



Donald Appert Vytautas Marijosius Programming Award

Having examined Maestro Appert's programs for a number of seasons (he has won this award before) and deciding to avoid reading anything I had written in the past about his skill-set, I am always taken by two things: his *commitment* and his *courage*.

Commitment on a number of levels: to decide to program unusual repertoire, to find and prepare the materials, to study and learn the scores, and to plan how to teach these works to his community ensembles in such a way that a credible performance can be presented. (His performances with his groups at Clark College and the Jewish Community Center are not note perfect – but they are something far more important... they *live*. He makes it possible to consider the value of the works he revives both thoughtfully and emotionally; they have been that well prepared.)

Courage: not the courage that says "I will perform this symphony by Magnard that no one ever does" – but the courage to overcome what for years must no doubt have been pressure – from administration, fellow faculty, symphony musicians, board members and audiences – to stick to the well-worn path of the familiar. (I know this pressure myself, and it can be debilitating. Beethoven is so *easy* to program.)

Hopefully, by this point, and perhaps through the recognition he has received from The American Prize, Maestro Appert is now recognized (and accepted) for the outlier-programmer he naturally is. Something about his choices must satisfy his curiosity and some part of his musical being (and surely the curiosity of at least some in his audience.) His is a calling worthy and noble. It is a delight to honor him once again.

— DK [David Katz, chief judge and founder of The American Prize]



Honoring Donald Appert, winner of The American Prize in Orchestral Programming Maestro Vytautas Marijosius Memorial Award, 2020

Given in memory of the great Lithuanian conductor, Maestro Vytautas Marijosius, music director of the Lithuanian State Opera, and for nearly thirty-five years Director of Orchestral Activities at the Hartt School of Music. The Prize recognizes and rewards the best achievement in the unique field of orchestral programming, where the selection of repertoire by knowledgeable, creative and courageous music directors builds orchestras and audiences, educates young people and adults, and enriches the community.

Vytautas Marijosius was born in Lithuania in 1910. He studied at the Prague Conservatory with Hermann Scherchen and Vaclav Talich and by the age of twenty-eight was music director of the Lithuanian State Opera. He toured with the renowned Russian bass, Feodor Chaliapin, as his personal accompanist, recorded for the Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft with the Berlin State Orchestra, guest conducted throughout Eastern Europe, and was awarded The Order of the White Lion for his contributions to Czech culture, the country's highest award to a non-citizen. Driven from his homeland by the Communists, Marijosius settled in New Britain, Connecticut, in 1948 and soon joined the faculty at the Hartt School of Music (later part of the University of Hartford.) Marijosius would stay on the faculty for more than thirty years and would chair the Department of Applied Music until his retirement from the University as Professor Emeritus.



Marijosius was music director of a number of orchestras in the Northeast and guest conducted the Chicago Symphony and the Symphony of the Air. A man of remarkable perception, quick wit, extraordinary musical skill and impeccable taste, Marijosius was delightful and demanding, beloved by faculty and students. Loyal to a fault, he remained at Hartt even when offered the post of music director of opera at the Eastman School of Music. Marijosius died in 1996.

Vytautas Marijosius lives on in the memories of his son and two daughters and their families, and in the memories of all who knew him. He also lives in the accomplishments of those whom he taught, including David Katz, chief judge of The American Prize, and now in the achievements of the recipients of **The American Prize in Orchestral Programming – Vytautas Marijosius Memorial Award. Congratulations.**