



Guelph Musicfest

at the Guelph Youth Music Centre

guelphmusicfest.ca

20th
anniversary
season

Stewart Goodyear

performs J.S. Bach, Goldberg Variations

Friday June 5, 2026 at 7:30 pm
Guelph Youth Music Centre



Guelph Musicfest alumni

20 years have brought an array of fantastic performers and concerts. Thank you to all the performers who have made Guelph Musicfest a success for two decades!

Cathy Anderson (cello)	Arlen Hlusko (cello)	John Medina (baritone)
Roman Borys (cello)	Chiharu Iiuma (piano)	Paul Pulford (cello)
Sheng Cai (piano)	Anna Jennewein-Ronai (piano)	Charles Richard-Hamelin (piano)
Cameron Crozman (cello)	Jerzy Kaplanek (violin)	Adam Riggs (cello)
Glyn Evans (tenor)	Brett Kingsbury (piano)	Marion Samuel-Stevens (soprano)
Mark Fewer (violin)	André Laplante (piano)	William Shookhoff (piano)
Sadie Fields (violin)	Bénédicte Lauzière (violin)	Robert Silverman (piano)
Janina Fialkowska (piano)	Brandon Leis (tenor)	Theresa Thibodeau (soprano)
Colin Fox (actor)	Betty Maher (piano)	Valerie Tryon (piano)
David Gillham (violin)	Stephanie Mara (piano)	Annette-Barbara Vogel (violin)
Stewart Goodyear (piano)	Meredith McCallum (violin)	

AFIARA STRING QUARTET: Valerie Li (violin), Yuri Cho (violin), David Samuel (viola) & Adrian Fung (cello)

ANAGNOSON & KINTON: James Anagnoson & Leslie Kinton (piano duo)

CECILIA DUO: Sarah Nematallah (violin), Min-Jeong Koh (violin) & Ken Gee (piano)

CECILIA STRING QUARTET: Sarah Nematallah (violin), Min-Jeong Koh (violin), Caitlin Boyle (viola) & Rebecca Wenham (cello)

CECILIA STRING QUARTET: Sarah Nematallah (violin), Min-Jeong Koh (violin), Caitlin Boyle (viola) & Rachel Desoer (cello)

ENSEMBLE MADE IN CANADA: Elissa Lee (violin), Tawnya Popoff (viola), Rachel Mercer (cello) & Angela Park (piano)

FESTIVAL QUARTET: Jerzy Kaplanek (violin), Christine Vlajk (viola), Paul Pulford (cello) & Ken Gee (piano)

FESTIVAL QUARTET: Jerzy Kaplanek (violin), Christine Vlajk (viola), Katie Schlaikjer (cello) & Ken Gee (piano)

FESTIVAL TRIO: Sadie Fields (violin), Paul Pulford (cello) & Ken Gee (piano)

FIRE & GRACE: Edwin Huizinga (violin) & William Coulter (guitar)

GRYPHON TRIO: Annalee Patipatanakoon (violin), Roman Borys (cello) & James Parker (piano)

JERZY KAPLANEK QUARTET: Jerzy Kaplanek (violin), Anthony D'Alessandro (piano), Mark Godfrey (bass) & Ethan Ardelli (drums)

MADAWASKA ENSEMBLE: Sarah Fraser Raff (violin), Anna Redekop (viola), Amber Ghent (cello) & Brett Kingsbury (piano)

MADAWASKA QUARTET: Jeewon Kim (violin), Sarah Fraser Raff (violin), Anna Redekop (viola) & Mary-Katherine Finch (cello)

PAYADORA: Rebekah Wolkstein (violin, vocals), Drew Jurecka (violin), Elbio Fernandez (vocals), Jesse Dietschi (double bass), Mark Camilleri (piano)

PENDERECKI STRING QUARTET: Jeremy Bell (violin), Jerzy Kaplanek (violin), Christine Vlajk (viola) & Simon Fryer (cello)

PENDERECKI STRING QUARTET: Jeremy Bell (violin), Jerzy Kaplanek (violin), Christine Vlajk (viola) & Katie Schlaikjer (cello)

QUARTETTO GELATO: Colin Maier (oboe), Adam Diderrich (violin), Matti Pulkki (accordian) & Kirk Starkey (cello)

RIDGE TRIO: David Gillham (violin), Thomas Landschoot (cello) & Chiharu Iiuma (piano)

ROLSTON STRING QUARTET: Luri Lee (violin), Emily Kruspe (violin), Hezekiah Leung (viola) & Jonathan Lo (cello)

SCHMALTZ & PEPPER: Eric Abramovitz (clarinet), Rebekah Wolkstein (violin/vocals), Drew Jureka (arranger, multi-instrumentalist), Jeremy Ledbetter (piano), Michael Herring (bass)

SLIDE BY SLIDE: John Monkhouse, Dave Davidson, Jim Edwards & Susan Follows (trombone)

