

# Red Leaf News

www.redleafpianoworks.com

Newsletter no.10 – October 2013



Red Leaf Pianoworks  
a composers' collective

Martha Hill Duncan  
Susan Griesdale  
Beverly Porter  
Rebekah Maxner  
Janet Gieck  
Joanne Bender  
Teresa Richert  
John Burge



## Red Leaf Pianoworks welcomes John Burge

**John Burge** has been an active composer since the 1980's and a professor of composition and theory at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario since 1987. A pianist himself, he has composed music for numerous world class pianists including Canada's own Janina Fialkowska and Stephane Lemelin.



When asked to join Red Leaf Pianoworks, John prepared an initial volume of pieces for young pianists entitled **PARKING AN OCTATONIC TRUCK**. The ten pieces in the collection explore some of the more unusual approaches to composition such as polytonality, sympathetic reverberation, less traditional meters and clusters. Each piece is put together in a logical fashion making them easy to teach, memorize and most importantly, fun to play. To order **PARKING AN OCTATONIC TRUCK**, send an email to [info@redleafpianoworks.com](mailto:info@redleafpianoworks.com).

*Behind the Curtain* – What happens “behind the scenes” in the life of a Red Leaf Pianoworks Composer? See page 2

## Upcoming Events

**Long & McQuade New Minas** is hosting a **Red Leaf Pianoworks** workshop which will be presented by **Rebekah Maxner**, Monday November 4, 10 AM. The workshop will feature **Rebekah Maxner's Madge's Notebook**, **Beverly Porter's Land of the Silver Birch** and **Susan Griesdale's Arctic Voices**.

Nov. 4/5, **Vocal Masterclasses at Texas Tech University**, Lubbock, Tx and West Texas A& M, Amarillo, Tx. and Nov. 15/16, **2013 Kingston, ON The Master Class Youth Series for Voice with Canadian Music Centre & Canada Conservatory**, Facilitator: **Martha Hill Duncan**

**Beverly Porter** will be adjudicating the **Canadian Music Showcase** in Ottawa Nov. 16 – 17.

**Red Leaf Pianoworks** workshop hosted by the **BCRMTA North Island Branch** as part of Canada Music Week in November will be presented by **Teresa Richert** on Nov. 23. She is also presenting composition workshops to students and teachers in several locations in BC throughout the month of November.

**Remenyi** in Toronto will be hosting a workshop on Nov. 13, 9AM to 12PM with **Darlene Irwin** of **The Student Organizer** and **Martha Hill Duncan** and **Susan Griesdale** of **Red Leaf Pianoworks**.

Nov. 22-24 **Brantford, ON Contemporary Showcase**, Adjudicator: **Martha Hill Duncan**



# Behind the Curtain

What happens behind the scenes in the life of a Red Leaf Pianoworks composer?

## Rebekah Maxner

The saying goes “write what you know” and what I know is life with three kids who love to read. So I read too, and then I write music about it. *The Color Collection* is from Patricia Godwin’s book *I Feel Orange Today*. *Old MacDonald had the Blues* is from reading so many rhythmic rhymes to my kids. And my newest book, *Madge’s Notebook, A Piano Tribute to The Hunger Games* is from our family’s latest favorite book series.

The inspiration for my piano book came from *Catching Fire* (Chapter 6, page 87), where Katniss says that Madge is trying to teach her piano, but that she mostly likes listening to Madge play. Because there are so many similarities between District 12 and Nova Scotia, where I have lived my whole life, I wanted draw on influences from my province’s folk tradition to write pieces like *Deep in the Meadow*, *The Toasting* and *The Hanging Tree*.

Only *The Hanging Tree* came from my first sketches. All the other pieces were written and rewritten several times because I wasn’t satisfied with my first attempts. I wanted the music to be simple, beautiful, and to sound like it had been sung for ages. Because *The Hunger Games* deals with the rather dark topic of a government sacrificing young people to war in order to preserve a way of life, I wanted my music to reflect the healing role music plays in the books. I believe music shines a light of hope in a dark world.

### Favorite quote:

“...something unexpected happens.

“I begin to sing. At the window, in the shower, in my sleep. Hour after hour of ballads, love songs, mountain airs. All the songs my father taught me...”

Mockingjay, Chapter 27, Suzanne Collins



## Recent & Upcoming Performances

**Janet Gieck’s** piano sextet entitled **Expectation** for 3 pianos, 12 hands was performed at the Saskatchewan New Music Festival in June 2013.

**Janet Gieck** will be performing her piece **Absalom’s Party** on Oct. 27 at the Saskatoon Composer’s Society concert.

**John Burge’s Cathedral Architecture** for organ and orchestra will be premiered by the Kingston Symphony Association at St. George’s Cathedra., Kingston on October 27<sup>th</sup> (conductor, Evan Mitchell, soloist, Michael Capon)

**John Burge’s Flanders Fields Reflections** (2009 Juno Award for Best Recording of Classical Composition as recorded by Sinfonia Toronto) will be performed on November 10<sup>th</sup> at 2PM, St. Andrew’s Church by The Thirteen Strings of Ottawa. This ensemble will also premiere Burge’s **Second Piano Concerto** on January 10, 2014 with Pianist Angela Park, conducted by Nurhan Arman.

Dec. 2013/January 2014 **Searching the Painted Sky** - a brand new opera by composer **Martha Hill Duncan** and librettist Janet Windeler Ryan will be premiered by the Youth Opera of El Paso in El Paso, Tx and New York city.