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## ENTERTAINMENT MUSIC

# A classic weekend for music lovers



By James Reaney, The London Free Press  
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Artistic director Annette-Barbara Vogel, left, leads the Magisterra Soloists as they rehearse Tico-Tico, a piece of renowned Brazilian music they'll perform at a fundraiser Saturday at the Hassan Law Community Gallery. (CRAIG GLOVER, The London Free Press)

The London classical and community music scene scores off the charts this weekend.

Opera, soloists, new ensembles and the city's best-kept musical secret are among the choices.

An intriguing new ensemble helmed by Western's Don Wright music faculty Prof. Annette-Barbara Vogel celebrates its recent tour of Brazil with a fundraising concert on Saturday.

"Right now, you're marching . . . and Brazilians don't march," violinist Vogel told the young string players in Magisterra Soloists at a recent rehearsal. "You're very German with this right now."

Vogel's cheerful direction — playing off her German heritage — came during *Tico-Tico*. It's to be heard Saturday, along with other selections calling up memories of Brazil — and a Felix Mendelssohn *Octet*.

A two-week, six-city tour to Brazil during the 2016 Olympics helped establish Magisterra's mandate as a professional, non-profit chamber music ensemble in London.

"(It's) really important for us," Vogel told Postmedia News. "What we try to do at the fundraiser is showcase what we've done over the year. We also want to talk about . . . who we are, what we intend to do, what we aim to stand for (and) what we hope to succeed in."

Magisterra will also bring its music to schools with a focus on elementary classes.

Meanwhile, London composer and musician Igor Saika steers another new ensemble at Aeolian Hall. Saika teams with good friends Miranda Mulholland, a violinist and singer, and London singer-songwriter Marty Kolls.

"It is my intention with the Borderlands Ensemble to create exciting new collaborations with visiting and local artists . . . as well as provide a venue for young composers to create new works and showcase them to the public," Saika said. "The Borderlands Ensemble will not be a traditional orchestra — it will try to meet the eclectic desires of young audiences who want new works of music that break down traditional genres."

Mulholland, Kolls and Saika all met at Western more than a decade ago.

"I was a composition major at the time, and Miranda was an effervescent and somewhat capricious singer/violinist. I do believe I was her piano accompanist for a while," Saika said of Mulholland, a Toronto solo star and member of Great Lake Swimmers.

"Marty and I were in the same year together at Western. We were good friends especially in first year, when Marty was a piano major . . . the last couple of years I have played regularly with Marty, and Miranda has become a dear friend to both me and my wife, Danielle."

In other concerts, Western's Wright faculty opera program is showcased at a gala over two nights, while U.S. violinist William Preucil returns to the Jeffery Concerts.

Faculty members Theodore Baerg (director) and Simone Luti (conductor, head coach) helm the nights at the opera program.

Elsewhere, Charlene Pauls conducts her first concert as artistic director with the ensemble as London Pro Musica Choir enters its 47th season. Selections range from Bach to Coldplay and Healey Willan to folk icon Pete Seeger to contemporary Canadian composer Stephen Chatman.

In addition to all of these choices, the Salvation Army's London Citadel Band — a.k.a. as London's best-kept musical secret for more than 125 years — teams with the London

Citadel Songsters in songs of faith and remembrance.

IF YOU GO

**What:** A selected guide to classical and community music events in London this weekend. Prices vary.

**William Preucil, Arthur Rowe:** Friday, 8 p.m. LPL's Wolf Performance Hall, 251 Dundas St. Visit jefferyconcerts.com (information) or call 519-672-8800 (tickets).

**Western Opera Gala:** Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 8 p.m. Talbot College's Paul Davenport Theatre. Visit www.music.uwo.ca or call 519-661-3767 (information) or 519-672-8800 (tickets)

**London Pro Musica Choir:** Saturday, 7:30 p.m. First-St. Andrew's United Church, 350 Queens Ave. (at Waterloo). Visit londonpromusica.

**Magisterra Soloists:** Saturday, 7 p.m. Hassan Law community gallery, 142 Dundas St. Visit eventbrite.ca/d/canada—london/magisterra-soloists

**London Citadel Band:** Saturday, 7:30 p.m. 555 Springbank Dr. Visit londoncitadelband.ca or call 519-472-2500

**Borderlands Ensemble:** Saturday, 8 p.m. Aeolian Hall, 795 Dundas St. (at Rectory). Visit aeolianhall.ca or call 519-672-7950.

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— with files by Chris Montanini, Postmedia News

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