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## Mission Statement

Philadelphia Sinfonia supports the artistic growth of young musicians in the Delaware Valley by providing high-level ensemble experience in a supportive educational environment.

We believe that the pursuit of excellence requires performers with integrity, working together toward a common goal. Thus our mission is three-fold: to provide ensemble opportunities for young musicians,



to achieve the highest level of artistic advancement, and to educate young people broadly to be strong citizens and leaders as well as responsible musicians.

We recruit from a demographically diverse student population to provide an opportunity to anyone who musically qualifies and to enrich the experience of all members of the organization.

## Sonata

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 PO Box 996  
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## Philadelphia Sinfonia's Triumphant Tour of Argentina!



# Sonata

Sinfonia Orchestra News

Fall 2009

## Philadelphia Sinfonia Returns from Argentina: a Critical and Cultural Success



Curtain call in Buenos Aires.

*"Enthusiasm... and musical excellence",*

—music critic for *Dario Uno*, the largest newspaper in Mendoza, Argentina.

*"The care given by the conductor in each phrase and in the execution of all aspects of the music brought about an expressive performance.... The talent of these musicians was rewarded in the euphoric response of the audience."*

—*Dario Uno*, June 26, 2009

*"Philadelphia Sinfonia ... displayed enthusiasm, discipline and a balanced sound. This group seems, without a doubt, to deserve praise for its style, dynamic composition, correct handling of tempo..."*

—*La Prensa*, Buenos Aires, July 3, 2009

**F**ifty triumphant young musicians and their conductor, Maestro Gary White, returned July 3rd from the 2009 Philadelphia Sinfonia concert tour to Argentina. Moving by bus from Mendoza in the west to Buenos Aires in the east, the orchestra performed in beautiful, historic

concert halls in Mendoza, Cordoba, Rosario and Buenos Aires.

The Argentine audiences packed the sold-out concert halls, called for multiple encores, and music critics and reporters from newspapers and from TV and radio

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## Argentina 2009: in the Words of a Touring Musician

**W**hen I heard that Sinfonia's destination for its summer 2009 tour would be Argentina, I was thrilled. After many spectacular European tours, I was excited that Sinfonia had decided to tour South America for the first time. Even before we left, I knew that this adventure would be different from anything I had experienced before. The first difference was in the clothes we packed. Since Argentina is located below the Equator, its seasons are the opposite of ours; when it is summer in the United States, it is winter in Argentina. Walking around in t-shirts and shorts simply wouldn't do; we packed jeans, sweaters, and scarves. Another difference was that, instead of playing three concerts in ten days, as usual, we would be playing four concerts in four cities, but in the same amount of time. This busier schedule would prove even more tiring than a traditional tour, but it would be all the more rewarding.

On June 23rd, fifty musicians, a handful of chaperones, our conductor, orchestra president, and orchestra manager met in a hotel parking lot in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, loaded our instruments and suitcases onto buses, and drove to New York's JFK Airport. After a twelve-hour flight to Buenos Aires, a shorter flight took us to our first destination: the desert city of Mendoza. We arrived at the hotel exhausted but excited to see that the local newspaper had written

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## Argentina 2009: in the Words of a Touring Musician

Continued from pg 1.



Concertmaster Madeline Gralish presenting Sinfonia's gift to her Argentinian stand partner.

an article about us. A large picture of the orchestra accompanied an interview of Maestro White, whose quotations had been translated into Spanish.

According to Fabián, our affable tour guide, Mendoza receives only eight inches of rain per year. Its original inhabitants, the indigenous people of Argentina, devised an ingenious system of canals for irrigation, which the Spanish used to line the streets with trees when they built the city, in 1561. Another ancient tradition that is still followed today is the practice of sweeping plazas and streets with long palm fronds, which fall from the many palm trees in Mendoza. When we visited a lovely park,

we could see the Andes Mountains in the distance, and many of us stopped to snap a photo of the incredible view.

In Argentina, we traveled in two giant double-decker buses, which were too tall for Mendoza's tree-lined streets and scraped the treetops as we drove by. Our first concert hall resembled a miniature version of Carnegie Hall. The acoustics were a little dry, but that was easily remedied by holding notes longer and by using more vibrato. Over 700 people made up an enthusiastic, appreciative audience; they gave us a standing ovation and enjoyed three encores.

