



Here & Now

Meet the people who'll shape city life in 2009 and beyond

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SOFIA KINACHTCHOUK PHOTO STYLING BY ELIZABETH INTERIORS

Full of new ideas and infectious enthusiasm, the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra's new Executive Director **Annelisa Pedersen** brings fresh ambition and imagination to one of the city's iconic cultural institutions





Burlington-born Jason Bouwman, principal of local design firm Compass Creative, thrives on creative challenge and enjoys the sterling distinction of having had two of his designs minted as silver dollars



ANNALISA PEDERSEN Executive Director, Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra

She may be new to the city, but Annelisa Pedersen has experience that belies her youthful 30 years. A classically trained musician, she's also a dynamic fundraiser, almost doubling grant monies during her tenure as general manager of Vancouver vocal chamber ensemble Musica Intima. That's no small feat when you consider the sobering prospects for arts organizations these days, especially those working in classical music. Look to the turmoil facing Opera Hamilton or the Bach Elgar Choir, or recall the HPO's own mid-'90s bankruptcy. Pedersen is bright and quick-witted, and certainly aware of the climate, but approaches her work with verve, optimism, and a passion for forging new working relationships within the area's cultural sector. Between her appointment and the vision of artistic director James Sommerville, the HPO is ready to be rediscovered in a big way.

CHRIS MURRAY City Manager, City of Hamilton

Formerly Manager of Housing and the individual credited with quietly stick-handling the divisive Red Hill Creek Parkway project to completion, Chris Murray came out on top of a field of over 70 applicants. He's widely regarded as a big-picture professional, a tough-minded analyst with an empathetic ear, able to find productive dialogue even when agendas clash and tempers boil over. All of which be real assets in his new role as City Manager. Consider the government of the past year: the departmental dust-ups, rudeness and scandal, and of course the long-running inefficiency of City Hall. Bringing that beast to heel is arguably a challenge on par with the contentious Red Hill file. There's a lot at stake at this moment in Hamilton's history, and a lot of latent promise. And nobody will be tested more regularly than Murray, who is intent on making real and lasting gains. You won't necessarily see a lot of him, but he's definitely one to watch.

ERIC VANDEWALL Incoming CEO, Joseph Brant Hospital

When he replace retiring longtime Jo Brant president Don Scott in mid-June, Eric Vandewall will inherit quite a hot potato. The hospital suffered the province's worst C. difficile outbreak on record, which left dozens of deaths in its wake, gave rise to a \$50 million class action suit and shook community confidence in the institution. On top of which he will be dealing with a \$5.5-million deficit and an aging facility in need of an upgrade. Vandewall knows the story as well as anyone. And the Burlington resident has indicated that his priorities at Jo Brant will be maintaining quality and safety while keeping budget reined in, advancing the hospital's redevelopment plans while he's at it. A seismic shake-up might be part of the prescription. During his time as vice-president of Mississauga's Trillium Health Centre, Vandewall managed to balance the Centre's budget by cutting the bureaucracy: eight administrators were terminated, and two vice-presidents pared to hit the desired benchmark. That, along with the frictions coming out of working with the local health network, should make this hospital drama interesting.

ROB MACISAAC President, Mohawk College

As a three-term mayor of Burlington, Rob MacIsaac shaped Burlington's growth and future through initiatives such as the establishment of the Burlington Community Foundation, Team Burlington and the redevelopment of the Waterfront. But even then, his vision went beyond those borders. A sustainability advocate who sits on the board of the Canadian Urban Institute, he served as a member of the Ontario Smart Growth Panel and chaired the provincial task force to make recommendations to establish a permanent Greenbelt for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. He went on to chair Metrolinx, the provincial agency in charge of charting the next quarter-century of transportation across the GTA and Hamilton, an ambitious \$50-billion strategy. In February, he began a new phase as president of Mohawk College. His connections and credibility, appetite for innovative strategies and institutional reform will be major strengths at a time when funding pressures are high. Especially as he looks to reinvigorate the college through a number of changes, including a planned \$84-million face lift, including a roomy facility on the Fennell Campus that will give the school bold new profile.

