

Messiah performances to feature ?remarkable? soloists

Upcoming performances of Handel's Messiah at Orangeville's Westminster United Church and Alliston's Banting Memorial High School will feature ?four remarkable soloists,? according to conductor John Wervers.

They are soprano Hannah Shelton Campbell, mezzo-soprano Cara Cameron, tenor Bair Spry and bass Lorne Derragh.

Campbell has sung as the soprano in Toronto at Roy Thomson Hall, St. Lawrence Center of the Performing Arts, Alix Goolden Hall in Victoria, B.C., The Rose Theatre in Brampton as well as The Royal Opera House in London, England. She has performed with many orchestras, including Clarion Symphony, Toronto Youth Symphony Orchestra and Great Lakes Orchestra. She grew up in Southern Ontario, obtaining her Bachelor and Masters in Music from the University of Western Ontario.

She is passionate about passing on her love of music to children and adults, and teaches vocal and piano lesson.

Cameron received a BFA in vocal Performance and a B.Ed. from York University. She sang with Voices, an award winning chamber choir in Toronto for 10 years, and continues to sing regularly for church as well as community events. In recent years, Cameron has appeared as a guest soloist for the Waterloo Chamber Players, the Dufferin Concert Singers, the New Tecumseth Singers and the Orangeville Community Band (of which she is a member). In addition to caring for her rather large family, she teaches piano and voice from her home, and also teaches music and art in the Upper Grand District School Board.

Spry hails from Waterloo, Ontario. He is completing his final year of an Honours B.Mus. in Voice Performance at Wilfred Laurier University. During his time at Laurier, Spry studied under the tutelage of Daniel Lichti, Victor Martens and Lynda Mieske. Performance credits include the role of John in the premiere of Catherine Magowan, Spy Denomme-Welch's Giiwedini (2013), the Narrator in J.S. Bach's Coffee Cantata (2014), Tom Rakewell in excerpts of Igor Stravinsky's The Rake's Progress (2014), and most recently, Rinuccio in Giacomo Puccini's Gianni Schicchi (2015).

In addition to his love for opera, Spry is equally passionate about choral music. In 2011, he began singing with a quartet of friends under the banner of Chordscape Vocal Quartet, and went on to form the Sightlines Vocal Ensemble: an octet composed of blind or visually challenged choristers who perform on an ad-hoc basis at charitable events within the blind community. He currently sings with the Laurier Singers, Spiritus Ensemble, and the Ontario Youth Choir ? at which he was appointed as Ontario's tenor representative for the national Youth Choir of Canada (2014, 2016).

Derragh started his career in music taking piano lessons at his mother's side, and then scholarship studies at the Royal Conservatory of Music. Continued studies throughout life have led him from the pit as accompanist and viola player, onto the stage in numerous lead operatic/musical roles and even back to the pit, having conducted many musicals around the GTA.

Derragh was personnel manager of the Mississauga Symphony for 20 years and lead baritone with the Mississauga City Centre Opera for a number of years, performing roles as Figaro, Zurga (The Pearl Fishers), Dr. Falke (Die Fledermaus) and the Thief in The Old Maid and the Thief. His most recent roles have included Don Quixote (Man of La Mancha) with South Simcoe Theatre, Fagin (Oliver), Aldopho (The Drowsy Chaperone) with Orangeville Music Theatre.

He has helped coach and he accompanied the Banting musical You're a Good Man Charlie Brown and their three previous shows. Performances by the Alliston-based New Tecumseth Singers and Orangeville's Dufferin Concert Singers. The first will be Saturday evening (Dec. 12) at Westminster United Church, Orangeville, and at Banting Memorial High School, Alliston, Sunday afternoon.