



MAXWELL DAVIES: **The Turn of the Tide**

November 19 | 7:30 pm
Farquhar Auditorium, UVic

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VICTORIA
CHILDREN'S CHOIR

November 19
7:30 pm
Farquhar Auditorium
UVic

*The presentation of
The Turn of the Tide
is supported in part by*

• *The Gail O'Riordan
Climate and the Arts
Legacy Fund at the
Victoria Foundation*

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**MAXWELL DAVIES:
The Turn of
the Tide**

*Frederick Delius (1862–1934)
On Hearing the First Cuckoo
in Spring*

Summer-night on the River

*Rita Ueda (1963–)
forty years of snowfall will not heal
an ancient forest*

*Kelly-Marie Murphy (1964–)
Rains of Ash and Embers*

INTERMISSION

*Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (1934–2016)
The Turn of the Tide
(chamber orchestra version)*

- Section I: First Life
- Section II: Creation Established –
Life Flourishes
- Section V: The Worst that Could
Happen – The
Corruption & Dissolution
of All Nature Completed
- Section VI: The Warning is Heeded
– Nature Reborn – The
Decline is Reversed*

*Randall Thompson (1899–1984)
Choose Something Like a Star**

Mvt. VII, from *Frostiana: Seven
Country Songs*, words by Robert Frost

*with Victoria Children's Choir

Maxwell Davies: The Turn of the Tide

Climate change is an issue of concern for us all, but most of all to the youth who will inherit the planet. Alongside a creation story that carries a warning, and musical mediations of our impact on the environment, we pledge to do better. To provide inspiration, we evoke the natural world that we wish to preserve with two pastoral miniatures from the pen of Frederick Delius: *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* and *Summer-night on the River*.

In the months leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympics, composer Rita Ueda faced a hard choice: accept a commission from the organizing committee, or register her opposition to the Games by not participating. In the end, the offer to write for the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra proved too tempting to turn down—but while Ueda couldn't say no, she felt that she had to say *something*.

"I thought to myself 'What could I say about the Olympics to the Olympic Committee?'" the Japanese-Canadian composer recalls. "And then I remembered this incident at the Sapporo Olympics, which were held not too far from where I was born."

Although Ueda came to Canada shortly before the Sapporo Olympics took place, she admits that she benefitted from the cultural spinoffs the Games provided. "I remember going to see a John Cage concert; I met [American avant-garde composer] Earle Brown for the first time, and (Canadian flute virtuoso) Robert Aitken. And Steve Reich and his ensemble played. It was fantastic, except that I remember reading the Sapporo Olympics report,

and what had happened was that not one single ski run in the area was big enough for the Olympics. So the Olympics Committee had said to the city of Sapporo, 'Tear down that mountain and create an Olympic-standard ski run.'

"The city said 'Okay,' and they knocked down an entire virgin forest and created the ski run," she continues. "Yet there were literally thousands of places to ski in the prefecture of Hokkaido, right? This is a place where kids literally have to ski to school."

The absurdity of the situation lingered in Ueda's mind until years later, when she and her mother paid a return visit to their former home. "We were just walking around the lake that's right underneath this mountain," she says. "We watched a tour group go by, and the tour guide was saying 'Can you see? That was the site of the Sapporo Olympics ski run, and the mountain has been restored.' But I could still see that gash, and I just blurted out 'Are you people blind? Can't you see that gash in the mountain?'"

That memory proved the spark for Ueda's Olympic commission, *forty years of snowfall will not heal an ancient forest*. Both a eulogy for the old-growth trees and bear habitat that were sacrificed for the Olympic facility and a recognition of the earth's fragile beauty, it's a fitting inclusion for a program of pieces created either in response to the climate crisis or as a balm for anxious souls. Also on the bill are Ottawa-based composer Kelly-Marie Murphy's *Rains of Ash and Embers*, an explicit reaction to the forest fires and blistering temperatures that turned the summer

of 2021 into a dystopian hellscape; the British environmentalist and activist Peter Maxwell Davies' *The Turn of the Tide*, which is both an elegy for the natural world and a call to action; and American choral master Randall Thompson's warm and optimistic *Choose Something Like a Star*.

Concern for the world around us animates all of these works, and one suspects that the composers would mostly agree with Ueda's assessment of the best way to deliver a social message by way of art.

"I just want people to think about the environmental impact of human endeavours," Ueda says. "When I make a statement with my music, I don't mean to do any kind of finger-wagging. I drive cars, just like everybody else. I ride airplanes to go to my premieres. I have the same negative and positive impact on the planet as the next person, so I don't need to wag a finger at anybody or anything. All I'm trying to say is 'This is what happened. This is what happened to me.' And then I like to ask the people in the audience 'What do *you* think?'"

"People listening to my music are free to disagree with me," she adds, "but what I *would* like them to do is think deeply."

