

SONATA

Sinfonia Orchestra News
Summer 2012

PHILADELPHIA
SINFONIA
Educating Musicians. Creating Artists.

Roar of Applause Ends Brahms' Symphony and Sinfonia's Fifteenth Year!



2011-2012 Orchestra in Concert

Before the last note had died, the crowd leapt to its feet and signaled its approval. Powerful and accomplished, Brahms' *Symphony No. 2* set a new benchmark for Maestro Gary White and the Sinfonia musicians at the Kimmel Center on May 15, 2012.

This symphony closed the concert that closed Philadelphia Sinfonia's fifteenth year.

It capped a spring in which week followed week of remarkable events: a stunning benefit recital in Chestnut Hill; a Verizon Hall rehearsal, side-by-side with the Philadelphia Orchestra; Brahms' symphony sectionals; "Elements of Musicality" masterclass with flute/piccolo artist, Lois Bliss Herbine; two chamber orchestra concerts; a Trenton War Memorial concert for both orchestras; the Kimmel Center Festival Concert, featuring Brahms and piccolo artist, Lois Herbine in Vivaldi's *Concerto for Piccolo in C Major*; a post-season appearance at the Mann Center for Performing Arts.

Maestro White led our musicians through a stellar anniversary year and a particularly eventful spring, but by far the strongest expression of Sinfonia's meteoric rise in its fifteen year history, was the skill, control and sheer musicality of this performance of Brahms' *Symphony No. 2*. It was glorious. Bravo!

Carol Brown
President, Board of Directors

Repertoire for 2012 – 2013: Philadelphia Sinfonia and Philadelphia Sinfonia Players

An extensive, but partial, listing of next season's repertoire can now be found on our website: www.philadelphiasinfonia.com. Highlights include:

Philadelphia Sinfonia:

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Scheherazade, Op. 35*
Beethoven: *Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 69 (Pastorale)*
Smetana: *The Moldau*
Kile Smith: Commissioned work (TBA)

Philadelphia Sinfonia Players:

Bizet: *L'Arlesienne Suite*
Mozart: *Symphony No. 9 in C Major, K.73*
Beethoven: *Coriolan Overture, Op. 62*
Rimsky-Korsakov: *Dance of the Tumblers from "The Snow Maiden"*

FALL AUDITIONS 2012 – 2013 TO FOLLOW RECORD-BREAKING SPRING AUDITIONS

To fill the remaining seats in both of our full orchestras, all musicians are invited to audition in September 2012.

Students who audition successfully and are offered seats in the fall will be joining a very strong set of musicians in both of our orchestras. Spring auditions brought more than double the number of musicians to Philadelphia Sinfonia compared to the previous spring, ensuring that the extraordinary level of our advanced orchestra, Philadelphia Sinfonia (PS) will continue, and the level of the new orchestra, the Philadelphia Sinfonia Players (PSP), will also be very high. We extend congratulations to all those who have enrolled to date and encourage other musicians to join them!

We will be hearing auditions for all instruments for the new Philadelphia Sinfonia Players and for the few remaining openings in our most advanced group, Philadelphia Sinfonia – where we are particularly looking for **viola, bass, bassoon, tenor and bass trombone and percussion**.

To schedule an audition in September, call Jonathan Hummel after July 30, 2012 at: 215-351-0363 or email jhummel@philadelphiasinfonia.com. The audition dates in September are:

Saturday, September 1, 2012
noon – 5:30 PM

Saturday, September 8, 2012
noon – 5:30 PM

Sunday, September 9, 2012
1:30 – 5:30 PM

Further audition information can be found on our website:
www.philadelphiasinfonia.com.

From the Podium



This is a very special time of year for us at Philadelphia Sinfonia. While our students are off on their various summer endeavors or preparing for new chapters in their lives

as they begin college, we have a chance to reflect on our recently concluded season's successes and give thought to the ways we would like to grow. It is also the time of year that we work steadily on our next season. Spring audition results are in and we are busy preparing for 2012-13. It is an exciting and productive time for our administration and staff.

Looking back over this past season there are many highlights. Our collaborations were amongst the most exciting – side-by-side events with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Play

On, Philly! and our annual Messiah with First Presbyterian Church of Germantown, just to name a few. The Chamber and Full Orchestras continued to give musically exciting performances in Philadelphia and the surrounding areas, culminating in a final post-season concert at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts.

As the 2011-12 season ended we held spring auditions for 2012 - 2013. Record numbers of students auditioned for Philadelphia Sinfonia and for the new Philadelphia Sinfonia Players. Both orchestras promise to be filled with new and returning musicians who will make our upcoming season a rich one indeed. It was a great pleasure to hear so many talented and hard working musicians and we appreciate their interest and enthusiasm.

