

THE OREGON SINFONIETTA

OUR 38TH YEAR

Dr. Donald Appert, Music Director/Conductor

Larry Greep, President

NEWSLETTER FOR MAY 2011

Next concert: Sunday, May 22nd at 3:00 p.m.

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

Mozart – Piano Concerto No. 21
in C major

Mary Stone, soloist*

Mendelssohn – Symphony No. 5,
"Reformation"

*Program notes for this concert are
on page 4*

Eighteen-year old **Mary Stone** has played the piano for ten years and is a student of Barbara Roberts. Before moving to the Portland/Vancouver area six years ago Mary studied with Jan Jordan in California where she participated in the Southwestern



Youth Music Festival, placing first in her age division. Since 2006 Mary has participated in both Oregon and Clark County Music Teachers' Association festivals, where she has been a consistent winner. During 2008 and 2009 Mary was chosen to play at the Associations's District Honors Recital and to perform at the Washington Music Teachers' Convention. In September of 2008 Mary performed Camille Saint-Saens' *Carnival of the Animals* with the Columbia Symphony. Scholarship awards include finalist in the 2009 Vancouver Symphony Young Artists Competition and winner of the Elizabeth Stern Scholarship Competition. Mary enjoys playing for fundraisers and has performed for the School of Piano Technology for the Blind, the Vancouver Seafarers Concert and the Ten Grands. Prior to devoting herself to the piano Mary played hammer dulcimer in a Celtic band with her six siblings, competed in Irish dance, and participated in musical theater. Mary is home-schooled and works as a church musician, a piano teacher, and an accompanist. She is also a member of *Cantores in Ecclesia* where she sings Gregorian chant and sacred polyphonic music.

NEXT SEASON'S CONCERTS

**FEATURING CMSO CONCERTO COMPETITION WINNERS*

SUNDAY, November 6th, 2011

Berlioz – Overture to King Lear

Barber – Knoxville: Summer of 1915

Linda Appert, soprano

Stanford – Symphony No. 3 "Irish"

SUNDAY, January 22nd, 2012

Wagner – Siegfried Idyll

Weber – Clarinet Concerto No. 1*

Schumann – Symphony No. 3 in Eb (Rhenish)

SUNDAY, March 18th, 2012

Beethoven – Egmont Overture

Bruch – Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor

Dvorak – Symphony No. 7

SUNDAY, May 13th, 2012

Beethoven – Piano Concerto No. 4*

Brahms – Symphony No. 2

MEET THE MUSICIANS



David Roddy, oboe, has performed for three conductors in The Oregon Sinfonietta, starting in 1993. He has played oboe since he was 13, when his music teacher brought a new instrument to school and asked if anyone wanted to play it. His teacher, who was also his father, was surprised when David volunteered to switch from clarinet to oboe – he had found his true instrument. David played in many community orchestras, often with his father, who played French horn, including the Marylhurst Symphony, Portland State Wind Ensemble, Mittleman Jewish Community Center Orchestra, Willamette Falls Symphony, Pacific Crest Wind Ensemble and with others. He has also been selected three times for solo recitals at the Northwest Oboe Seminar in Portland. Among his most memorable performances was playing with members of the Oregon Symphony at the Coaster Theater in Cannon Beach while in high school. Unlike his persistent love of the oboe, David has made many changes in his work career. After graduating from Portland State University he apprenticed and worked as a musical instrument repairman. He then moved on to cable TV technician, AutoCAD drafter, and finally journeyman electrician. Currently his job takes him to Google's data center in The Dalles, where he commutes home just in time for orchestra rehearsal each Thursday night. In his spare time, David enjoys kayaking, scuba diving and traveling with his wife and caring for their log home and 2.5 acres near Oregon City.



