

Ensemble opens season with German Reformation

By Dominik Kurek
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

It has been nearly 500 years since the German priest Martin Luther set off a chain of events that led to the Protestant Reformation when he nailed a list of grievances to the door of a Wittenberg church.

Now, all those years later, the choir and orchestra of the Oakville Ensemble is kicking off its 2011-12 season showcasing the work of Luther with the artistic flair of the German composer Johann Sebastian Bach.

The ensemble will hold a pair of concerts, titled *Ein feste Burt*, this weekend (Oct. 29, 30).

The Saturday concert will take place at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, a regular venue for the ensemble.

"For the first concert, we'll do two pieces by Bach," said the ensemble's founder and artistic director Stéphane Potvin. "We'll do the *Ein feste Burg Reformation Cantata*, which people either know because of the cantata or they've gone to church and sung the hymn, *A Mighty Fortress*."

The other work of Bach will be a Lutheran *Mass in G*. The concert will also feature a more modern piece of music, written by Canadian composer Jared Hynnes, titled *According to Anne*, that is a reflec-



MICHAEL IVANIN / OAKVILLE BEAVER

HARMONIZE: The choristers of the Oakville Ensemble choir and orchestra are pictured rehearsing for their pair of concerts this weekend.

tion of an individual wrestling with church doctrine.

The cantata is a piece of work written by Bach set to Luther's famous hymn *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, which translates to A Mighty Fortress is our God.

"It's very flamboyant. It's a powerful piece of music. It just seemed fitting to open the season," Potvin said.

The audience will be given the music and invited to sing along during the final movement.

"The idea of the cantatas were

that the choir and orchestra would perform the movements throughout the service. It always finished with a coral, which is a known melody that Bach would harmonize and the whole congregation would join along with the choir and orchestra," Potvin said.

The *Mass in G* is more subdued, but it builds in passion as it progresses.

"It's great music. It's action and singing, action and playing," Potvin said.

Potvin invites members of the community to the entire season, which will feature music by well-known composers, as well as works by Canadian composers.

"You don't need to drive into Toronto to hear good performances," he said. "Stay in town. You have a great performing group."

He added everyone is welcome to come.

"There's something for everyone," he said. "We try to make it approachable. I like to talk to the

audience. I don't want anybody to come to the concert and feel out of place."

The Saturday evening concert at Grace Lutheran church, 304 Spruce St., begins at 7:30 p.m. The Sunday concert begins at 3 p.m. It takes place at Mary Mother of God Catholic Church, located at 2745 North Ridge Trail.

Advance tickets are available at www.oakville-ensemble.ca, at a cost of \$25 for general admission, \$15 for students and seniors and \$50 for families. Tickets at the door cost \$35 for general admission, \$25 for seniors, \$15 for students and \$70 for families.

Music and a Meal

The Oakville Ensemble has started its new Music and a Meal program that partners its concerts with restaurants in town, through which patrons can receive concert and meal discounts.

Patrons can present their pre-purchased Oakville Ensemble concert ticket to one of its partner restaurants on the day of the concert and receive a 10 per cent discount on their meal. Conversely, people can present their restaurant bill at the door of the concert venue and receive a 10 per cent discount on their concert tickets.

Member restaurants are Paradiso Restaurant, 3S's Restaurant, Beccofino, Ristorante Julia and Ritorno.

Show of art



MICHAEL IVANIN / OAKVILLE BEAVER

IN BRONTE: Artist Don Morrison is pictured with his painting during his exhibit at Sovereign House. His art show, which is part of the Bronte Historical Society's Art on the Bluffs series, ends today (Wednesday) at 4 p.m. Visit www.bronte-historical-society.ca for more information.

Lake-inspired painter exhibits at historic Sovereign House

Bronte painter Carol Sanders will be showcasing her work at Sovereign House through this year's Art on the Bluffs series.

The exhibit, titled *All Over the Place*, opens Saturday, Oct. 29.

Sanders has spent hundreds of hours in her lakeside studio, creating figurative and landscape oil paintings. The retired teacher, who has travelled both near and far, said she's inspired by such things as cottage lake swimmers, Newfoundland rowboats and airport waiting areas.

The exhibit runs to Nov. 2.



The gallery, 7 West River St., is open Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday from 1-4 p.m.

This exhibit is the last in the Art on the Bluffs series, which is put on by the Bronte Historical Society. To learn more, visit www.bronte-historical-society.ca.