

# SONATA

Sinfonia Orchestra News  
Winter 2017

**2016-17**  
YEARS PHILADELPHIA  
SINFONIA  
*Educating Musicians. Creating Artists.*

## Banner Anniversary Year for PSP Too!



PSP in Concert: February 19, 2017

**S**unday, February 19, 2017....  
Rumor had it that the admissions  
line stretched the length of the  
block outside St. Stephen's Church.

Certainly, by the time the last audience  
members arrived, we were scrounging for  
extra space and chairs to seat them. The  
expectation and excitement from audience

### SPRING AUDITIONS

For all ensembles will be held on  
May 20, 21, 27, 28.  
See page 5 for more information.

members to musicians was palpable — and warranted: it was the Philadelphia Sinfonia Players first concert under the baton of their new conductor, Ms. Danielle Garrett. It was also the first concert of the Philadelphia Sinfonia Players 5th Anniversary year.

And how well they played! The relationship between Ms. Garrett and her musicians has flourished, generating a strong and quite musical ensemble. Ms. Garrett fosters her musicians' confidence, hones their listening and instrumental skills, and brings them to accomplished performance levels with quite difficult repertoire.

From Meyerbeer's *Coronation March from 'Le Prophète'* that opened the February 19th concert to Bizet's *L'Arlesienne Suite No. 2*, the closing number, the

*Continued on page 4.*

## Brilliant Performance with Soloist David Kim Opens 20th Anniversary Season

*"Our performance... was one of those rare moon and the stars lining up moments... and there was no way we were going to be denied."*  
— David Kim, Concertmaster, *The Philadelphia Orchestra*

**M**ax Bruch's *Violin Concerto No. 1*, one of the most popular violin concertos in the repertoire, has been performed and recorded by many violinists. The Philadelphia Orchestra Concertmaster, David Kim, has himself performed it many, many times, yet something rather special emerged on stage as he performed it with Philadelphia Sinfonia at our season-opening concert on January 22, 2017.

Asked to comment post-performance, Mr. Kim eloquently captured his experience of the lead-up and rendition of this beautiful

work in a lovely tribute to Philadelphia Sinfonia:

*"My first experience performing with Philadelphia Sinfonia was a delight. Every aspect of our collaboration was executed with excellence, meticulous organization, and passion. It seems the entire organization from board to musicians to conducting staff is quite unanimous in purpose and style. Music Director Gary White is to be saluted for his superb leadership."*

*"Our performance of the Bruch Violin Concerto was one of those rare moon and the stars lining up moments. Conductor Danielle Garrett assisted in fantastic preparation and there was no way we were going to be denied. We all felt it on stage and it was fun to know that we were taking part in an extra special performance that we would all remember for years to come."*

David Kim, Concertmaster  
*The Philadelphia Orchestra*

*Continued on page 5.*

## From the Podium

Well, as you can see from the rest of this newsletter, our 20th anniversary year is off and running! PS students have accompanied Philadelphia Orchestra's concertmaster, David Kim, and played with the orchestra itself under Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin while the very next day giving a full second concert of their own. PSP students have given their first stunning concert under their new conductor, Danielle Garrett, and our chamber orchestra, PSCO, has played on two different PS concerts and also performed its own solo concert, its first of two.

This represents a lot of activity and a wide variety of events — and it's still somewhat early in our concert season! As we continue to work on this season's repertoire, I find myself thinking a lot about the important orchestral skills we are teaching our students in this year of particularly exciting, but also demanding performances.

