

SONATA

Sinfonia Orchestra News
Fall 2013

PHILADELPHIA
SINFONIA
Educating Musicians. Creating Artists.

Peace Day Philly

Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra: Stunning in *Concert for Peace*



Maestro Gary White leading the Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra and Keystone State Boychoir.

We can't imagine a more inspiring way to begin our season than by embracing an idea beyond ourselves. Thus, on only two rehearsals, the Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra performed a concert with global impact in collaboration with the Keystone State Boychoir on Sunday afternoon, September 22, 2013.

In 1981 the United Nations established an International Day of Peace to coincide each year with its September opening session. Since 1982, this day has been observed in dozens of countries and hundreds of cities around the world on September 21.

Lisa Parker, co-founder and coordinator of Peace Day Philly, the regional initiative that organizes events in conjunction with the UN International Day of Peace, says

"Music has the universal power to bring people together, even when language and words divide us."

We concur, and this is how we found ourselves invited this year to participate in a *Concert for Peace*, knowing that diverse concerts and music gatherings were taking place simultaneously around the world with the same intention and focus.

Long a part of our mission, "to educate young people broadly to be strong citizens and leaders as well as responsible musicians," the use of music to build intercultural bridges and highlight our common humanity is a theme we actively promote. Over the years our students have participated whole-heartedly in benefit concerts for international and

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HIGHLIGHTS

Maestro White's 15th Season:

*Ten Highlights for Musicians
and Conductor*

Over the 15 years of Maestro White's tenure, many seasons stand out for one, two, three or four highlights, but this year's collection tops the list for sheer number of commanding events and number of artists involved: high-profile collaborations, multi-genre performances, master class offerings, internal concerto competition and frequent sectionals.

Whether in PS or PSP, every Sinfonia Association musician will have multiple opportunities this year to expand knowledge and technique, work with professional musicians and explore contemporary classical music with a big-name composer, share in a huge side-by-side rehearsal, and perform on the stage of Verizon Hall.

By the time this issue of Sonata goes to press, the Chamber Orchestra (PSCO) will have held its first concert (see p. 1); twenty musicians from PS will have competed in our bi-annual concerto competition (see p. 2 for an announcement of the winner); our string players will have participated in a bowing master-class led by cellist Deborah Reeder (open to all strings in PS and PSP); sectionals will be a common experience of PSP rehearsals, and we will be in the midst of fall sectionals in PS, providing intensive professional coaching for Beethoven's

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From the Podium

As I begin my 15th year with Philadelphia Sinfonia, it is astounding for me to look back on all that has been accomplished – both by our organization and by our incredible students. (I probably wrote something similar when it was my 10th anniversary. But it seems even more apparent to me now as my time with Sinfonia seems to be flying by.)

Fifteen short years ago the board and I had big plans for where Sinfonia was headed and it is most rewarding to see how many of those dreams have become dazzling realities. One of the biggest dreams has become our most recent accomplishment: the creation of our newest orchestra, Philadelphia Sinfonia Players (PSP). I had long felt the need for another group, and through the careful planning and hard work of our board and administration, PSP is entering its second year filled with talented musicians and a very balanced instrumentation. The experience its returning players gained from last year allowed the orchestra to “hit the pavement running” in September, and its newest members are holding their own very nicely. I look forward to continued growth and many great concerts with this exciting new ensemble!

Fifteen years ago the Philadelphia Sinfonia Chamber Orchestra (PSCO) was a small

but extremely dedicated ensemble of string players. This year, as in the past, the group continues to be extraordinarily dedicated and the level is quite high. A number of years ago I began to accept students who weren't quite ready for the advanced full orchestra into this chamber orchestra setting, with the hopes that they would be mentored by the more advanced students and eventually audition into Philadelphia Sinfonia. That system often worked, and although we no longer accept those “chamber associates,” we continue that tradition today by merging our PS players with up-and-coming talent from PSP. The new mentoring system is going strong, and all of the PSCO players benefit from this unique opportunity.

