups, as well as for film, television, and video games. She has received commissions from the CBC, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Alberta Foundation, the German Westdeutsches Rundfunk, the Elaine Kaufman Cultural Center, the New York State Council for the Arts, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and the Harvard Musical Association. Her accolades include three consecutive Broadcast Music Inc. Awards, SOCAN Composer Awards, the Zwilich Prize in the International League of Women Composers Competition, the Juilliard Composers Competition, and the Dean's Composition Prize at Indiana University, as well as a Juno nomination in the category of Best Classical Composition. She has held numerous composer residencies, including a long-term residency with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.

Heather has also written and directed four short films. Her feature film Dissonance is currently in development at A71 in Canada.

AMPLIFIED VOICES

Program

Maurice Ravel (1875 - 1937)/reduction by James Kalyn [2021]
Bolero

Heather Schmidt (b. 1974)

River Run Commissioned by Dr. Mary Pedersen in memory of her sister Cheryl Ann Pedersen Sutton

I. Lento

II. Vivace

Modest Mussorgsky (1839 - 1881)/reduction by Andrew Ager [2022]

Pictures at an Exhibition

- 1. Promenade
- 2. Gnomus
- 3. Promenade
- 4. The Old Castle
- 5. Promenade/Tuileries
- 6. Bydlo
- 7. Promenade/Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks
- 8. Samuel Goldenberg & Schmuyle
- 9. The Market Place in Limoges/Catacombs/Cum mortuis in lingua mortua
- 10. Baba Yaga/The Great Gate of Kiev

Program Notes

BY REID PARKER

Maurice Ravel - Bolero

The popularity of Ravel's Bolero is impressive. A favourite in concert halls around the world, it has also become one of the most often used pieces by flashmobs everywhere. It owes its allure to its rhythm, the repetition of two exotic Iberian-flavoured themes and a dramatic key change late in the work. Beneath the melodic line is a driving ostinato on the side drum repeated 128 times. The work gradually rises in intensity, reaching a great climax at the end usually leaving audiences cheering. Is it a minimalist work? No, but it certainly serves as a successful precedent for the school of minimalist composers who followed later.

However, the story of Bolero is far more complex than the music itself. Maurice Ravel, like Debussy, was a French impressionist composer who didn't like being characterized as such. However his music often evokes the hazy suggestive imagery so well captured by the French impressionist painters. His music was not always easy to perform, but he became regarded as France's finest composer of the early decades of the twentieth century.

Bolero resulted from a 1928 commission by the wealthy Russian dancer Ida Rubenstein who originally asked Ravel for an orchestral arrangement of Isaac Albinez's Iberia. But the rights to transcribe this music had been granted to another composer and, although Ravel was eventually given permission to compose the transcription, he decided to fulfill the commission with an original work. On vacation in St. Jean-de-Luz, a French coastal village near the Spanish border, he discovered the main tunes

of Bolero while noodling on the piano. Liking the character of the themes, he decided to write an orchestral piece based on repetition rather than on the usual symphonic development. A suspicion exists that the simplistic form of the work resulted from the early stages of progressive aphasia, a form of dementia which affected Ravel's expressive abilities and soon crippled the composer, prematurely ending his career.

The arrangement to be performed by Camerata New Brunswick was written by clarinetist James Kalyn of Ventus Machina.

Heather Schmidt - River Run

Throughout recorded history, humans have commemorated a lost loved one by commissioning a work of art, be it by means of the written word, a painting, a statue or a photograph. Unless produced by an artist of renowned ability, these memorials seldom serve as long-lasting tributes. Statues, even of the finest marble, are stationary in a mobile world; photographs fade and are seldom preserved beyond a generation or two; the poetic odes, if exceptionally well-written, may find a place in a dusty archive, perhaps later to be found by an enterprising genealogist whose research attracts little subsequent attention.

But, ahh! A great musical threnody! If well-written by a composer of international repute, the testimonial can survive forever and easily travel around the world where its original inspiration is captured by program annotators (like the present scribbler) and passed along to the next performance.

Symphony New Brunswick is honoured to have worked with Dr. Mary Pedersen in her commission of River Run, a remembrance of her beloved sister Cheryl Ann (Pedersen) Sutton (1956-2018) and written by one of Canada's pre-eminent composers, Heather Schmidt.

Cheryl Sutton was a woman many of us would have liked to have known. She was colorfully described in her obituary as "a bright shining light in the lives of many". "She was known for her sun-hat wearing, animal-loving, vegetable-scrubbing, nature-seeking, fair-weather skiing, fastest potato-peeling, out-of-rhythm dancing, spritzer-drinking, fun-loving joie-de-vivre", a tongue-in-cheek characterization suggesting the deep love felt for her by those she left behind.

Symphony New Brunswick fans became acquainted with Heather Schmidt in April when the orchestra performed her Symphony no. 1 ("Manufactured Landscapes") and we welcomed her to New Brunswick as she conducted workshops for young composers. Now she has written River Run premiered on this tour by Camerata New Brunswick. Inspired by happy childhood days growing up in Four Falls and Perth-Andover along the St. John River, the music commemorates the life of Cheryl Sutton. The first movement is a loving tribute and the second, a celebration of a life well-lived.

Modeste Mussorksy - Pictures at an Exhibition

Modeste Mussorgsky was one of five nineteenth-century Russian composers known as the "Mighty Handful" or the "Mighty Five". Besides Mussorgsky, the group included Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakoff (famous for the tone poem Scheherazade), César Cui, Mily Balakireff and Alexander Borodin, all of whom were self-trained and part-time composers. They celebrated Russia and Russian folk music in their music while rejecting strict adherence to the Germanic musical tradition. Their rival, Tchaikovsky, was trained in accepted musical practices at the Moscow Conservatory and, although he too used folk song in several of his compositions, the Five had little respect for him.

Pictures at an Exhibition was inspired by an exhibit of paintings and art objects by Mussorgsky's friend Viktor Hartman (1834-1873) organized as a testimonial to the

artist the year following Hartman's death. By Mussorgsky's own admission, the powerful opening "promenade" passage represents his own large bulk as he begins his slow walk through the gallery. He stops to examine ten of Hartman's works, each painting or object described musically.

Separated at times by variations of the Promenade theme as the composer continues his stroll, they are titled in order: "The Gnome", "The Old Castle", "Childrens' Quarrel", "Cattle", "Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks", "Samuel Goldenburg", "The Market at Limoges", "Catacombs", "The Hut on Fowl's Legs", then ending with a glorious and inspiring restatement of the Promenade theme depicting the "Great Gate of Kiev".

Mussorgsky's music was originally written for piano; and few piano works are its dramatic equal. But several composers couldn't resist scoring Pictures for full symphony orchestra. The most frequently-performed version is by Maurice Ravel, but this writer prefers an arrangement by conductor Leopold Stokowski written in 1939, even though it omits two episodes. The arrangement of Pictures to be heard today, written by Canadian composer Andrew Ager, has been previously performed in Ottawa and Regina. But, at Symphony New Brunswick's request, Ager altered the scoring for this concert to include tympani. Earlier this year, musicians from Ottawa's National Arts Centre Orchestra gave the first performance of this version.



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