



Cheng² Duo & James Campbell

THE Valley
Concert
Society

WORLD
CLASS
MUSIC

OUR 43RD
SEASON
2025-2026

Friday | 24 April 2026 | 7:30 pm

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*The Valley Concert Society supports a scent-free environment for the enjoyment and well-being of everyone in the audience.
No unauthorized photography or electronic recordings are allowed during today's performance.*

Programme

Piano Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 11

Ludwig van Beethoven

- I. Allegro con brio III. Tema con variazioni*
II. Adagio

Trio Miniatures

Paul Juon

- I. Rêverie III. Elégie*
II. Humoreske IV. Danse phantastique

INTERMISSION

Wood and Wire for clarinet and piano

Graham Campbell

- I. Blues III. Jig*
II. Ballad

Seguida Española for cello and piano

Joaquin Nin

- I. Vieja Castilla III. Asturiana*
II. Murciana IV. Andaluza

Clarinet Trio in A minor, Op. 114

Johannes Brahms

- I. Allegro III. Andantino grazioso—Trio*
II. Adagio IV. Allegro

Artist Profiles

Bryan Cheng | cello **Silvie Cheng** | piano

Rooted in a sibling bond that transcends the familial, the JUNO-nominated **Cheng² Duo** (pronounced *Cheng Squared Duo*) enchants music lovers worldwide with its impassioned expressivity, contagious joy, and instant rapport with listeners. Their performances have been described as “brilliant” (*The Sunday Times*, UK), “truly exhilarating” (*The WholeNote*, Canada), and “absolutely captivating...through a tremendous mastery of their instruments” (*Pizzicato Magazine*, Luxembourg).



Cellist **Bryan Cheng**, the only prizewinner of both the Queen Elisabeth and Geneva International Music Competitions in 40 years, and pianist **Silvie Cheng**, former Cecilia Concerts Musician-in-Residence and National Arts Club Artist Fellow, have cultivated a lifelong musical dialogue, forged in childhood and refined through years of shared artistry. Since officially founding the Cheng² Duo with their 2011 Carnegie Weill Recital Hall debut, they have toured extensively across the Americas, Europe, Asia and South Africa.

Recent and upcoming highlights include debuts at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango (Bogotá), Frauenkirche Dresden, Flagey (Brussels), Munich Künstlerhaus, Dame Myra Hess Series (Chicago), Chamber Music at the Clark (Los Angeles), Harvard University, Rockport Chamber Music Festival, Heidelberger Frühling Festival, Banff International String Quartet Festival; returns to Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts (Kingston), Ottawa Chamberfest, Salle Bourgie (Montréal), Chamberfest Cheboygan; and recital tours throughout Canada, Colombia, Ireland, India, South Africa, and USA.

In the vanguard of creative programming, Bryan and Silvie are equally committed to presenting traditional masterworks, rediscovering neglected repertoire, and championing the music of their time. Since 2013, they have commissioned and arranged 17 new works, and curated cross-disciplinary concert experiences that weave classical and contemporary music with





jazz, poetry, and visual/media arts. World-class collaborative partners have included photographer and cinematographer Edward Burtynsky, Mercury Films, and multimedia studio Normal.

Cheng² Duo's four critically-acclaimed albums include *Portrait* (Centrediscs, 2023), nominated for a 2024 JUNO Award in the category "Classical Album of the Year, Small Ensemble", *Russian Legends* (2019),

Violonchelo del fuego (2018), and *Violoncelle français* (2016). Born in Ottawa and Tokyo to Chinese parents, Bryan and Silvie's multicultural roots and Canadian upbringing inform their global musical outlook. They currently have musical bases in Berlin and New York City. For more information, follow @Cheng2Duo on social media.

James Campbell | clarinet

James Campbell was Professor of Music at the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University from 1988-2019. He has performed as soloist and chamber musician in over 35 countries with over 65 orchestras including the Boston Pops, the London Symphony and Philharmonic, and the Montreal Symphony. He has collaborated with Glenn Gould, Janos Starker, and Aaron Copland and toured with over 35 string quartets, including the Guarneri, Amadeus (when he replaced an ailing Benny Goodman) and Vermeer. Of his over 50 recordings, the BBC and *The Times of London* rated his recording of the Brahms Clarinet Quintet with the Allegri Quartet as the best available. A Juno Award winner, he has been named Canada's Artist of the Year, awarded the Queen's Gold and Diamond Jubilee Medal, an Honorary Doctor of Laws, and Canada's highest honor, the Order of Canada.

