

# Rhapsody Quintet

## Biography

*“Played with grace and brio, best enjoyed by candlelight.”*  
(Stephen Cooke, *Halifax Herald*, Pick of the Week (*Passion*))

Classy...not classical! Halifax's **Rhapsody Quintet** defies easy pigeonholing. Comprising five classically trained musicians who are as at home in a symphony concert hall as in a jazz club, Rhapsody has been performing original arrangements of beautiful melodies from eras past and present like jazz, klezmer, tangos, movies and musicals since the mid 1980's. These fabulous musicians have been arranging and writing music to suit their unique instrumentation, (violin, clarinet, cello, piano and double bass), garnering awards and radio play.

Founding members **Anne Rapson**, violin and **John Rapson**, clarinet are now replaced by current members **Jennifer Jones** and **Eileen Walsh**, joining colleagues **Shimon Walt**, cello; **Diana Torbert**, Piano and **David Langstroth**, Bass. All are important members of Nova Scotia's professional musical scene.

**Rhapsody Quintet** has released six CDs to date: *The Melody Lingers On*, (1998) featuring musical theatre songs with Leslie Lake Searle and Ross Thompson was featured in Bravo TV's *Nova Scotia Ocean Fantasy* video, and *A Fantasy in the Making*, a half-hour documentary both produced by New Scotland Pictures Inc. In 1999, the East Coast Music Awards nominated the second CD, *Café Chantant and other Salon Delights* for Best Classical Recording. *Kiss of Fire* followed in 2001, and was given extensive airtime on the BBC on Brian Kay's hour long *Light Programme*. The Quintet is featured also on CBC Radio Maritimes' compilation recording, *Play it Again, Stan!* The fourth CD, *Rhapsody in Red*, was recorded in the Red Chamber of Province House, Nova Scotia's historic provincial Legislature, released to a packed house in 2004. This recording was made possible through the assistance of the Canada Music Fund and the Music Section of the Canada Council for the Arts and received support from the Province of Nova Scotia through MIANS' Export Development Program. *Rhapsody in Red* won the *Best Classical Recording CD* for 2005 at the Music Industry Association of Nova Scotia Awards and was nominated for *Best Classical Recording* at the 2006 ECMA's. In 2008 Rhapsody released *Rhapsody by Request* – featuring everything from klezmer to Queen – winning them Music Nova Scotia's *Best Classical Recording* for 2009. With their sixth recording in 2012, a two-CD set featuring an entire CD of tangos – *Passion* – Rhapsody features beloved movie tunes such as selections from *The Lord of the Rings*, an original composition by member David Langstroth (*The Four Seasons of Nova Scotia*), music performed on the Titanic and more.

**Rhapsody Quintet** has appeared twice as guest artists with Symphony Nova Scotia and performed in Ottawa in the National Arts Centre's *Atlantic Scene* Festival, and as featured artists on Toronto's *Music Alive* series. The Quintet was honoured to be invited to perform for the re-opening of both the historic Public Gardens and Point Pleasant Park in Halifax following the devastation of Hurricane Juan, and provided the music for the Premier's Dinner in honour of the first recipients of the Order of Nova Scotia.

The Quintet has performed throughout the Maritimes on many series including the Dartmouth Community Concert Series, Acadia University's Performing Arts Series, the deCoste Centre, the St. Bernard Concert

Series, the Indian River Festival, the Moncton Community Concert Series, the Marigold Theatre, the Mahone Bay Concert Series and the Acadia University Alumni Series. They've presented *The Melody Lingers On* show at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium in Halifax and the Imperial Theatre in Saint John, and performed in the Halifax waterfront Bishop's Landing Series both with guest soprano Sung Ha Shin Bouey and on their own.

Rhapsody's recordings have been used in ballet performances and professional theatre productions, including the Atlantic Theatre Festival and Neptune Theatre, and Chester Playhouse's 2006 *A Pitiful Ambition*, a comedy by Lorne Elliott. They created a new show with collaborators actor/narrator Marcia Kash, cantors Tracey Scher and Ari Isenberg and Baritone Lowell Shore, entitled *Kosher Ceilidh*. And the group played their first European performance at beautiful Santa Margherita on the Italian Riviera for a private function – next door to Rod Stewart's wedding party! The Quintet made a guest appearance on national TV on Candy Palmeter's *The Candy Show* on APTN, and their music was used on the live to theatre Broadway production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, starring late theatre great, Brian Bedford. In 2013, 2015 and 2017, Rhapsody was awarded the silver or bronze medal in the category *Best Classical Artist/Group* in the annual Reader's Poll in *The Coast*.

Rhapsody has performed for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, Prime Ministers of Canada and other visiting foreign dignitaries. They've also played for audiences ranging from women in prison to patrons in pubs, worked with local choirs and done many in-school performances through local residencies around Nova Scotia. Their *Sgt. Pepper Lonely Heart's Club Band* show at the Cohn helped to raise close to \$30K for cancer patients in Halifax. The 2017-18 season sees a return engagement to the National Arts Centre on the NAC Presents Series.

Listeners can learn more about the group at [www.rhapsodyquintet.com](http://www.rhapsodyquintet.com) or find them on Facebook or Twitter. Rhapsody's recordings are distributed through their website, and at a number of local and independent outlets, including Taz Records, CD Baby, iTunes, the Symphony Nova Scotia Boutique, CD Plus, and through amazon.com.

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*...simply splendid...full of the sophisticated grandeur of a long, lingering 1930s mid-Atlantic cruise...*  
(Ron Foley MacDonald, *The Daily News*)

*“This is a splendid disc...superbly played...Waltz for a Princess gives just the right shimmering glimpse of the ballroom...”* (Light Music Society Newsletter, U.K.)

*“Rhapsody Quintet earned a well-deserved ovation from a large audience in the Cohn...proving that the old show tunes from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have lots of miles left in them...it was a sit back, relax and enjoy kind of evening.”* (Stephen Pedersen, *Arts Reporter*, *The Mail-Star/Chronicle Herald*)

*“The production...is immaculate...Elegant, polished and set off by delicate bursts of ironic passion, (it's) a musical adventure from start to finish.”* (Ron Foley Macdonald, *The Daily News*)

*“Lush and lovely...beautifully paced...the group brings its obvious love of performance and high calibre of playing to this nicely delivered project.” (Sandy MacDonald, The Daily News)*

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