During this year's spring auditions many of our Chamber Orchestra Associate members auditioned successfully and advanced in the Philadelphia Sinfonia program. Started several years ago as a way to train and mentor young musicians not quite ready to play in our most advanced full orchestra, the Associates program has now evolved into

a new full orchestra, Philadelphia Sinfonia Players (PSP). It will be a great joy and pleasure to work with the musicians of PSP, many of whom may audition eventually into our most advanced orchestra, Philadelphia Sinfonia (PS). I have long felt the need for this additional component in our program, and I am very pleased that our recent auditions exceeded our expectations. I look forward to the exciting, strong inaugural season of this group!

So we are still reflecting on the past year, its many rich experiences as well as the outstanding accomplishments of our musicians, and we are busily planning our exciting up-coming season. As always we so appreciate the support we receive from the Philadelphia area music teachers and community, parents and other youth music organizations. And we are most proud of the hard work and achievements of our many talented students.

Wishing everyone an enjoyable summer,

Gary D. White
Music Director & Conductor

Summertime...

Tanglewood, Kinhaven, Aspen, Philadelphia International Music Festival, New England Music Camp, China... are among the destinations of our musicians this summer. Look for a follow-up article reflecting their experiences that will appear in our fall issue of Sonata.

ORCHESTRA NEWS

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PNC Arts Alive Festival: Sinfonia at The Mann Center

Within days of our Festival Concert at the Kimmel Center, we were back together again, in concert at The Mann Center for Performing Arts. Invited to play in this post-season event on May 19, we took the main stage at 12:30 PM, performing a set of pops and classical favorites, including Tchaikovsky's "Valse" from *Swan Lake*, St. Saens' *Danse Macabre*, the Piazzolla *Libertango*, and – always welcome and a great piece to close – the *Duke Ellington Medley*.

Joined at the end by enthusiastic members of the Play On, Philly! Orchestra, we played side-by-side Tchaikovsky's *March Slav*.

It was a perfect, beautiful spring day, a delightful post-season event, and a last chance to say good-bye to our graduating seniors who are off to colleges and music schools in the fall.

Warming up at The Mann Center for Performing Arts, May 19, 2012.



Side-by-Side with The Philadelphia Orchestra

For an ambitious high school musician, very little can top the experience of sitting side-by-side on the stage of Verizon Hall with a member of The Philadelphia Orchestra, playing all four movements of Brahms' *Symphony No. 2*. Recipients of The Philadelphia Orchestra's 2012 side-by-side program partnership, we rehearsed the symphony for weeks ahead of time, and the preparation yielded a stunning rehearsal with profound moments. We thank Maestro Cristian Macelaru and the musicians and staff of The Philadelphia Orchestra for this once-in-a-lifetime experience for Sinfonia musicians on March 31, 2012. We also thank photographer Jessica Griffin, for her beautiful record of the event.



Soiree

A splendidly-appointed, historic Chestnut Hill home was the jewel-like backdrop for Sinfonia's 2012 benefit soiree. In the tradition of 19th century house concerts, Philadelphia Sinfonia musicians performed solo works and chamber music to a full-house of enthusiasts on a lovely Sunday afternoon in March.

Solo and accompanied works ranged from Bach's classic *Cello Suite No. 5 in C minor* and *Violin Partita No. 2 in D minor* to Pablo Sarasate's show-stopping *Habanera* to Shostakovich's demanding *Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 147*, each played with tenderness or panache, as each piece required, by individual members of this season's Sinfonia string quartet.

Rounding out the instrument representation and completely charming the room, Mozart's *Concerto for Flute and Harp in C Major*, the second piece on the

program, was rendered with exquisite accomplishment and beauty by harpist Mia Venezia and flutist Shannon Vandzura.

The musical program concluded with an incredible flourish: Greg Gennaro, Matt Slesinski, Randy Tallini and Max Song, the season's string quartet coached by Maestro White, nailed brilliantly Franz Schubert's *String Quartet No. 12 in C minor "Quartettsatz."* Stunning!

Musicians and audience feasted on now-traditional soiree reception fare: egg salad sandwiches with former board member, Susannah Chang's, secret ingredient; stuffed strawberries; chocolate shortbread cookies; cheese platters....

We thank our hosts who welcomed us warmly and graciously into their lovely home and also thank our generous musicians, who practiced, performed and won the hearts of their audience.



Mozart: Mia Venezia, harp, and Shannon Vandzura, flute.



Sinfonia String Quartet, left to right, Greg Gennaro, Matt Slesinski, Max Song, Randy Tallini.

2012 Senior's Departing Gift

It happens each spring: about a fourth of our members graduate from high school and move on to fine colleges, universities, conservatories and schools of music. This year's seniors are no exception; they are headed to remarkable places and interesting lives. Their aspirations are high, their accomplishments are many, and while we will miss them, we wish them all the best as they embark upon new programs and new adventures.