Of course, everything all began with our current advanced orchestra, Philadelphia Sinfonia. It has been a great joy to watch how this orchestra has grown musically, expanded its repertoire and developed musicians who have become true leaders both here and in their communities. The fifteen years' worth of memories collected from just this one ensemble makes me very happy, but to now have the privilege of working with all three orchestras feels indeed like “hitting the jackpot.”

There are so many season highlights this year that I don't have room to list them



Gary D. White, Music Director & Conductor

all. But when we come to this year's last concert, in which we present PSP and feature PS performing Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9 in d minor* with the Mendelssohn Club in Verizon Hall, I know I'll be thinking back on just what a truly amazing journey it's been — and there are still so many exciting years ahead!

Gary D. White
Music Director and Conductor

Sinfonia's Concerto Competition Winner

Twenty Philadelphia Sinfonia musicians competed on October 19, 2013 to perform as a soloist with our orchestra this year. While extremely impressed by the overall quality of the record-breaking number of contestants, the judges selected Benjamin She as the winning soloist. Ben sits in the first violin section of Philadelphia Sinfonia and is in his fourth year as a member of the orchestra. He will perform the first movement (Andante) of Henri Vieuxtemps' *Violin Concerto No. 4, Op. 31* on one of our first two PS concerts. Stay tuned....

Gammuto Violin

This year's Philadelphia Sinfonia recipient of the annual John Gammuto violin loan is Cordelia Ilton.

Seven years ago, John Gammuto, a violin maker and former Sinfonia parent, donated a superior violin from his collection to us. Each year we loan this violin to a student in the orchestra. Selected during seating auditions, the recipient is someone whom the seating judges determine will grow significantly with the use of this instrument. We are pleased to award it to Cordelia for the 2013-2014 season.

ORCHESTRA NEWS

Fall 2013 | Vol.10, No. 3

Published by: Philadelphia Sinfonia

Edited by: Carol Brown

Photos by: Tom Gralish and
Steven Goldblatt

Design by: Hanna Manninen

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Sinfonia Soiree

Save the date: Sunday, March 9, 2014

Plan to come to our fifth annual fund-raising house concert featuring Sinfonia soloists and a magnificent reception on Sunday, March 9, 2014, 3:00 PM. This year's recital will be held on the Pennsylvania side of the river in a spectacular home in Northwest Philadelphia. Invitations will be mailed in January.

To request an invitation, please email info@philadelphiasinfonia.com

Peace Day Philly

Continued from page 1.

intercultural initiatives and partnered in side-by-side rehearsals and performances with young musicians from totally different cultures and backgrounds — both here in Philadelphia and abroad. We were pleased and proud to continue this theme in September in partnership with the Keystone State Boychoir and Peace Day Philly.

The Chamber Orchestra and Maestro Gary White opened the *Concert for Peace* with an exquisite rendering of Gustav Holst's *St. Paul Suite for String Orchestra*, followed by Mozart's *Ave*

Verum Corpus performed together with the KSB. Together again, both groups closed the concert with a grand finale that had the audience on its feet. The Boychoir, known for international tours (to all seven continents!), a Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony performance, and led by Music Director Joseph Fitzmartin and Associate Music Director Steven Fisher, energetically held the stage through the center portion of the concert. They "rocked" the crowd (standing room only!) — and so did we!

Lisa Parker of Peace Day Philly intends to extend and expand the reach of Philadelphia Sinfonia and the *Concert for Peace* by promoting on-going interaction between our students and other music students around the world. The first such initiative is on the horizon with a youth orchestra in Hong Kong eager to make our acquaintance. We are ready. The world is large, and opportunities abound....



End of concert: Music critic Tom DiNardo, center, is applauded for his assistance in bringing both youth groups to the Peace Day Philly Concert. To the left of him is Lisa Parker, his daughter and Peace Day Philly Coordinator. To the right is Gary White, Music Director, Philadelphia Sinfonia.

