



## unplugged.

Season 2014-2015

Williamsport Symphony Orchestra E-Notes

February 2015

### 2014-2015 Calendar

#### February 2015

- 16 Meet the Maestro  
Happy Hour  
Capitol Lounge, CAC  
5:30-7:00 pm
- 17 WSO *The Kings of Melody*  
Community Arts Center  
7:30 pm
- 22 Williamsport Symphony  
Youth Orchestra  
(WSYO) and Junior Strings  
(WSJS)  
Community Arts Center  
5:30 pm

#### March 2015

- 20 Meet the Maestro  
Happy Hour  
Capitol Lounge, CAC  
5:30-7:00 pm
- 21 WSO *Jazz & Latin*  
Community Arts Center  
7:30 pm

#### May 2015

- 03 WSYO Chamber Recital  
Mary Welch Honors Hall  
Lycoming College  
3:00 pm
- 11 Meet the Maestro  
Happy Hour  
Capitol Lounge, CAC  
5:30-7:00 pm
- 12 WSO *Hope & Triumph*  
Community Arts Center  
7:30 pm

For more information, please visit  
[www.williamsportsymphony.org](http://www.williamsportsymphony.org)



### Conductor's Corner

Dear Friends,

Checking in the dictionary for the definition of "Melody", I was surprised to find so many different interpretations of a single term! From the simplest to the most scientific, I finally found one that caught my attention: "a sequence of single notes that is musically satisfying. "What exactly does that mean? Like many other musical terms, the meaning evolved through the centuries, and composers understand melody in different ways. It is hard to pick the best melodists of all time, but definitely Mozart, Verdi and Dvorak are among the top ones.



February's program is filled with beautiful melodies, exciting music, and four outstanding soloists. In the opening Overture "*Vespri Siciliani*" by Verdi we find all the operatic elements that characterize Italian composers including epic and dramatic moments. In Dvorak's music we find the folk elements from his native Bohemia, but also the influence of another great composer of symphonies, Johannes Brahms, who said that he wished he could write melodies as beautiful as Dvorak's! Although the Czech composer is best known for his *New World Symphony* and *Slavonic Dances*, his *Symphony No. 7 in D minor* will captivate you with its endless beauty and intensity.

Of course we are also proud to showcase four of WSO's wind

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principals - Judy Burke, clarinet; Sue Laib, oboe; Steve Olson, bassoon; and Bill Kenny, French horn - to perform the *Sinfonia Concertante for Winds* by W. A. Mozart. There is still speculation regarding the authenticity of this piece because there are no definite records of when it was composed or performed. Nevertheless, I doubt that anybody other than Mozart could have written such an interesting concerto! It is great to start the year with such an amazing program, and I am looking forward to seeing you at the concert!

All the best,

Gerardo Edelstein  
Music Director/Conductor

## Muncy Farms December evening

Friday, the evening of December 12<sup>th</sup> Muncy Farms was the destination for a "couldn't-have-been-better" gathering for friends and supporters of the Symphony. Host Malcolm Barlow greeted guests after they'd driven down the long lane to his family's home overlooking the Susquehanna River. The original part of the home built in 1769 is the oldest house in Lycoming County.

It was a wonderful social time with a champagne welcome, a buffet of marvelous food from the Herdic House in the candlelit dining room, quiet music, and an open bar. It was described in the invitation as an open house to come and go as you wished, but once there, nearly everyone stayed to enjoy the ambience of the home and conversation with friends. Lori Clutter, piano, and Scott Schell, guitar, took turns playing listenable music.

Co-chairs Linda Lundy and Bev McCauley and their committee - JoAnn Gorski, Lyneah Hudock, Christine Kaiser, Miki Rebeck and Anne Rice - planned what turned out to be one of the most enjoyable evenings of the season for many. A silent raffle of several items was headed by an exquisite James Meyer diamond pendant. Also on the raffle was a weekend for 8 at the Lundy's Eagles Mere home, a stunning gold bracelet and accompanying scarf from Soko World Shop in the Mall, jewelry from Trebecca, and gift certificates for local restaurants (Herdic House, Morrones, DiSalvo's, Penn College's Le Jeune Chef, Moon and Raven, and Sticky Elbow).

We thank Malcolm, his staff, the committee and the auction donors for a December evening to remember!

## Program Notes by Dr. Gary Boerckel

Did Mozart Write It?