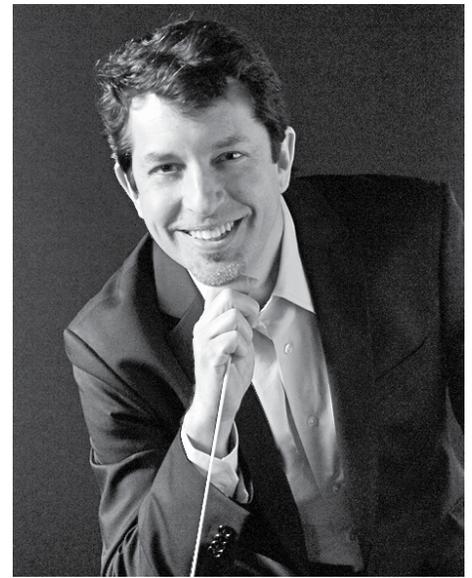
Our training program is designed first and foremost to give students the best and most comprehensive orchestral music education possible. As we teach and explain to our students, many different skills are required to be a successful musician. But as I live through our exciting and jam-packed 20th anniversary year, I particularly see one of those traits that is indispensable to a well-rounded musician, fully demonstrated by all our members, across all three orchestras — and that is *flexibility*.

Every successful musician must possess the ability to be flexible, think quickly, and be able to make adjustments as fast as possible. Our students have learned and showed their willingness to do just that by making quick

changes while accompanying virtuoso violinist David Kim, and by playing Dvořák Symphony No. 8, first under my direction, then under Maestro Nézet-Séguin, and then back under me (in the same day!) for a dress rehearsal and concert.

Professional musicians know how to play under many different conductors, quickly figuring out what each new conductor is after in terms of sound, musicality, etc. It is remarkable to see this heightened development in our *students* — many of whom are still in high school. But this flexibility hasn't just been demonstrated by our advanced orchestra, PS, it is also flourishing in PSP where the musicians have quickly adapted to and grown under their new conductor, Danielle Garrett. This is especially remarkable, because PSP is made up of middle school, as well as high school, members.

Flexibility, the ability to adapt quickly with a positive and constructive attitude, is a critical orchestral skill that our students are constantly using in their musical endeavors not only in this special anniversary year —



Gary D. White, Music Director & Conductor

but every year. This ability will also serve them well in many other aspects of their lives. As always, I am awed and amazed by the depth our students demonstrate. Watching them in action this season has been nothing short of astonishing.

Gary D. White  
Music Director & Conductor  
Philadelphia Sinfonia Association

### Sinfonia and PMAY Consortium Secures Mellon Foundation Grant to Fund Instrumental Classical Music Education in Philadelphia

The Philadelphia Music Alliance for Youth (PMAY), of which Philadelphia Sinfonia is a participating organization, has received an unprecedented grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation with the end goal of increasing diversity in the professional classical music field. This multi-year, \$2.532 million grant will identify and support committed young musicians from the Philadelphia area's underrepresented communities, preparing them to enter the field of music at the college/conservatory level.

Each of the participating organizations will receive a share of this grant commensurate with its planned initiatives, to begin in September 2017. The funds

and the overall program, titled "PMAY Artists Initiative," will be administered by Settlement Music School.

Besides Philadelphia Sinfonia and Settlement Music School, the collaborating organizations that are a part of this initiative include: Play On, Philly!, Musicopia, Project 440, Temple University Music Preparatory Division, Philadelphia Youth Orchestra, School District of Philadelphia Office of Music Education, The Philadelphia Orchestra, and The Primavera Fund.

Philadelphia is the first city in the nation to receive funding at this level from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support the future of young musicians.

## ORCHESTRA NEWS

Winter 2017 | Vol. 15, No. 1

Published by: Philadelphia Sinfonia

Edited by: Carol Brown

Photos by: Steven Goldblatt,  
Tom Gralish, and Ke Feng

Design by: Hanna Manninen

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## Side-by-Side with Maestro Nézet-Séguin and The Philadelphia Orchestra

“*[This morning’s event] exceeded my expectations*”

—Maestro Nézet-Séguin

Philadelphia Sinfonia’s “date” with some of the best musicians in the world brought our top orchestra to the stage of Verizon Hall on Saturday morning, February 25. Seated side-by-side with instrumentalists from The Philadelphia Orchestra, under the baton of The Philadelphia Orchestra’s iconic Music Director and Conductor, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, our musicians were ready and eager to play. The repertoire for this special rehearsal: Dvořák’s *Symphony No. 8*.