Repertoire for 2013 - 2014

(A partial listing for all three orchestras; repertoire subject to change)

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA

Symphony in d minor
by César Franck (1822 – 1890)

Ma Mère L'Oye (Mother Goose)
by Maurice Ravel (1875 – 1937)

Symphony No. 9 in d minor Op. 125, "Choral"
by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

La Forza del Destino Overture
by Giuseppe Verdi (1813 – 1901)

Orpheus in the Underworld Overture
by Jacques Offenbach (1819 – 1880)

Meditation and Elegy
by Romeo Cascarino (1922 – 2002)

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA PLAYERS

Symphony No. 85 in B-flat Major, "La Reine"
by F.J. Haydn (1732 – 1809)

Polovetsian Dances
by Alexander Borodin (1833 – 1887)

Fruhlingslied, Op. 16 (Spring Song)
by Jean Sebelius (1865 – 1957)

Lucio Silla Overture, K. 135
by W.A. Mozart (1756 – 1791)

In the Steppes of Central Asia
by Alexander Borodin (1833 – 1887)

On the Beautiful Blue Danube, Op. 314
by Johann Strauss, Jr. (1825 – 1899)

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Sinfonia in A Major
by Giuseppe Tartini (1692 – 1770)

Divertimento in F Major, K. 138
by W.A. Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Serenade in E Major, Op. 22
by Antonin Dvořák (1841 – 1904)

Sarabande
by Camille St. Saëns (1835 – 1921)

Tango Suite
by Astor Piazzolla (1921 – 1992)

Sinfonia No. XII
by Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

Maestro White's 15th Season

Continued from page 1.

Symphony No. 9 and César Franck's *Symphony in d minor* to each section of the advanced orchestra.

Beyond rehearsals, challenging repertoire and a total of twelve concert dates on our calendar, this year's collection of ten unique, unusual or special artistic events includes: 4 performance collaborations (Keystone State Boychoir; Network for New Music; Enchantment Theater; Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia); 2 master classes (Deborah Reeder's bow arm workshop, "Tune Up Your Bow," and composer John Harbison coaching Sinfonia students in his historic gem *Thanks, Victor*); one huge side-by-side rehearsal incorporating all 160 PS and PSP musicians; a concerto competition with a record-breaking number of contestants; a spring fundraising recital in a fairytale setting and — in a grand finale with three hundred musicians participating — our first concert performance in the Kimmel Center's Verizon Hall.

Not to be outdone by artistic opportunities highlighting this year, in another highlight, the board and administration will complete its most recent strategic or long range planning process in the winter of 2014 — charting a path for the next five years and taking us to Maestro Gary White's 20th year of musical leadership of the Philadelphia Sinfonia Association.

I want to thank the many parents who responded to a survey last spring to provide program feedback for our strategic planning process and to thank the multitude of generous and dedicated Sinfonia musicians who have graced our trajectory over the last fifteen-plus years. In this year of highlights, we are excited about the present, eager for the future and grateful for the past... It has been an extraordinary and rewarding adventure!

Carol Brown
President, Board of Directors



Members of the PS bass section in concert.

Kudos from *The Times of Trenton*

The following is a letter to the editor of the Trenton, N.J. newspaper following our concert on April 14, 2013:

SINFONIA PERFECTION

What a boost for concertgoers in Trenton!

The April 14 performance at the Patriot Theater featuring the Philadelphia Sinfonia was one of the finest performances I have ever attended.

The level of talent was outstanding. Even though the group was composed of young people from the ages of 11 to 22, they played every piece with the kind of perfection that one would expect from seasoned professionals.

Kudos to music director and conductor Gary White and the Philadelphia Sinfonia for their great work in developing exceptional musicians and for sharing their talents with the Trenton area.

