

THE OREGON SINFONIETTA

The Orchestra of the Chamber Music Society of Oregon – Our 37th Year

Dr. Donald Appert, Music Director/Conductor

Larry Greep, President

NEWSLETTER MARCH, 2010

Next concert: Sunday, March 14th at 3:00 p.m.

Sunnyside Seventh-day Adventist Church, 10501 SE Market Street just east of I-205

Mozart – Overture to the Magic Flute
Bruch – Romanze for Viola & Orchestra
*Sasha Reed, soloist**
Appert – Nara Variations
Parry – Symphony No. 2, "Cambridge"

Program notes are on page 4

Sasha Reed, 16, was born in Portland but spent the first seven years of her life in Ann Arbor, MI. Upon returning to the Northwest, she took up the piano and shortly thereafter the violin. At 11, drawn to its lower, richer tone, Sasha had her violin restrung as a viola and began her studies with Leo Whitlow. Other teachers include Anthony Dyer and, currently, Darrell Hunt. She has participated in the Oregon Suzuki Institute Summer Music Festival at George Fox University the last seven years, performing solos, chamber music, and orchestral repertoire. In the spring of 2009 Sasha was among only 26 violists state wide invited to participate in the Washington Music Educator's Association's solo contest in Ellensburg, WA. Sasha enjoys painting, leather working, knitting, sewing, and playing the accordion. She is currently enrolled as a Junior at Mountain View High School in Vancouver.



UPCOMING CONCERTS

**CMSO CONCERTO COMPETITION WINNERS*

SUNDAY, May 16th, 2010

Grieg – Piano Concerto No. 1 in A minor

Andy Rim, soloist*

Dvořák – Symphony No. 8 in G major

MEET THE MUSICIANS



Jack Torimaru, violin, was born in Japan. He began on the violin at age six and took lessons until age 17 but decided not to major in music. He earned a masters degree in electrical engineering from Kobe University and joined Sharp Corporation in Japan. Jack was a founding member of the Ashiya Chamber Orchestra in 1965 and has been its concertmaster for 40 years.

Jack came to the US as vice president of technology at Sharp Microelectronics Technologies and joined Oregon Sinfonietta in 1995 as an assistant concertmaster. After five years he returned to Japan but took early retirement in 2003. Since then he has traveled back and forth between the two countries to enjoy music making. Jack takes lessons regularly from Ms. Yuko Iwatani, who studied with Ivan Galamian and later with Joseph Fuchs at the Juilliard School of Music. Jack and his wife **Naoko**, a cellist who also plays with the Oregon Sinfonietta, frequently attend chamber music workshops in Japan, Europe and the US. They have two sons in Japan, a daughter in Beaverton and three grandsons. Jack also enjoys making sushi for his family.

NOTE: These two picture subjects are entirely a coincidence!



Bill Dameron, bassoon, tinkered with all kinds of music in his youth, gave a piano recital at 3-1/2 and played euphonium with the high school band starting in 6th grade. Banjo and violin were less successful, and music was ignored in college and grad school. He returned to playing an instrument in his early 30s when he fell in love with the tone of the oboe. Work intervened somewhat, but after his retirement in 1995 from the Foreign Service and move to the Pacific NW he played with several local orchestras, including as principal oboe with the Oregon Sinfonietta for five years. A medical condition in his right hand (overuse) led him to switch to bassoon just over four years ago. Bill is on the board of the CMSO and writes the Sinfonietta program notes and its newsletter. Serious opera buffs for 40 years, he and his wife Diana, also a retired Foreign Service Officer, take in productions all over the world. Bill is on the board of Chamber Music Northwest (catch us this summer!), past president, director or officer of several national and local mineralogical associations, and on the board of the Rice Museum of Rocks and Minerals in Hillsboro. Bill and Diana are invited exhibitors at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show and Bill runs a mineral collectors reference website. During his career of nearly 30 years with the State Department he concentrated on Europe and Africa; his last post was as U.S. Ambassador to Mali. Bill's granddaughter Hannah is his newest hobby.

