

THE OREGON SINFONIETTA

OUR 38TH YEAR

Dr. Donald Appert, Music Director/Conductor

Larry Greep, President

NEWSLETTER FOR OCTOBER, 2010

Next concert: Sunday, November 7th at 3:00 p.m.

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

Butterworth – Two English Idylls

Appert – Northwest Triptych (world premiere)

Nielsen – Symphony No. 1 in G minor

Program notes for this concert are on page 4

Welcome to the 38th season of the Oregon Sinfonietta! This coming year the Oregon Sinfonietta will perform wide ranging musical programs which introduce our audiences to new works as well as classical pieces not often heard or performed. If you are a returning orchestra participant or audience member you already know



that of the four free concerts scheduled each year, three feature our student competition winners as the soloist, and this year is no exception. If you are a newcomer to our concerts, you are in for a musical treat. In addition, the Oregon Sinfonietta is pleased to perform the world premiere of our own Don Appert's *Northwest Triptych*, a piece in three movements. But rather than have me explain it to you, I invite you to hear it for yourself at our first concert, November 7, 2010, at the Sunnyside Adventist Church in east Portland. Bring your friends, relatives, and neighbors. It's the real deal, and it's free!

Larry Greep, President

UPCOMING CONCERTS

**FEATURING CMSO CONCERTO COMPETITION WINNERS*

SUNDAY, January 23rd, 2011

Schumann – Overture, Scherzo, and Finale
Haydn – Oboe Concerto in C major, Mvmt. 1
Ellie Coale, soloist*
Gounod – Symphony No. 2 in Eb major

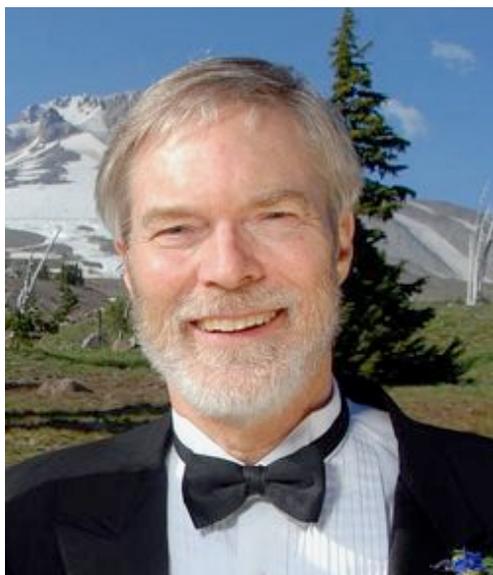
SUNDAY, May 22nd, 2011

Mozart – Piano Concerto No. 21 in C major
Mary Stone, soloist*
Mendelssohn – Symphony No. 5
“Reformation”

SUNDAY, March 13th, 2011

Mendelssohn – Overture to Ruy Blas
Saint-Saëns – Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor
Megan Yip, soloist*
Brahms – Symphony No. 4 in E minor

MEET THE MUSICIANS



Cliff Reynolds, bassoon, has been with the Sinfonietta since May, 2008. His life as a bassoon-type started when his son, then a high schooler, said, “Dad, you like the bassoon, don’t you! I’ll teach you how to play!” Who could turn that down? After a year or so Cliff was able to buy his son’s teacher’s bassoon. Cliff had heard that bassoon in the San Luis Obispo Symphony and had a good idea of how it could sound. He’s been chasing that sound since. He has had teachers in Monterey, San Jose and three in the Portland area. Portland was chosen to move to because of its big city arts in a close friendly atmosphere, where an amateur musician was welcome. He has played with the Marylhurst, Jewish Community, Pro Arte, Clark College, Mormon, Reed College and Oregon City orchestras, a McCall Idaho bassoon band, two woodwind quintets and a bassoon quartet. Through high school and his year as a music major at San Francisco State College Cliff played trumpet. He stopped playing, but began again to play with his son when he started on the clarinet/sax/bassoon. While he would like to play bassoon all day, Cliff works as a physical therapist. When he and his wife, Nancy, also a PT, are visited by their son and his new wife Cliff gets another lesson, his son easily sight reading pieces Cliff has been working on. Cliff also enjoys hiking, snorkeling, watching ballet and talking like a pirate.



