

# THE OREGON SINFONIETTA

*The Orchestra of the Chamber Music Society of Oregon – Our 36<sup>th</sup> Year*

*Dr. Donald Appert, Music Director/Conductor*

*Larry Greep, President*

## NEWSLETTER, JANUARY 2009

**Next concert: Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m.**

Sunnyside Seventh-day Adventist Church, 10501 SE Market Street just East of I-205  
Featuring Bailey Schmidt, Trombone

*Gade – Echoes of Ossian Overture*

*Appert – In the Similitude of a Dream*

*David – Concertino for Trombone and Orchestra*

*CMSO Competition winner Bailey Schmidt*

*Haydn – Symphony No. 104 in D Major, "London"*

***Program notes for this concert are on page 4***

Bailey, a freshman at North Salem High School, began the trombone with his father at age 8. A year later he started lessons with Matt Polacek, a Salem teacher with whom he still studies. When he was ten Bailey placed second in the Wiscarson Concerto Competition playing the first movement of Rimsky-Korsakov's Concerto for Trombone. In 2006 he performed for the Oregon Legislature and took second place in the Salem Chamber Orchestra Concerto Competition (its youngest contestant by several years).



This past year he and his older brother Bryce performed Herbert L. Clarke's trumpet/trombone duet "Cousins" with the Salem Concert Band. Bailey has attended the Brass at Wallowa Lake (sponsored by the Oregon Symphony) and University of Oregon music camps. In 2007 he received a fellowship to attend the Summer Brass Institute in Menlo Park, California where he studied with Mark Lawrence, the recently retired principal trombonist of the San Francisco Symphony, and this past summer he spent six weeks in Vermont at the Kinhaven Summer Music School. Bailey was recently selected to be part of both the 2009 Oregon All-State Orchestra and the All-Northwest Band. In addition to his musical activities Bailey is actively involved in his church youth group and plays high school soccer and basketball.

### UPCOMING CONCERTS:

**Sunday, March 22, 2009**

Lalo – Symphonie Espagnol, op. 21

Niloy Ghosh, violin

Borodin – Symphony No. 2 in b minor

**Sunday May 10, 2009**

Svendson – Symphony No. 2 in

Bb major, op. 15

Beethoven – Piano Concerto No. 5

William Han, piano

## MEET THE MUSICIANS



**Alison Ember**, violin, actually played with the Oregon Sinfonietta when she was in high school. In fact, she soloed, performing the Tartini Violin Concerto in D the day after her eighteenth birthday. Her teacher was a co-founder of the orchestra and its concertmaster for many years – Dorothy McCormick, who was chagrined when Alison did not major in music at Pomona College. Instead Alison studied philosophy and later attended seminary for graduate school. She did not become a member of the clergy but she currently is a volunteer chaplain for the Multnomah County Jail in downtown Portland where she leads Bible studies and prayer sessions. For her "day job" she calculates retirement benefits.

Alison's excitement at the moment is her upcoming marriage to Allen Brown on St. Valentine's Day. They will honeymoon in Puerto Rico and take a Caribbean cruise. She says she may even be able to play duets with her husband someday, if he can obtain a viola and relearn the instrument of his youth. She does note one difficulty in her life right now. Her cat, Toby, is nine years old and bites. She has tried behavioral therapy and natural remedies, to no avail, so Toby is now on Prozac. Alison says that wherever her busy life takes her she will always have the joy of music, just as she did in high school.



**Jessica DePetro**, flute, was born in Richmond, Michigan on a horse farm. Her family moved to Mesa, Arizona where at age ten she began playing flute through the Arizona public school system. She participated in regional and all state bands and orchestras in junior high and high school and majored in music performance for three years at Arizona State University before switching career paths to science.

After working in a laboratory in Phoenix for a year Jessica found a job as a cytogenetic technologist at OHSU, a position she has held for eight years. After only a few years in Portland Jessica started searching for a group to play in and was lucky enough to find the Oregon Sinfonietta. This is Jessica's fourth season with the Sinfonietta.

Jessica enjoys home remodeling and finds architecture and old houses fascinating. She is currently remodeling her second fixer home in north Portland. Jessica also enjoys traveling and hopes to add places as Thailand and Italy to the list of lands she has visited. She also enjoys spending time with her two dogs, Nilla and Newton. Her secret ambition is to learn to play the cello.

## CONDUCTOR'S CORNER

Our upcoming concert has the usual mix of well-known (Haydn) and lesser-known composers (Gade, David, Appert). It's a great pleasure for me to perform the famous "London Symphony" with the Oregon Sinfonietta. Those of you who heard the Bruckner Symphony No. 3 can see the Viennese connection, since Haydn lived and worked in Vienna about 100 years earlier. The last Haydn Symphony we performed was No. 103, also composed for the same London trip.

Our opening overture is by Niels Gade, a 19<sup>th</sup> c. Danish composer whose Symphony No. 1 we performed a number of years ago. I recall Hazel DeLorenzo was so excited about that as she told me that she was originally of Danish descent! I have enjoyed discovering and sharing the music of these lesser-known composers and will continue to program their music since it deserves to be heard.

Most trombonists know the David concertino that Bailey Schmidt will be performing. At only 14 years of age he is playing very well and you can look forward to an exciting performance of this work from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> c. that shows influences of Mendelssohn. In ancient times I, too, performed this work, though only with piano accompaniment. Through the generous support of our many donors we are able to provide these great opportunities for young artists to perform with a full orchestra.

