

ALBUM REVIEWS



Jazz

Kye Marshall Jazz Quartet *Pencil Blues* (Self-released)

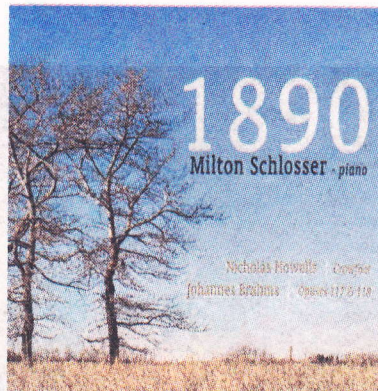
★★★ (out of four)

Cellist/composer Kye Marshall has played in such diverse contexts as the National Ballet Orchestra and Toronto Downtown Jazz Festival, alongside so many top flight players there's only one person around to be surprised by the irrepressible playfulness found on *Pencil Blues*, her sixth album. That's me. The Marshall I knew in university — with her intense work ethic about serious music — has evolved into a splendid jazz composer capable of the good nature cello grumbling in "Summer Sizzle," the Bach-jazz crossover in "I Remember Johann Sebastian" and the aching melody in "Interrupted Conversation," a piece she performs to "continue to talk" with her late mother.

As *Pencil Blues'* producer, Marshall has difficulties — as other producers have had on other projects before her — in balancing the intensity of the cello's hyper resonant sound with that of her accomplished session mates; bassist Don Thompson, Kent Teeple on viola, guitarist Andrew Scott, drummer Ethan Ardelli and percussionist Mark Duggan. In "Cello-ing," the 11-tune album's hot tempo opener, Marshall's cello acoustically overwhelms everything else. Then again, maybe it's her way of making us pay attention as I should have done all along.

Kye Marshall, bassist Don Thompson and guitarist Tony Quarrington perform at the Homesmith Bar in the Old Mill on Saturday.

Peter Goddard



Classical

Milton Schlosser *1890* (miltonschlosser.com)

★★★ (out of four)

Alberta-based Milton Schlosser has released the latest album in an unexpected boom of recordings featuring the late works of Johannes Brahms (1833-1897). This CD has a lot of things to recommend it — except, perhaps the featured piece by young Métis composer Nicholas Howells, who graduated from the University of Alberta in 2010.

Schlosser's aim is to highlight someone from Canada's native communities, which have virtually zero presence in the country's art music scene. But for reasons of continuity of style as well as quality of writing, it would have been so much better to not place Howells' *Crowfoot* next to Brahms's late-Romantic masterworks.

Crowfoot, commissioned by Schlosser, is a bit of a patchwork, with some very nice moments. Its novel features include words in Cree uttered by Chief Crowfoot before he died in 1890, and the use of a drum.

Schlosser's real accomplishment — and the reason to buy this album — is a clear-headed reading of Brahms' short but structurally complex pieces that often defy clear interpretation.

Toronto pianist Peter Longworth succeeded earlier this year, and Schlosser does, too. They did it by first trusting Brahms' notes to speak for themselves. The results are emotionally expressive, powerfully intimate journeys through beautiful harmonies and counterpoints.

John Terauds

Telnyuk S

Ukrainian vocal duo touring Canada with Toronto-based artist Ihor Polishchuk

LESLIE FERENC
STAFF REPORTER

Audiences may not always understand the words, but they're sure to be moved by the Telnyuk Sisters, whose evocative music and performances break down language barriers.

"It's very powerful and passionate," said Tracy Jenkins, co-artistic director at Toronto's Lula Lounge where the duo from Kyiv, Ukraine, perform Tuesday as part of Lulaworld 2013. "We were struck by the beauty of the music and its power. Audiences will feel it, too."

Jenkins and colleague Jose Ortega were captivated by the duo even before

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BIENNALE from E1

Prior to the 2011 Biennale, the gallery stepped in and, with the help of a national curatorial panel, plucked Vancouver-based Stephen Shearer to represent the nation. Shearer, like Boyle, worked with the gallery's curator of contemporary art José Drouin-Brisebois.

According to gallery director Marc Mayer, it was an emergency measure. "It was broken," he told me at the time. "And it had been broken for 25 years."

He was referring to the fact that, since 1986, the Venice commission had been an open-entry competition. Any institution, from little artist-run centres to major museums, were invited to make their pitch.

The mix brought forward a rare opportunity for regional actors to play on art's biggest stage. In 2009, the tiny Justina M. Barnicke Gallery at the University of Toronto successfully pitched video artist Mark Lewis. In 2007 the Art Gallery of the Universi-