

SONATA

Sinfonia Orchestra News
Summer 2013

PHILADELPHIA
SINFONIA
Educating Musicians. Creating Artists.

Philadelphia Sinfonia & Mendelssohn Club to join forces in Beethoven's Ninth!

Looking ahead to 2013 -2014, his fifteenth season as Music Director of Philadelphia Sinfonia, Maestro Gary White commented almost a year ago that he would like to do "something choral." Something choral has turned into something very big: Philadelphia Sinfonia will perform Beethoven's monumental *Symphony No. 9 in d minor* with the acclaimed Mendelssohn Club chorus in Verizon Hall on June 8, 2014, Maestro Gary White conducting.

Sometimes known simply as "*The Choral Symphony*," Beethoven's final complete symphony is one of the best-known and best-loved works of the Western classical repertoire. It is the first example of a major composer using voices in a symphony and is considered by many, if not most, critics to be among Beethoven's greatest works.

The Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, now 140 voices strong, first performed with The Philadelphia Orchestra 110 years ago, in 1903. The repertoire that evening: Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9!* We look forward to continuing a long and proud history of performing Beethoven's Ninth with the Mendelssohn Club. Ticket information will be available next spring.

Also on tap for 2013 – 2014: a third collaboration with Network for New Music, featuring composer John Harbison and his string quartet, *Thanks Victor*. John Harbison, one of the best-known of contemporary American composers, will present a public master class on April 5, 2014 with the Philadelphia Sinfonia String Quartet in a performance of this piece. *Thanks Victor* is a medley of Victor Young
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Philadelphia Sinfonia Players Ends Spectacular First Season

The words have been used before: **stunning, outstanding, impressive...!** However frequently these words were written or spoken about PSP this year, they were never overused. The orchestra deserved every superlative adjective in the book.

The first season of PSP, our intermediate
Continued on page 3.



PSP 2012 - 2013.

FALL AUDITIONS 2013 – 2014 TO FOLLOW RECORD SPRING AUDITIONS

To fill the remaining seats in both of our full orchestras, all musicians are invited to audition in September 2013.

Students who audition successfully and are offered seats in the fall will be joining a very strong set of musicians in *each* of our orchestras. Spring auditions brought us record-breaking long audition days, ensuring that the extraordinary levels of our advanced orchestra, Philadelphia Sinfonia (PS, for ages 13 through college), and of our intermediate orchestra, the Philadelphia Sinfonia Players (PSP, for ages 11 - 18), will continue to be very high. We extend a warm welcome and 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 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 29, 2013 at: 215-351-0363 or email jhummel@philadelphiasinfonia.com. The audition dates in the fall are:

Saturday, August 31, 2013

noon – 5:30 PM

Saturday, September 7, 2013

noon – 5:30 PM

Sunday, September 8, 2013

1:30 – 5:30 PM

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

From the Podium

Quotations from the Critics and Masters

Every week of the Sinfonia rehearsal season, on Monday or Tuesday, Maestro Gary White sends an email to each of our orchestras outlining the rehearsal plan for the following Saturday, with practice tips, general announcements and important schedule information. Often included in these emails is a "Quote of the Week" from or about a composer whose work is being rehearsed or something equally relevant. These quotations are sometimes funny, often poignant and frequently inspiring, all serving to make the "notes on a page" more meaningful and immediate to student musicians.

Drawn from his 2012 – 2013 weekly emails, some sample quotations are listed below, with occasional editorial notes from Mr. White (GW). — Ed.

9/20/12, for PSP rehearsing Mozart's *Symphony No. 9*: "Mozart is Sunshine." – Antonin Dvorak

9/24/12, for PSP rehearsing Bizet's *L'Arlesienne Suite*: "I am not made for [writing] the Symphony; I need theater, I can do nothing without it." – Georges Bizet (GW: remember his *L'Arlesienne* was written as incidental music for a theater piece.)

