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The Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia

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To the Parents of

For the Musicians, Families and Friends of the



**BAY YOUTH ORCHESTRAS
OF VIRGINIA**

Volume 11 No 2

The BYO-GRAPH

January, 2004



The Art of Song and String

by Christina Morton

The violin has been described as the instrument that most closely resembles the human voice because of its range of expressionistic qualities. Learning to be expressive on a string instrument takes many years of developing enough technique to not only produce different sounds, but to experiment with bow speed, pressure and the positioning of the bow on the string to produce a variety of desirable tones and styles of playing. This has been the focus of our study of our repertoire in the Junior String and String Orchestras. All of the music in this concert is related to the theme of "song" presented in a variety of styles; a baroque oratorio, a romantic song, an Irish folk tune, a traditional round, American folk tunes, a chorale, a spiritual and more. The Virginia Children's Chorus will be performing their own selections with words and voice, while our orchestras will be performing with bow and string.

My partner in this program, Carol Thomas Downing is not only the Music Director of the Virginia Children's Chorus, but she is also a Suzuki Violin Teacher and a fiddler. We have worked together with local Suzuki events and my children have been members of her chorus. It seemed like a fun idea for our groups to collaborate for this concert event. I have been a

singer my entire life and have some great memories of performing with groups choral works such as Faure's "Requiem". Exposing string players to the beautiful melodies of the vocal repertoire occurred to me to be a valuable and unique experience.

The orchestras have risen to the challenge to not just play the right notes and the right rhythms at the right time, but to learn to express their music and play it from the heart. Vocalists feel music through their whole body when they sing. As instrumentalists, we tend to isolate the music into our fingers and forget that the rest of our body is a part of the process. Breathing is one of the most crucial elements of expression. Singers must do it to produce a sound. Wind and brass players must do it to produce a sound. String players often forget to do it! Funny as that might seem, it is often true. Breathing is important for phrasing and helping release tension on the bow to produce pure tone instead of forced tone. The students have not only grown in their ability to read and perform music as a group, but have grown as expressive musicians and this concert is sure to delight even the quasi-classical enthusiast.

See you there- TCC Roper Hall, Norfolk - 7:30 pm on Tuesday February 3, 2004

Highlights

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The BYO-GRAPH is published by the Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia. Articles, comments and suggestions welcome.

Deadline for Spring issue is March 15, 2004.
Don't be Late!

Upcoming Events

THE ART OF SONG AND STRING!

February 3, 2004 • 7:30 p.m.
TCC Roper Performing Arts Center, Norfolk
Bay Youth String & Jr. String Orchestras;
Christina Morton, conductor.
Featuring the Virginia Children's Chorus

CONCERTO CONCERT

February 17, 2004 • 7:30 p.m.
TCC Roper Performing Arts Center, Norfolk
Bay Youth Concert & Symphony
Orchestras; Helen Martell and Leslie
Stewart, conductors.
Featuring winners of the Bay Youth
Concerto Competition
Beethoven: "Egmont" Overture
Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite

EXCHANGE CONCERT WITH THE RICHMOND YOUTH SYMPHONY

March 21, 2004
Dale High School, Richmond
Bay Youth Symphony Orchestra & Rich-
mond Youth Symphony
Leslie Stewart and Eckart Preu,
conductors
Beethoven: "Egmont" Overture
Holst: Jupiter and Mars from
"The Planets"

SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THE VIRGINIA SYMPHONY

April 21, 2004 • 7:30 p.m.
Deep Creek High School, Chesapeake
Virginia Symphony and Bay Youth
Symphony Orchestra
Shizuo Kuwahara, Conductor
Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet
Fantasy-Overture

SEASON FINALE

May 6, 2004 • 7:30 p.m.
Virginia Beach Pavilion
Featuring all ensembles and conductors
of the Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia
Borodin: Overture to "Prince Igor"
Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet Fan-
tasy-Overture
Brahms: Academic Festival Overture

CORRECTION

Ryan Thomas, oboe, and Jeranda Manley, violin, were left off the list of members who made regional orchestra in our last edition. Congratulations to them and all who made regionals this year.

A lesson in the power of music-making



MUSIC
from the Music Director

by Leslie Stewart

In the last issue of the *BYO-GRAPH*, I described a trip that my husband and I took last summer to France. But that wasn't our only international adventure last year! In May, 2003, we had the good fortune to go to Brazil for ten days. I spent the first few days guest-conducting a community orchestra in Jundai, a town of about 50,000 near Sao Paulo. Then I went to the University of Campinas for three days where I gave several lectures and masterclasses on conducting, the violin, and chamber music.