James has been Artistic Director of the Festival of the Sound since 1985. Under his direction the Festival has traveled to England, Japan, and the Netherlands and it has been the subject of documentaries by BBC Television, CBC Television and TV Ontario.



Program Notes

Piano Trio in B flat Major

Beethoven composed this work at the age of twenty-eight for clarinet, cello, and piano. He later adapted it for violin instead of clarinet. Clarinets were still a new instrument, and Beethoven was working out the possibilities and limitations of the instrument.

The first movement opens with a bold unison and works through two sets of themes. The gentle theme of the second movement is introduced by the cello. It resembles the melody he used two years later in his extremely popular septet.

The nickname acquired by this work, Gassenhauer Trio, relates to its third movement. It is a theme with nine variations. The theme was taken from a very popular opera aria of the time. People everywhere whistled and sang this tune. Gassenhauer is a term applied to street musicians. Some suggest that Beethoven was urged to use the melody in a work and that he later came to regret having done so.

Trio Miniatures

Paul Juon was born in Moscow in 1872 to a Swiss family. He studied with some of Russia's greatest musicians at the Moscow Conservatory. He became a teacher and composer, first in Russia, later in Berlin. He retired to Switzerland and died there in 1940.

The four miniatures were first composed as piano pieces. He later arranged them for a trio, thinking that wind and string instruments could better capture their emotional nature. They are some of his most frequently played works. The titles of the four movements clearly depict their moods.



Wood and Wire

Graham Campbell, guitarist and composer, is James Campbell's son. He is an established composer in a wide variety of genres. Wood and Wire is a jazz inflected piece in three movements for clarinet and piano. A new composition, it was premiered earlier this month in London, Ontario, by cellist Cameron Crozman and pianist Meagan Milatz.

Seguida Española

Joaquin Nin was born in Havana, Cuba, and died there, but he spent most of his life in Spain. This work, whose title translates as *Spanish Suite*, features a different region of Spain in each of its movements.

Vieja Castilla is a melody from the chivalric era in sixteenth-century Old Castille. *Murciana* is a stomping dance from the southern province of Murcia. The strummed cello imitates the sound of a guitar. *Asturiana* is a sad and moody piece from the northern coastal region of Spain. *Andaluza* is a passionate gypsy dance from the land of Granada and Seville.

Clarinet Trio in B Minor

In 1890, Brahms announced that he was retiring from composing. Then he attended a concert in which he heard a brilliant clarinetist play. He was so inspired he soon produced four works for the clarinet. He was especially fond of this trio.

Brahms uses the melancholy timbre of the clarinet to create a sense of pathos in this trio. The first movement is written in sonata form. The cello introduces each theme which the clarinet then develops. The long melodic lines of the slow movement create a feeling of peacefulness. The third movement is an easy-going waltz that is reminiscent of his Liebeslieder Waltzes. Energy and changing rhythms create a tumultuous finale.



About the Valley Concert Society

Beginnings

The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra was key to creating the society. They had been performing outreach concerts in Clearbrook with the help of some Abbotsford residents taking care of local arrangements. The symphony suggested that this group form a local society that would present programs offered by the symphony for a fixed fee.

On July 12, 1983, a group gathered in the home of Paul Moritz and elected an organizing committee with Paul as its president. On August 31, 1983, the BC Government issued the Certificate of Incorporation that made The Valley Concert Society a reality.

An intense campaign of mailing and phoning as well as advertising and fund-raising followed, all of it intent on procuring an audience and sufficient funding for their opening season. They achieved their goals with little time to spare, and the season opened with a chamber group from the VSO playing the program you will hear today. The rest of the first season consisted of two performances by the full symphony and a concert featuring the VSO's concertmaster Gerald Jarvis on violin and pianist Linda Lee Thomas.

A similar season was planned for the next year, but the society was not able to sell sufficient subscriptions, and the season was cancelled. They did receive a grant for \$500 and were able to present one concert featuring the Vancouver Cantata Singers.

A period of grappling with various organizational and promotional ideas resulted in a new beginning with a new format. Instead of relying exclusively on the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the society presented a variety of small-group performers. The Purcell String Quartet opened the season on November 1; they were followed by programs featuring the Vancouver Chamber Choir, pianist Robert Silverman, and the quintet A Touch of Brass. The VSO did perform once to close the season.