9/24/12: for PS rehearsing Smetana's *Moldau*: "With me, the form of each composition is the outcome of the subject." – Bedrich Smetana

10/9/12: for PS: "The important thing is that one should let the orchestra breathe." – Otto Klemperer, conductor

10/9/12: for PSP: "Whoever plays an instrument must be conversant with singing." – Georg Philipp Telemann

10/16/13, for PS: "Do not take up music unless you would rather die than not do so." – Nadia Boulanger (GW: a rather dramatic response from Nadia Boulanger, musician, composer, a great teacher to many, including Aaron Copland, about pursuing a career in music. The point is you must want it more than anything, for it isn't always the easiest career option – though it can be one of the most rewarding.)

11/28/12, for PSP: "A musician cannot move others unless he himself is moved." – CPE Bach

12/17/12, for PS: "Music means love and understanding." – Marian Anderson (GW: Anderson was a great favorite of Toscanini and, in 1955, broke the color barrier by becoming the first African-American to perform at the Metropolitan Opera. She remains a legendary figure in the history of opera, remembered among other highlights, for her Lincoln Memorial concert and her performances at the inaugurations of both Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy.)

1/10/13, for PSP: "If I don't practice for one day, I know it; if I don't practice for two days, the critics know it; if I don't practice for three days, the audience



Gary D. White, Music Director & Conductor

knows it!" – Ignacy Jan Paderewski, pianist and composer

9/18/12, for PS: "I shall hear in heaven." – Ludwig van Beethoven

These words "I shall hear in heaven," are presumed to be Beethoven's last. He was losing his hearing near the end of his life when he wrote his immortal Symphony No. 9, a highlight of our next season....

And so, in a quotation cited in September 2012, we cycle from last season to the next. In the meantime, have a good summer!

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Repertoire for 2013 – 2014:

Philadelphia Sinfonia and Philadelphia Sinfonia Players

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

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA:

César Franck: *Symphony in d minor*

Maurice Ravel: *Ma Mère l'Oye (Mother Goose)*

Ludwig van Beethoven: *Symphony No. 9 in d minor, Op. 125, "Choral"*

Giuseppe Verdi: *La Forza del Destino Overture*

Jacques Offenbach: *Orpheus in the Underworld Overture*

Romeo Cascarino: *Meditation and Elegy*

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA PLAYERS:

F. J. Haydn: *Symphony No. 85 in B-flat Major, "La Reine"*

Alexander Borodin: *Polovetsian Dances*

Jean Sebelius: *Fruhlingslied, Op. 16 (Spring Song)*

W. A. Mozart: *Lucio Silla Overture, K. 135*

Alexander Borodin: *In the Steppes of Central Asia*

Johann Strauss, Jr.: *On the Beautiful Blue Danube, Op. 314*

Philadelphia Sinfonia Players Ends Spectacular First Season

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orchestra, ended as it began, with a group that demonstrated astounding musicality and intelligent, talented performances. In its final concert that emotionally spanned the distance between the energy of Bizet's "Les Toreadors" from *Carmen Suite No. 1* and the sonorous depths of Schubert's *Symphony No. 8 "Unfinished,"* it was hard to believe that this orchestra accepts

students as young as 11. The sound was mature, the orchestra was "with" the conductor every minute, and each piece was technically tight.

About one-sixth of the first-year PSP students have now auditioned successfully into Philadelphia Sinfonia, our advanced full orchestra. However, a very strong core of musicians is returning to PSP, and

a number of talented new members are joining them. A handful of spaces do yet remain in PSP, so interested musicians should not hesitate to audition in September. The level of this group will be excellent. We can't wait for another season of superlative performances... and superlative adjectives. How's this one for the remarkable first season: *Bravissimo!*



PSP 2012 - 2013.

2012 – 2013 Recaptured

Featuring composer Kile Smith's commissioned work *The Red Book of Montserrat* and Rimsky-Korsakov's monumental *Scheherazade*, we closed our 2012 – 2013 season with a fabulous Philadelphia Sinfonia concert at the Kimmel Center on May 16, 2013.

2012 - 2013 was a season of adventures and many "first's": first year of PSP, first embrace of electronics in our repertoire; first viola da gamba performance; first Kile Smith commission; first performance with Philadelphia Orchestra Horn player, Jeffrey Lang; first side-by-side rehearsal between PS and PSP; first father/son joint performances (there were two of them!); first student enrolled whose teacher used to be a Sinfonia student; first coffee hour for parents during rehearsal. Each was an adventure, all astonishingly successful.