They say that "music is an international language." This is a good thing since I wasn't fluent in Portuguese! I did manage to open my first rehearsal in Jundai saying in Portuguese "Good Evening. I am pleased to meet you. First we will play Mozart." Everyone grinned and one violinist who was eager to show off his English replied "Good to meet you, too!"

Although I did my best to communicate in either Portuguese or use Italian musical terms, I sometimes resorted to the Spanish I learned twenty years ago playing in the Puerto Rico Symphony. Fortunately, the principal flutist of the Jundai orchestra was fluent in English and translated whenever the situation was too complex for my foreign language abilities.

The orchestra consisted of musicians from age eight to sixty with a wide range of abilities. Missing entirely were oboes, bassoons, French horns, or low brass instruments, so the music director had rearranged all of the music for what she had: 5 flutes, 6 clarinets, 1 bass clarinet, 1 alto saxophone, 1 trumpet, 5 percussionists, 2 pianists and strings. When her scores arrived in Virginia two weeks before I left for Brazil, I was concerned whether such unorthodox orchestration could preserve the intentions of Mozart or Faure. But they were so skillfully done and she had trained the orchestra to play so musically, that little was lost in the "translation."

The concert opened with the music director (a woman) conducting two movements of a mass by John Leavitt, an American composer with whom I was not familiar. However, I immediately liked this piece. The orchestra was joined by the local community

choir in this work, as well as the next piece – a chorus from Bizet's opera *Ivan II*. Then the assistant conductor (also a woman – so much for Brazil having a machismo culture!) led two Brazilian pieces. These were based on folk songs and popular in flavor – designed to challenge the percussionists as well as delight the audience. I conducted the last two works on the program – Faure's *Pavane* and the Overture to Mozart's *Cosi Fan Tutte*. Perhaps the program order was the opposite of what is conventional, but in Latin American the place of honor is always at the end of the concert.

After years of Bay Youth concerts getting at most a mention in the Virginian Pilot's "Best Bets" it was overwhelming for me to see the media coverage of this performance. There were huge, front-page articles including my picture in the local paper two days previous to the concert. Concert posters were plastered all over town. Just before I walked out on stage, I was interviewed by the local television station for that evening's late news broadcast. The concert was sold out – 2,000 people in the audience!

Of course it could be argued that there is less competition for news in a smaller city like Jundai and it was a novelty for there to be an American guest conductor. But it is also true that cultural events are far more newsworthy in Brazil than in the United States.

Perhaps second only to soccer, Brazilians are passionate about all music. The devotion of the players in this orchestra was nothing short of amazing. The principal cellist had lost the ability to move the fingers in his right hand from a bout with polio as a child. He kept his bow on the music stand and whenever it was time to play, he would patiently pick up the bow with his left hand and place it in his deformed right hand. In spite of this handicap, he played beautifully.

A young violinist, who had broken his arm (playing soccer, of course!) showed up at the first rehearsal with a cast extending from the wrist to above his elbow on his bow arm. He had figured out a way to move his violin from left to right since he couldn't move the bow and insisted on being allowed to play! The music director said the decision was mine, but who could deny someone with that much determination?

My experience in Brazil was such an inspiration – and a reminder to never take anything for granted... especially the gift of music-making!

Concerto winners take center stage in February

On Tuesday, February 17, 2004, at 7:30 PM the Concert and Symphony Orchestras of the Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia will present the 'Concerto Concert' at the TCC Roper Performing Arts Center in Norfolk. The concert features the winners of the Bay Youth Orchestras' Concerto Competition held in December of 2003. This year's winners are **Kristen Baird**, who will be the soloist in the *Symphonie Espagnole*, opus 21 for violin and orchestra by Eduardo Lalo, and **Daniel Schuster**, who will be featured in Carl Marie von Weber's Clarinet Concerto No. 1. Beethoven's *Egmont Overture*, Mahler's *Adagietto* from Symphony No. 5 – featuring harpist Kristina Finch – Rossini's Overture to the *Barber of Seville* and the *Peer Gynt Suite* of Grieg will round out what is sure to be an exciting concert.



Carolina University each week to study with Ara Gregorian. Her previous violin teachers include Sara Johnson, Paul Statsky and Leslie Stewart.

First-place winner **Kristin Baird** began her violin studies at the age of six with Dora Mullins, who continues to coach her. Kristin is currently a sophomore in the Math and Sciences Program at Ocean Lakes High School and travels to East

Kristin has held the position of concertmistress with many orchestras, including the Senior Regional Orchestra, Shenandoah Conservatory Performing Arts Camp Orchestra and the Bay Youth Concert Orchestra. She is currently concertmistress of the Bay Youth Symphony Orchestra.

