



CBC changes not music to everyone's ears

Last week, in an effort to gauge the reaction of the local music community to the proposed changes to CBC Radio Two, I picked the brain of Guelph singer/songwriter Stephen Fearing. The planned overhaul will see our national broadcaster use its second spot on the FM dial for a lot less classical music in favour of other genres, a move Fearing, as a non-classical artist, strongly supports. He even went so far as to lend his name and mug to an ad in the Globe and Mail explaining the new format, which is set to be rolled out in September.



DECLAN KELLY
episodes and voices

What I didn't expect, however, was that as a fan of all types of music, Fearing seemed genuinely hurt at the loss of an outlet for a genre of music so far removed from his own.

In a similar way, cellist Ben Bolt-Martin didn't give me the

don't-touch-a-single-note-of-classical programming rant one might expect from someone whose heartstrings — and purse strings for that matter — are so closely tied to the genre. Instead, the Stratford Shakespeare Festival musical ensemble member took a wider view of the situation, and sees September's Radio Two redo as only the latest component of more wholesale changes currently afoot at the CBC.

"My main concern with the changes isn't necessarily with the present shift in programming, per se," Bolt-Martin told me over e-mail. "My biggest concern is with the way the CBC on both Radio One and Radio Two has been systematically getting out of the 'live' and 'local' business for a number of years now.

"If you've listened to CBC for as long as I have — and even though I'm only 34, I listened in the womb — you'll recognize that one of the most amazing components of the CBC over the years is the sense of 'event' that has always characterized the CBC, whether it be concerts in jazz, classical, folk, radio dramas, etc. or news from every area of the globe and every nook and cranny of the country."

While saddened by the loss of such a major means of exposing younger artists to the very best in classical music, Bolt-Martin feels the real blow to the genre is the void of sponsorship and promotional opportunities being created as the CBC curtails its classical music programming.

"In fact, the present programming shift probably makes a whole lot less difference than do the behind-the-scenes changes that have been happening for years and continue to happen: the shutting down of local bureaux, the removal of radio dramas, the removal of literary programming and more recently the shutting down of the CBC radio orchestra and the removal of sponsorships of live radio events such as the CBC choral competition," Bolt-Martin said. "Once the CBC started to get out of the business of making things happen and started relying on recordings and news out of the big centres, the CBC already started to seem a whole lot less relevant."

In addition to being part of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival's musical ensemble, Bolt-Martin plays on the forthcoming CD "Notes Towards," a large part of which was recorded in Guelph's St. George's Anglican Church. The album features the music of Timothy Corlis, Leonard Enns and Heather Dawn Taves, along with the poetry of Margaret Atwood.

How very Canadian. So much so, I suspect the CBC will love it . . . assuming, of course, they can find a place to play it.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Oxanna Adams's 'Celebrating the Seine' is part of her 'Urban Revelations, Rediscovering Paris' exhibition.

The City of Lights in black and white

Photographer Oxanna Adams captures Paris 'Revelations'

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GUELPH — For Guelph photographer Oxanna Adams, "Urban Revelations, Rediscovering Paris," her new exhibition, is unusual.

Usually, Adams trains her lens on nature and scenes of wilderness. However, with her new exhibition, she has chosen the streets of Paris as her muse. The subject matter of some of these pictures might appear mundane, but they reveal a sharply caught moment. Some of the photographs show two elements juxtaposed against each other, giving the pictures a slightly different meaning.

One of her black and white pictures is a shot of an apartment building, which, with a variation of light, takes on a soft, almost mesmerizing look. Another striking picture is that of an alleyway. The sparkle of the water in it contrasts sharply with the dark shadows of the alley, an effect that might have not been possible in a colour picture.

Adams said she named the exhibition "Urban Revelations," because when the first she went to Paris 25 years ago, the sky was always overcast. However, on her recent trip for the "Urban Revelations" pho-

if you're going

what: "Urban Revelations, Rediscovering Paris," black and white photographs by Oxanna Adams

where: Trina Koster Gallery, 260 Waterloo Ave.

when: Until May 1

time: Weekdays Noon to 6 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

web: www.tkpworkshops.blogspot.com

tographs it was sunny and the buildings revealed themselves fully.

She said it was a revelation because she found in Paris what she said was missing from Canadian cities: a good sprinkling of art on the streets. That, while overwhelming, provided the inspiration to shoot a lot of pictures.

"You can't go a foot without taking a photograph," Adams said. "You really have to hold yourself back."

She did take a lot of pictures, although photography is not her first love; it's painting. In her work, Adams said she has been

inspired by the famous Group of Seven painters, especially the impressionistic elements in their work. In a similar vein, Adams's paintings also take as their subjects the natural landscape like the Rocky Mountains or the rugged wilderness of Northern Ontario's Killarney Provincial Park.

Adams has brought some of the techniques of painting in her photography, primarily the idea of value sketching, where a painter determines the light and dark proportion, as well as the "centre" of the painting.

Adams was "sucked into" photography after she took a workshop course with local photographer Trina Koster in 1990. Koster said Adams tries to bring a wide variety of painting methods to bear on her photography, too.

"She is very observant in her pictures," Koster said. "The way she does her pictures is like making a painting. She knows well where the object is going to be."

This sharply observed quality in her pictures can also be credited with Adams's propensity to take pictures in black and white. She has done a lot of winter photography, where there's not much colour to begin with. Also, Adams said shooting in black and white lends itself to sharp and exciting contrasts between elements in the picture. In noting that her approach to painting is minimalist, Adams said she has come to see coloured pictures as undesirable. She sums it up by asking, "Are you looking at different forms or you are being distracted by colour?"



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Oxanna Adams on photographing in Paris



The Entrepreneurs

EVERY WEDNESDAY



Guelph Mercury reporter Vik Kirsch profiles a creative Guelph area business with ambition.



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