

# Boys choirs join together for youth opera in Georgetown

By Lisa-Dawn McKenzie  
Gaudeamus Choirs of Halton Hills

*The Gaudeamus Choirs of Halton Hills presents The Star Gatherer, an one-act opera for youth, by Stephen Paulus on Saturday, Feb. 27, 7:30 p.m. at St. John's United Church, 11 Guelph St. in Georgetown.*

*The Gaudeamus Choirs will be joined by the Hawthorne Village School 's Boys Choir, the E.W. Forster School Boys Choir and the George Kennedy School Boys Choirs as well as baritone Bradley Christensen.*

*Tickets are available in advance online: [www.ticketscene.ca](http://www.ticketscene.ca)*

*The following is a question-and-answer interview with Gaudeamus Choirs of Halton Hills Artistic Director Diane Murray-Charrett.*

## Could you give a short description of what happens in The Star Gatherer?

The Star Gatherer is a story set 'a long time ago' in the land of Bevravia.

Once every eight years, in the town of Bevravia, a magic 400-pound cake is baked for a local festival. It is the job of Mega the Baker to collect a star fallen from the sky and put it into the cake as the magic ingredient. The students from the town school are served a piece of cake. Whoever eats the piece with the magic star will gain a special talent. Mega, the Baker is filled with grief due to the loss of his son, so that he forgets to put the star into the cake. The children in the village decide to come together and help Mega through this difficult time.

## What will the audience see or hear at this performance that might be different from other children's choir offerings?

This is a rare opportunity to see children perform an opera, which has been written for children's voices. The main difference between opera and other musical theatre, is that there are no spoken lines—it is sung through from beginning to end. Although there are two spoken lines in the show, the rest is completely sung. This will be the first time Gaudeamus Choirs undertakes a production that is fully costumed with staging and lighting.

The evening will also have our most senior singers perform three selections for Benjamin Britten's operatic setting of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

## Tell us something about the special guest soloist?

Bradley Christensen is an up and coming lyric baritone born in New Zealand and now based in



**DIANE MURRAY-CHARRETT**  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Toronto. Bradley has earned praise for his "splendid vocal style and appealing stage presence," and is quickly gaining reputation in recital and on the operatic stage. A graduate of the University of Auckland, he completed a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Italian, and a Bachelor of Music with Honours in singing. The recipient of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music Vocal Performance and Pedagogy Graduate Award, he just completed a Masters of Music in Voice Performance and Pedagogy under the tutelage of Dr. Darryl Edwards.

The Star Gatherer is one of many performances in this young singer's 2015-16 season. Other highlights include performing Sergeant Meryll (Yeomen of the Guard) with the COSI Connection, Winterreise with pianist Shaya Petroff, Jesus from Arvo Pärt's incredible Passio, with the Grand Philharmonic Choir, Frank (Die Fledermaus) with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, the baritone soloist in Carmina Burana with the Ottawa Choral Society, French chansons with the Greater Toronto Philharmonic Orchestra and a chamber music recital with Pocket Concerts.

## What prompted you to undertake such a production?

I came across a video performance of this opera online while researching music for an upcoming season about seven years ago, and purchased the music back then. Although I have produced

and directed many musical theatre productions in my career, opera is another genre I truly love, and believe it is important to allow children to experience this unique area of music. Last summer I attended COSI — The Centre for Opera Studies in Italy, as a chorus conducting intern, and really enjoyed the experience and being immersed in an opera performance program. The Star Gatherer score has sat on my musical shelf for many years, and this year seemed like the right time to do it.



**BRADLEY CHRISTENSEN**  
SPECIAL GUEST PERFORMER

## When and where is Star Gatherer happening?

Saturday, Feb. 27, 7:30 p.m., at St. John's United Church, 11 Guelph St. in Georgetown. I should point out that students from three area schools are joining us in the production, and there are only 126 seats available, so tickets will go fast. Tickets can be purchased online through Ticketscene. Here's the direct link to our event and ticket sales page: <https://www.ticketscene.ca/events/14699/>

## After The Star Gatherer, what's next for Gaudeamus Choirs?

Our annually spring concert will take place on Saturday, April 24. It will focus on singing about the land, and the important place that water has in our life. To close out our season, on Monday, April 26, we will perform the American and Canadian national anthems at a Blue Jays game.

For more info, contact Gaudeamus Choirs at [gaudeamus@cogeco.ca](mailto:gaudeamus@cogeco.ca) or call 416-895-2697, [www.gaudeamuschoirs.com](http://www.gaudeamuschoirs.com)



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## What is an easement?

An easement is a legal right to have access over a particular part of property. Often when you buy a new home there will be an easement attached to your property that allows the Town to have access to parts of your lot in order to install and maintain various utility services. There may also be an easement for a limited time after purchasing the property, perhaps one year, allowing the builder to access your land to complete the work and maintain the grading. As the owner you have to ensure you do not interfere with the ability of the Town or builder to access your land for the limited purpose that the easement allows. They have an obligation to ensure that if they restore your land to its original condition.

You can also find easements in various other situations when shared access is required. For example, two properties may share a driveway, and if the driveway belongs to one property, but the adjacent property's owner needs to use that driveway to access the municipal road, then that property has an easement over the driveway.

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