Forty Years of Outstanding Music

The Valley Concert Society has brought over 200 remarkable musical experiences to the residents of Abbotsford. The most frequent performer has been the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, which performed sixteen times in the first nineteen seasons. The Victoria Symphony and the North Shore Sinfonia also played three times each. Smaller chamber orchestras made frequent appearances including such outstanding groups as I Musici de Montreal, Tafelmusik, and the Pacific Baroque Orchestra.



Choral groups were often booked. They came from near—the Vancouver Chamber Choir, the Vancouver Cantata Singers, and Chor Leone—and from far—the Soweto Choir of South Africa, the Cuban National Choir, and the Little Eagles of Siberia. Smaller vocal ensembles included Chanticleer, QuintEssence, and Gesualdo Six. Some of Canada's greatest singers made solo appearances: Maureen Forrester, Isabel Bayrakdarian, and Ben Heppner.

Solo piano recitals included such transcendent talents as Robert Silverman, Janina Fialkowska, Charles Richard-Hamelin, and David Jalbert.

Classic chamber music repertoire held an important place in the society's history. The Shostakovich, Minguet, and St. Lawrence String Quartets all made memorable visits to Abbotsford. The Gryphon Trio played in Abbotsford three times, and the recent performance by Ehnes, Tsang, and Armstrong was unforgettable.

Other diverse strings made an appearance. Guitars came in solo, trio, and quartet combinations. Rita Constanzi performed on a solo harp while harp ensembles brought several varied programs, as did the Langley Ukulele Ensemble.

There were some definite favourites among the many brass groups that performed. A Touch of Brass, Foothills Brass, and Cosmos Brass played here a combined fourteen times. Less common were woodwind ensembles such as the Prairie Winds from Chicago and the Winds of the Southern Cross from Brisbane, Australia.

The diversity of performing groups was endless. The Sidestreet Strutters were a Dixieland combo, Acclarion came with a clarinet and accordion, Sal Ferreras performed twice with a percussion ensemble, Trio Voronezh brought Russian music, there was a concert featuring only a bassoon and a guitar. Chris Jarrett performed a piano accompaniment to the silent film classic *Battleship Potemkin*. The actor Colin Fox narrated a program based on letters between Robert and Clara Schumann along with music by a soprano and piano.

People to Remember

George Zukerman was never a part of The Valley Concert Society, but he looms as an enormous figure throughout the history of the organization. He was a critical contributor during the restructuring of the society in its third year by providing performers who were touring in the area. He himself performed in Abbotsford



more than once on his bassoon as part of varied groups. He came to the rescue on one occasion when the Kiev Symphony Orchestra did not come as scheduled, and he filled in with a program entitled *The Great Mozart Hunt*. He also narrated programs, including his last one in April of 2022 less than a year before his death at age 95.

Paul Moritz was the founding president of The Valley Concert Society and provided effective leadership for that intrepid group that had the vision to bring this kind of music to our city. He served intermittently in that position until 1997. The society recognized his important contribution by naming a bursary in his honour.

Lorna Keith was the longest serving president in the society's history. She assumed that position after Paul Moritz stepped down until her retirement in 2014. She guided the organization through the transition from the Abby Arts Centre to the Matsqui Centennial Auditorium as performing venues. The society named the endowment fund that it holds at the Abbotsford Community Foundation in her honour, a fitting tribute as she played a key role in establishing that fund.

Liz Carter was the last remaining charter member of the board when she passed away during the season in 2015. While not very visible publicly, she was enormously valuable behind the scenes. She chaired the committee that programmed each season. She was the Volunteer Coordinator. She was the House Manager. Liz had her hands on most of the organization's key functions. It was a considerable challenge to replace her many roles on short notice. The society honoured her memory by giving her name to its pre-concert talk.

VCS Contributes to the Community

The Valley Concert Society has two key elements in its mission statement. Providing concerts and other musical performances is the obvious one. The second is to support the musical education of young people in the community. The organization addresses this goal in several ways.



■ *Bursaries*

The Valley Concert Society has created two bursaries to be given annually to deserving music students in the community. They are named in honour of two founding board members, Paul Moritz and Marjorie Nixon. The value of the awards has increased over the years and currently stands at \$500. The society also provides a scholarship for the Abbotsford Music Festival named in honour of former board member Rudy Baerg at a value of \$200.