Jim Tsai, violin, began lessons at age six in Taiwan in a Suzuki program. He moved with his family to Cincinnati when he was eight and kept up playing through high school, including four years with the Cincinnati Youth Symphony. He remembers fondly his first rehearsal in the violin section struggling through Tchaikovsky's First Symphony and trying hard to stay invisible. He continued playing orchestral and chamber music while at MIT but subsequent training for a career in medicine turned into an extended musical hiatus. In 2002, after completing his residency in radiology, Jim moved to Portland and found time to play. He has performed with the University of Portland Orchestra, as concertmaster for two seasons, the Oregon Sinfonietta, the Sunnyside Symphony Orchestra and on a couple occasions with Classical Revolution PDX. A musical highlight was performing the Bruch concerto as soloist with the UP Orchestra in 2007. Interest in vintage violins, lutherie and violin performance has taken Jim to places like Cremona and Tainan, Taiwan to visit to the Chimei Foundation. He has attended the last two sessions of the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis and the last three editions of the Violin Society of America Makers Competition. His most memorable concert experience: seeing Hilary Hahn perform the Glazunov concerto at Disney Hall with the LA Phil. Jim is an enthusiastic chamber musician and welcomes playing viola when the opportunity arises. He also enjoys running, reading pop science and pop econ books and watching *The Daily Show* and *Portlandia* religiously.

CONDUCTOR'S CORNER



Our final concert of my 10th anniversary season with the Oregon Sinfonietta revisits two works we have performed before. Mozart's piano concerti are always a pleasure to perform with our young artists. They don't require large hands but do require musical maturity in the phrasing and artistry that is demanded of the soloist. Our last CMSO Concerto Competition Winner for the season is Mary Stone from Washougal, a student of Barbara Roberts. I have had the pleasure of hearing her compete to perform with us several times over these ten years. It is a tribute to her hard work and perseverance that she has won the coveted prize of a performance with the orchestra of a full concerto.

Mendelssohn is known for resurrecting the music of J.S. Bach. One can certainly hear that influence in the "Reformation" Symphony, especially in the final movement which opens with a quote of Luther's famous hymn "A Mighty Fortress is our God." Like the Bach cantata which uses this same melody, Mendelssohn weaves the chorale tune into his counterpoint so that it sails above the complicated lines underneath. Like Beethoven, he uses three trombones, but sparingly. He also includes a contrabassoon to reinforce the bass line in the final movement. I know you will enjoy hearing this fine work as much as we will performing it for you.

Looking ahead to next season (details of dates and repertoire on page one) I am pleased to say that my wife Linda has agreed to perform Samuel Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* on our November concert. She recently performed this wonderful work with the "Mihail Jora" Philharmonic in Bacau, Romania with great success. As always we will offer a mixture of both the well-known composers (Schumann, Dvorak, Brahms) with the lesser-known ones (Stanford). We hope you will join us to share the joy of the musical experience of a live orchestra performing. Lastly my thanks to all who have continued to support us financially. In these difficult economic times we appreciate your willingness to support the arts and in particular the Oregon Sinfonietta. See you May 22nd!

Don Appert

DR. DONALD APPERT'S WEBSITE

A new website-in-progress is at <http://www.maestroappert.com/>

OREGON SINFONIETTA WEBSITE

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

CMSO/SINFONIETTA ARTISTS IN THE NEWS

As reported in March Andy Rim, who performed the Grieg Piano Concerto with us last year, was to play in Portland's annual Young Artists Debut! Concerto Concert. He was last on the program April 12 with Liszt's *Totentanz* under Neil DePonte's baton and accompanied by members of the Oregon Symphony and Oregon Ballet Theater Orchestra. His muscular reading received a standing ovation and numerous curtain calls.

Program Notes, Sunday, May 22, 2011

Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major, K. 467

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

In an archetypical 1969 Swedish film based on a true story (*Elvira Madigin*) two lovers float dreamingly on a remote lake but then agree on murder/suicide because they can't stay together. The background music (this concerto's slow movement) immediately moved Mozart's work to the top of the charts. The Andante is indeed one of Mozart's loveliest, opening with the theme in muted strings and pizzicato in the bass line, followed by the solo piano, then some new material and concluding through various keys with the theme. The work for a period became known as "*The Elvira Madigin*." Its first movement begins quietly with a march figure, but quickly moves to a more lyrical melody interspersed with a fanfare in the winds. The little march theme persists and the tutti counter theme, with this march playing beneath it, is simplicity transformed. The soloist first enters with a small cadenza and trill before introducing a new theme, a stroke of genius. The movement unfolds in traditional sonata form. The finale consists of short Mozart tunes basically built on harmonic changes. No original Mozart cadenzas remain.