The most recent of these events are recaptured – visually – here. Expand the recollections with our season CD's and YouTube videos. Check out YouTube videos at: www.youtube.com/philadelphiasinfonia.

Jeffrey Lang solos with PS at Trenton War Memorial



Jeffrey Lang, Associate Principal Horn of The Philadelphia Orchestra performed Mozart's *Horn Concerto No. 3 in E-flat Major* with Philadelphia Sinfonia at the Trenton War Memorial on April 14, 2013. Please visit the Philadelphia Sinfonia YouTube videos page at www.youtube.com/philadelphiasinfonia to listen to this beautiful performance.

Master Class with Network for New Music



Composer Van Stiefel, Gary White and the Philadelphia Sinfonia String Quartet presented Stiefel's *Hourglass* for string quartet and computer-generated soundtrack in a public master class on April 6, 2013. Van Stiefel speaks to the audience and quartet (above) in this fascinating event, a collaboration with Philadelphia's new music ensemble, Network for New Music.



The Philadelphia Sinfonia String Quartet performing Van Stiefel's *Hourglass*: Greg Gennaro and Stephanie Bonk, violins; Randy Tallini, viola; Max Song, cello; Gary White, computer soundtrack and conductor.

PSCO at Keneseth Israel



In it's second solo concert of the season, in April, the Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra performed for The National Council of Jewish Women against the stunning backdrop of the Keneseth Israel Synagogue in Elkins Park. Conductor Gary White embellished the excellent performance with a lively Q & A between the audience and members of the chamber orchestra. The musicians were articulate and compelling talking about their lives, their music, their artistic commitment, and the audience loved it!

Soiree 2013: A Splendid Afternoon of Music to Benefit Philadelphia Sinfonia, March 17, 2013.



Mia Venezia, left, and Olivia Castor, right, performed a stunning three-movement harp duet, *Cambria*, by John Thomas



Warming up for Beethoven and Janáček string quartets: Greg Gennaro and Stephanie Bonk, violins; Randy Tallini, viola; Max Song, cello.



Dylan James, clarinet, in Mozart's *Concerto for Clarinet in A Major*.



Elena Smith, cello and viola da gamba, was on the gamba on this occasion with a piece from Carl Friedrich Abel's *27 Pieces for Bass Viol*.

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tunes originally arranged by Harbison for the Lydian String Quartet.

Philadelphia Sinfonia ventures into new territory in yet another amazing collaboration next spring. Titled "Myths and Fairytales," a Philadelphia Sinfonia performance with Enchantment Theatre Company will bring concertgoers an interactive, theatrical rendition of Maurice Ravel's *Ma Mère l'Oye (Mother Goose)* – the complete ballet. Presented in the spectacular Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral, this event is scheduled on Thursday evening, April 10, 2014.

For PSP (the Philadelphia Sinfonia Players), next season will feature first a home-based concert in St. Stephen's Church in February, and then the group will venture out for performances with new audiences in Germantown and the Kimmel Center's Verizon Hall in the spring.

PSP and PSP are scheduled for a second annual side-by-side rehearsal in February 2014, and the string sections from both orchestras will be offered a Bowing Master Class with cellist Deborah Reeder this fall. Deborah Reeder is a founding member of the critically acclaimed Philadelphia Trio.

The Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra, a small jewel in the collection of Sinfonia ensembles, has thrived over the past year with the new addition of a small handful of carefully selected string players from PSP, who joined their more experienced colleagues from PS at the conductor's invitation. Next year's chamber orchestra will reflect the successful composition of this year's experiment. Chamber orchestra members are a serious bunch, opting for extra hours of rehearsal, more performances, finely focused study of a broader range of repertoire... Maestro White appreciates the intensity of this group of musicians and looks forward to rehearsing with them for the traditional performance of *Messiah* in December and two other chamber orchestra concerts in the spring.