I was sad to leave Mendoza, which was a lovely city with a small-town feel, but I was excited to visit Córdoba, an eleven hour bus ride away. On our first night in Córdoba, we all managed to attend a concert of the



The Teatro Colon, Cordoba, Argentina

local symphony orchestra, which played the entire *Daphnis et Chloë*, by Maurice Ravel. It was a fantastic opportunity to be able to hear a professional orchestra from another country, and I found the concert inspiring.

Our own concert was held in the same hall the next night. We were thrilled to see that huge banners advertising our concert hung from the building's façade. A sold-out audience of nearly 1,200 people listened rapturously, and their cheers and applause brought the conductor out for encore after encore. After the concert, students from the local music conservatory came backstage to mingle with Sinfonia musicians. The language barrier did not stop us from communicating with one another, and many smiles, laughs, and e-mail addresses were exchanged.

Our next stop was Rosario. We explored the city, escorted by tour guides. We saw the National Flag Memorial, a large monumental complex that honors Manuel Belgrano, the creator of Argentina's flag. The beautiful concert hall in Rosario was nearly full, and the audience was very receptive.

From Rosario, we traveled on to Buenos Aires, Argentina's capital and largest city. This sprawling metropolis is divided into forty-eight *barrios*, or districts. We visited La Boca, a neighborhood that was originally home to the city's many Italian immigrants, who painted their homes bright colors. Nowadays, it is a major tourist area, filled with souvenir shops, tango clubs, and street vendors peddling their wares.

One of the most incredible experiences we had evolved from what we thought was a side-by-side rehearsal with students from the Felix Bernasconi Institute in Buenos Aires. In fact, we unexpectedly found ourselves in an impromptu concert by, for, and with the Bernasconi Institute students and their music director, Maestro Jorge Roel. The Argentinean orchestra opened the concert, which was mostly attended by other students and their families. Sinfonia then played a couple of pieces, and both orchestras closed the concert by playing

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## From the Podium

We begin to plan for our tours almost 18 months before we are scheduled to leave. We work out every possible detail we can think of... and there are hundreds of emails, phone calls and meetings that take place. Yet once the tour begins there are always surprises and unplanned events, and I, for one, wouldn't have it any other way!

We have repeatedly commented on this phenomenon, and this year's tour was no exception. In fact, the "surprises" are what I believe the orchestra, our chaperones and administrative staff will remember fondly for a very long time.

The day before we left, a relative said to me "Aren't you nervous about taking 50 teenagers and twenty-somethings on an international tour? It must be very difficult and exhausting." I smiled at this and immediately launched into what I believe so deeply about this group. I responded, "This is not just any ordinary group of young adults. Our members have always been first-rate performers and ambassadors who show the best of what Philadelphia and America has to offer. So, no, I don't worry about our players, and instead, I look forward to every planned and unplanned moment of our trip."

When confronted with the unexpected, I believe it is the flexibility and commitment of our members and staff that allow us to be so successful on our tours. For example, one surprise happened when we arrived for what we *thought* would be a simple intercultural exchange between our members and an Argentine youth orchestra at the Escuela de Coro y Orchesta del Instituto Felix Fernando Bernasconi. We expected to meet informally in a rehearsal room, and play a piece or two for their orchestra members and they would do the same for us. Afterwards we would then play through a work combining the two orchestras. However, when we arrived we discovered that we were to present an actual concert in their performance hall, filled with a packed house. The results were stunning! Each group played several works to an enthusiastic audience, and we ended with a joint performance that combined some

80 musicians and a children's chorus. After many kind words and presentations were made, there was a beautiful reception and we made many new friends. No one could have predicted the success, on so many different levels, of that evening.

Another surprise came at our last concert in Buenos Aires. Circumstances caused an unforeseen cancellation of our performance partner in a joint concert between Philadelphia Sinfonia and the Bande Sinfonica de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, resulting in a last minute solo concert for our musicians. In spite of this regrettable situation, I cannot tell you how proud I was to stand in front of our members that night. Their focus and flexibility allowed them to present a full concert that had the audience on their feet and demanding encore after encore.