Leila Ready, violin, grew up in Spokane amidst an abundance of music. She loved playing violin from the third grade on, and studied privately with Robert Armstrong throughout high school, playing in the Spokane Junior Symphony, her high school orchestra and the Spokane Philharmonic while still in high school. She earned her B.A. in violin performance from UW in Seattle, studying with Emanuel Zetlin. After moving to Portland she played with the Portland Opera and in several community orchestras, studied with Lajos Balogh and played six seasons with the Oregon Symphony. However, raising her two children with Michael, her husband, plus three step-children meant a switch to regular hours and paychecks for 27 years as a legal secretary. She continued playing chamber music and singing in the Masterworks Choir for several seasons, and joined the Oregon Sinfonietta in 1995. Now retired, she and Michael attend ballgames and performances involving their eight grandchildren, take family camping trips, travel, garden, read history, and are active in their church. Leila also loves making scrapbooks.

CONDUCTOR'S CORNER

Welcome to my tenth season as Music Director of the Oregon Sinfonietta! I am particularly eager to share the music of our November 7 concert. We begin with the last orchestral work of George Butterworth, who tragically died so young in World War I. The orchestra will have performed all of his orchestral music with this piece (there were only four such works altogether). Last season we played the lovely *The Banks of Green Willow* for a small orchestra. Also for a small orchestra the *Two English Idylls* are in the style of folksongs but quite sophisticated. Especially poignant is the final passage with the solo violin. This beautiful music will touch your heart.

Northwest Triptych is my first work for full orchestra and this will be the world premiere. In the early 1980's I composed two chamber orchestra works as well as my first string orchestra piece. Last season we played the second of my string orchestra pieces. My ideas for the *Triptych* had been germinating since composing the *Nara Variations* in 2007. I had written down a number of melodies, with one in particular that I had composed in Barcelona that I felt quite striking. The impetus to begin came with the unexpected death of our principal horn, Ken Hillway, just before Memorial Day in 2009. What was to be the slow movement was the first music composed. Normally I compose works in one continuous movement. While guest conducting in Italy I had an inspiration for a first movement and wrote most of the first part of it on the way back in the plane. I was literally hearing the music in my sleep and would then wake up and write it down. Then while in El Salvador I began to have ideas for another movement. I decided on the title since triptych refers to having three parts, and of course we live in the Northwest. This is my most complicated work to date and opened a door of creativity to follow, as I went on to compose two works for choir, a duet for horn and violin for my daughter's wedding in August, a trombone quartet, and a concertino for bass clarinet and string orchestra commissioned by Italian virtuoso Rocco Parisi.



Our final work on the program, Nielsen's *Symphony No. 1 in G minor*, was on my first concert in Europe in Skopje, Macedonia in 2000. I also performed it with the Ente Autonomo Orchestra Sinfonica Siciliana in Palermo, Italy, and it is a great pleasure to perform it again with the Oregon Sinfonietta. Nielsen's harmonic language, while very tonal, is still refreshingly distinct. It goes places you do not expect. The form of the work is fairly standard for a symphony, but other than a somewhat brief glimpse of Bruckner one doesn't hear any clear influences in this music. The melodies are strong and engaging throughout.

It has been a great pleasure to work with the musicians of the Oregon Sinfonietta these last nine years. Although the size of the orchestra has not changed substantially, the quality has greatly improved. With the continued support of our donors and our loyal audience I look forward to celebrating this my tenth anniversary as Music Director/Conductor and hope for another ten years of exciting music making!

