

Sibling Revelry

By Patricia Crane

Anyone with a brother or sister can tell you: the sibling relationship is delicate, equal parts fraught and rewarding. If they're too far apart, siblings can feel like strangers; too close, and the competition can be fierce. Spend five minutes in a car with two kids in their "I'm telling Mom!" phase, and you can attest to the high emotions and singular energy that exist between siblings.

But take that unique relationship and mix in some prodigious creative talent, and you have the makings of a dynasty.

The modern landscape of Classical music teems with siblings following in the footsteps of Fanny and Felix Mendelsohn and the Strauss brothers. Today's sibling collaborations run the gamut—from exclusive partnerships to pursuing individual careers and collaborating on special projects.

Together literally all their lives, identical twins Richard and John Contiguglia are the most famous duo-pianists playing today. Making their world debut in 1962, they've spent their joint career bringing oft-forgotten duo-piano pieces back into the limelight. And since 1999, twin sisters Emily and Julia Bruskin (violin and cello) have collaborated with pianist and fellow Juilliard alumna Andrea Lam as the award-winning Claremont Trio.

Speaking of string-playing siblings, tune in on September 14 at 8 p.m. as Monday Night at the Symphony features Norwegian sister/brother duo Mari and Hakon Samuelsen, playing the late James Horner's *Pas de Deux*, Double Concerto for Violin and Cello.

The piece premiered in 2014 for the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's 175th anniversary; it's one of Horner's final completed works.

Don't miss the Ying Quartet (boasting three of the founding Ying siblings) with pianist Adam Neiman, playing Anton Arensky's Piano Quintet in D at 7:30 p.m. on September 14.

And be sure to listen for solo pieces and collaborations by pianist Orli Shaham and her brother, violinist Gil. These award-winning siblings have their own stellar careers, but



Richard and John Contiguglia

photo: National Gallery, London



Mari and Hakon Samuelsen



The Ying Quartet

photo: Todd Matarazzo

they've recorded several acclaimed albums together.

Is it coincidence? Genetics? Their parents' attitudes, or just good old-fashioned sibling rivalry? Whatever the cause might be, when musical greatness runs in families, we are the beneficiaries—and we can only hope that their artistry inspires a sister somewhere to stop poking her brother, and likewise get her brother to stop stealing her favorite bear. Otherwise, I'm telling Mom. ♪



Orli Shaham

photo: Christian Steine



Gil Shaham

photo: Luke Ratray

Bryn Terfel

Meat Loaf at the Met? Terfel turns 50!

By Bob Chapman

Bryn Terfel continues to seek new artistic challenges. One of the few non-tenor male opera singers to have achieved worldwide fame, the Welsh bass-baritone took on the role of Tevye, Russian-Jewish peasant farmer, in *Fiddler on the Roof* in the U.K. last summer, following a triumphant run of *Sweeney Todd* in New York and London.

Born Bryn Terfel Jones on November 9, 1965, in Pant Glas, Caernarfonshire, Wales, he dropped the Jones surname at the beginning of his professional career so as not to be confused with a baritone named Bryn Jones. At first, says Terfel, he was more drawn to popular music than to Classical, and as a young student at the Guildhall School of Music in London, he often went to Pink Floyd concerts. American fans sometimes compare him to Meat Loaf, whom he physically resembles.

His introduction to opera was a Covent Garden production of Verdi's *Otello* with Plácido Domingo as the tragic Moor. In 1989, Terfel won the Lieder Prize in the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition, and he made his professional operatic debut the following year as Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così Fan Tutte* with the Welsh National Opera.

For the past quarter century, Terfel has sung leading roles at the world's greatest opera



Bryn Terfel

photo: DG Adam Barker

houses, including New York's Metropolitan, Milan's La Scala, London's Covent Garden, and the Vienna State Opera. When he sang Mozart's *Figaro* at the Met in 1994, The New York Times ran a front-page story about him.

Terfel's rich, warm, vibrant voice is capable of expressive pianissimos as well as roaring fortissimos. Along with major roles in operas by Mozart, Verdi, and Puccini, his repertory includes Nick Shadow (Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*), Offenbach's four villains (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), and Wagner's Wotan and Hans Sachs.

Equally acclaimed as a song recitalist, particularly with Schubert and Mahler lieder, Terfel continues to champion British composers such as Delius, Vaughan Williams, Finzi, and Butterworth. No Classical snob, Terfel seems just as happy belting out Welsh ballads (with his compatriot Tom Jones) and Broadway showstoppers.

On November 9, during the first hour of Music in the Night, Bryn Terfel will sing Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Songs of Travel*, accompanied by pianist Malcolm Martineau. ♪