Authenticity is often an issue in the world of painting- "Rembrandt Portrait Scientifically Verified After 50 Years of Doubt" *Daily Mail* June 9, 2014-and for those who find an old violin in the attic-"But the label says Stradivarius!"-and occasionally there is doubt about a musical composition. The *Sinfonia Concertante for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon*-attributed to Mozart-is a famous example. In 1778, the 22-year old Mozart was in Paris hoping to secure a lucrative position, perhaps something similar to Haydn's role as composer and musical director for a Hungarian prince. In his letters home to his father, Mozart described a *sinfonia concertante* [a concerto for more than one soloist] he had composed for some prominent wind players who were friends of the Mozarts. The work was completed and scheduled for performance, but the conductor told Mozart he had lost the score and the performance was cancelled. Mozart suspected foul play-he was probably right-and told his father he would recreate the score. Nothing more was heard of the work until 70 years after Mozart's death when a manuscript turned up in the papers of Otto Jahn, one of Mozart's biographers. It was clearly a major discovery, and the *Sinfonia Concertante* soon became a favorite of performers and listeners alike. But there are reasons to doubt the authenticity of Jahn's manuscript: it is not in Mozart's handwriting; the four soloists include a clarinet soloist instead of the solo flute in the Mozart original; and the plentiful phrasing and dynamic notations were obviously added by someone not of Mozart's generation. Jahn left no indication of how he had obtained the manuscript. Great scholars have taken opposite positions. Alfred Einstein, who I believe to have been the most insightful of Mozart experts, thought it was authentic. Donald Francis Tovey, another writer on music that I greatly admire, proclaimed "the man who wrote it could not compose." The popularity of the *Sinfonia concertante for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn and Bassoon* has not been diminished by controversy, and I have not heard of a program attributing it to *Anonymous*.



...and will the real Dvorák please stand up!

The Czech--in his own day, he was known as a Bohemian-- composer Antonín Dvorák became famous with the publication of his *Moravian Duets* for two singers and the *Slavonic Dances* for piano duet. In the *Moravian Duets*, Dvorák retained the texts of genuine folk songs but substituted his own melodies written in the style of folk music. In the *Slavonic Dances*, he used the richly varied rhythms of Bohemian folk dances--from the *furiant* its exuberant cross-rhythms and the gentler Bohemian polka to the "bi-polar" *dumka*, which alternates between mournfully slow and frenetically fast--but the melodies are once again the composer's own. Dvorák became known as a "nationalist"

composer, and the influence of folk music can be heard in many of his larger works, including most of his nine symphonies. The great exception is his *Symphony No. 7 in D Minor*, Op. 70, where the *scherzo* alone is influenced by the rhythms of the *furiant*. The seventh symphony was commissioned by the Philharmonic Society of London; Dvorák had become a great favorite in Britain. Was he consciously trying to write in a more "international" style, perhaps emulating Brahms, whom he greatly admired-or did he believe it would more readily appeal to a British audience? We don't know Dvorák's thoughts on the matter, but he was evidently very pleased with his new symphony and, to this day, British music critics and writers generally regard it as his finest work.

## UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL: Meet the Golds

You never know till you ask, so it was great fun finding out from Eleanor and Pastor James Gold (long-time subscribers/donors) what it is that brings them the 35 or so miles from Mifflinburg (weather permitting) to their seats in the front row of the loge for most WSO concerts. Their story is worth telling for its many crisscrossing threads. Jim says -

I can't think of a time that I did not know that there was a Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, but, obviously, there was a first time. Since 1960 (several years after we were married), we have been friends with a family named Orris.

When we retired in 1996 and moved back to the area, we reconnected with Ken and Melba Orris. Ken was a music teacher in Middleburg and Melba gave private piano lessons and was an organist in that town. They updated us on their three sons, one of whom is Dale Orris who plays trumpet with the WSO. Ken and Melba took us to a concert.

I have always liked what I call "good" music, but my love of good music was enhanced immensely by a professor I had at Lycoming College - James W. Sheaffer. He would suggest musical programs in the area to his classes. On one occasion, Mr. Sheaffer invited me and three or four other students to his home for the evening meal, and then he took us to the Forum in Harrisburg to hear the Philadelphia Orchestra.

In 1955 Jim Gold was a student at Lancaster Theological Seminary and was on a "break." Some high school friends and he went to Selinsgrove to watch a basketball game between Lycoming College and Susquehanna University. They met "three pretty girls" and struck up a conversation; Eleanor Erdley was one of the three. One thing led to another, and Eleanor and Jim were married in 1957.

After Jim's graduation from seminary, the couple served Pennsylvania United Church of Christ (UCC) parishes in Nescopeck, Middleburg, and for 29 years in Ickesburg. In retirement, Jim has continued to serve as an interim pastor. Eleanor has sung in a number of choral groups and is currently one of three organists who rotate at the Dreisbach Church near Lewisburg.

Asked if they had a favorite instrument in the WSO, they replied that both of their sons were brass players in high school - one trumpet and the other French horn. (Their daughter



**Eleanor and Pastor James Gold**

began playing clarinet, but switched to a position in "band front.") Add the friendship with the Orris family, and the brass section sounds like the winner. Lucky for them, the brass section is often featured!

There are at least two more ties to Williamsport. Their son Steve sang in the Lycoming College Choir under Fred Thayer for four years, graduating in 1980 and still speaks fondly of those experiences with Fred. And finally, Jim's "alum contact" at Lycoming College is...Karen Sheaffer, daughter-in-law of his professor, Jim Sheaffer.

Until a question is raised, we often don't know in how many ways we're connected to those sitting around us who share the joy of music!