Don Appert

Program Notes, Sunday, November 7, 2010

Two English Idylls

George Butterworth (1885-1916)

Butterworth and his close friend Ralph Vaughan Williams travelled together to collect English folk songs before WWI and each influenced the other. Butterworth's outstanding war record and death by a sniper's bullet are well known and his *Shropshire Lad* has become the unofficial paean to the unknown soldier in England (he was immediately buried in the trenches at the battle of the Somme). In 1911 he had composed his *Two English Idylls*, based on folk tunes.

Both of the Idylls open with an oboe melody which evolves into rich strings and then other winds. There are three separate tunes in the first Idyll. The second ends quietly with a well-known song *Phoebe and the Dark Eyed Sailor*, made popular in an arrangement by Vaughan Williams in 1913.

Northwest Triptych

Donald Appert (b. 1953)

The first movement, *Intrada*, is a bit reminiscent of Stravinsky's *Petrushka*, with its parallel chords in the brass that begin the movement. Most of it is in an asymmetrical meter of either five or seven beats in a measure. The middle section has its inspiration in an early brass trio entitled *Lament* as I used a similar melody that keeps shifting meters. The title of the second movement, *The Keening Bell*, is a somewhat obscure term for a funeral bell signifying intense grieving. This is the longest movement of the work and utilizes the most dissonant harmonies in a close counterpoint. The opening three notes form an ongoing motive throughout. The opening solo is for horn, since the movement is dedicated to our late principal horn player, Ken Hillway, and one of the first of my bell motives can be heard in the horns. The rather poignant melody that I wrote in Spain is developed fairly thoroughly (and has since found its way into my recently composed trombone quartet as well as a small piece written for my oldest daughter's wedding this past summer). The final movement is quite catchy. *Riffs* is built on a number of short ideas layered and combined throughout in a jazzy manner. The orchestra gets to really strut its stuff so to speak! *(Notes by the composer)*

Symphony No. 1 in G minor, Op. 7

Carl Nielsen (1865-1931)

Nielsen today is best known for his six symphonies, several concertos and his wind quintet. His father was an amateur musician and his mother sang, and he claimed to be influenced by this and his rural upbringing. He earned his keep as a violinist in the Royal Theater orchestra in Copenhagen for many years, but was also briefly an army bugler/trombonist. His first symphony, written between 1891 and 1892, was dedicated to his wife, a well-known sculptor, and premiered in 1894. Nielsen played in the second violin section.

This work is in the standard four movements, but in his succeeding five symphonies he moved gradually away from traditional form. The symphony's melodies are said to reflect Denmark's music, although this can be hard to detect. Nielsen tried and quickly rejected Wagner, falling into the "Brahms" camp and eschewing an overly romantic approach. The first movement is marked, rather strangely, *allegro orgoglioso* (proudly). Notably, the symphony's first movement is in G minor and the work concludes in C major. Nielsen and Mahler both composed major works in "progressive tonality," ending their symphonies in different keys than they started with and working their way to the end in a series of key changes. The slow movement has some sense of movement, and the scherzo (*allegro comodo*) introduces some complex rhythms beneath the 6/4 structure. Nielsen's works, long a staple in the Nordic countries, are now becoming more widely performed in the US.

Program notes by Bill Dameron

MUSIC DIRECTOR APPERT WINS FIFTH ASCAP AWARD

For the fifth time, Clark College music professor Donald Appert has been honored with the ASCAP PLUS Award, presented by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). He also received ASCAP awards in 2005, 2006, 2008 and 2009. Appert received the award for the premiere of his work *Easter Wings* composed for the Clark College Concert Choir, performances of *Nara Variations* by the Oradea State Philharmonic (Romania) and the Orchestra Classica di Alessandria (Italy), and *Elegy*, performed by the Craiova State Philharmonic (Romania).

(From a Clark College press release)

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What is it like to be an orchestral musician? For a much better appreciation of the commitment see the September 19 article in the Syracuse Post-Standard:

http://blog.syracuse.com/opinion/2010/09/making_music_the_work_of_a_syr.html

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