

Notes

the newsletter of

The National Orchestral Association

CELEBRATING COMMON GROUND

As we approach the presidential election year, the major political parties will be working hard to identify those issues that will motivate their constituencies. Unfortunately, the political discourse often degenerates into the kind of extreme partisanship that undermines our unity as a nation.

One of the things we do share in common is our great American culture, which incorporates a wide diversity of cultures and experience. During this time of national discourse, we can remind ourselves of the unity we all share by supporting those organizations that seek to culturally uplift humankind. Music is one of the great unifiers, in which people of all backgrounds can come together to experience the joys of pure creative expression.

In the coming year, let us all take a few moments to find common ground in the joy of music. Political issues come and go from year to year, but the joy of music is a constant that reminds us not only of our aspirations, but of our humanity.

As the pundits and political parties try to drive us apart, we who share a love for music can point to experiences that bring us closer together. Our love for expression and respect for the creative process knows no political, social or economic boundaries. Like the air we breathe, artistic expression is common to all people, and the sharing of music transcends all partisanship.

Let us remember that we all share this planet together, and that we are measured not by the petty things that divide us, but by the experiences of things like music which transcend the ordinary.

In the coming year, may we be blessed with a greater understanding of each other, and a renewed appreciation for the arts and for the expression of what is best in the human spirit. If we are to continue our success as a nation, we must avoid petty bickering and celebrate our common ground.

Matthew J. Trachtenberg, President

CONCERTS IN THE HEIGHTS

Concerts in the Heights ("CITH") is a monthly chamber music series in upper Manhattan, serving the Harlem, Washington Heights and Inwood communities. With the success of the smash hit *Hamilton*, the neighborhood of Washington Heights has gained new attention as birthplace of composer Linn-Manuel Miranda, and the location for Miranda's previous Broadway hit *In the Heights*. Washington Heights is a vibrant multi-cultural neighborhood that historically has been underserved by the New York musical scene. Fortunately, Concerts in the Heights has been serving the residents of Washington Heights and other nearby neighborhoods for many years, and has continued its monthly chamber music series at the historic Morris Jumel Mansion, the oldest remaining house in Manhattan, and the place where much of the musical *Hamilton* was written.

Bringing classical music to underserved communities is an important goal for the NOA, and CITH has been serving these communities in New York for many years. The company was founded by violinist Monica Bauchwitz, and presents monthly chamber music concerts designed to expose neighborhood residents to quality music they might not otherwise have access to. Concerts are interactive, with discussions and opportunities for questions before the concerts, followed by informal post-concert receptions open to all attendees.



Monica Bauchwitz

CITH's 2015/2016 season commenced with a program featuring compositions written in 1765, the year in which the Morris Jumel Mansion was constructed. In November, the company celebrated four composers born in 1865 - Sibelius, Nielsen, Glazunov, and Dukas. In March, the company will explore music for violin and cello with later concerts to feature such things as "Nature in Music" and an intriguing program called "Treasure Hunting in the Middle Ages." Concert in the Heights' breadth and variety of programming, combined with its high performance standards, have created an organization that is vital to the underserved communities of upper Manhattan. This organization exemplifies what can be done with modest financial resources and a commitment to finding performance venues that are magnets for attracting a wide diversity of concertgoers from local communities.. For more information about this wonderful organization, please visit www.concertsintheheights.org.

BARZIN CONDUCTING TECHNIQUE

Leon Barzin protégé Jacques Voois is currently working on a book that focuses on centerpoint conducting. Maestro Voois is creating this book to describe the evolution of centerpoint conducting, the dynamic conducting technique advocated by NOA founding music director, Maestro Leon Barzin. Maestro Voois has participated in several NOA-sponsored conducting workshops, and his previous dissertation on Maestro Barzin became the basis for the documentary, *Leon Barzin and the National Orchestral Association*, which features Maestro Voois. The conducting monograph should prove to be an important contribution to the pedagogical literature. We wish Maestro Voois much success in creating a work which will undoubtedly be a valuable resource for conductors and students alike.