*Edward Stout
Ewing, NJ*

Rich Reward in Strings Master Class

The first master class of our 2013-14 season featured guest string clinician Deborah Reeder presenting her informative workshop titled "Tune Up Your Bow." String members from Philadelphia Sinfonia Players and Philadelphia Sinfonia came together to take advantage of this important and beneficial opportunity to work on their "right arm" technique. As Ms. Reeder explained, traditionally string players spend more time focusing on the left hand – which is responsible for producing the correct notes and proper intonation. Often the right or "bow" arm can be inadvertently neglected, yet it is the bow arm that is responsible for the crucial tone color, dynamics and articulations the player produces.

Our students worked diligently for an hour with Reeder as she took them through several different innovative exercises

with their instruments that emphasized the subtle control necessary to play the advanced repertoire our musicians are expected to perform. At its conclusion, the importance of this workshop was immediately apparent, for the musicians of PS began rehearsing Verdi's *La Forza del Destino Overture*, and within the first few measures of the string entrance they were called upon to use the very techniques Reeder had just described!

Cellist Deborah Reeder, is a founding member of the Philadelphia Trio, a member of the Philadelphia Opera and Ballet orchestras and a former member of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ms. Reeder is an active teacher and has extensive experience working with young musicians both privately and through her popular summer program "Music in the Mountains."

Master Class: American Composer John Harbison

Philadelphia Sinfonia musicians, their families and the public have a treat in store this season: in collaboration with Network for New Music, Philadelphia Sinfonia will host a master class led by contemporary composer John Harbison at 2:00 PM on April 5, 2014.

Working with this year's Philadelphia Sinfonia String Quartet in a master class setting, Mr. Harbison and the string quartet will present his piece, *Thanks, Victor*, a 1994 playful tribute to Victor Young, composer, arranger, violinist and conductor.

Mr. Harbison was born in 1938, won a BMI Student Composer award at age 16, the Pulitzer Prize for *The Flight into Egypt* in 1987, and received a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship in 1989. His opera, *The Great Gatsby*, was commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera to celebrate James Levine's 25th anniversary with the company and first performed at the Met in 1999.

Mr. Harbison studied at Harvard University, the Berlin Musikhochschule and at Princeton. He is currently an Institute Professor of Music at MIT. Known for his symphonies, operas, and large choral works, his music is considered primarily classical, although he also works at the edge between classical and popular music. *Thanks, Victor* is a lighter work and will be extremely fun for all to explore.

This year's Philadelphia Sinfonia String Quartet is composed of violinists Stephanie Bonk and Benjamin She, violist Jamie Ye and cellist Max Song. They will also perform *Thanks, Victor* on a Network for New Music concert Sunday, April 6, 2014.

2013-14 Concert Season

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA

Sunday, January 19, 2014, 3:00 PM
First Presbyterian Church in
Germantown
 35 West Cheltenham Avenue
 Philadelphia, PA 19144

Sunday, February 23, 2014, 4:00 PM
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
 19 South Tenth Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19107

Thursday, April 10, 2014, 7:30 PM
Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral
 3723 Chestnut Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19104

Sunday, June 8, 2014, 4:00 PM
Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center
for the Performing Arts
 Broad and Spruce Streets
 Philadelphia, PA 19102

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA PLAYERS

Sunday, February 16, 2014, 4:00 PM
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
 19 South Tenth Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19107

Sunday, May 18, 2014, 3:00 PM
First Presbyterian Church in
Germantown
 35 West Cheltenham Avenue
 Philadelphia, PA 19144

Sunday, June 8, 2014, 4:00 PM
Verizon Hall at The Kimmel Center
for the Performing Arts
 Broad and Spruce Streets
 Philadelphia, PA 19102

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Sunday, December 8, 2013, 3:00 PM
***The Messiah* with The Germantown**
Oratorio Choir
First Presbyterian Church in
Germantown
 35 West Cheltenham Avenue
 Philadelphia, PA 19144

Sunday, March 16, 2014, 2:00 PM
Foulkeways at Gwynedd
 1120 Meetinghouse Road
 Gwynedd, PA 19436

Thursday, April 24, 2014, 7:45 PM
Keneseth Israel
 8339 Old York Road
 Elkins Park, PA 19027

Alumni “Reception with the Conductor”

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 2014

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 Reception with the Conductor, which will be held on Saturday, January 4, 2014 at St. Stephen's Church. You are welcome to attend rehearsals in the afternoon and stay for the reception. Please note that this year's gathering starts at 5:30 PM at the end of rehearsal. Refreshments served!