VINCE MOLINARO President, The Molinaro Group

Some kwetched about its size and height, and there was the standard eleventh hour OMB appeal. But the Molinaro Group's Strata seems as unavoidable as the future. And many

ways, the 21-storey Maple Avenue tower will be the face of Burlington's future. Said to be the city's first high-rise condo registered for LEED certification, it's designed to be eco-friendly, from its geothermal heating and cooling system on up. Four years after starting the project process, the Molinaro Group is finally getting ready to sink its teeth into construction. Along the way it has had to defend its vision against critics who were more comfortable with the status quo of the site's existing 10-storey limit, a relic of the mid-'80s. But these sort of builds will become more commonplace as the city grapples with new population and its identity as a 21st century city. President Vince Molinaro has proven himself to be an assured hand at navigating the politics of making developments happen, and his company hangs its name on several well-placed Burlington properties. But something tells us they're just getting started.

JASON BOUWMAN Creative Director, Compass Creative Studio

Burlington-born Jason Bouwman inhabits both commercial and artistic worlds, having done commercial and personal projects in various media. An illustrator and Sheridan College grad, he's also Creative Director of design firm Compass Creative Studio Inc., which he founded four years ago. More recently, Bouwman has earned recognition in a more novel sphere: as a designer of currency for the Royal Canadian Mint. Two of his designs have appeared in as many years. Last year, Bouwman designed a commemorative coin for the Royal Canadian Mint's 100th anniversary. His latest design, for the 2009 Canadian Silver Dollar commemorating a century of flight, juxtaposes three iconic airplanes – the Silver Dart, Avro Arrow and Snowbird – with the silhouette of a child with arms outstretched in imitation of an aircraft. The image is a familiar one for most of us, certainly the designer, an aviation fan since childhood. Now he's ready to soar.

MARCO CIBOLA Illustrator, graphic designer

You hear a lot about the way that insurgent artists are transforming our communities. But sometimes the momentous imports arrive without fanfare. That's the case with Marco Cibola, an accomplished and prolific graphic artist working out of Dundas. He operates Nove Studio along with his wife Anne, and his clients have included magazines like *Color*, *Nylon*, *Mass Appeal*, *Time*, *Macleans* and *Outside*, newspapers such as the *Financial Times*, music industry design (Kelly Polar, Junior Boys) as well as niche products like Element Skateboards and tableware by hip California lifestyle company Poketo. An illustration instructor at Sheridan College, the Montreal-raised artist has also had his work exhibited in galleries in North America and Europe. That worldly pedigree bodes extremely well for the quiet valley town's growing trove of creative assets.

CHRISTINA & ELIZABETH LIAO Figure skaters

These 15-year-old Dundas twins have been figure skating since they were eight, but their promise has become plain in the last couple of years, when they've attracted attention with strong finishes at the junior nationals, when they've seemed as interested in testing each other as testing themselves. It seems gentle enough, but that sibling rivalry might be part of what gives them an edge. The twins, who are enrolled in an enriched French Immersion program at Westdale High, are disciplined and highly driven, gifted academically as well as athletically. Their quiet confidence is striking. They seem able to not only keep it all in perspective, but to make it look easy. The fact that they are skaters distracts from the fact that these two have the skill and will to dominate in any field they choose to.

CHELSEY GOTELL Competitive swimmer

McMaster University psychology student Chelsey Gotell has a reserved power and tireless work ethic, attributes that serves her well in the pool. A member of the McMaster Marauders varsity swim team, Nova Scotia-born Gotell won a silver medal in the 100m breaststroke at the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games, as well as bronze medals in the 50m freestyle and 200m individual medley. In 2004 in Athens, she took gold medal in the 100m backstroke and three bronze. And she was one of Canada's standout performers at September's Paralympic Games in Beijing. The visually impaired twentysomething snared five medals, including two gold, one silver, and two bronze. The gold medal performances, in 200-metre individual medley and 100-metre backstroke, were made all the more impressive in that they were delivered in world record time.

Poised and purposeful both on the ice and off, figure skating sisters **Elizabeth and Christina Liao** have what it takes to make a lasting mark, wherever they choose to go







Metals exporter Amandeep Singh Kaloti, this page, is helping to redefine waterfront industry. Midget motorsports enthusiasts Treyten and Cayden Lapceovich are driven by thrills, skills and family tradition



RYAN ELLIS Hockey defenceman

If 18-year-old Ryan Ellis isn't living the dream yet, he soon will be. The Freelon native and Windsor Spitfires blueliner is the Ontario Hockey League's top defenceman, an accomplished puck-handler and powerplay engineer has helped make the Spitfires the team to beat, jockeying to the verge of a Memorial Cup berth. Recently named OHL Defenceman of the Year, the understated Ellis was named OHL Player of the Week in October 2008 and Kal Tire OHL Defenceman of the Month three times since then. And most memorably, Ellis has a gold medal to commemorate his role on the Canadian team that won January's World Junior Championships in Ottawa. He'll venture back to the stratosphere again soon as Ellis about to get another exciting chance to test himself against the world's best. He's touted as a lock for a first-round pick in the 2009 NHL Entry Draft. If it has been a tempestuous year so far, it shows no signs of letting up.