There were many other surprises both big and small... a 20 foot high banner at the "teatro" in Cordoba, advertising our concert — with our name and picture, our name in neon lights, stunningly beautiful concert

halls, near-capacity houses filled with enthusiastic audiences who asked for (and got) encore after encore, and in some cases repeat performances of our already-performed repertoire (after all we had only so many encores, and when we finished those, they still wanted more!); and the list goes on.

Careful preparation and planning are two important lessons we teach our musicians to always heed. I believe the more prepared you are the better you can respond to the uncertain variables and those surprises involved in live performance. Our surprises, in all their different forms, did indeed make for a memorable tour that was rich in the planned and the unplanned.

Gary D. White  
Music Director & Conductor



### YouTube: Sinfonia Concert in Buenos Aires

A YouTube clip, posted by a fan in the audience, is on the homepage of our website: [www.philadelphiasinfonia.com](http://www.philadelphiasinfonia.com). See it for yourself! The URL for this clip: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgMMrtoH2X4>

Dear Maestro White,  
It is a great pleasure to contact you and all the young players of the Philadelphia Sinfonia who are under your distinguished direction to deeply thank you on behalf of the educational community of the Escuela de Coro y Orchesta del "Instituto Felix Fernando Bernasconi" and myself for the excellent warm cultural exchange that took place this past June.  
The musical performance by your young and distinguished orchestra shows the great ability and significant cultural heritage of your wonderful country and demonstrates the resources and commitment your citizens bring to these endeavors. For this reason, I would also like to send my humblest greetings to the Mayor of Philadelphia and thank him for his salutation and lovely words.  
Let me send all my best wishes to you and your musicians and I look forward to sustaining an ongoing dialogue.

Yours sincerely,  
*Jorge Roel*  
Professor Jorge Roel  
Dir. De la Escuela de Coro y Orchesta  
Instituto Felix Fernando Bernasconi  
Buenos Aires, Argentina

## President's Column

Argentina to Ukraine.... The global reach of Philadelphia Sinfonia extends a long way this year! In our own small sample, we detect a new eagerness around the world to engage with the best the United States has to offer, and we are pleased and proud to respond.

Perhaps you can see from various articles in this newsletter how warmly we were received in Argentina this summer and how engaged a group of Ukrainian visitors became with our Sinfonia story in Philadelphia this fall (see USAID Project below). There are many, many rewards in global engagement and many, many responsibilities — rewards and responsibilities we gladly share with our musicians.

Among the many ways we prepare for an international tour, there are few more important than teaching our musicians the *responsibilities* of going on tour, and our students do a terrific job! They must

each take responsibility for the musical product and must bring 100% to all rehearsals and concert performances. They are each responsible for their goods while traveling, for their instrument(s), for their rest and health and well-being; each is responsible for the social cohesion of the touring orchestra, for looking out for one another; each is responsible for the image we present as U.S. citizens abroad; each is an ambassador for our orchestra, for our city and for our country.

This kind of responsibility stretches all of us, but it is only an extension of the responsibility we ask of our musicians and ourselves week in and week out. We model responsibility as best we can: we treat our musicians as fairly as possible; we are on-time ourselves, organized, and prepared; we go beyond business-as-usual when we can and perform, for instance, for Kosovo refugees when the opportunity presents itself, as it did a number of years ago, raise money for earthquake

victims in Japan, collect food for local food banks, go "green" with recycling and reusable Sinfonia water bottles.

This fall, a new generation of musicians joined Philadelphia Sinfonia, and the responsibilities and expectations for rehearsal and performance at the level of our orchestra are being taught. The task of transforming one hundred individuals, each a talented musician, into an integrated, interactive, responsive orchestra is our collective job each fall. It takes skill and perception from the conductor and a lot of responsibility from the musicians: "know the music; come prepared; keep your eyes on the conductor; listen, listen, listen... to recordings and to each other". The rewards are out there: welcome to the 2009-2010 Philadelphia Sinfonia season!

Carol Brown  
*President, Board of Directors*

## Philadelphia Sinfonia sought for participation by U.S. Agency for International Development Program

*Gary White and Carol Brown spend Monday morning with musicians and music managers from Ukraine*



Two interpreters, Carol Brown and Gary White, deep in conversation with Ukrainian musicians.

Gary White and I rode the elevator to the 12th floor of 1515 Arch Street on Monday morning, October 19, and took our places at a crowded table in the conference room of the International Visitors Council of Philadelphia. Around

the table were seated ten eager musicians and music managers from the Ukraine and two highly-skilled interpreters.