Kristin has performed in masterclasses for Paul Katz, Peter Salaf, Rachel Barton and the Miami String Quartet. She has also won the concerto competition at Shenandoah Conservatory's Performing Arts Camp.

Kristin also enjoys horseback riding and surfing. Upon graduation from high school, she plans to study violin with an emphasis on chamber music.

Clarinetist **Daniel Schuster** is our second-place winner. Daniel is a senior at Hampton Christian High School and studies clarinet with Trish Fritz. He enjoys playing and watching team sports (especially basketball and baseball) as well as reading.

Daniel hopes to attend either Indiana University or Peabody Conservatory of Music next fall with a double major in music performance and music education. His long-term career goals include earning a Master's degree in music, joining the Air Force Band and playing in a professional symphony orchestra.



YOUTH SYMPHONY EXCHANGE WEEKEND

March 19-21, 2004

The members of the Bay Youth Symphony have already begun preparing the music for our exchange weekend with the Richmond Symphony Youth Orchestra in March. Here is the tentative schedule:

FRIDAY, MARCH 19

6:00PM Meet at ODU parking lot to board bus for Richmond
8:30PM Arrive at Thomas Dale HS, Chester, to meet host families

SATURDAY, MARCH 20

8:00AM Breakfast with host families
9:00AM - 12:00PM COMBINED REHEARSAL #1 – Thomas Dale HS
12:00PM-1:00PM Lunch provided by YPP Parent's Association
1:00PM-3:00PM COMBINED REHEARSAL #2
3:00PM-7:00PM Free time with host families

8:00PM Richmond Symphony Masterworks Concert. Carpenter Center (Complimentary tickets will be provided to all BYSO members). Wagner: *Siegfried Idyll*, Bartok: *Divertimento for Strings*, Beethoven: *Violin Concerto* (William Preucil, soloist)

SUNDAY, MARCH 21

8:00AM Breakfast with host families
9:00AM-12:00PM Some families may go to church, some may not. BYSO students should be prepared
12:00PM-1:00PM Lunch at Thomas Dale HS (provided by YPP Parent's Association)
1:00PM-3:00PM DRESS REHEARSAL (Each orchestra and combined)

3:00PM CONCERT

Beethoven: *Egmont Overture* (BYSO)
Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake Suite* (RSYO)
—intermission—
Copland: *Quiet City* (RYSO)
Mahler: *Adagietto* from Symphony #5 (BYSO)
Holst: *Mars and Jupiter* from *The Planets* (Combined)

SUMMER MUSIC CAMPS

IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO SIGN UP for Music Camp! Here are some camps for you to consider:

CHAUTAQUA ORCHESTRA PROGRAM

(June 26-August 17) Chautauqua NY
(716) 357-6233 (ph) 357-9014 (fax)
music.ciweb.org (web)
music@ciweb.org (e-mail)

EASTERN MUSIC FESTIVAL (June 26-July 31)

Greensboro NC
(877) 833-6753 ext. 27 (ph)
www.easternmusicfestival.org (web)
admissions@easternmusicfestival.org (e-mail)

EASTERN U.S. MUSIC CAMP

(June 27-July 24) 2-3-4 week sessions
Colgate University NY
(866) 777-7841 (ph) (518) 877-5121 (fax)
easternmusiccamp.com (web)
summer@easternmusiccamp.com (e-mail)

INTERLOCHEN ARTS CAMP

(Various sessions June-August)
Interlochen MI
(231) 276-7472 (ph) www.interlochen.org
(web) admissions@interlochen.org (e-mail)

MIDWEST YOUNG ARTISTS

Chamber Music Camp (June 20-July 17)
Chicago Jazz Workshop (July 18-July 23)
Lake Forest Academy IL
(847) 926-9898 www.summer.mya.org

NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS SUMMER PROGRAM

Musica Piccola (June 20-July 3)
Chamber Music Institute (June 20-July 23)
Winston-Salem NC
(336) 770-3290 (ph) www.ncarts.edu

PINE MOUNTAIN MUSIC FESTIVAL

(June 27-July 19) Hancock MI
(906) 482-1542 (ph) 487-3511 (fax)
www.pmmf.org

COMPETITION CORNER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Hampton is holding its Young Performing Artists Competition on February 29. Cash awards of \$300-500 are available. Performers must be 11-22 years old and must reside and/or study within a 50-mile radius of Old Hampton. Entries are limited to 21 participants on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information call First Presbyterian Church at (757) 722-0006.

VIRGINIA BEACH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA is holding its String Competition on March 27. Students must be in 11th or 12th grade and play in their high school orchestra. Cash awards of \$200-500 are available. For more information, contact Pamela Burke at (757) 460-9640.