■ *Master Classes*

Since 2016, The Valley Concert Society has been holding master classes which give talented young music students the opportunity to work on a prepared piece of music with some of the artists that we bring to our stage. Piano students have had the privilege of working with such luminaries as Jane Coop and Charles Richard-Hamelin. In alternate years, string students have worked with the likes of Bryan Cheng, Nancy Dahn, and are working with violist Molly Carr this year.

■ *Performances*

The society has provided several opportunities for local music students to perform publicly. At its 25th and 35th anniversaries, it presented a concert of former bursary winners. This gave the audience the opportunity to experience the talent of these remarkable young people. The society has also programmed two past bursary winners in its regular season, recognizing their growth as musicians.

■ *Community Outreach*

In the season just past, The Valley Concert Society has initiated a new venture aimed at allowing various members of the community to enjoy the wonderful artistry of our performers. Axiom Brass played for seniors in a high-rise complex, and for children participating in a Day Camp at The Reach. This year the society is presenting an outreach concert to the community served by the Salvation Army. These concerts come at no cost to the audience.



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Valley Concert Society Membership

Valley Concert Society (VCS) is a not-for-profit society incorporated in BC.

We invite you to become a member of the society.

COST: \$10 per person annually

BENEFITS: Vote at General Meetings.

Invitations to special events.

Reserved seating at concerts.

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valleyconcertsociety.com

Upcoming 2026–27 Season

OUR 44TH
SEASON
2026–2027



Subscriptions can be purchased for all 6 concerts at \$150 for adults, \$140 seniors and \$60 for students. The Tickets for individual concerts will be available online at \$35 for adults/seniors and \$20 for students.

Pacific Baroque Orchestra Friday, October 16, 2026



Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* headlines a program of night music by one of Canada's most exciting ensembles under the leadership of Artistic Director Alexander Weimann.

Benjamin Butterfield Friday, November 20, 2026



One of Canada's leading tenors is joined by pianist Sarah Hagen to bring a program of two song cycles by the romantic Robert Schumann and the witty Randy Newman.

Fire & Grace & Ash Friday, February 12, 2027



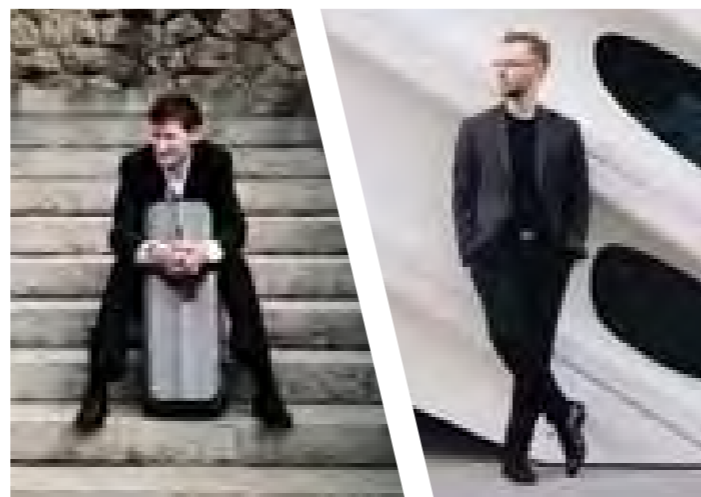
This eclectic collaboration between violinist Edwin Huizinga, guitarist William Coulter, and mandolinist Ashley Hoyer explores the connections between classical, folk, and contemporary traditions.

Stobbe & Williamson Friday, March 5, 2027



Karl Stobbe, concertmaster of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, joins Mission's own Paul Williamson, a piano instructor at the U. of Manitoba, in a program of Biber, Beethoven, Morlock, and Strauss.

Swensen & Pohjonen Friday, April 9, 2027



Danish cellist Jonathan Swensen and Finnish pianist Juho Pohjonen are both prize-winning musicians. Their program includes works by Fauré, Pärt, Poulenc, and Chopin.

Federico Colli Friday, April 30, 2027



Known both as a brilliant pianist and a creative original thinker, the Italian Federico Colli brings an insightful sensibility to the music of Scarlatti, Debussy, Schubert, and Mozart.