Maestro Nézet-Séguin is a consummate musician and conductor. He is also a remarkable teacher. Instructing more by

example and metaphor than exhortation, Yannick conveyed his interpretation of this most cheerful and beautiful of Dvořák’s symphonies to the musicians, and they responded well, successfully delivering the interpretations that he wanted.

Nézet-Séguin brings a strong personality to the podium and uses it to full effect. He cares about the physicality of music (feeling the music throughout your body to help with phrasing and rhythm), and moves constantly himself. He works fast, hard, and with intensity. But he also told stories, learned musicians’ names, laughed and sang, and clearly enjoyed himself — all of it entirely in service of the music and his teaching. He delivered an amazing, inspiring morning to our musicians.

We are incredibly grateful to The Philadelphia Orchestra, to its dedicated and outstanding musicians, and to Maestro Nézet-Séguin for this remarkable, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

With comments floating round the Philadelphia Orchestra musicians about how well-prepared our students were, Nézet-Séguin closed the rehearsal with his second tribute to our Music Director, Gary White, whose work he praised.

And he had a little parting advice for Philadelphia Sinfonia’s musicians: “Keep doing what you are doing,” he said. Make it musical, don’t be afraid to take risks, and enjoy every minute of it. His own joy was abundant — and empowering for PSA’s very fortunate musicians.

## Future Events

### **MARCH 4, 11, 18, 25: PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA ASSOCIATION FOOD DRIVE TO SUPPORT PHILABUNDANCE!**

Again joining the national food drive, “Orchestras Feeding America,” Philadelphia Sinfonia Association orchestras will collect and donate non-perishable food items. Cans of food can be brought to St. Stephen’s during rehearsal on any of the four Saturdays in March 2017. Over the last eight years, since 2009, our organization has contributed over *four* tons (!) of food to Philabundance. Please help us bring that number up even higher!

### **APRIL 1: PS/PSP SIDE-BY-SIDE REHEARSAL AT 3:15 PM**

This is a glorious annual event! All 170 of our students will gather in a single ensemble to rehearse Tchaikovsky’s *1812 Overture* and Vaughan Williams’ *Concerto Grosso for 3 String Orchestras*, which they will be performing together on May 14 in Verizon Hall. Each PSP student is seated with his or her counterpart in the PS orchestra, and the sound in the beautiful acoustic St. Stephen’s Church is always rich and rewarding.

Please note altered rehearsal schedule for all groups: PSCO at noon; PSP at 1:30 PM; Side-by-Side at 3:15 PM; PS at 4:15 PM.

### **APRIL 22, 2017: MASTER CLASS. PRESENTED BY THE PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY, ECCO, AND THE PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA AT 12:30 PM**

The critically acclaimed East Coast Chamber Orchestra (ECCO) will present a master class with our own Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra musicians, at 12:30 PM on April 22. ECCO will be in Philadelphia that weekend performing for the Chamber Music Society and has generously agreed to spend an hour on Saturday afternoon with our students.

ECCO is “a collective of dynamic like-minded artists who convene for selected periods each year to explore musical works and perform concerts of the highest quality. The members of this democratically-run, self-conducted orchestra are colleagues and friends from leading conservatories and music festivals across the country. They are

soloists, chamber musicians, principals of major American orchestras, and GRAMMY award winners who play with the symphony orchestras of Philadelphia, Minnesota, San Francisco, Chicago, St. Louis, Seattle, and Boston, among others.”

— *Philadelphia Chamber Music Society*

What an exciting afternoon ECCO will bring to us! All PS and PSP musicians are strongly encouraged to attend.

### **MAY 13, 2017: FESTIVAL CONCERT DRESS REHEARSALS AT TEMPLE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

TPAC is a beautiful place to perform and a beautiful facility for dress rehearsals. PS and PSP will hold separate dress rehearsals on Saturday, May 13: PSP at 12:30 PM and PS at 3:30 PM. In between, at 2:00 PM, PS and PSP will have a joint side-by-side dress rehearsal, along with a 200 voice choir, to polish the spectacular finale to the following afternoon’s Festival Concert: Tchaikovsky’s *1812 Overture*.