CONDUCTOR'S CORNER

Our program opens with the well known *Overture to the Magic Flute* by Mozart. Composed in the final year of his life, it reflects his connection with the Masons with the consistent symbolism of the Trinity throughout (3 opening chords, key of 3 flats, etc.). It has been a pleasure to see how our string section has improved and is playing this exciting music with great skill. Next season we will perform Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major*, k. 467 with a CMSO concerto competition winner. At this concert we feature Sasha Reed as soloist for the lovely Bruch *Romanze for Viola and Orchestra*. She has big shoes to fill as the last student who performed this with the Oregon Sinfonietta went on to study at the Juilliard School. We look forward to her debut as a soloist.



You can find my program notes for *Nara Variations* included in Bill Dameron's usual fine work as our program annotator. The Ashiya Chamber Orchestra in Kobe, Japan just happens to have Jack and Naoko Torimaru as their concertmaster and principal cellist. We are pleased to have them as members of the Oregon Sinfonietta as well, since they regularly return to the area to visit their daughter Yumi who lives in Beaverton. Their enthusiastic support for my compositions since they first performed "*In the Similitude of a Dream*" about 10 years ago led first to my composing *Elegy* in 2001 (ironically premiered after the tragic events of 9/11) and then *Nara Variations* in 2007. I am pleased that their orchestra has performed all four of my works for string orchestra. Since their premiere of the *Nara Variations* in 2007, I have conducted the piece in Spain, Romania, Italy, and El Salvador with warm reception from both the orchestras and the audiences. Conducting one's own compositions provides the unique experience of a kind of continuing perspective with regards to the interpretation. Tempi in particular may vary with each orchestra depending on their response to the work. I look forward to sharing this very personal work with our audience in March.

The program concludes with a composer for whom that I have developed a great fondness. Hubert Parry's music, while it can remind one of Brahms and Elgar, has a wonderful warmth and thickness to the texture. We have performed his *Symphony in C*, "*The English*" as well as his *Overture to an Unwritten Tragedy*. In this his second symphony which he subtitled *Cambridge*, I find the second movement most enjoyable. It has a vibrancy to it that is quite dancelike. Our principal bass, Kay Robbins told me at one rehearsal that it reminded her a bit of Klezmer music in that particular movement. The slow movement is most expressive and eloquent. The final movement perhaps is the most like Brahms, specifically his first symphony with the grand theme of the fourth movement referenced by Parry. After our wonderful performance with José Rubio of Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs* on our November concert, I am sure you will enjoy this fine music of one of VW's teachers. For those who missed that concert, we have made additional CDs available at our March concert. See you there!.

The Oregon Sinfonietta, Sunday, March 14, 2010

Overture to The Magic Flute

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Children love *The Magic Flute* and the music and antics of Papageno the bird catcher and his Papagena. Opera lovers know it for its famous arias. For Mozart and his most important librettist, Schikaneder, it was an expression of anti-establishment views and an opportunity to tweak the nose of royalty and the Church, both of which banned Masons at a time when Mozart, his friends, European intellectuals, Ben Franklin and George Washington used the Masonic Order to promote democracy and the individual search for morality and brotherly love. The opera, premiered just before Mozart's death, is silly and heavenly at the same time. A radical departure was the use of trombones in the overture, reflecting the solemn knocking at the entrance into the temple in Tamino's search for love and truth. The overture perfectly reflects the opera to come, not particularly through musical quotes but with its style and emotional impact.

Nara Variations

Donald Appert (b. 1953)

(Notes by the Composer) In 2007 I visited Nara City, home of friends Jack and Naoko Torimaru, who play in both the Oregon Sinfonietta and the Clark College Orchestra. The day I left I heard music in my mind, a Japanese ritual called the "three beat song," a rhythm (only) repeated several times followed by a loud "OH!" *Nara Variations* is not a traditional theme and variations form; it instead uses melodic and rhythmic ideas in an ongoing variation technique. The "three beat song" rhythm opens quietly in unison and then expands, in perfect fifths and in volume. The first melody has a Japanese flavor, and a new tune is then heard in the cello and bass. My "Nara Walking Tune," played by the viola, reflects walking in Nara City. At the tempo change a rising chord progression appears, inspired by Vaughan Williams. Finally, the theme is "reflected" in the second violins and violas a beat apart after the first violins.

