

GREEN MOUNTAIN YOUTH SYMPHONY
"the music is just the beginning . . ."

NOTES FROM GMYS

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1 NOVEMBER 2007

MUSINGS FROM THE MAESTRO

Hello Everyone!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to our first newsletter! It is very exciting for me to have the opportunity to write to you all about what has been happening, and to share with you my thoughts and plans for the orchestras.

We have a wonderful concert coming up on **December 9**. Paul Perley has been working on "Cross Country," "Dragon Hunter," and one of his own compositions with the Repertory Orchestra. Paul has a wonderful time with them, and he is such a supportive and inspiring person; we are very lucky to have him. The Chamber Orchestra is working on more challenging repertoire. They are doing a piece called "Hatikva" which is an arrangement by John Williams of the Israeli National Anthem for the movie "Munich". This is a real professional-level piece, and the first time the Chamber Orchestra has been able to perform a piece of that level. They are also doing two rousing pieces "Artemis Rising" by Jeffrey Bishop and Jacques Offenbach's "Orpheus in the Under-



Artistic Director Robert Blais. Photo credit: Jeb Wallace Brodeur

world" (the famous Can-Can). The Senior Orchestra is playing the Telemann "Suite in A minor" for Flute Solo and Strings, featuring Jenny Law, our wonderful principal flutist, and the Albinoni Oboe Concerto in G Major featuring Ryan Shaefer, our principal oboist. The full orchestra will perform Dvorak's famous New World Symphony; this is a beautiful and exciting piece that I love. One of the most wonderful parts about this Symphony is that everyone has extremely important parts sprinkled liberally throughout, so everyone has to keep on their toes!

A few things that we have been doing for a little while now really demonstrate the importance of our orchestra

in the community. One such event is the Chamber Orchestra's semi-annual trips to school systems. It is so great to see the school students interact with the musicians on those days. Once we arrive at the school, our students break up into small groups and go talk to classes. They see these kids, not much older than they are, playing music beautifully, and it really inspires them. Then, the whole school gathers together and listens to the orchestra do a little concert. I usually say a few words about how an orchestra works, what a conductor does, and have a couple of the kids conduct the orchestra. It is so fun!

Continued on page 2

FALL 2007 CONCERTS

Sunday, December 9

Robert Blais, Artistic Director
Ryan Shaefer, oboe
Jenny Law, flute

Dvorak: *New World Symphony*
Albinoni: *Oboe Concerto in G Major*
Telemann: *Suite in A Minor for Flute and Orchestra*

3:00pm

Barre Opera House
Tickets: \$5 suggested donation, students free

1:00pm Performance
GMYS Repertory Orchestra
Paul Perley, conductor
&
GMYS Chamber Orchestra
Robert Blais, conductor

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The Senior Orchestra has also been playing at Montpelier's First Night for the last few years. We've developed a huge following for these concerts, and it is great to have the opportunity to share our talented kids with the community. The Montpelier First Night folks called us one of the highlights of the evening; it was very gratifying! I really value the opportunity to play at these concerts.

Oh yes, I should mention camp. We've had camp for two years at Johnson State College, and it has been wonderful. Last year was 50% larger than the year before, and everyone has a great time. I wanted us to have a music camp

for the Senior Orchestra because I remember that music camp for me was when I really improved, when I really got excited, and when I really made excellent friends. That social interaction is obvious throughout the year, and it is really nice to see. We are planning on doing a day camp that will be open to kids in the Chamber and Repertory Orchestras next summer if all goes well; it will include all the activities of the Senior Orchestra camp, but just not overnight! Stay tuned!

Finally, thanks so much for giving me the opportunity to share music with these extremely talented and fun kids. It is a real privilege.

SOLOIST PROFILES

Jenny Law,

the Senior Orchestra's principal flutist, is featured in this December's performance of Telemann's "Suite in A minor" for Flute Solo and Strings. There are many things Jenny likes about the piece, but what stands out to her most is "how the solo combines slow and sweet parts as well as fast and technical parts." Jenny joined GMYS during her freshmen year of high school. She says one of her favorite things about playing in the orchestra is "being able to hear how our playing changes and how each week we get progressively better."