THE SPHINX ORGANIZATION

Founded in 1996 by Dr. Aaron P. Dworkin, The Sphinx Organization was formed “to help overcome the cultural stereotype of classical music, and to encourage the participation of Blacks and Latinos in the field.” Its vision and mission is to “transform lives through the power of diversity in the arts.” The Annual Sphinx Competition provides minority musicians with the opportunity to work with professional musicians, and to compete and be judged by an internationally renowned music panel. The Organization has many active outreach programs geared toward developing an interest in classical music among underserved young people. Like Maestro Barzin, the Sphinx Organization not only seeks to provide exposure to great classical music, but to engage young people in the creative process with instruction, performance opportunities and inspiration. We commend this outstanding organization on its many valuable programs, and recommend that our readers visit the Sphinx Organization’s very engaging website at www.sphinxmusic.org.

MUSIC CONSERVATORY OF WESTCHESTER

The NOA is pleased to be a supporter of the Music Conservatory of Westchester. The Conservatory was founded in 1929, and is the oldest and largest community arts school in the five-county region comprising Westchester, Rockland, Bronx, Putnam and Fairfield, Conn. Counties. The Conservatory serves students from pre-school children to seniors, and historically has “embraced everyone in the community regardless of age, background, ability or financial means.” For more information, please visit www.musicconservatory.org.

LYRIC CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

The Lyric Chamber Music Society of New York is continually trying to explore new and innovative ways to bring classical music to diverse audiences, and the NOA is proud to contribute to the Lyric’s efforts. The Lyric uses intimate settings that promote a strong personal interaction between audience and performer. Programs are created not only to attract wider audiences, but also to engage audience members with a personal and intimate musical experience. This organization has brought together many of the nation’s leading instrumentalists and composers, who also enjoy the experience of performing in intimate settings. To contribute to the work of this fine organization, and for more information about the Lyric, please visit www.lyricny.org.

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES SOCIETY

Music of the Spheres Society was founded by world renowned violinist Stephanie Chase in 2001. The organization promotes and develops new audiences for classical music through innovative programs of chamber music concerts, lectures, and educational workshops that illuminate music’s historical, philosophical, and scientific foundations. For more information, please visit: www.musicofthespheres.org.

BALLET SCHOOL OF STAMFORD

The Ballet School of Stamford is an outstanding example of community-based training organizations, serving Connecticut’s Fairfield and Westchester counties, and providing professional dance training for children and adults. The organization also maintains a relationship with the Stamford Center for the Arts, giving the school an ability to provide unique performance opportunities for its students, with a varied repertoire of original productions and classical ballets. NOA founding music director Leon Barzin believed that ballet was an important means of exposing young people to classical music as well as dance. To learn more about this vital training ground for young performers, please visit www.balletschoolofstamford.org.

THE STECHER AND HOROWITZ FOUNDATION

The National Orchestral Association is pleased to continue its support for the Stecher and Horowitz Foundation. Its continuing mission is to serve as an incubator of talent in the world of classical music. The organization mentors young pianists by providing performance opportunities. Its flagship programs, the New York International Piano Competition and the Young Artists Series, have been responsible for identifying many incredible young pianists. For more information about upcoming concerts and competitions, please visit www.stecherandhorowitz.org.

INTERLOCHEN CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Founded in 1928 as the National Music Camp, Interlochen Center for the Arts has helped train young musicians and artists for decades with its summer camp and winter academy offerings. Its idyllic setting between two lakes in northern Michigan provides a unique sanctuary for the enjoyment of the arts, and serves a wide diversity of students from around the country and other parts of the world. Founded to help foster music programs in schools, which were sorely lacking in the 1920s, this organization exemplifies the common ground that music provides for people of different socio-economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds. When walking through the campsite, one senses the sheer joy of music-making, from the little practice huts to the grand space of its nearly 4000 seat Kresge Auditorium. For more information, please visit www.interlochen.org.

ARS ANTIQUA

Ars Antiqua is a unique American music organization devoted to performances of 17th and 18th century music on period instruments. Its innovative programming has won critical acclaim and attracts a devoted following. Each performance has a unifying theme, incorporating both music and an historical perspective by guest speakers and using illustrated program books in order to “help place the music within the context of baroque art and social history.” For more information about Ars Antiqua, please visit www.ars-antiqua.org.

SETTLEMENT MUSIC SCHOOL

The Settlement Music School is one of the largest community schools of the arts in the United States, and one of the tri-state area’s largest employers of musicians. Settlement has six locations in the South, West and Northeast Philadelphia, Germantown, Willow Grove and Camden, New Jersey. It “provides 10,000 weekly services of individual lessons, classes and activities in music, dance and visual arts to children and adults” regardless of age, race or financial circumstances. For more information about this important organization, please visit www.smsmusic.org.