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Local Operatic trio takes on Adele's hit "Hello"

ViVA put their own twist on a song about an ex-lover who won't pick up the phone

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"Hello" is huge. More than half a billion people and counting have watched a YouTube video of Adele singing her monster hit.

Her album 25 sold 3.38 million copies in its first week, smashing Billboard's record for single week sales. And that's not all that's big about the album and it's first single, which has inspired covers by everyone from Spanish singer Leroy Sanchez to R&B singer Joe Thomas, violinist Bryson Andres, even marching bands.

There's Adele's powerhouse voice on display in hits such as "Someone Like You" and "Rolling in the Deep" and know this torch song about an old lover who won't answer the phone.

So the Star issued a challenge to ViVA, a Toronto trio of operatically trained singers: sing "Hello" in your own way and tell us what is so great or difficult about it.

Mezzo-Soprano Erin Fisher described it as "tricky" with "lots of technique". "It's really got a lot of passion so if you can use the colours of your voice to create that, it's helpful, but it's definitely a challenge" she said.

Soprano Katerina Tchoubar definitely warmed to the task. "I feel so motivated and inspired by her because it totally echoes my emotions" she said. "I literally sing from the heart."

"We are opera singers and we like the challenge," added soprano Anna Bateman. "I was totally excited."

Enlisting the help of their music director Mark Camilleri, the trio downloaded the music off the internet one evening and met in his west-end studio the following morning.

Fisher called "Hello" one of her favourite songs because "it comes from experience, a real place." Tchoubar added "It is something I can sink my teeth into. The depth of emotion is so powerful."

ViVA, which had its first performance at Casa Loma in the summer, plans to make "Hello" part of its non-operatic repertoire, which also includes Lenard Cohen's "Hallelujah." They'll sing it December 16th at the Voice of Christmas concert at Columbus Event Centre, 901 Lawrence Ave W.

Go to thestar.com/entertainment to see a video of them performing "Hello".