



Chorfest's Pacific Soundwaves a Success

by Damian Inwood

The title was Pacific Soundwaves, and for many of the 250 choral singers from all over B.C., the final weekend in May will be the highlight of their summer.

The North Shore Chorus was the host choir for the B.C. Choral Federation's annual Chorfest, a weekend of rehearsals and workshops, culminating in a final concert. This year's guest directors were Peter McCoppin, music director of the Victoria Symphony, and Bruce Pullan, music director of the Bach Children's Chorus. For 250 adult and youth choir members, the two guest directors provided the inspirational leadership that led to a thrilling final concert at the new Capilano College Sportsplex May 31st.

Choir members came from Vancouver to Vernon, from Sooke to Summerland, from Duncan to Denman Island and many other places. Rehearsals took place at Carson Graham School and the choir members split into an adult group and a youth group, preparing songs by Stephen Chatman and Percy Aldridge Grainger.

But it wasn't all hard work. On Friday's opening night, the North Shore Chorus hosted a reception and on Saturday afternoon, Chorfest delegates got a chance to do the hula, sing Samoan songs or try their hand at Maori dancing at a Polynesian workshop put on by Toti Taft and Cane Fire. On Saturday night there was a banquet at Otlegle's Golf Club in West Vancouver. Entertainment was provided by the 50-member North Shore Chorus, led by music director Terry Pitt-Brooker, performing John Rutter's Reluctant Dragon, Soloists were Martin Crilly as The Dragon, Bill Worrall as St. George and Caroline Edlitz as The Boy. Brigid Coult, president of the B.C. Choral Federation, was presented with the annual Willan Award for her years of service to choral music.

The highlight of the weekend was undoubtedly the gala concert on Sunday, May 31. That was when the choir members got the chance to put into practice the training and techniques they'd received from Peter McCoppin and Bruce Pullan. The concert truly lived up to its Pacific Soundwaves name, with enter-tainers representing different parts of the Pacific Rim.

It started off with the North Shore chorus soprano, Rozanne Preston, singing the native Indian song, People of the Salmon, by David Campbell. Guest performers were the Vancouver Chinese Choir Association, conducted by Frank Huang, the Uziame Taiko drummers, the Vancouver Chinese Music Ensemble and the B.C. Boys Choir.

"Most of all, it was fun," said Joan McLeod, conference coordinator. "People enjoyed the variety. They could sing and enjoy the workshops. They enjoyed the difference in the concert, which was not just choral." She added that Peter McCoppin, who comes from a choral background but is usually associated with orchestral work, said he had enjoyed the

opportunity to work with a large choir again. "He really made Stephen Chatman's Five B.C. Folk Songs come alive," she added.

Joyce Maguire, executive director of the B.C. Choral Federation, agreed. "Because Chorfest is held in a different place each year, each one always has its own special feel," she said. "The 1992 edition was different because the singers had a chance to attend workshops as well as sing. And the concert offered a wide variety of music in addition to the choral music."

Chorfest was held in Victoria last year and 1993 will see a special Children's Chorfest for 600 youngsters from all over B.C. to be held in Coquitlam in May. In August, the B.C. Choral Federation is co-hosting the 1993 World Symposium on Choral Music in Vancouver, with more than 800 musicians and 20 choirs from all over the world.

Damian Inwood sings with the North Shore Chorus. Among his many commitments to the arts on the North Shore, he is president of the Deep Cove & Area Heritage Association and treasurer of the Deep Cove Cultural Society.

Spirals Enigma Lives On

by Seamus McMahon

There are sad cafes, greasy cafes, expensive cafes, and there is Spirals. Both Spirals and its owners are something of an enigma. The cafe is located on lower Lonsdale, a few minutes walk from the Seabus terminal on Vancouver's North Shore.

Spirals is a coffee house and art emporium. At dawn, you can order a fast, inexpensive breakfast. Try the 'French toast with bacon or sausage' or the 'Eggs Bennie.' On the weekend treat yourself to a glass of champagne. Later in the day you can dawdle the afternoon away sipping a coffee, and Maria Ernie, co-owner, will regale you Tarot.

Or you can sit alone and study the art on the walls of the cafe. Artists are encouraged to exhibit their work, and for many, Spirals offers a chance for a first solo exhibit. From time to time work of outstanding quality can be seen here. Spirals got its name because of co-owner Ian Stabler's interest in megalithic Celtic art. "Life is a spiral," he said as he finished a neck massage on a startled customer who complained of stress while ordering a meal. The customer became enchanted. Spirals is an unofficial healing centre. Just like a European bistro or an Irish pub, strangers talk freely to one another at Spirals.

At night, Spirals comes alive with music. Again it's an open house—anyone with talent can be a performer. Five musicians were recently sponsored by Spirals at the Music West convention. At least two of these musicians are now going professional as a result. Poets recite on-stage. Occasionally a playwright will test a play-in-progress. Everyone gets involved. Staff and customers are roped in to help the production come to life.

So why is Spirals an enigma? The owners have mood swings like everyone else. Shifting energies. Spirals is a small place and the ambience is intimate. Ian Stabler says, "I opened with just \$20." So every few months, the cafe closes for a major reconstruction. Customers help out with painting, drywalling and even mowing. Such is customer loyalty. Nobody wants the cafe to close. That says it all. And the coffee is excellent. Spirals is open 24 hours a day on weekends. Drop in and judge for yourself.

Seamus McMahon is a playwright and sculptor. His stained-glass crystal work, 'Symmetry,' was awarded an Honourable Mention at the recent Images & Objects X exhibit organized by the North and West Vancouver Community Arts Councils.

Magic at BC Fest

by Ella Parkinson and Lynn Flipse

- Four shy 10-year-old musicians, the girls in their demure print dresses, and the boy with tousled hair and a wrinkled T-shirt, playing in a string quartet—astoundingly professionally—their facial expressions ranging from deadly serious to impish grins.

- The first glimpse of the transformation of the curling rink into a magnificent showcase of the works of 240 B.C. artists.

- The gawky 17-year-old boy with large feet and protruding elbows who kept 600 people spellbound with his cello solo.

- Two artists from different parts of B.C. engaged in a passionate discussion of their work.

- The excitement visible on the faces of artists from remote areas as they emerged from workshops on art history and philosophy.

It was all there, and then some. In all there were 1300 participants, the young and the emerging artists who were the top contenders from every community in the province. Under the banners of the Pacific Coast Music Festival Association, the Assembly of B.C. Arts Councils, Images & Objects X, the B.C. Association of Performing Arts Festivals, the Association of B.C. Drama Educators, and the B.C. Student Film & Video Society, they showcased their talents for final judging. They brought their talents, skills, their discipline and passion, and most of all, their joy and encouragement for the winners.

This 10th B.C. Festival of the Arts was all about the interaction of hundreds of musicians, dancers, singers, actors and visual artists. They came together to celebrate their creativity and to stimulate participation, enthusiasm and understanding at a community level.

The Festival is probably the most significant community arts celebration in Canada. We were very proud to be a part of it.