## Banner Anniversary Year for PSP Too!

*Continued from page 1.*

Philadelphia Sinfonia Players performed with enthusiasm, grace, musicality, and prowess. Strings and winds had special opportunities to hold their own and shine in Peter Warlock's *Capriol Suite for String Orchestra* and Donizetti's *Sinfonia for Winds*. And the walls of St. Stephen's Church fairly rang with the glorious sound of the full orchestra, as Jean Sibelius' *Finlandia* closed the first half with the beloved hymn-like melody of this work. Bravo, PSP!

Five years ago, the inaugural year of PSP, our new full "intermediate" orchestra exceeded our expectations on all counts: number of members, level of ability, and the quality of its performances. And from that moment on, PSP has become a sought-after, solid part of the PSA program — a destination in its own right as well as a successful feeder into Philadelphia Sinfonia, our top group.

Over its first four years, our Music Director, Maestro Gary White, conducted and led

PSP. By last year, this group was sufficiently established and sustainable, and we had found the perfect next conductor for PSP, so Maestro White could focus on the entire PSA program as music director and more closely as conductor upon PS and PSCO.

PSP rehearses and performs challenging and original repertoire, breaks rehearsals frequently into sectionals — with our artistic staff, musicians from professional groups in the area, and with Curtis students; and has accompanied professional soloists: Darin Kelly, trumpet; Allison Herz, clarinet; and this spring in a special anniversary commission arrangement of selections from Rodgers and Hart, another professional trumpet player, John Thyhsen.

In each of its five years, PSP has successfully rehearsed side-by-side with our advanced full orchestra in works drawn from both groups' repertoire. The success of these internal side-by-side rehearsals speaks both to the strength of PSP and to our confidence that PSP will be a strong partner



Danielle Garrett, PSP Conductor, 2017

with PS and multiple other performers — including two choirs — on the stage of Verizon Hall in our May 14 grand finale to this, our anniversary year.

**20th Anniversary Festival Concert:**  
*Sunday, May 14, 2017; 4:30 PM,*  
*Kimmel Center's Verizon Hall. Tickets*  
*available at the Kimmel Center box office,*  
*online or by phone: [kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org)*  
*or 215-893-1999.*



PSP winds, 2017



PSP violins, 2017

## Upcoming Concerts

### PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA

**Sunday, May 14, 2017, 4:30 PM**

Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center  
 300 S. Broad Street  
 Philadelphia, PA 19102

### PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA PLAYERS

**Sunday, May 7, 2017, 3 PM**

featuring soloist John Thyhsen, trumpet  
 First Presbyterian Church in Germantown  
 35 West Chelton Avenue  
 Philadelphia, PA 19144

**Sunday, May 14, 2017, 4:30 PM**

Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center  
 300 S. Broad Street  
 Philadelphia, PA 19102

### PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

**Wednesday, May 3, 2017, 7:00 PM**

Meadowood Retirement Community  
 3205 W. Skippack Pike  
 Worcester, PA 19490

## Brilliant Performance with Soloist David Kim Opens 20th Anniversary Season

*Continued from page 1.*

David Kim is a superb musician and a generous collaborator. Philadelphia Sinfonia musicians are fortunate, indeed, to have experienced this performance with Mr. Kim. We are grateful to him for accepting our invitation to perform and for the enthusiasm and graciousness he brought to every moment of the collaboration.

But it must also be said that Philadelphia Sinfonia musicians are *themselves* remarkable, skilled, collaborative performers. They showed us all what they can do, and together with David Kim and Maestro Gary White, it was brilliant, passionate, and extraordinarily moving.

David Kim's Bruch violin concerto was followed in the concert's second half by our string chamber orchestra's outstanding rendition of Mozart's *Divertimento No. 3 in F Major*, with all of its requisite grace and charm, and the full orchestra's performance of Claude Debussy's *La Mer*.