An invitation to the reception will be posted on our Facebook Alumni page. Questions can be directed to board member, Naomi Atkins, at: nrsa@comcast.net or to our executive director, Jon Hummel, at jhummel@philadelphiasinfonia.com.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP on our new Facebook page: log into Facebook, search for “Philadelphia Sinfonia Youth Orchestra Alumni” and request to join. Please note: the old Facebook alumni group is no longer in use.



Members of the PS brass sections in concert.

Alumnus Profile: Adam Greenstein — *Musician and Engineer*



Adam Greenstein

What got Adam Greenstein started playing the trumpet, which would one day lead him to Philadelphia Sinfonia? Its funny sound!

When Adam was in third grade, students at his school were given the opportunity to try out any musical instrument. When Adam tried the trumpet, he “couldn’t stop laughing after first buzzing into the mouthpiece because ... it sounded like a duck.” Adam was “sold” on the trumpet then, and now, 20 years later, he still is.

Adam joined Sinfonia during his sophomore year of high school, and clearly remembers his first Sinfonia performance at Independence Mall, when the Liberty Medal was awarded to then U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell. After that auspicious start, he went on to enjoy the next two-plus years with Sinfonia, including a tour to Vienna, Budapest, and Prague. During college, he returned as a guest musician to tour Krakow, Prague, and Teplice. But it was the first tour, when Adam played a brass chorale segment of the West Side Story medley in a church in Vienna, that stayed with him; he reports that “the final chord seemed to ring on forever.”

And playing music has stayed on “forever” with Adam. As an engineering undergrad at Washington University and as a graduate student at Penn State, music stayed with him — and he stayed with it. In college, he did it all — brass ensemble, jazz band, concert band, pep band, and Mariachi band for all four years — not to

mention the St. Louis Wind Symphony, which he played in for part of college as well. He took private lessons and minored in music, an interesting complement to his science training. In graduate school, Adam played in the State College Area Municipal Band, finding that music provided him with a “good balance” to his rigorous engineering studies. Music helped him “relax and de-stress” then and it still does. Being a part of Sinfonia exposed Adam not only to new styles of musical performance, it developed in him a strong desire to give music back to the communities that he would eventually live in — in college, grad school and beyond.

Adam’s advice to students considering serious music study is not surprising: “[T]ake advantage of every learning and performing opportunity [you] can before college, as every little bit will open [your] eyes... .Playing music has been an integral part of my life and shaped my college experience.” Although Adam did not choose to become a professional musician, music continues to be a significant part of his life. He adds — with a touch of humor: “My long-term goal is just to play until I die...and afterwards, if possible. I love playing with the community concert band and brass quintet where I am now, and I hope to continue performing with them as long as I am in the area. If I move, I will be actively searching for new groups to join. ... I want to spend the long-term giving music back to the community at no cost because it is something that people should be able to enjoy for free, considering so many other things in life come with a cost.”

We wish Adam well in his musical — and scientific — endeavors.

Please feel free to contact Adam at alg0821@gmail.com.

Diane Edelman

Trivia Quiz

Name two composers who are said to have greatly influenced the Belgian composer César Franck. Though inspired by them, how does Franck’s *Symphony in d minor* differ from their compositions?

This is a question with a three-part answer. The first musician to email Carol Brown

(info@philadelphiasinfonia.com) with the correct answers will win a small prize.



Members of the PS bassoon section in concert.

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.



Maestro White's 15th Year: Season Highlights!