As promised, our audience will get a chance to hear my very first composition for string orchestra, *In the Similitude of a Dream* from 1981. I conducted the premiere of this work in Virginia Beach, Virginia as a part of a concert by the Tidewater Composers Guild, a group that I had co-founded with a colleague from Hampton University. The title is taken from the subtitle of John Bunyan's classic *Pilgrim's Progress* and my intention was to convey the main character's intense longing for heaven. If you listen carefully, you can find influences of Vaughan Williams and Stravinsky. It fits into the category of Neo-Romantic. This short work began my association with the Ashiya Chamber Orchestra in Japan through my very good friends Jack and Naoko Torimaru. They took this piece home with them to perform resulting in the composition of several works I composed for their orchestra. Next season you will get a chance to hear my latest string piece *Nara Variations*, which was one of those works. Those who have heard my *Elegy for string orchestra* (which is the other, composed in 2001) can find in particular a musical idea that seems to always pop up in my music. Conducting this work is a bit like meeting an old friend again as the last time I performed it was with the Warwick Community Youth Orchestra in Australia in 1999 (the beginning of my travels abroad as guest conductor).

*Don Appert*



## Sunday, January 25, 2009, 3:00 p.m. – Program Notes

*Echoes of Ossian Overture, Op. 1*

Niels Wilhelm Gade (1817-1890)

Gade was the most important musical figure in Denmark during the 19th century. This, his first composition, was written in 1840. Both he and David were protégés of Mendelssohn, who appointed Gade as an assistant conductor at the Leipzig Gewandhaus. Gade returned to Copenhagen in 1847 and taught Grieg and Nielsen. His works are in the German Romantic style of Mendelssohn and Schumann.

Scottish subjects were popular at the time. Ossian was the narrator of a series of poems purportedly from ancient Gaelic sources published by James Macpherson in the 1760s, based on the legendary Oisín, the son of Fionn mac Cumhaill, later Fingal; Scotland's Fingal's Cave is named after him and Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*, or *Fingal's Cave* (1832) inspired Gade. Gade's programmatic piece begins with somber chords, followed by folksong-like melodies, and at times ancient battles can be imagined. The descriptive music follows a pattern similar to Mendelssohn's overture

*In the Similitude of a Dream*

Donald Appert (b. 1953)

*(Notes by the composer)* In 1980 I co-founded the Tidewater Composers Guild in Hampton, Virginia. With a grant we hired a string orchestra for a concert that I conducted 1981. It was all new music, including *In the Similitude of a Dream*. The title comes from the subtitle of *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan. I wanted to capture the longing of Pilgrim's heart for the heavenly places. I used from the very beginning an ostinato (repeated pattern) of six notes descending (inspired by the opening of Stravinsky's *Apollo*). Over the top I layered my primary melody. The overall style is neo-romantic, and the critic who heard the premiere remarked, "while one can quibble about 20th century influences, it certainly was a pretty piece." The final section with its upward progression of parallel chords (known as planing) was inspired by a passage from Ralph Vaughan Williams' one act opera *Riders to the Sea*. This particular idea has a strong emotional reaction for me and has appeared in a number of my works.

*Concertino for Trombone in Eb Major, Op. 4*

Ferdinand David (1810-1873)

David, a violin virtuoso, composer and professor in Leipzig, premiered Mendelssohn's famous concerto and was his concertmaster at the Gewandhaus Orchestra. Today this trombone concerto is the best known of his compositions. Originally Mendelssohn promised to write a trombone concerto for a young virtuoso who joined the orchestra, but eventually recommended his friend David. Premiered in 1837, David's German romanticism allows the soloist to sing lyrically or show the instrument's bold, brassy side. There are no breaks between the three movements. A recitative for the trombone brings the first section to a close, leading directly to the reflective funeral march. After recalling some first movement ideas the final movement ends with a very difficult coda for the soloist.

*Symphony No. 104 in D Major, "London (or Salomon)"*

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

After 30 years in the Esterházy Court Haydn resided twice in London, then the richest of Europe's capitals. Each extended visit resulted in six symphonies and many other compositions. The German born promoter Salomon sponsored Haydn's London trips and concerts, although the famous violinist Viotti organized the concerts for the last three symphonies. *Symphony No 104* ("London" but sometimes "Salomon") is the last of such works by the father of the classical symphony. The composer conducted the premiere in 1795 on an all-Haydn program, which was financially very successful.

The slow dramatic introduction in d minor contrasts sharply with the cheery opening D major theme. Its lightness is aided by the use of repeated notes and downward and upward "sighs." Watch for unusual accents and silences throughout the symphony. The graceful Andante movement (with a jolting, powerful middle section) is followed by the humorous Minuet, full of syncopations. The last movement features a Croatian folksong over a bagpipe-like drone and concludes with a brilliant coda.

*Program notes by Bill Dameron*

## **CMSO STUDENT PROGRAM – UPDATE**

The string and wind classes started the winter term January 13. They had to postpone their December concert due to weather and are looking at an alternative date to allow the students to demonstrate their progress and gain live performance experience. The Salvation Army, students and their parents continue to be enthusiastic about the program and provide sustained support and welcome attendance as a featured part of the Tuesday night children's activities.

The current difficult economic times make it even more important that we continue our tradition of offering very low cost music instruction to children who otherwise would have no such opportunity. We are pursuing grants for our two teachers and for instrument repairs. Funds generated by our concerts help, but individual donations are much appreciated and badly needed.

CMSO is also always looking for instruments for the students, so if there is an unused instrument in your attic that could be put to good use please consider donating it to our program. Your gift may be tax deductible because CMSO is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Please contact John Burkhardt at 503-401-3745 or call the CMSO contact number (503-285-7621) if you would like more information.

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*Box 2911, Portland OR 97208  
503-285-7621  
[www.OregonChamberMusic.org](http://www.OregonChamberMusic.org)*