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# Uxbridge stars at the Grammys

by Shelagh Damus

The 55th Annual Grammy Awards are set to take place on Sunday February 10th at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. That is a long way from small town Uxbridge, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't tune in. There are a couple of Uxbridge connections to the Grammy Awards this year. The first is the posthumous lifetime achievement award being bestowed upon celebrated Canadian pianist, Glenn Gould by the U.S. Recording Academy. The award will be presented in the lead up to the ceremony. He and the other posthumous recipients will be recognized during the televised Grammy ceremony.

Glenn Gould is a descendant of the Gould family that founded Uxbridge. His first public performance took place at the Trinity United Church on First Ave. Gould was an incredibly gifted pianist who picked up a quartet of Grammy Awards during his lifetime. He was known for his unique and often controversial interpretations of the works of J.S. Bach; his recording of the Goldberg Variations catapulted the pianist onto the world music stage. He combined incredible technical skill with an interpretive style that verged on reinvention. His eccentricities were many; his exceptionalities were more. Gould exhibited perfect pitch at the age of three. He learned to read music before he learned to read words. He achieved the highest mark from the Royal Conservatory of Music for his final exam which he took at the age of twelve. Rather than work through a piece of music at the piano, Gould claimed he would read the music, study its nuances and then play it. His time at the piano was dedicated more to improving his technique. His preferred approach of pulling down on the keys instead of striking them from above led to one of his more visible eccentricities – his chair. Gould had a special chair he used whenever and wherever he played piano that situated him in a position lower than conventional wisdom dictated a pianist should sit. It travelled with him for all concerts, performances and recordings.

Gould's performing career ended at the age of 31. Then he dedicated himself to recording his music and the pursuit of opportunities within the print media, and the broadcasting sector where he discussed music, music theory and philosophy as it applied to music. Gould died in 1982 at the age of 50. His innovation within the world of classical music is the reason his recordings remain relevant today. The Lifetime Achievement Award honours performers who have made contributions of outstanding artistic significance to the field of recording.

The second Uxbridge connection to the awards is jewellery maker Judy Cogo. A custom-made Swarovski Crystal necklace is to be included in one of the gift bags given to celebrities at the 2013



Grammy Awards. Much like Ginny VanVeghel's 'Friggin' Lip Balms' that conditioned the lips of the music industry's A-list at last year's Grammys, Cogo is hop-

ing to capitalize on the exposure the necklace's inclusion in the swag bag will bring to her line of jewellery.

"Celebrity gifting is a very selective process and many businesses are evaluated for inclusion," says Cogo. She was first approached by Black Diamond Celebrity Gifting. "They found me on Facebook and contacted me with an invitation to submit a piece of jewellery for consideration for the Country Music Association Awards." They were impressed with her submission and her work was given to Taylor Swift and a couple of other celebrities at the awards in November. Cogo is "very honoured to participate in such high profile events and to be recognized for [her] creative styles."

Some of the Grammy swag "gets delivered to the celebrities in the days prior to the actual ceremony. Therefore, there is a chance it might get worn on stage at the Grammys," says a hopeful Cogo. Otherwise, the piece will be included in a gift bag given out back stage. Cogo will be notified in the days that follow which celebrity received her necklace. Should the celebrity be caught on camera wearing the piece it will serve as "an endorsement – when a celebrity wears it then for lots of people it is okay for them to wear it too," says Cogo.

Both looking back and going forward, Uxbridge is a community that celebrates creativity in the arts. This year's Grammy Awards, and the inclusion of both Gould and Cogo illustrates that the world is sitting up and taking notice too!



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