Debussy's difficult, commanding, landmark composition asks a lot of a youth orchestra's musicians and conductor. Maestro Gary White opened our rehearsal season last

September with the comment that he had been waiting all his life to conduct *La Mer* with a youth orchestra.... This season's musicians were put to their conductor's personal test, and they rose admirably to the challenge, ending the concert with all the grandeur and drama that its final movement — and “the sea” itself — evokes.

With another difficult, but well-performed work as the concert's opening number (Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C minor*), this afternoon's performance spanned 200 years of extraordinary music and proved to be a superb opening to Philadelphia Sinfonia's 20th Anniversary year.



Soloist David Kim with Philadelphia Sinfonia in Max Bruch's violin concerto.

### CALL FOR SPRING AUDITIONS!

Going into its 21st season, the Philadelphia Sinfonia program includes several performance opportunities for each orchestra, varied and challenging repertoire, master classes and sectionals, and a season CD. We have three orchestras:

**Philadelphia Sinfonia (PS):** advanced full symphonic orchestra for ages 14–23  
Rehearsals: Saturdays, 2:50–5:30 PM

**Philadelphia Sinfonia Players (PSP):** intermediate-advanced full symphonic orchestra for ages 11–18  
Rehearsals: Saturdays, 9:50 AM–12:00 NOON

**Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra (PSCO):** advanced string orchestra  
Open to any PS string player  
Rehearsals: Saturdays, 12:20–2:00 PM

Auditions take place at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 19 S. 10th Street, Philadelphia.

Spring auditions are offered this year on:

May 20, 2017: 10 AM to 6:00 PM  
May 21, 2017: 10 AM to 6:00 PM  
May 27, 2017: 10 AM to 6:00 PM  
May 28, 2017: 10 AM to 6:00 PM

Auditioning musicians are expected to perform two different movements from a concerto or sonata — one technical movement and one slower, more melodic movement — without accompaniment; perform major scales up to four flats and four sharps; sight read.

**For more information contact us at**  
**info@philadelphiasinfonia.com or**  
**215-351-0363**

Registration is available on our website: [www.philadelphiasinfonia.com/auditions](http://www.philadelphiasinfonia.com/auditions)

## Sponsors/Supporters

Philadelphia Sinfonia is truly grateful to its generous sponsors and friends, whose gifts nurture the growth of many young musicians, further develop our organization, and contribute to a vital artistic community in the Philadelphia region. Gifts can be made online through our website, or by contacting us at [info@philadelphiasinfonia.com](mailto:info@philadelphiasinfonia.com) for donor materials. Sponsors are listed annually in our winter newsletter. The current list includes donations received between June 1, 2016 and February 28, 2017:

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*(Auditions and other events would not be the same without them!)*

## Trivia Quiz

George Gershwin composed the beloved *An American in Paris* in 1928. He has written that it is about many different things, but he was very clear that there is a definite use of jazz blues in a few sections. What do the blues represent in the story of *An American in Paris*? What inspired Gershwin to use the blues this way?

*This quiz is open to all current musicians in our program. It is a two-part question with a two-part answer. The first musician to email Carol Brown ([info@philadelphiasinfonia.com](mailto:info@philadelphiasinfonia.com)) with the correct answers will receive a small prize.*

And for all the rest of our readers, don't miss Philadelphia Sinfonia's performance of Gershwin's *American in Paris*, on Sunday, May 14, 2017 at 4:30 PM. Tickets at the Kimmel Center box office, online or by phone: [kimmelcenter.org](http://kimmelcenter.org) or 215-893-1999.

## Alumna Profile: Chelsea Wimmer

Joining Philadelphia Sinfonia was a thrilling experience for violist Chelsea Wimmer. Chelsea still recalls that her first season began with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, which tells the story of Sinbad and his travels across the rolling, wavy ocean. "Sitting in the middle of an orchestra for the first time, playing music of that depth and warmth, and hearing the full, huge sound of both violin sections playing the opening theme together, while the violas and cellos supported them as the waves in the story, was a huge 'whoa' moment for me," shares Chelsea.