ST. PETERSBURG STRING QUARTET: Alla Aranovskaya (violin), Alla Krolevich (violin), Boris Vayner (viola) & Leonid Shukayev (cello)

TACTUS VOCAL ENSEMBLE: Stephanie Kramer (soprano), Catherine Robertson (artistic director, soprano), Valerie Nunn (alto), Daniel Cabena (countertenor), Glenn Peirson (tenor), Marcus Kramer (tenor), Gordon Burnett (bass), Neil McLaren (bass)

TRIO CONCERTANTE: Nancy Dahn (violin), Simon Fryer (cello) & Timothy Steeves (piano)

ZEMLINSKY QUARTET: František Souček (violin), Petr Štřížek (violin), Petr Holman (viola) & Vladimir Fortin (cello)

Many thanks to Guelph Musicfest supporters

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Maide de Stein
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Guelph Musicfest is grateful for the support from members of the audience.

This season is dedicated to the late **Diana Philbrick**, who supported Guelph Musicfest from 2021 to 2024.

Guelph Musicfest continues

RESERVED SEATING FOR REMAINING CONCERTS IS SOLD OUT *

Friday June 12... GRYPHON TRIO

Annalee Patipatanakoon violin, **Roman Borys** cello, **Jamie Parker** piano

Friday June 19... PENDERECKI QUARTET with **Ken Gee** piano

Jerzy Kaplanek violin, **Jeremy Bell** violin, **Christine Vlajk** viola, **Katie Schlaikjer** cello

*** STANDBY SEATS ARE AVAILABLE — Just come to the ticket table at 7:15 pm**

TICKETS FOR ONLINE VIEWING — musicfest-tickets.square.site/s/shop



Stewart Goodyear

performs J.S. Bach, Goldberg Variations

Friday June 5, 2026 at 7:30 pm

Guelph Youth Music Centre, Recital Hall

Goldberg Variations, BWV 988 (1741)Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Few keyboard works match the sheer scope and ingenuity of Bach's Goldberg Variations — thirty variations on an opening Aria, spanning every mood from playful to profound, all bound together by a single, quietly persistent bass line. Bach published the work in 1741 as *Clavier-Übung IV* ("Keyboard Exercise, Part Four"), describing it as composed "for the refreshment of the soul of music lovers".

The Famous Story — Probably Apocryphal

Legend has it that Bach wrote the Variations at the request of Count Hermann Karl von Keyserling, a Russian ambassador who suffered from chronic insomnia. The Count supposedly asked Bach for pieces "of such a gentle and somewhat lively character" that his household musician, the young harpsichordist Johann Gottlieb Goldberg, could soothe him through the night. Whether or not this charming story is true — and scholars now believe it largely is not — the name has stuck for nearly three centuries.

The Architecture

The genius of the work is its structure. Bach doesn't vary the melody of the Aria — he varies its bass line and harmonic progression, allowing each of the thirty variations to take on an entirely different character while remaining secretly unified. The thirty variations divide neatly into two halves of fifteen, with Variation 16 acting as a grand intermission. Every third variation is a canon — a piece where one voice imitates another at a set distance — and each successive canon widens the interval of imitation (from unison in Var. 3, a second in Var. 6, a third in Var. 9, and so on). Between canons, Bach alternates lively virtuoso "arabesques" with genre pieces including dances, an aria, a fughetta, and a French overture.

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Guide to the Variations

Aria — A serene, ornate sarabande in G major that provides the harmonic foundation for everything to come. Its melody floats above a steady, purposeful bass.

Variation 1 — A sprightly, syncopated opening that contrasts sharply with the Aria's tranquility — like drawing back a curtain.

Variation 2 — Three interweaving voices in a compact, elegant dance; two parts converse playfully over a steady bass.

Variation 3 (Canon at the Unison) — The first canon: one voice follows the other at the same pitch, a beat later, in a lilting 12/8 dance rhythm.

Variation 4 — A lively passepied-style dance in quick triple time, with imitation between the parts.

Variation 5 — The first of the “arabesques”: a dazzling, rapid-fire piece featuring spectacular hand-crossing, as one hand leaps constantly over the other.

Variation 6 (Canon at the Second) — A tender, nostalgic canon where the following voice enters a step higher. Kirkpatrick called it “almost nostalgic tenderness.”

Variation 7 — A gentle gigue — a French-style dance with dotted rhythms, unhurried and graceful.

Variation 8 — More virtuosic hand-crossing, this time in the French style, with both hands occupying the same register simultaneously.

Variation 9 (Canon at the Third) — The canon entries are now a third apart, with a slightly more active bass adding warmth.

Variation 10 (Fughetta) — A miniature four-voice fugue, the subject winding through bass, tenor, soprano, and alto in turn.

