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Musical milestone for local maestro

By [Aarik Danielsen](#)

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To create 100 of anything is quite a feat. By way of example, the forthcoming "To Rome With Love" is director Woody Allen's 42nd feature; approximately 75 albums and compilations bore the prolific name of Duke Ellington during the jazz great's lifetime. More than 1,000 compositions have been attributed to J.S. Bach — but comparing oneself to Bach is always an exercise in futility.

So Kirk Trevor deserves more than a little fanfare for putting his name on 100 recordings of classical and contemporary music. Trevor, the music director and conductor of the Missouri Symphony Orchestra, will get an opportunity to enjoy the moment Thursday when the orchestra presents a concert titled "100 of the Best" as part of the Hot Summer Nights series. Performing alongside the orchestra is a frequent musical collaborator and compatriot of Trevor's, the well-traveled and -renowned pianist Joshua Pierce.

Recording an album is something that requires grit, vision, determination and, often, staying on task while juggling a grueling schedule and sensitive artistic temperaments. So Trevor would be forgiven for losing track of a few moments or sessions along the way. "To be honest, I remember every one," he said this week in an email.

Trevor came to the realization that he was in rarefied air after coming across several ledgers and websites that numbered his recorded output, often as a conductor of various ensembles, at upward of 70 or 80 albums. Trevor "decided I actually need to make a count" but found himself overwhelmed by the task. Unsure what his criteria should be, he decided to list "only those that had a certain pressing" — thus, in reality, his discography actually numbers more than 100, stretching out to include video game soundtracks and rock efforts. A flood of musical memories — and accompanying emotions — came to Trevor as he wound his way through sessions and dates and titles.

"I was struck by the variety of repertoire I had in that 100, and that made me proud," he said. That repertoire includes work with orchestras, choirs, superlative soloists and chamber groups in service of works by many of music's lions and luminaries — from Copland to Nat King Cole, Debussy to Fats Domino, Handel, Liszt, Mozart and Strauss — as well as "nearly every major and minor American composer alive today."

"It was exciting to sit down with the CDs and" try "to remember the stories that surrounded each one, and, of course, each one had some weird or wonderful or quirky thing happen in the week that it takes to make a full CD," he said.

Some projects were recorded in, to borrow a phrase from The Beatles, places Trevor will remember all his life, whether historic Warsaw, Poland or, in fact, London's hallowed Abbey Road Studios. That place provided a particular "thrill, just to look at those walls and know who had been there before me — from" British composer Sir Edward "Elgar to The Beatles to John Williams." Scouring the list also reminded him of the fantastic composers and soloists he was paired with as well as the sort of idiosyncratic moments and conversations that come when working with musicians.

Thursday night's performance features the renowned Pierce, who has worked with Trevor on seven recordings, the maestro estimated — and the pair have several more collaborations in the works. Trevor praised Pierce's "unusual" range. "He was very famous as a contemporary avant-garde pianist for a long time and yet was one of the best romantic pianists out there."

"He is a big pianist but with a real heart and soul," Trevor added. "He has always been a collaborative partner with me. He likes for me to take the role of leading him to his best playing, meaning that we find tempos and interpretive elements together that show him at his best."

Together, the two have presented works by the likes of Gershwin, Bach, Hindemith and Brahms as well as "some *concerto grosso*"-type "works where the piano is almost" an "equal partner with the orchestra." On Thursday's performance, Pierce will collaborate with the Missouri Symphony Orchestra on works by Swiss-born composer Ernest Bloch "as an example of that shared musical vision," Trevor said, as well as a Bach concerto, "which is pretty unusual these days, for pianists to play Bach concertos on the piano." Trevor also has programmed the music of Dvorak for the orchestra.

Trevor's 100th recording is no excuse or occasion for respite — he has several more

projects on the calendar, including recordings of compositions by the Argentine tunesmith Florencio Asenjo and a set of piano concertos, and ideas for scores more. He has designs on utilizing the Missouri Symphony Orchestra to record an album for young listeners that would spur and spark music appreciation. Trevor affirmed his openness to nearly any sort of collaboration, provided it holds water artistically. "I usually say if you can get me on a plane that can arrive in time for the downbeat of the first session, ... then I will be there," he said.

A CD release party will be held at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, with the concert to follow at 7:30, at the Missouri Theatre Center for the Arts. Other Hot Summer Nights series concerts this week include "This Land Is Your Land" at 3:30 today at the Missouri Theatre, the second in a set of chamber recitals tomorrow night at Broadway Christian Church and an appearance by Mithril Celtic Band on Saturday at the Missouri Theatre. For descriptions and ticketing details, visit www.motheatre.org.

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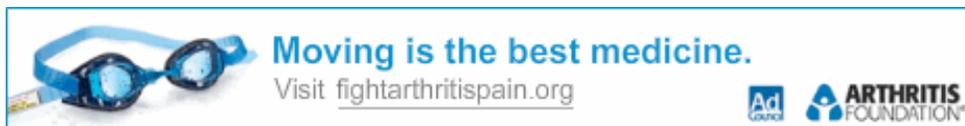
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