And it was just the beginning of many musical journeys for this multi-talented Sinfonia alum. One journey led Chelsea to Argentina, with Sinfonia's 2009 tour, and others led her to a broad variety of musical experiences.

Following high school, Chelsea did not automatically jump into music full-time. She entered Goshen College in Indiana as an English major with a music minor, but switched by her sophomore year. She was always musically engaged, however — in orchestra, two or three choirs, at least one chamber group, and solo work. As luck would have it, there were few violists at Goshen, which gave Chelsea many opportunities to perform. This led her to realize that "nothing was as rewarding, joyful, or thrilling as playing music!"

That conclusion has led Chelsea to pursue *two* graduate degrees in music. Following graduation and a year of full-time work, Chelsea earned a Master of Music in Viola Performance at SUNY Stony Brook, where she is now working toward her Doctor of Musical Arts degree, studying with Lawrence Dutton (Emerson Quartet) and Nicholas Cords (Silk Road Ensemble, Brooklyn Rider).

Grad school has been "enormously challenging." Echoing feelings that many young musicians share, Chelsea found herself loving her studies, but at first afraid of not being able to meet her teachers' demands. She thoughtfully reflects: "I was very intimidated by the skill and talent of

my new colleagues and peers.... However, I loved that my life was suddenly filled with high-level, in-depth music study with very few distractions. There's no way I would have found happiness in that level of intensity straight out of high school."

The "lesson"? Musicians develop at different "tempos." "All that said, I have absolutely loved graduate school. It's been really fulfilling to learn more about what I already love, as well as discover new, exciting opportunities."

Those "new opportunities" include Baroque performance practice and contemporary music. Chelsea has performed in the Amherst Early Music Festival, with Stony Brook's Contemporary Chamber Players, and with Philadelphia's Symphony in C orchestra, as well as many other ensembles throughout Philadelphia and N.Y.C.

What's next? Chelsea's goal is to perform with a symphony or chamber orchestra and teach in a university.

Perhaps most important is Chelsea's advice to those thinking of studying music at college or a conservatory: "I didn't decide to pursue a career in performance until partway through college. I'd encourage [any new college student] to explore anything that interests them. Don't be afraid of something because it seems risky, scary, or difficult. Keep your mind open to new people and experiences. Learn from your peers and get to know your professors."



Chelsea Wimmer, violist  
Photo: Cyneé Photography

"Be sure to practice hard, but live a full, satisfying life outside the practice room. It won't all be easy, but don't let any one experience define who you are as a player or a person. There are a lot of dynamic ups and downs that come with pursuing what you're deeply passionate about and dedicated to, and I find that to be really rewarding and joyful."

Great advice from a well-seasoned musician!

*Please feel free to contact Chelsea at [chelseawimmer@gmail.com](mailto:chelseawimmer@gmail.com), and visit [www.chelseawimmer.com](http://www.chelseawimmer.com).*

Diane Penneys Edelman

### ALUMNI SPECIAL! Get Your Complimentary Tickets for our 20th Anniversary Festival Concert!

**SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2017; 4:30 PM IN VERIZON HALL:** All Philadelphia Sinfonia alumni are warmly invited to join us for our 20th Anniversary Festival Concert, "Wolfgang, George and Friends." Don't miss this fun concert and its grand finale.... Featuring our entire roster of musicians and the Keystone State Boychoir, Pennsylvania Girlchoir, Abington Choral Club, and requisite cannons, Tchaikovsky's grand *1812 Overture* will close our concert and our 20th Year!

Complimentary tickets to this great celebration are available for all Sinfonia alums. To reserve alumni comp tickets, please contact Executive Director Judith Mendelsohn at 215-248-5814 or [Mendelsohn@philadelphiasinfonia.com](mailto:Mendelsohn@philadelphiasinfonia.com).

# PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA

Gary D. White  
*Music Director and Conductor*  
Judith Mendelsohn  
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Danielle Garrett  
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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.



*20th Anniversary Concerts, Events, Auditions, and more....*