

## Biography – Peter-Anthony Togni

### Composition – Performance - Broadcasting

“This brand new recording (Sea Dreams) of choral music by the brilliant Canadian composer, Peter-Anthony Togni finally answers the calls for more of Togni's choral work. Long overdue, it shows us what an absolute master of choral composition Togni really is.” **David Jaeger (Producer/Composer)**

“There is something Epiphanic about this music; resist it, if you can”

**Norman Lebrecht (The Classical Review UK)**

Peter-Anthony's music is spiritually rooted and contemplative. It ranges from the ethereally quiet to the explosive outer limits of contemplation. Togni has been heard everywhere from Toronto's Roy Thompson Hall and the Moscow Conservatory, to the Oriental Arts Centre in Shanghai and the Vatican in Rome for His Holiness Pope John Paul II. His music is broadcast regularly in Canada on CBC, as well as internationally, including on the BBC, Classic FM, Deutsche Wella and Radio France.

Togni's works have been released on XXI Records, CBC Records, Hänssler Classics, and Warner Classics UK. In 2010 his *Lamentatio Jeremias Prophetas*, a concerto for bass clarinet and choir, was recorded by bass clarinetist Jeff Reilly and the Elmer Iseler Singers and released on the ECM label, produced by Manfred Eicher. In 2013 Peter-Anthony's latest solo CD *Piano Alone* was released. The Sanctuary Trio's newest CD *Estuary* came out in the Fall of 2015, along with a recording of *Responsio* on ATMA Classique. *Hymns of Heaven and Earth* was released by Centrediscs in 2016, a disc of entirely Togni music, and in July 2020 Luminous Voices released *Sea Dreams*, another entirely Togni disc, on Leaf Music and distributed by Naxos. Blackwood, Peter-Anthony's duo with bass clarinetist Jeff Reilly, released their debut recording of original music *Lost and Found* in 2022, which was nominated for two ECMA awards, and their most recent album *Passages* came out in October of 2024.

In 2006, Togni's *Illuminations* (a concerto for bass clarinet and string orchestra) was nominated for a Juno award in the category Classical Composition of the Year. 2011 brought two nominations for Peter-Anthony's *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, for an East Coast Music Award in the Classical Music category, and for a Juno award in the category Classical Composition of the Year. The work was also a finalist in 2010 for the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Masterworks Arts Award, celebrating outstanding works of contemporary art that inspire and promote the development of artistic endeavour in Nova Scotia. In 2012, Togni's *Missa Liberationis*, the result of a project with the Latvian Youth Choir BALSIS, was published by Musica Baltica, and was premiered in Canada by Pro Coro Canada. Also in 2012, Peter-Anthony was the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

The *Responsio* project for bass clarinetist Jeff Reilly and vocal quartet premiered in July of 2013 and the recording was released in 2015 on ATMA classique. The work is the grand prize winner of the 2014 Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Masterworks Arts Award and was also nominated for a 2016 Juno Award for Classical Album of the Year: Vocal or Choral Performance. *Warrior Songs*, a work for percussionist Jerry Granelli and choir premiered in Bolder Colorado in 2014, with its Canadian premiere taking place in March 2015 with the Elmer Iseler Singers in Toronto. In 2016 Peter's opera *Isis and Osiris*,

based on the libretto of Sharon Singer and in collaboration with Opera in Concert, premiered to critical acclaim in Toronto.

*Sea Dreams* premiered in Calgary in February of 2018 with Luminous Voices and flutists Sara Hahn-Scinocco and Sara Geick; the work is part of their CD *Sea Dreams* released in 2020 which was nominated for a Juno award in Best Classical Recording Vocal or Choral. *Sea Dreams* is the winner of the 2021 ECMA for Classical Composition of the Year. Togni's *Living Flame of Love* premiered in 2019 with Edmonton's Pro Coro Canada with Nora Bumanis and accordionist Joseph Petric, and two commissions for the RCCO premiered during the RCCO's July 2019 National Competition. 2020 brought the work *Magnificat* for the Calgary Renaissance Singers and Players.

Togni's *Voice of the Weaver* is a composition commissioned by Jeff Reilly for bass clarinet and choir, with texts by Mi'kmaq poet Mary Louise Martin, which premiered in Canada in July 2022 with the Elora Singers. His newest endeavour is *The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, premiered in November 2024 in Toronto with the Elmer Iseler Singers and the Elora Singers in joint concert.

Peter-Anthony is also a pianist, improviser, conductor and organist. He has given many solo recitals across Canada and in Europe. In July of 2015, Peter-Anthony took part in the 53<sup>rd</sup> Magadino International Organ Festival in Switzerland, which was co-founded by his late father, Victor Togni. He has also worked extensively in Canada as a church musician. He was music director at St. Mary's Cathedral in Calgary, an organist at St. Michael's Cathedral in Toronto and organist and choir master at St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica in Halifax. He was the organist in the internationally acclaimed trio Sanctuary alongside bass clarinetist Jeff Reilly and cellist Christoph Both. Sanctuary, which was based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, formed in 1999 and performed across Canada and around the world, at venues such as St. John's, Smith Square in London, Saint- Séverin in Paris and the Dom Cathedral in Riga, Latvia. In 2008 they were the first Canadians since Glenn Gould to play at Philharmonic Hall, in St. Petersburg Russia. They have also made several recordings including their acclaimed CD *The heart has its reasons* for Warner Classics UK. The Togni Trio, a jazz ensemble with drummer Malcolm Gould and bassist George Koller, performs throughout Canada and the United States, and has two released recordings. Peter-Anthony also regularly collaborates with artists such as jazz saxophonist Mike Murley and cellist Jeffrey Zeigler. He is currently half of the duo Blackwood with bass clarinetist Jef Reilly and the duo recently perform with cellist, composer and improviser India Gailey, and he tours his solo piano works.

Peter-Anthony was born in Pembroke, Ontario in 1959. He spent his early years in Toronto where he attended St. Michael's Choir School. He later went on to study at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, studying organ with Frederick Geoghegan and composition with Stephen Chatman. He furthered his studies in organ and improvisation in Paris France with the great French organist Jean Langlais. Togni also studied composition with Allain Gaussin at the Schola Cantorum in Paris where he was awarded first prize in composition.

For over twenty years, Peter-Anthony was a broadcaster, hosting radio programs for CBC Radio 2, including *That Time of the Night*, the award-winning *Stereo Morning*, *Weekender* and *Choral Concert*.

Peter-Anthony teaches at Acadia University's School of Music in Wolfville, and is the organist and choir master at Saint Benedict Parish. He currently resides in Halifax, Nova Scotia.