Gail O'Riordan would also have subscribed to Ueda's view. The long time Victoria Symphony cellist mixed environmental activism with her work as a musician and music educator, and in the months before her death from cancer, in 2018, she and her scientist husband Jonathan strategized a way to keep her concerns in the public eye. The Gail O'Riordan Climate and

the Arts Legacy Fund was the result. It's helping to fund this presentation of **Maxwell Davies: The Turn of the Tide**—which is especially apt, considering the educational aspects of its title piece, a kind of co-creation with young musicians and choristers—and will continue to pay for environmentally themed arts programming until 2030, when it is due to wind down.

"By that time I'll be into my 89th year, and I'll have done most of what I want to do," notes Jonathan O'Riordan, a geographer and former deputy minister in the BC government's Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management. "And I'm hoping that the idea will take off, and that people will use it as a major feature of their programming, because I think climate is going to be the issue in the 2030s. You're already seeing it exposed with the heat and the fires and the extreme weather events that ricochet around the word almost every month. And the whole concept of 'turning the tide'? I think it's a really good title, because the tide has to turn or else we are going to get flooded, metaphorically and physically. We need to turn the tide so that we can start to live sustainably."

To do this will require us *all* to think deeply, and what makes us more thoughtful than music?

NOTES BY ALEX VARTY



Victoria Children’s Choir

The Victoria Children’s Choir is one of the top choral and music organizations in Canada. Under the leadership of an outstanding artistic team, our choristers are exposed to the highest standards of music education, encompassing vocal technique, musicianship and performance opportunities, for a full immersion in the transformative world of

choral music. In a unique and supportive environment, 140 choristers aged 7–20 from throughout Greater Victoria study and perform an array of contemporary and classical repertoire from around the world. The choir tours internationally, and is regularly invited to collaborate with renowned musicians, including the Victoria Symphony, Pacific Opera Victoria, The Tenors, Fretwork, and Victoria Baroque.

Victoria Children’s Choir—Concert Choir			
Eamon Canty	Kaelyn Manseau	Charlotte Topshee	Oscar Webster
May Evans	Sophia Ochs	Abhiram Vinod	Stella White
Davis Foster	Lucy Owen	Elizabeth Wald	Rachel Wong
Tessa Fouracre	Juila Pavon	Aidan Warren	Janna Zhao
Evelyn Gillett	Payton Slogotski	Anna Wautier	
Annie Huang	Audrey Sharp	Natalya Wautier	
Betty Huang	Jessie Swan	Max Webster	

David Stratkauskas, VCC Concert Choir Director & Artistic Director

David Stratkauskas is a native of Vancouver, where he completed his MA in Music Theory at UBC. In 2003, inspired by his particular love for organ and choral music, he moved to London, where he was organist at St Michael’s Battersea and St Mary Stoke Newington. Several of his choristers from St Michael’s went on to organ and choral scholarships at Cambridge colleges. In London, he also worked as a choral conductor, jazz

pianist, and teacher. Mr. Stratkauskas returned to Canada in 2010 to take the position of organist at the Church of Saint John the Divine, Victoria, where he has helped build a vibrant music programme with several choirs and a thriving choral and organ scholarship programme, performing works from the sacred choral canon, but also championing new music. He has worked with the Victoria Children’s Choir since 2011, and serves also as Artistic Director of Vox Humana Chamber Choir.



Turn of the Tide, Final Chorus
Text by Peter Maxwell Davies
May tides turn bright.
Pure salt spangles, spindrift glint,
a-shimmer through the mirrored spread
of scatheless cirrus sky.

May reborn woodlands' spangled
shadows
safeguard night-jar, fawn and fox.
May wildcat stalk again.
May lichen flourish on the stone,
where wheatfields,
mottled gold and green,
make waves, unsullied as the sea.

May we who hesitate here on the edge
turn to join the round of all Nature's
dance: Let's not hesitate any longer,
for time's not running out on us—
till we join in the dance—
Nature's helpmates,
certain of our right place,
Nature's servants,
certain of all the right steps in the dance,
in tune with all Nature's creation,
in step, in time
with the whole of creation,
in step, in time,
in step, in time,
in tune with all creation.

[Text repeats from "May we
who hesitate here on the edge."]

For the sake of our children,
and our children's children,
may resolve be firm, immutable,
evergreen,
our hallowed trust,
our hallowed trust—evergreen.



"Choose Something Like a Star"
by Robert Frost

From *Steeple Bush*, by Robert Frost.
Copyright 1947, by Henry Holt and
Company, Inc., and used with their
permission.

O Star (the fairest one in sight),
We grant your loftiness the right
To some obscurity of cloud—
It will not do to say of night,
Since dark is what brings out your light.
Some mystery becomes the proud.
But to be wholly taciturn
In your reserve is not allowed.
Say something to us we can learn
By heart and when alone repeat.
Say something! And it says, 'I burn.'
But say with what degree of heat.
Talk Fahrenheit, talk Centigrade.
Use language we can comprehend.
Tell us what elements you blend.
It gives us strangely little aid,
But does tell something in the end.
And steadfast as Keats' Eremitic,
Not even stooping from its sphere,
It asks a little of us here.
It asks of us a certain height,
So when at times the mob is swayed
To carry praise or blame too far,
We may choose something like a star
To stay our minds on and be staid.