Additional concerts, sectionals, our internal concerto competition and spring benefit recital fill a busy calendar for next season. The highlights are truly

exciting, but perspective is warranted: the context for everything we do and perform in the Philadelphia Sinfonia Association program is directed toward the *educational* experience of young musicians and the process of preparing them to work and perform intelligently and collaboratively. Empowering our students to contribute in this way to their own musical development, to the artistic product of a group endeavor and to the vast human enterprise is a responsibility but also a joy. We begin this annual process again in mid-September and will continue through the final exhilarating words and notes of Beethoven's Ninth on June 8, 2014. There is no more fitting finale!



Philadelphia Sinfonia brass 2012 - 2013.

Orchestras Feeding America: Outstanding Fifth Year for Sinfonia's Food Drive!

For the fifth consecutive year the orchestras of 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 1,196 lbs. of food to Philabundance, our regional food bank partner in April 2013. It was a terrific contribution; we send a huge thank you to Methacton, and congratulate everyone who participated!

Over the last five years, Philadelphia Sinfonia and the Methacton School District have together contributed a total of 6,911 lbs. – over 3 tons — of food to Philabundance. This is a substantial outpouring of support, for which Philabundance is very grateful.

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 ten Sinfonia musicians who were a

dedicated 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, it is all in good fun, and in the end, the collaboration between the students to mitigate hunger in our region is the goal *and* the visible means of achieving it. How proud we are of the 2013 Food Drive Committee... both of their dramatic success and the leadership skills they demonstrated.

Alumna Profile:

Violin to Voice: Kristin Young

Over the years, you've read profiles of Sinfonia alumni who are performing in orchestras, teaching instrumental music, practicing music therapy, and the like. But the Sinfonia experience doesn't just lead its members to careers in instrumental performance. Please consider the story of Kristin Young, a Sinfonia alum who has moved on to a different kind of career ... in *vocal* performance!

Kristin took up the violin at age 5, and studied piano as well. Although she came to Sinfonia as a violinist, Kristin chose to compete in Sinfonia's annual concerto competition in voice – and won! She sang Musetta's aria, "Quando m'en vo'", from *La boheme* and the Countess's aria, "Porgi Amor," from *The Marriage of Figaro* for the competition performance. Kristin was well on her way to a career in vocal performance.

After high school, Kristin majored in music at Barnard and took a broad variety of music courses. In addition, she took advantage of performance opportunities at Mannes College of Music's Opera Extension Program. Kristin studied with one of her Barnard voice teachers, Harolyn Blackwell, for three years following college as well.

Following college, Kristin worked with Schmidt Artists International, Inc., an artist management agency, and then graduated from Boston University's College of Fine Arts as a Master of Music in Vocal Performance. As a member of the studio of Sharon Daniels, who was also the head of the Opera Institute, Kristin had the opportunity to perform in several productions in Boston, and across the country as well.

Upon reflection, Kristin's transition from instrumentalist to vocal performer grew naturally from her involvement with Sinfonia. One of the most important



Kristin Young

Photo: Jonathan Hartt

aspects of her training has been teamwork: "Playing in Sinfonia allowed me the privilege of performing difficult instrumental music, which has some requirements in return: I was dedicated to practicing my music thoroughly enough so that I would positively contribute to my section's success, but also expected the same of the other musicians. I think the same applies to opera - we're all there for the purpose of creating music together and making the composer's dream manifest, which means having respect for each other as musicians and listening to each other in order to reach a high level of artistry."

Kristin's advice to students interested in a career in music – whether instrumental or vocal – is the same. "It's important to explore other disciplines in order to have a deeper understanding of the context in which music was composed." She also recommends taking time to work in the "real world" before pursuing graduate studies. Doing so made Kristin feel "more driven and dedicated to my pursuits in music after being away from the academic world for a few years."

Later this summer, those in the Boston area may have the chance to hear Kristin sing the part of Despina from *Così fan tutte* with Opera del West. She will also

audition for various Young Artist and Apprentice programs throughout the country to gain more experience on stage and further develop her singing.

And who knows? Perhaps Kristin will find herself performing a concert work someday with *her favorite youth orchestra....!*

Please feel free to contact Kristin at kristin.young6@gmail.com.

Diane Penneys Edelman

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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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Next Season: Beethoven's Ninth!