This year's senior class left Philadelphia Sinfonia with a financial donation that has been added to our scholarship fund. Thank you, 2012 Seniors, for your steadfast participation in our program, your musicality, your leadership and for your generous final gift. Your legacy is substantial, both in your many years of musical achievement in Sinfonia and in your gift to future members of the orchestra. We will welcome you back at any time and, in the meantime, wish you well.

Philadelphia Sinfonia: Musicianship, Scholarship, Leadership

The Philadelphia Sinfonia Board of Directors, Music Director and Executive Director celebrated our fifteenth year with a branding project. As a result, our logo and all publications have changed. We believe the new “look” is appropriately reflective of the organization we have become. At fifteen years, we have a clear understanding of who we are, what we do, how we do it, and of the power and effectiveness of our program. As part of the project we also developed a statement codifying our “brand” and are proud to share it, below:

At Philadelphia Sinfonia we challenge our students to extend their musical training beyond technical excellence and to develop artistic mastery of the repertoire they perform. We lead them into the minds and hearts of the composers whose work they play and provide theoretical understanding of these compositions. We inspire our students to be leaders in the classroom and in our organization, and we instill in them a profound sense of civic and global responsibility. They arrive at Philadelphia Sinfonia with talent and tenacity and they graduate as thoughtful human beings and as adept and passionate musicians, whether or not they choose to pursue a career in music.

Philadelphia Sinfonia is one of the premiere youth orchestras in the tri-state area. Since 1997, we have been teaching young musicians to discover their full artistic potential. Our students range in age from 11 to 22 and have exceptional musical ability. Many go on to study at prestigious universities and conservatories such as Harvard and Princeton Universities, The Curtis Institute of Music and The Julliard School.

We take a broad and contemporary approach to the study of orchestral music, with a curriculum that emphasizes teamwork and three different areas of growth and development – musicianship, scholarship and leadership.

Musicianship: our students hone their musical proficiency and develop advanced orchestral skills in a collaborative and engaging environment. They are encouraged to question, to innovate and to push themselves beyond the boundaries of comfort. They are active participants in the process of learning a piece of music and responsible partners in its performance.

Scholarship: knowledge and understanding are critical components of musical artistry. Sinfonia rehearsals include a thorough excavation of a composition and its composer’s background, providing

theoretical and historical context for each piece, and our international tours are designed to include concert performance and on site study of composers and their music in their original cultural setting. The deepest understanding of a piece of music is derived directly from its composer; with strong relationships to a number of living composers, we hold rehearsals and masterclasses with them whenever possible, to powerful effect.

We develop leadership through opportunities for artistic mentorship within our organization and opportunities for civic engagement in the local and global community. Our musicians run a highly successful annual food drive supporting Philabundance, have participated in musical workshops for area school children, participate enthusiastically in side-by-side rehearsals with children in underserved areas at home and abroad, and take pride in our benefit concerts, which have helped Kosovo refugees and the victims of the earthquake in Kobe, Japan.

Each season we perform four advanced full orchestra concerts, three chamber orchestra concerts, two intermediate

orchestra concerts, an intimate afternoon recital of solo works and chamber music. Most advanced orchestra seasons include either a highly visible summer concert or an international tour. Our musical repertoire is diverse and daring, comprised of works from the standard classical canon alongside 20th and 21st century pieces, and has included several world and Philadelphia premieres.

We have performed at the Kimmel Center, the Mann Music Center, the Liberty Medal Ceremony honoring Colin Powell and at the 2000 Republican National Convention. We have partnered with guest artists as renowned as soprano Julianne Baird and jazz virtuoso violinist Christian Howes. Internationally, Philadelphia Sinfonia has wowed audiences in Holland, Great Britain, Russia, the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Poland, Austria, Hungary, Belgium and Argentina.

Young musicians are at the heart of Philadelphia Sinfonia. They are a diverse group with incredible gifts, capable of discovering the theoretical and emotional content of a composition and communicating something truly moving to an audience.

Orchestras Feeding America: New Record for Sinfonia Food Drive!

We broke our own collection record in the March 2012 Sinfonia Food Drive! For the fourth consecutive year Philadelphia Sinfonia teamed with Orchestras Feeding America to address hunger in the United States. Again joined in this project by the Methacton School District Spring String Jam, we all collected and donated 1,632 lbs. of food to Philabundance, our regional food bank partner. It was a terrific contribution; we send a huge thank you to Methacton, and congratulate everyone who participated!

The Sinfonia food drive is organized, promoted and run by our musicians. A very popular activity, this year’s food drive committee was staffed by at least fifteen Sinfonia musicians who were a dedicated, articulate, driven group, drawn from all sections of the orchestra. While this drive has traditionally been fueled by a collection competition between the various sections of the orchestra, in the end, *collaboration between the musicians* to mitigate hunger in our region is both the goal of the project and the clear, visible means of achieving it. How proud we are of the 2012 Food Drive Committee, of their dramatic success and of the leadership skills they demonstrated.

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA

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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.



PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA

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