In her life outside GMYS, Jenny, a senior at Montpelier High School, likes to read and write. She plans to go to college and eventually hopes to practice counseling psychology. Jenny wants younger orchestra members to always remember "Bob isn't as scary as he likes to pretend he is." That's good to know!

Ryan Shaefer,

a senior at Harwood Union High School and the GMYS's principal oboist, will be playing the solo this December in Albinoni's Oboe Concerto in G Major. He's looking forward to his solo performance, he says, because "while it's nice playing with an ensemble and getting to be one with each other, it's also rewarding to be able to stand out so people can see what you're capable of." A member of the GMYS since his freshman year, Ryan says one of his favorite things about it is "When you're on stage and you've just finished a show. The point where you stand up for your bow, breathe out that little sigh of relief - there's always this little tingle I get in my stomach. I find it very pleasing." He also says, "We all have a good time, so there a lot of funny moments, especially with morons like me attempting to crack jokes 24/7."

"MUSIC IS THE ONE THING IN THIS WORLD WHERE IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE YOU'RE FROM; YOU STILL UNDERSTAND IT."

Being center stage requires keeping a sense of humor. Ryan remembers "one time during a show of the Harwood Musical *Anyone can Whistle*, I was supposed to rip a bright red wig off the female lead's head. Unfortunately, when I did so, one of the strands of hair managed to catch itself on the microphone I was wearing. Throughout the rest of the fifteen-minute scene, I had to carry around a wig since I couldn't take it off."

Ryan hopes to pursue musical theater at the Boston Conservatory or some other arts college. Before he heads on to new adventures, he leaves this advice for younger orchestra members: "Don't give up on music. Ever. Music is the one thing in this world where it doesn't matter where you're from; you still understand it. It's the best thing to have; it's a gift nobody should waste. And once you're under the lights and you've done your thing, the feeling you'll get when you know you've done a good job is the best feeling you'll ever get. It's better than finishing up a good meal; it's better than love. Nothing is better than the moment when you've played in front of an audience and you know you've touched at least one person in the crowd."

A FEW WORDS ABOUT SOME OF THIS CONCERT'S COMPOSERS

source: <http://theclassicalstation.org>

ANTONIN DVORAK
(1841-1904)

Dvorak was a devoted family man. He was utterly Czech and deeply attached to his homeland. He loved folk music, whether from his native land or other places. He was so fond of these rustic tunes that he often composed original works in the style of these folk melodies and did them so well that they caught the public's fancy: listen to Slavonic Dances, Op. 46 and Op. 72. He wrote eight symphonies which were rich in melody and plainly evocative of Bohemia. It was his ninth, however, which has become a listener favorite. Composed after being invited to teach at a music conservatory in America, and homesick, Dvorak gave this work a subtitle: "From the New World," which since been shortened to "New World." The second movement has the haunting folk tune which goes by many names including "Coming Home" and is thought to be based on a Negro spiritual.

JACQUES OFFENBACH
(1819-1880)

The son of a Jewish cantor, Offenbach loved the human voice. It was no surprise that he composed beautiful arias to explore the richness of the voice. Although he started his musical career as a cellist, and

OFFENBACH ONCE
BEAT THE WALTZ
KING (JOHANN
STRAUSS, JR.) IN A
CELEBRATED WALTZ
WRITING CONTEST.

retained a lifelong affinity for the instrument, he turned his attention toward opera in his mid-30's and opened the Bouffes- Parisiens house. There, he would stage productions of his works like *Orpheus in the Underworld* and *La Belle Helene*. He died before finishing his grand opera *The Tales of Hoffmann*. Offenbach once beat the Waltz King (Johann Strauss, Jr.) in a celebrated waltz writing contest.

**GEORG PHILIP
TELEMANN** (1681-1767)

During his lifetime, Telemann was the best-known composer in Europe. That this was true when considering that one of his contemporaries was Johann Sebastian Bach is all the more interesting. Telemann studied law as well as music; he quickly chose the latter as his career and established a reputation as a rising star. He wrote a significant number of sacred and secular works in his various jobs, which included Music Director for the city of Frankfurt. His personal life wasn't quite so happy. His first wife died at an early age and his second one left him, after giving birth to 10 children, most of whom didn't survive infancy. For nearly 16 years, Telemann was director of the Hamburg Opera and contributed a number of his own compositions for production. After his death, Telemann faded rather quickly from memory. Ironically, Bach became the standard bearer of the Baroque Era only after his own death.