Virtually all of Mozart's piano concertos (27 numbered works plus various rondos, etc.) are masterpieces. The combination of opposing forces (the fortepiano and orchestra) was ideal. Among his 41 symphonies perhaps a half dozen reach this plane; of the string quartets, maybe a dozen. This lighthearted work (1785) followed the great D minor concerto, deservedly considered one of his best and long the most popular. After the twelve keyboard concertos of 1784-1786 the novelty had worn off. He needed financial support to perform each new one and conditions had worsened. He would only compose two more.

Symphony No. 5 in D major "Reformation," Op. 107

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Felix' grandfather Moses Mendelssohn was renowned as a philosopher and received status as a "Protected Jew," bestowed upon his widow and children under Frederick the Great (the status was abolished in 1812 when Prussian Jews received civil rights). Moses argued against extreme orthodox views and promoted rationalism and accommodation with Christianity; in fact, citing Mendelssohn, the *Shylock* in a performance of *The Merchant of Venice* in 1788 apologized in advance to the Berlin audience, in verse, about the stereotypes of the play. Felix' father, brilliant and musically inclined, became a leading banker in Berlin. Abraham decided to raise the children as Protestants, supported by his wife and brother-in-law (who had changed his name to Bartholdy and urged all to add it to the family name, which they did). As Felix became famous Abraham asked him to drop "Mendelssohn," but having been greeted warmly in England because of his famous grandfather Felix resisted. The children were baptized in 1816, but Abraham waited until he had retired in 1822, so the conversion was primarily to benefit his children.

While Bach's music continued to be performed by organists and pianists and his cantatas were not uncommon after his death, his larger works were virtually unknown until the early 1800s. As interest increased, young Felix began leading friends through parts of the *St. Matthew Passion*, working on it over four years. Abraham collected Bach manuscripts, including a score of the Matthew Passion which he gave to Felix' teacher (today's conclusion is that the one Felix used came instead from his grandmother). The 1829 premiere was a sensation. So it is not surprising that for the 1830 tercentenary of the Augsburg Confession (the foundation of Lutheran Protestantism) young Mendelssohn wanted to compose this symphony. The celebrations did not materialize as hoped, and it was premiered in Berlin in 1832 but not published until much later. It is a work of his youth which he later denigrated.

The *Dresden Amen* theme, prominent (the hushed strings) in the opening movement, was fairly new at the time but later used by other composers, notably as the "Grail" theme in Wagner's *Parsifal*. It returns several times in the simple sonata form movement. The light scherzo is recognizably Mendelssohn, with a lovely trio introduced by the oboes. The lyrical third movement has references to the *Dresden Amen* and other passages of the opening and segues directly to the dramatic introduction to the sonata-form finale, led by the flute and then other woodwinds, a statement of Bach's chorale "*Ein' feste Burg*." After fugal reminders of Bach we hear a grand presentation of the famous hymn, *A Mighty Fortress is our God*.

Program notes by Bill Dameron

FROM OUTGOING BOARD PRESIDENT LARRY GREEP

As the Oregon Sinfonietta closes its 38th year, I can't help but be proud of the musical strides the organization has made over the years, especially in the last three years when I have been honored to be its President. In March, Megan Yip, our youthful solo competition winner, performed the Saint-Saens Cello Concerto in remarkably mature fashion, and I look forward to the final concert of the season featuring Mary Stone performing Mozart's Piano Concerto in C major. The competition winners are stunning examples that music is alive and well in the Portland metro area. I thank our many talented young artists, my fellow orchestra members, and our Music Director Don Appert for their musical contributions, and our many supporters and patrons who enjoy our concerts – as I have stated before: all for the love of music, the universal language. Well Done!

This is my last newsletter as President of the Oregon Sinfonietta, but not my last contribution to the organization. My term of office may be over, but I have many measures to play before I put my instrument in mothballs. I look forward to continuing as a member of the Sinfonietta Board and as a playing member of the orchestra. The Board is composed of orchestra members highly dedicated to CMSO's musical tradition and providing vision for the Sinfonietta's future. I applaud and thank each and every member of the Board for their individual efforts, initiative, and for donating their selfless time and energy.

In closing, some members of the Oregon Sinfonietta will get together over the summer months to sight-read some chamber music. For those newsletter readers who are not part of the orchestra but would be interested in participating in the chamber music experience this summer send us an e-mail at info@cmsomus.org to make your interest known. Be sure to mention the instrument you play and your contact information. See you on May 22!

Larry A. Greep

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