Variation 11 — A brilliant toccata in compound time: scales, arpeggios, and trills cascade across both hands.

Variation 12 (Canon at the Fourth, inverted) — A canon in contrary motion — the follower moves in the opposite direction to the leader.

Variation 13 — A slow, richly decorated sarabande for two manuals; the right hand sings a long, ornate melody while the left accompanies gently.

Variation 14 — Rapid toccata featuring enormous leaps between registers; Glenn Gould called it “one of the giddiest bits of neo-Scarlatti-ism imaginable.”

Variation 15 (Canon at the Fifth, inverted) — G minor — The emotional turning point of the first half: the only minor-key variation so far, slow and achingly melancholic. Gould likened it to “a perfect Good Friday spell.”

Variation 16 (French Overture) — A grand, ceremonial opening to the second half, featuring bold dotted rhythms and a fugal contrapuntal section — unmistakably French in character.

Guide to the Variations continued

Variation 17 — Another lively toccata for two manuals — light, skittish, and brilliantly keyboard-idiomatic.

Variation 18 (Canon at the Sixth) — A confident, tightly argued canon full of suspensions; Nicholas Kenyon called it “among the most supremely logical pieces of music ever written.”

Variation 19 — A dance-like piece in 3/8 with a flowing sixteenth-note figure passed gracefully between three voices.

Variation 20 — A virtuosic toccata for two manuals, one hand plucking short notes against the other’s long lines, in rapid hand-crossing.

Variation 21 (Canon at the Seventh) — G minor — The second minor-key variation, somber and almost tragic; a slow lament bass underlies the two canonic voices.

Variation 22 (Alla breve) — A stately four-voice movement, almost fugue-like in texture; the foundational bass line of the whole work is heard here more plainly than almost anywhere else.

Variation 23 — The hands chase each other in rapid, playful interplay — scales shooting up and down, alternating between hands in sparkling bursts.

Variation 24 (Canon at the Octave) — A lilting canon in 9/8; unusually, the leader alternates between voices mid-section.

Variation 25 — G minor, Adagio — The emotional pinnacle of the entire work. Wanda Landowska called it “the black pearl.” Chromatic, wistful, and achingly beautiful, it is the longest and slowest variation, and the third and final one in minor.

Variation 26 — A sudden burst of joy after the introspection: a racing sarabande in two simultaneous time signatures, the melody sparkling over a rhythmic accompaniment.

Variation 27 (Canon at the Ninth) — The final canon, and the only one written without a bass line — pure, stripped-down, two-voice counterpoint.

Variation 28 — A dazzling toccata filled wall-to-wall with written-out trills in both hands, the two voices glittering in and out of each other.

Variation 29 — Grand and declaratory: heavy chords alternate with brilliant arpeggios shared between the hands, building a sense of majesty and resolution.

Variation 30 (Quodlibet) — Instead of the expected final canon, Bach surprises us with a quodlibet — a cheerful medley of popular folk tunes woven over the bass line. The two songs embedded here translate roughly as “I’ve been away from you so long” and “Cabbage and turnips have driven me away — had my mother cooked meat, I’d have stayed!” It was a favourite party game of the Bach family, and feels here like a warm, affectionate farewell.

Aria da Capo — The opening Aria returns, note for note — but after everything we’ve heard, it sounds transformed: familiar yet distant, like returning home after a long journey.

Guelph Musicfest ENCORE



Friday October 30...

ZEMLINSKY QUARTET

František Souček violin

Petr Střížek violin

Petr Holman viola

Vladimír Fortin cello

program tba

This wonderful ensemble from Prague makes a return visit to the GYMC.



Friday November 6...

FESTIVAL DUO

Sadie Fields violin

Ken Gee piano

program tba

Sadie returns from Edinburgh, Scotland, to perform a solo recital in Guelph.



Reserve your ENCORE seats now. No payment required.

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Be sure to hear about upcoming concerts by joining the mailing list. Please be sure you let me know when there is a change of your email or home address.



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Ken Gee founder/artistic director

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Recital Hall Revitalization: Many Hands, One Hall

The Guelph Youth Music Centre has entered a new and exciting chapter, and it is asking our community to help take the next step.

The GYMC has launched a \$50,000 Recital Hall Campaign to outfit the Recital Hall with the sound, lighting, and presentation technology it needs to become the fully-equipped community performance space Guelph deserves. The goal is to introduce professional sound, dynamic lighting, and video presentation technology to a hall that already serves students, artists, non-profits, grassroots arts groups, and **Guelph Musicfest**.

If the Recital Hall and Guelph Musicfest have been meaningful to you, please be part of this next chapter.

canadahelps.org/en/charities/guelph-youth-music-centre

SELECT: Recital Hall Revitalization: Many Hands, One Hall



Guelph Musicfest 2026—at the GYMC

May 22 to June 19, 2026 20th ANNIVERSARY SEASON!

