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Sophisticated Fusion coming to Sarnia's Imperial Theatre

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Sophisticated Fusion's Adam Zukiewicz (left) and Peter Stoll (right) will be performing at Sarnia's Imperial Theatre on March 2, as part of the Sarnia Concert Association's 2022 season. Handout/Sarnia This Week jpg, SW

Two musical virtuosos will be performing an array of uplifting songs from a variety of different genres at Sarnia's Imperial Theatre on Wednesday, March 2 as part of the Sarnia Concert Association's first live show in over two years.

Clarinetist and saxophonist Peter Stoll and concert pianist Adam Zukiewicz – known together as Sophisticated Fusion – will be making a return appearance to Sarnia, performing their curated collection of classical and jazz-inspired pieces during their stage show, entitled From Chopin to Jazz.

Not only will the musicians play music ranging from Mozart to Benny Goodman, but the two – both teach music at post-secondary music schools – will provide the audience with highly interesting background knowledge about the pieces they will be performing.

During their last appearance in Sarnia, the pair enjoyed interacting with the audience, Stoll said, and look forward to once again reconnecting with local music lovers.

“We're very happy to be returning,” he said. “There's a really great audience in Sarnia and it was a great experience to play there.”

Attendees to the March 2 concert can expect to be immersed in an evening of lively, upbeat and inspiring music, Stoll said, with the duo performing pieces that have been hand-picked from a variety of different genres and eras.

“We really want people to have fun and enjoy themselves, so this is a presentation of music that crosses all sorts of genres and styles,” he said. “It’s music that Adam and I really love – there’s tune and melody and sound in every piece. We’ll take people on a little tour – we start with the classics and work through the style periods on both clarinet and saxophone along with piano.”

“There’s some Mozart that I’ve arranged and we end the first half with a wild opera fantasy, a piece that has a million notes for the clarinet that’s a lot of fun. Then in the second half, we start with a taste of classical music, but it’s a somewhat contemporary British composer who wrote beautiful pieces with singing melodies,” Stoll continued. “And then we pivot over to more jazzy things – we do some Gershwin, a piece called Harlem Nocturne (theme from the 80s television show Mike Hammer) and a piece on saxophone that reminds me of themes from those great British TV shows on PBS, like Hercule Poirot mysteries.”

The idea behind From Chopin to Jazz is simply to create some musical magic onstage, Stoll said.

“It’s all stuff that’s uplifting and fun, and we introduce every piece so that people have some idea of what we’re doing here, why we’re going there next and what’s interesting about this music. We just have a great time onstage presenting this,” Stoll said.

After COVID shut down live, in-person performances for two achingly long years, local music buffs are keen to get back into the theatre to experience live shows, said Sarnia Concert Association president Jim Elliott.

Sophisticated Fusion will provide them with a rousing welcome back, he added.

“These performers – Peter and Adam – they’re very popular with our audience,” he said. “We’ve had them here before and they were very well received. They provided a very lively and very entertaining evening last time and our patrons were quite keen on having them back.”

“They cover the whole spectrum – it’s quite a mixed bag they perform, from a light touch on the classics to a real jazz infusion. It’s a long ways from a staid old concert – this will be a very lively evening with two incredibly personable musicians,” Elliott said. “Our audience very much likes interaction with musicians, to have musicians who tell them about the music and give a little background and show their personal side. And Peter and Adam do that in spades, they really connect with the audience.”

Audiences who attend the show will also get a first glimpse at the new changes that have taken place in the Imperial Theatre since the last time they went there.

“I’m looking forward to our first concert back and especially in the newly renovated Imperial Theatre – it adds an extra dimension to the concert. I hope people will be able to find the time to come out and join us at what promises to be an outstanding concert.”

Stoll said that he and Zukiewicz have been eagerly awaiting the opportunity to perform in front of a live audience again.

“This will be our first concert for a live audience in two years and we’re so looking forward to meeting folks and being able to share this with them,” he said. “We’re really grateful to the Sarnia Concert Association for setting this up.”

For tickets to the show or for the Sarnia Concert Association’s spring series, visit the Imperial Theatre website at www.imperialtheatre.net or visit the Box Office at 168 Christina St. N.