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## LOCAL

Winnipeg Free Press - PRINT EDITION

# A night to remember at Carnegie Hall

By: Holly Harris

Posted: 05/9/2014 2:04 AM | Comments: 3 | Last Modified: 05/10/2014 10:05 AM | Updates

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NEW YORK -- There could be no mistake: The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra took Manhattan by storm one explosive note at a time, proving orchestras north of the 49th parallel can hold their own among the continent's top ensembles.

After three years of planning, the WSO finally delivered its bold, all-Canadian program (all composers in attendance) led by maestro Alexander Mickelthwate at New York City's historic Carnegie Hall.

### CONCERT REVIEW

#### WSO: Spring for Music

Carnegie Hall  
Thursday, May 8  
Attendance: 1,800  
Five stars out of five

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Notably, the 66-year-old orchestra is also the sole Canadian troupe invited to participate during the weeklong, four-year-old Spring for Music (S4M) festival that wraps up for good this Saturday night.

Diehard WSO fans -- and 900 of them were in the Carnegie Hall audience Thursday night -- might have been there this past weekend when the orchestra test-drove the two-hour show as part of its Masterworks series.

But context, as they say, is everything, and there is nothing quite like the spectacle of seeing your hometown orchestra perform in one of the world's most historic halls.

Also seeing an indigenous soloist onstage at the storied hall graced by almost every classical luminary in musical history became profoundly moving.

Derek Charke's 13 Inuit Throat Song Games (2009) featuring Inuit throat singer Tanya Tagaq is a cross-pollination of east-meets-west forces with Tagaq's guttural utterances providing counterpoint to the orchestra's raspy textures.

Perhaps fuelled by the moment, the barefooted Tagaq appeared even freer onstage this time around, gesturing and dancing about during the playful work with its 13 sections including titles such as Sound of Water and Story of a Goose.

Vincent Ho's The Shaman: Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra premièred by the WSO in 2011 is a powerhouse work that showcases Scottish dynamo percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie. The mostly older audience of 1,800, impressed by the sheer fury and might of Ho's three-movement work (with interlude) leapt to their feet in a rousing standing ovation, with cries of bravo for Glennie's dazzling performance.

The third of the three New York premières, R. Murray Schafer's Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, premièred by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in 2010, opened the program. As Canada's senior composer, the 80-year-old artist has created a masterfully orchestrated, postmodern ode to the modern symphonic

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form.

The acoustically superior hall provided the utmost clarity in its textures, with the second movement, Mysteriously, including its ghostly whistling chorus by the WSO players particularly resonant.

Finally, hearing Leonard Bernstein's infectious Times Square: 1944, from On the Town: Three Dance Episodes as an encore in Lenny's own adopted hometown proved the icing on the proverbial cake.

Even the New Yorkers were seen tapping away during the lively performance by the clearly awed and inspired WSO musicians on this magical night not soon easily forgotten.

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### HISTORY

Updated on Saturday, May 10, 2014 at 10:05 AM CDT: Leonard Bernstein's infectious On the Town suite was the encore.

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### long?

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