The middle section uses a melancholy idea I have nurtured for some four years and leads to a pulsating pattern of chord streams, a slow version of the very first theme. The finale begins with the "three beat song" rhythm and a new variation of one of the earlier melodies. At the end we again hear the "three beat song" in unison. The work premiered in Kobe in 2007 and has been performed by a number of orchestras since, including groups in Spain, Romania, Italy and El Salvador.

Romanze for Viola and Orchestra Op. 85

Max Bruch (1838-1920)

In contrast to Bruch's beautiful melodies in his best-known works, his disagreeable personality was such that at one point all members of his orchestra in Breslau (Warsaw) resigned in order to rid themselves of the composer. He was nevertheless highly respected, with two of his violin and orchestra works still among today's favorites. The *Romanze* was published in 1911, dedicated to famous French violist Maurice Vieux. Its mild lyricism is only offset by occasional orchestral outbursts. Bruch, openly opposed to the modernists, continued with his romantic melodic works well into the 20th century when his contemporaries were adopting new forms and harmonies.

Symphony No. 2 in F, "Cambridge"

C. Hubert H. Parry (1848-1918)

Parry's works are seldom played today, but he was an important figure in 19th century music in England. From an aristocratic family, he was a leading teacher and composer, known best for his choral works such as "*Jerusalem*," considered Britain's alternative national anthem (there is no "official" anthem, *God Save the Queen* notwithstanding). Parry died in the 1918 flu epidemic. His Second Symphony is among his finest works. Composed in 1883 and revised in 1887, it presaged large works from Elgar and Vaughan Williams. Heavily drawing on Brahms, its form is traditionally Germanic. A slow F minor introduction leads to the 6/8 allegro moderato, with straightforward three beats interspersed with a dotted note rhythm. The dance-like Scherzo could as easily have been by Dvorak, Brahms anointed successor; the lyrical slow movement is interrupted by jagged rhythms, and the graceful finale, in 3/4 time, recalls the same rhythmic figures as the first movement in its long progression to a grand finale.

Program notes by Bill Dameron

CMSO PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

If you didn't attend the last Oregon Sinfonietta concert, you missed a real treat! I'm not saying this just because I'm an officer of and participant in the group. For the last concert I was an audience member and thoroughly enjoyed the music making of the ensemble. The many hours of dedicated rehearsals by musicians and the leadership provided by our maestro, Don Appert, paid dividends upon hearing the harmonies and emotional passages of Beethoven's *Leonore Overture No. 3* and Schubert's "*Unfinished*" *Symphony*. My hat is off to Theresa Schumacher for her marvelous and haunting solo clarinet lines in the Schubert symphony. If that weren't enough, our student soloist showed her prowess in performing Chaminade's *Concertino for Flute and Orchestra* to a very responsive audience.

So if you missed the January concert, you can redeem yourself by coming with your friends to hear the Oregon Sinfonietta in a FREE concert on March 14 at the Sunnyside Seventh-day Adventist Church in southeast Portland. The program is a mix of classical, romantic, and contemporary music, including a piece composed by our own Don Appert. Come and spend the afternoon with us and enjoy a little something for everyone.

Larry Greep

WEBSITE

Please visit <http://www.cmsomus.org> to learn more about our organization, including the Oregon Sinfonietta, our concerto competition, upcoming concerts and contact information.

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The Oregon Sinfonietta has made a major contribution to the Portland area's musical scene. Search on the internet via Google under "Advanced Search" with the exact words Oregon Sinfonietta to cull out some non-relevant hits and take a look at the 129 results (and counting)! This has only been possible because of generous contributions. Our concerts are still free.

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