Through our demo CD and simultaneous translation, we briefly presented the story of our success as a young but strong and viable

American youth orchestra. And from there the visitors' questions never stopped until the meeting was concluded at noon; although it was time for the guests to move to the next part of their program, we were still talking, exchanging business cards and CD's, and considering visits and collaborations with our new friends.

As a newly-independent, former Soviet state, Ukraine is undergoing reforms in many sectors and the USAID program is intended to motivate changes in the area of cultural arts management. The concept of a free-market economy is taking hold in many areas of Ukrainian society but still missing in performing classical arts. The state management companies that dealt with classical artists no longer exist. This USAID program allows forward-thinking

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## 2009-2010 Concert Schedule

### Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra

Sunday, December 6, 2009, 3 pm  
First Presbyterian Church  
35 W. Cheltenham Ave.  
Germantown, PA

### Philadelphia Sinfonia

Sunday, January 31, 2010, 3 pm  
First Presbyterian Church  
35 W. Cheltenham Ave.  
Germantown, PA

### Philadelphia Sinfonia

Sunday, February 21, 2010, 3 pm  
Trenton War Memorial  
1 Memorial Dr  
Trenton, NJ

### Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra

Sunday, March 7, 2010, 12:30 pm  
Klein Branch, Jewish Community Center  
10100 Jamison Ave.  
Philadelphia, PA

### Philadelphia Sinfonia

Sunday, March 21, 2010, 4 pm  
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
19 S. 10<sup>th</sup> St.  
Philadelphia, PA

### Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra

Sunday, April 11, 2010, 2 pm  
Foulkeways at Gwynedd  
1120 Meetinghouse Rd.  
Gwynedd, PA

### FESTIVAL CONCERT

Philadelphia Sinfonia  
Sunday, May 2, 2010, 3 pm  
Perelman Theater, The Kimmel Center  
Broad & Spruce Streets  
Philadelphia, PA

## Trivia Quiz

Schubert's Overture to *Rosamunde* was part of the music he wrote for a theater piece by Frau Helmine von Chezy. The work as a whole was dismissed by the critics, but Schubert's compositions were thought to be fresh and original (though "slightly eccentric"). The drama was only performed twice. Since the future of the music was uncertain, Schubert did what many composers did and recycled one of the movements for another work.

The first musician to email Carol Brown (info@philadelphiasinfonia.com) with the correct answer will receive a small prize.

## Philadelphia Sinfonia's 2009-2010 Repertoire

(partial listing; repertoire subject to change)

### FULL ORCHESTRA

*Rosamunde Overture, D. 644* by Franz Schubert

*Rienzi Overture, WVV. 49* by Richard Wagner

*Adagietto* from *Symphony No. 5 in c sharp minor* by Gustav Mahler

*Polovetsian Dances* from "Prince Igor" by Alexander Borodin

*Symphony No. 1 in f minor, Op. 10* by Dmitri Shostakovich

*Presto Change-o!* (World Premiere) by Eliza Brown

### CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

*Entrance of the Queen of Sheba* from "Solomon" by G.F. Handel

*Concerto for 4 Violins and Strings, Op. 3, No. 9* by Antonio Vivaldi

*Serenade for Strings in C Major, Op. 48* by P.I. Tchaikovsky

*Brook Green Suite* by Gustav Holst

*Spanish Dance* by Dmitri Shostakovich

*Simple Symphony* by Benjamin Britten

## Alumni "Coffee with the Conductor": Saturday, January 2, 2010

Alumni, come celebrate the New Year by reuniting with Sinfonia friends! You are invited to catch up with Gary and with the other alums at our annual Coffee with the Conductor, which will be held on Saturday, January 2, 2010 at St. Stephen's Church. The gathering starts at 11:00 am, and you are welcome to stay and listen to the rehearsals afterwards. Light refreshments. RSVP to Naomi Atkins at [nrsa@comcast.net](mailto:nrsa@comcast.net) or on our Facebook page: Philadelphia Sinfonia Alumni.