JESSICA & MELISSA DOWLING Gymnasts

Dundas gymnasts Melissa and Jessica Dowling, who train at the Cambridge Kips Gymnastics Club, regularly turn in strong and award-winning performances. Jessica has been a breakout success: in recent months she has earning herself seventh spot in the all-around competition, placing sixth on beam, seventh on bars, eighth on floor and ninth in vault, qualifying for event finals and walking away with three medals including silver for her beam routine. Her younger sister Melissa is also making a name for herself at the national level, winning vault, beam and all-around at a recent tour selection meet. Both have remarkably well-rounded skill sets and are possessed of power, grace and agility, qualities that have served as a springboard to international competition.

CAYDEN AND TREYTEN LAPCEVICH Rising motorsports stars

Cayden Lapcevich has been racing for almost half his life – since he was five. This third-generation motorsport racer comes from a family whose men enjoy reputations as formidable track opponents, and their famously gutsy racing personae are visible in Cayden, a feisty driver who's nevertheless a patient and purposeful tactician. That combination has served him extremely well in competition, and it has paid off in spades: a recent season included four Grands Titles, three State Race victories, and several track records. And the wheel continues to turn: Cayden's younger brother Treyten has just launched his own racing career. Considering that their father, Jeff Lapcevich, has been racing for around 20 years, these kids are bound to make some serious inroads.



AMANDEEP SINGH KALOTI CEO, Sunrise Metals

An engine of transformation on the city's docklands, Amandeep Singh Kaloti has business partnerships in China, India, Pakistan, Thailand and Indonesia. He urged the Hamilton Port Authority to team up on a trial run of short sea shipping out of Hamilton, the first foray into that market. The inaugural vessel, loaded with containers of scrap metal from local scrap suppliers, bound for India and Pakistan by way of Montreal. Doesn't sound especially glamorous, but it could be the start of something big. Kaloti estimates that he has tapped into just five percent of India's market demand, and has plans to push deep into the subcontinent. Kaloti's initiative could give HPA's larger H2O campaign some traction, helping build momentum for waterfront industry in the new century.

DAVID PREMI Principal, david premi Architects inc.

As electrifying developments go, it's an unlikely one, but the impending remodel of the Hamilton Public Library and Farmers Market seems to be just that. It can't hurt that Downtown Hamilton is a light on cranes. Even so, the project is one of the city's most significant urban renewal projects in ages. A local lad himself, architect David Premi gets the significance of the job. One of the firm partners behind the HPL and Farmers Market facelift, Premi maintains a walk-up office near the Gore Park fountain and is one of a handful of the city's next wave of architectural voices. The York Boulevard work will make him more of a known quantity, but you'll definitely hear more from him. Premi is interested in raising the bar in other parts of the city as well, and is energized by the idea of helping shape the future of a city that is starting to reconnect with its urban identity.

DARCY & ASTRID HEPPNER Founders, Hamilton Music Collective

Hamilton is a city whose musical riches have put it on the map almost as surely as steel and donuts have. But the richness has traditionally run wild, with many talents underutilized and underappreciated. Hamilton-bred Darcy Heppner and his wife Astrid, both jazz saxophonists, set out to change all that shortly after moving here from New York City three years ago. One step was the formation of the Hamilton Music Collective, a non-profit group of local musicians and dedicated to making music a more common and more vital part of daily life. They've also brought jazz back into the mainstream, delivering high-calibre talent as part of a weekly big band series at the Corktown Pub and orchestrated a major collaboration between local musical icons, celebrated New York jazz photographer Jimmy Katz and the Art Gallery of Hamilton. And for an encore? Stay tuned...

Architect David Premi, below left, will shake up the York Boulevard streetscape with redesigns of the Farmers' Market and Central Library. Jazz saxophonists Darcy and Astrid Heppner, right, are cultural catalysts transforming the music scene