**BUT YOU CAN
CALL ME . . .**

Many works of classical music have nicknames provided either by the composer or someone else. Shown below are the proper names of ten works. See if you can guess the nickname with which each is associated. Check your answers in the box located on the back of the newsletter.

1. Piano Sonata No. 14 by Beethoven
2. Symphony No. 9 by Dvorak
3. Waltz in D Flat Major, Opus 64, No. 1 by Chopin
4. Symphony No. 96 by Haydn
5. Piano Concerto No. 21 in C Major by Mozart
6. Symphony No. 8 in B Minor by Schubert
7. Piano Concerto No. 5 in E Flat by Beethoven
8. Symphony No. 3 in C Minor by Saint-Saens
9. Piano Sonata No. 2 in B Flat Minor by Chopin
10. Symphony No. 41 in C Major by Mozart

Source:

<http://theclassicalstation.org/quiz/nicknames/indz.shtml>

OUTSIDE THE PRACTICE ROOM

Last winter, cellist **Brendan Ryan** started a trio, *For Strings*, which has played at several weddings, private parties, and Vermont Bar Association functions. The other members of the trio are violinists **Ellen Slade** and **Lydia Herrick**. Brendan says of the group, "what a highly successful and motivated trio of young people!" If you want to hire *For Strings*, contact Brendan at (802) 485-3460 or BRyanforstrings@gmail.com.

For the past two years, **Jonathan Reis**, bassoon, has attended the Double Reed Day held at the University of New Hampshire in January. This event brings together many bassoonists and oboists. This summer, Jon attended the International Double Reed Society held at Ithaca College and played with musicians from all over the world. He ended this visit by playing with the orchestra, performing Handel's Music for the Royal Fireworks at Cornell, conducted by Christopher Waite.

There will be another issue of Notes From GMYS published in late March. If you have an item for "Outside the Practice Room," please e-mail it to aherrick@u32.org by March 1.



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stamp

**INTERESTED IN JOINING
 GMYS?**

CALL BOB BLAIS NOW TO
 SCHEDULE YOUR AUDITION
 229-9214

AND DON'T FORGET TO
 COME HEAR US PERFORM!
 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9

THE MUSIC IS JUST THE BEGINNING

Have you ever wondered where our slogan came from? Holly Bushman coined the phrase in 2006, at our first summer music camp at Johnson State College. It was the final night of the camp, and everyone was hanging around, eating ice cream, and talking about what an awesome experience they'd had that week. Holly, a violinist, said, "And it's not just about the music! The whole thing's been fun. The music is just the beginning." Holly was right: we'd gone swimming, hiking, played capture-the-flag, made t-shirts, eaten together, had movie and pajama parties, and played lots (and lots) of music.

During the regular orchestra season, it's not just about the music, either. Cellist Maria Hoyt says, "we all have fun together at rehearsals, and of course Bob makes us laugh with all his jokes. He keeps everyone happy." After all, it's called *playing* music, and we at the GMYS think it should not only be hard work but also good fun!

BECOME A FRIEND OF GMYS

The Green Mountain Youth Symphony relies on charitable contributions to maintain reasonable tuition rates and bolster scholarship funding. No child is turned away due to an inability to pay, and all donations are tax deductible. Your support can make a huge difference. Donations in any amount help us tremendously:

- \$10 covers the cost of hosting the GMYS website for one month;
- \$40 hires a professional musician to coach an individual section of the orchestra for an hour;
- \$75 provides a semester's scholarship to a student in the Repertory Orchestra; and
- \$115 purchases the score for Dvorak's New World Symphony.

Please consider making a gift this year in support of GMYS. Your contribution will help us continue to provide incredible musical opportunities and to grow our program.

To make a gift, please send your check payable to *Green Mountain Youth Symphony* to:

Green Mountain Youth Symphony, P.O. Box 384, Montpelier, VT 05602

Or donate online by clicking on the Donate button on our website, www.gmys-vt.org.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

**BUT YOU CAN
 CALL ME . . .**

Trivia Quiz Answers:

1. Moonlight Sonata
2. New World
3. Minute
4. Miracle
5. Elvira Madigan
6. Unfinished
7. Emperor
8. Organ
9. Funeral March
10. Jupiter