## The Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra & Germantown Oratorio Choir Perform

*The Messiah*; Sunday, December 6, 2009; 3:00 PM  
First Presbyterian Church in Germantown  
35 West Cheltenham Avenue, Philadelphia

Invited to perform Handel's enduring and seasonal work, Conductor Gary White and the Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra will provide the instrumental accompaniment to First Presbyterian Church of Germantown's annual presentation. Please join us.

No charge for admission; free-will offering.

## Alumna Profile

Sara Gabalawi is one of those young musicians who has known for years that she wanted to pursue a career in music performance. Playing cello since age nine, Sara graduated from high school in spring of 2009 and is now on her way toward that goal. Sara is a freshman at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, Maryland, where she is busy taking private lessons (her top priority), music courses (and not much else besides that), and generally immersing herself in music. She plays in the orchestra, and will perform in a chamber ensemble as well.

Conservatory study has long been Sara's intermediate goal. She spent three years in Sinfonia, during which she had several unmatched opportunities — a 2007 side-by-side rehearsal with the Philadelphia Orchestra, a summer 2007 tour of the Czech Republic and Poland, and a solo concerto performance with Sinfonia in spring 2007 after winning the concerto competition in fall 2006. Upon reflection, she says, "Competing can be a scary thing as a performer. You have to know the piece so well to withstand nerves and other possible distractions during the competition and

performance. Being prepared, confident and remaining calm are all essential in succeeding in a competition environment. Never stop listening and finding things to improve upon — and play in front of anyone and everyone to get used to playing in front of an audience. After all this, though, the important thing is to just enjoy the performance and have fun while on the stage!"

Sara's enthusiasm and ability to compete successfully have led to additional exciting opportunities in her budding career. During summer 2009, she participated in the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria, where she was a member of a festival orchestra comprised mainly of professionals from major national orchestras and top graduate students. In addition, Sara has attended festivals in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Brunswick, Maine; and Eagles Mere and Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania.

How is she enjoying conservatory life? Sara says, "It has definitely been a transition. Conservatory life cannot really be compared to any other kind of lifestyle." According to her, conservatory study demands discipline, self-motivation, and time management — but is enjoyable as well. For students

debating between studying music at a conservatory or in a traditional college setting, Sara recommends figuring out goals, visiting different kinds of schools, and speaking with students as much as possible. Conservatory study, says Sara, "basically requires the students to be immersed in music. . . . If you really love music, making it your profession can be a dream come true."

Sara hopes to wind up in a top orchestra in the United States or Europe, and perhaps play chamber music as well. But, she says, "I will never know what surprises will come my way either . . . I am open to anything, as long as I am playing music!"

We look forward to watching and listening as Sara's dream comes true.

Sara may be contacted at saragabalawi@jhu.edu.

Diane Edelman



Sara Gabalawi

## Philadelphia Sinfonia sought for participation by U.S. Agency for International Development Program

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participants to devote their energies to filling this gap and to bring new ideas and innovations to management in the Ukraine.

Our visitors had already met with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Kimmel Center, Curtis Institute, the Philadelphia Musical Fund Society, the Academy of Music, the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Composers Forum, the classical music critics at *The Inquirer*, and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce (among other groups) in Philadelphia; Carnegie Hall and Young Concert Artists in New York; and the Harrisburg Symphony, Harrisburg Youth Orchestra, and Harrisburg Symphony Society.

What they wanted (and got) from us, was recent experience establishing, governing,

managing, and growing an *independent* teaching and performing orchestra.

Questions ranged from "what do you offer potential board members to serve as directors of your orchestra?" to ethical and philosophical questions about auditions and seating. It seemed a surprise that we offer only the reward of a job well-done to our board members!

The longest discussions centered on our touring experience, particularly our trip to Russia in 2005, and our interest in performing new American composers' work. At least two of the Ukrainian visitors are composers and judging from the CDs we were given, a high value in this group is placed on new Ukrainian music. I have listened to the first track of a young string ensemble's CD: *Bohdar Kotorovych; A*

*glance at modern music in Ukraine.* What an exciting, gorgeous piece it is! Now I only wish we had had another two hours to find out what the visitors' lives are like in their own country, more about what they do and how they manage it, and the systems in Ukraine for teaching music. Their culture is incredibly rich in musical history; Gary and I were lucky to touch — for just a moment — a contemporary strand of it.