Brass-Youth-Strings in Concert with their Musician/Educator/Conductor:

## Up Close and Personal: Meet Rick Coulter

The WSO is both an Orchestra and an Organization. The latter encompasses the Symphony Orchestra as well as the Billtown Brass, the Youth Orchestra, and the Junior Strings. As Gerardo Edelstein is to the Symphony, Rick Coulter is to the Brass; William Ciabattari, to the WSYO, and Matthew Radspinner, to the Junior Strings. Like Maestro Edelstein, the three are music-makers and educators as well.

This issue of the newsletter features Rick Coulter; successive issues will provide similar introductions to Ciabattari and Radspinner.

Coulter formed the Brass in 2000 so as to provide a more "portable" ensemble, one organized in the style of traditional British brass bands. In the time since then, the group has performed in Lewisburg and Milton and appears each summer in Brandon Park in addition to two in-CAC concerts each year. Among the 25 brass instrumentalists and percussionists are members of the symphony orchestra.

Coulter is a Pittsburgh native and graduate of Carnegie Mellon University. His focus on music sharpened when as he notes: *sitting on the stage of the Syria Mosque in Pittsburgh performing in a side-by-side concert with members of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra when I was a high school junior, I thought that maybe music would be a possible career, rather than physics.* And so it was that music - performance, teaching, conducting - morphed from interest into commitment, passion and career.

Coulter's career began in New Jersey as a high school band and orchestra director. After four years, he was recruited by a neighboring district to serve in the dual role of Supervisor of Fine Arts and high school band director. After 13 years in New Jersey, he was selected by the Williamsport District to serve as K-12 Supervisor of Music Education. The Williamsport District provided the opportunity to continue "helping others gain knowledge and skills" - the path Coulter explains that "chose me." He retired in 2014 as the K-12 Supervisor of the Essentials (Art, Music, Drama, Gifted, Health & Physical Education) and as Supervisor of Secondary Education.

As performer (Coulter is himself a trumpet player) and as audience member, he identifies as the best demonstration of the beauty and power of symphonic music the last movement of Respighi's *The Pines of Rome*, the "Pines of the Appian Way." As a conductor, he has blended teaching with conducting during his twelve years as the director of the WSYO; he has also conducted the WSO



Family Concerts as well as the Brass. The latter he says is "similar to the sensation of driving a fast sports car."

The passion and commitment to music, to the arts scene in Williamsport, to the WSO continue with Coulter's additional involvement with the WSO as a board member. Whether conducting over 500 performers at an all-district concert or the 28 members of the Brass or when performing with wind and jazz ensembles, the early relationship with music that crystallized during that side-by-side concert has enriched his life and the lives of those with whom he has interacted.

## Young Musicians on Stage-February 22



The Williamsport Symphony Youth Orchestra and the Junior Strings will share the CAC stage Sunday, February 22, for a concert that begins at 5:30 p.m.

The WSYO, under the direction of William Ciabattari, will perform two Saint-Saens compositions: "Bacchanale" and *Danse Macabre*. The latter will feature ballet choreographed by Theresa Kendall with students from St. John's School of the Arts. Violin soloist will be William Knauth, who will also serve as concertmaster. Selections from Stravinsky's *The Firebird* and "Goodnight Moon" which will feature soprano Fiona Gillespie round out the WSYO segment.

The Junior Strings, directed by Matthew Radspinner, will collaborate with the WSYO for the "Blunderbuss Battles" and "Warrior Legacy." The former was composed by Soon Hee Newbold, and the latter by Ralph Ford.

The Woodcock Foundation for the Appreciation of the Arts continues as a sponsor of the WSO's youth-focused activities. In addition, Robert M. Sides Music Centers and Wegmans are sponsors for this concert.

## Response to the December Concert

The side-by-side segment of the concert, with members of the WSYO taking a seat next to a WSO musician not only filled the stage but also enhanced the sound issuing from that stage. As the two comments below indicate, 'twas an audience pleaser:

*My favorite part of the concert was seeing the youth orchestra players joining their WSO counterparts for the last several numbers. Let's have more of the same. MG*

*Seeing that smile - throughout his time on stage - as that young violinist sat*

next to the concertmaster made that part of the concert even more special. RS

Please keep your comments coming. We enjoy them and will protect your anonymity using just initials.

## From the Desk of the ED

Welcome to 2015 and I hope you had a safe, joyful passage into the New Year.

The Holiday concert featured such a variety of musical genres. I still have a vivid memories of the score from the movie *Frozen*. Who knew it could be so powerful when played by the Youth Orchestra and the Symphony, complete with full brass? Another favorite was the beautiful "Jerusalem of Gold", and already we've had requests that it be played again. As always, we are grateful to our sponsors Hudock Moyer Wealth Resources and M&T Bank. The City of Williamsport provided additional support through a Cultural grant.



A heart-felt thank you to our contributors for their gifts to the Symphony this season! It isn't too late to make a donation or plan a future gift. Your support helps the Symphony provide quality orchestral music, performance opportunities for regional talent, and educational programs for our young people. It is gratifying to hear that we are considered a "gem" in the community. We are here for your enjoyment, and your financial support is greatly appreciated! If you have any questions or would like to meet with me, please call me in the office at 322-0227.

Let the music play on!

### Quick Links

Williamsport Symphony Orchestra  
220 West Fourth Street  
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701  
570-322-0227

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