Giuseppe Pietraroia
Associate Conductor

Giuseppe Pietraroia is Associate Conductor for both the Victoria Symphony and Pacific Opera. As a guest conductor he has been engaged by l'Orchestre Métropolitain, Orchestra London, Vancouver Symphony, Toronto Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Hamilton Philharmonic, Okanagan Symphony, Regina Symphony, Kingston Symphony and Thunder Bay Symphony.

His extensive opera engagements with Pacific Opera include productions of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *La traviata*, *La bohème*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Norma*, *Rigoletto*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La cenerentola*, *Tosca*, and *Let's Make an Opera/The Little Sweep*. In addition, he has conducted productions for l'Opéra de Montréal, l'Opéra de Québec, Opera Lyra Ottawa, Edmonton Opera, Opera New Brunswick, Calgary Opera's Emerging Artist Program, and l'Institut Canadien d'Art Vocal.

With Victoria Choral Society where he was Music Director for seven seasons, Maestro Pietraroia conducted performances of Handel's *Messiah* and Mozart's *Mass in C minor* with the Victoria Symphony, a choreographed production of Orff's *Carmina Burana* in collaboration with Ballet Victoria, Dvořák's *Stabat Mater*, David Fanshawe's *African Sanctus*, and the Duruflé and Fauré requiems.

Maestro Pietraroia has recorded a CD with soprano Marie-Josée Lord and l'Orchestre Métropolitain for the ATMA label, which won a Felix award granted by l'ADISQ and was also nominated for a JUNO award.

Giuseppe Pietraroia is the recipient of the George and Jane Heffelfinger Pacific Opera Victoria Artist of the Year Award and the Canada Council's Jean-Marie Beaudet Award in Orchestral Conducting.

**HOLIDAYS AT
THE FARQUHAR, UVic**

Handel's *Messiah*

December 16, 2022, 7:30 pm

December 18, 2022, 2:30 pm

GIUSEPPE PIETRAROIA,
conductor
NATHALIE PAULIN, soprano
ALLYSON McHARDY, mezzo-
soprano
JOHN TESSIER, tenor
DAVID JOHN PIKE, baritone
**VOX HUMANA CHAMBER
CHOIR & FRIENDS**

HOLIDAYS AT THE ROYAL

New Year's Day Celebration

January 1, 2023, 2:30 pm

GIUSEPPE PIETRAROIA,
conductor
AND SPECIAL GUESTS:
SIMONE OSBORNE, soprano
POV CHORUS
BALLET VICTORIA

Start off the New Year with a program every bit as effervescent as a glass of bubbles! As our special guest, Canadian soprano **Simone Osborne** will share some of her favourite arias, including "Sempre libre" "O mio babbino caro" "Song to the Moon" "Vilja Song" Join us for one of the season's most anticipated and playful traditions!

Re-Connect

Festival 2023

Presented by
Climate and the Arts & CreativelyUnited.org

Portraits of Nature Concert + Bowker Creek Walking Tour

2:30 pm, Saturday, March 18, 2023

Dave Dunnet Community Theatre, 2121 Cadboro Bay Rd.

Civic Orchestra of Victoria. Nathan Jacklin, Music Director

Changing Course: A River's Journey of Reconnection

2 pm, Saturday, April 22, 2023 Earth Day, Vic Theatre, 808 Douglas St.

A special Earth Day film premiere with live music and panel discussion

Resurrection - Ballet and Music on Renewal with Nature

7:30 pm, Saturday, May 20 + 2:30 pm Sunday May 21, 2023

UVic Farquhar Auditorium, Ring Rd.

Ballet Victoria; Victoria Choral Society; Members of Victoria Symphony

Brian Wismath, Music Director

Dream of Gerontius by Edward Elgar

7:30 pm, Saturday, June 3, 2023, Christ Church Cathedral, 930 Burdett Ave

Victoria Philharmonic Choir, Members of the Victoria Symphony and International Soloists

Peter Butterfield, Music Director

Walking Within the Bounds of Nature

2 pm, Saturday, June 24 + Sunday, June 25, 2023

Irving Park in James Bay, 250 Menzies St.

Sponsored by James Bay United Church

Sopranos and instrumentalists Jennifer Turner and Caleigh Alders

The Birds - Piano Recital

4 pm, Saturday, July 8, 2023, Christ Church Cathedral, 930 Burdett Ave

Soloist Sarah Hagen

For further information visit www.CreativelyUnited.org

Funded by the Gail O'Riordan Climate and the Arts Legacy Fund