Carol Brown

*As we go to press, Philadelphia Sinfonia has just received an invitation from the National Symphony of Ukraine to represent the United States in a summer festival, the first invitation issued from Ukraine to an American youth orchestra in eight years!*

## Philadelphia Sinfonia Returns from Argentina: a Critical and Cultural Success

Continued from pg 1.

stations stormed the conductor backstage following every performance.

Commended in Argentina reviews for superior technical ability and evocative musicality, Philadelphia Sinfonia engaged its audience from the opening notes of Mozart's Overture to *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, and sealed its connection to Argentina by closing each performance with the subtle and exquisite *Melodia en La Menor* by Argentine composer Astor Piazzolla (the response to this piece was palpable) and a piece of Americana: selections from Bernstein's *West Side Story*.

Collaborations and cultural exchange in Buenos Aires added to the depth of Philadelphia Sinfonia's experience in Argentina. The orchestra shared a June 30<sup>th</sup> side-by-side performance with the young musicians from the Felix Bernasconi Institute's music school, located in an

underserved area of Buenos Aires, which evolved into an evening of eager conversation, instant friendship and email exchange between the musicians of each country. The following night, in its final tour performance, the Sinfonia strings were led by Maestro Lito Valle, conductor of the professional Banda Sinfonica of Buenos Aires, in Piazzolla's *Melodia en La Menor*. The orchestra and audience were both

### More quotations from *La Prensa*, Buenos Aires:

"... [In] the Bankelsangerlieder [for Brass Choir], nine soloists played the technical passages of 16th notes with delicate beauty, while a Telemann suite for strings [Don Quixote] was played with solid attacks, musical conviction and a good transition of dynamics..."

"Selections from West Side Story were the high point of the evening: with enjoyable swing and cadence, exquisite work by the percussion section, and a lovely, refined reading of the melodies that was never excessive, these selections were executed with grace by a maestro/conductor who always displayed clarity and malleable control over his young charges."

clearly moved by this unusual performance.

The amazing tour of 2009 capped an equally amazing year that began in September 2008 with our being named Commended Winner in the 2008 Mark of Excellence "National Orchestra Honors Competition"; a truly sweet and satisfying finale!

## Argentina 2009: in the Words of a Touring Musician

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excerpts from *The Sound of Music* together. After the performance, a meet-and-greet reception allowed us to get to know our hosts, who were all eager to practice their English and to listen to our Spanish. Many of the students from the Bernasconi Institute were kind enough to come to our concert the following evening, which is a perfect example of the kind, welcoming reception we were given by the Argentinean people everywhere we went.

At our final concert in Buenos Aires, Maestro Lito Valle, conductor of la Banda Sinfónica de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, a professional wind ensemble, led the string section in Astor Piazzolla's *Melodia en La Menor*, an Argentine piece that evoked a palpable response from the audience in each concert that we played. During the concert, we presented Maestro Valle with a plaque and a letter from Mayor Nutter, congratulating La Banda for its 100 year anniversary.

Other highlights of the tour include: spotting cows, cows, and more cows from bus windows; being followed around by well-fed "stray" dogs in each city; visiting an open-air market in Córdoba; seeing political advertisements everywhere (we were in Argentina amidst an election); a visit to the Che Guevara Museum in Alta Gracia; exploring the fascinating family mausoleums in La Recoleta Cemetery in Buenos Aires; and a spectacular tango show in La Boca.

For me, this tour was a little bittersweet, because it was my last opportunity to perform as a member of Sinfonia. I have had an incredible five years in this orchestra, and I will be back to visit as often as I can. This organization is truly special, and I will never forget all of the wonderful people I met and the fantastic music I performed.

This tour would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of

many individuals: our tour organizers at ADI Tours; Mr. AJ Duffy, head chaperone extraordinaire; our other chaperones, who made sure no one was left behind; our incredible orchestra manager, Danielle Garrett; our wonderful orchestra president, Carol Brown; and Gary White, our amazingly inspirational conductor. Last but not least, I would like to thank my fellow musicians for the professionalism they showed as ambassadors for our country and its people. It is often said that music is the universal language, and I think we managed to show that people around the world will always be able to communicate in a spirit of goodwill and understanding if they just listen to one another and enjoy the music.

Madeline Gralish  
Concertmaster 2005 – 2009

Madeline is now a student in violin performance at the Mannes College of Music in New York