

SONATA

Sinfonia Orchestra News
Fall 2016

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

A Legacy of Excellence: Celebrating at 20 Years!



The Sinfonia program has expanded a lot over the years, illustrated by the side-by-side rehearsal of our two full orchestras, PS and PSP, May 2016.

Twenty years ago the U.S. was a pretty different place. Bill Clinton was president; Spice Girls and Boyz II Men had number one hits; Steve Jobs returned to run Apple; and *Titanic* the movie won 11 Oscars.

When we perform our fabulous final Festival concert in Verizon Hall next May, it will have been twenty years almost *to the day* since Philadelphia Sinfonia was incorporated in the state of Pennsylvania.

For most of our current musicians that date is pre-history. They simply had not yet been born! But for those of us who have been developing, shaping, and growing Philadelphia Sinfonia practically since its inception, it is not so long ago.

Yet over those twenty years we have made incredible strides. Philadelphia Sinfonia is now double the program it was just five years ago, one of the top youth music offerings in the region, and a collaboration destination for stellar professional groups and soloists with an educational mission. Our students and concerts have a reputation for extraordinary musicality and for their ability to speak to and truly move an audience. For all this — our “legacy of excellence” at twenty years — we are proud and grateful and eager to celebrate.

From the first PS concert in January, featuring Philadelphia Orchestra Concertmaster, David Kim, in Bruch’s *Violin Concerto No. 1*, to our final concert’s finale — an extravagant performance of Tchaikovsky’s *1812 Overture*, complete
Continued on page 3.

David Kim to Solo with PS in Bruch’s Violin Concerto

David Kim, Concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra, will perform Max Bruch’s *Violin Concerto No. 1* with Philadelphia Sinfonia at the Temple Performing Arts Center in January. Bruch’s concerto is one of the most popular violin concertos in the repertoire, has been performed and recorded by many violinists, and is the composer’s most famous work.

David Kim was named Concertmaster of The Philadelphia Orchestra in 1999. Born in Carbondale, Illinois, in 1963, he started playing the violin at the age of three, began studies with the famed pedagogue Dorothy DeLay at the age

of eight, and later received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from The Juilliard School.

He appears as soloist with The Philadelphia Orchestra each season as well as with numerous orchestras around the world. He also appears internationally at festivals such as Brevard, MasterWorks (USA) and Pacific (Japan). Mr. Kim has been awarded Honorary Doctorates from Eastern University in suburban Philadelphia, the University of Rhode Island, and Dickinson College.

It is quite an honor for all our students to experience rehearsals and the performance
Continued on page 5.



David Kim; photo credit: Ryan Donnell

From the Podium

While reflecting back over our first 20 years for this column, I wondered how consistently the words I have written in the past would compare to our current statements and ideals about musical excellence and the collegial community that fosters it. The comparison seemed especially intriguing, given our tremendous growth over the past two decades. So I reviewed some of my past newsletter columns and was surprised to find how consistent we *have* been about our programmatic goals – even while planning program growth and development – as the following excerpts from our 10th and 15th anniversary newsletters demonstrate:

“I believe first and foremost that we are successful because of the tremendous group effort that goes into making the orchestra. The enthusiasm and tireless energy of our talented musicians, their generous parents and our hard-working Board have made us what we are and developed our truly unique sense of ‘community’.

“We also work diligently to cultivate leadership opportunities for the musicians. I am always pleased to see our members support and respect each other in truly remarkable ways.

“We strive to develop self-sufficient, independent, and thinking musicians.

We supplement the growth of our members through rehearsal discussions of the relevant music history and theory required to play our repertoire. The players gain valuable insight into the music, which helps them mature into stronger individual musicians able to play at a very high level. I believe treating the orchestra as a professional ensemble nurtures such growth.”

(“From the Podium” – Sonata; Spring, 2006 – 10 years ago)

“We talk often about our ‘collaborative and informed rehearsal process’, something that is unique and special about the interaction here at Sinfonia. We bring that process not only to exciting and productive rehearsals, but also to the partnerships we pursue and form. I can think of nothing that gives me greater joy than watching our students take on mentorship roles when they welcome our newest members or when they work side-by-side [with one of our collaborative partners, such as] Play On, Philly!”

(“From the Podium” – Sonata; Fall, 2011 – 5 years ago)

It was great fun to re-read the old columns, compare them with the present, and see how we have kept to our mission even as



Gary D. White, Music Director & Conductor

we have expanded. Looking ahead, here's to the next twenty years, when we will need to stay flexible enough to provide our students with the best and most current orchestral training while staying true to our core goals of musical excellence, the development of our students' leadership skills and a strong sense of community.

Gary D. White
Music Director & Conductor

ORCHESTRA NEWS

Fall 2016 | Vol.14, No. 5

Published by: Philadelphia Sinfonia

Edited by: Carol Brown

Photos by: Steven Goldblatt, Ryan Donnell, Tom Gralish and Jessica Griffin

Design by: Hanna Manninen

©Copyright Philadelphia Sinfonia Association 2016

Philadelphia Sinfonia's orchestral training program is based upon the belief that a breadth of musical knowledge empowers young musicians and is essential for musical excellence. Through the study of musical history, theory and performance practice, students learn to make their own musical decisions so they can contribute fully within a collaborative rehearsal environment. The result is an intellectually engaging community that values and strives for high performance standards, fosters respectful interactions, personal responsibility and leadership skills, and contributes to a life-long appreciation for music, the artistic process, and to a deeper understanding of the human experience.

~ Philadelphia Sinfonia's Condensed Program Description 2016

A Legacy of Excellence: Celebrating at 20 Years!

Continued from page 1.

with cannons and a 200 voice choir, Philadelphia Sinfonia's 2016 – 2017 anniversary concert season is a vast celebration of the musical excellence, program quality, collaborative spirit, and artistic benchmarks we have sought and achieved over our first 20 years.

Between these two concerts that bookend the season — the first at the Temple Performing Arts Center and the last, titled “Wolfgang, George and Friends”, that features *all* our musicians in the Kimmel Center's Verizon Hall — we have also planned multiple other special events. Among them: a side-by-side rehearsal for PS with The Philadelphia Orchestra (February 25, 2017); a trumpet soloist performing a special 20th anniversary commission arrangement of selections from Rodgers and Hart with PSP in May; a master class on April 22 featuring our chamber orchestra in a coaching with

ECCO, a top-notch chamber orchestra of “super-musicians” brought to town by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

We hope many people will join us for the season's festivities. We *especially* welcome and encourage Philadelphia Sinfonia alumni from the last 20 years to come to the Kimmel Center for our final performance on May 14, 2017, when we let loose with Tchaikovsky and his spectacular *1812 Overture*. We would really love to see you there. The successes of our first 20 years are a result of some hard work of our own, but that would not have gone very far without the talent, the participation and commitment, and the loyalty of all of you who joined our program and worked with us throughout those 20 years. It's been one fabulous collaborative adventure from the beginning, and we thank each of you for your valuable part in it.

Philadelphia Sinfonia's *Hansel and Gretel* to Air on WRTI

Tune into WRTI on Saturday, December 31, from 11:00 AM to noon for the broadcast of Philadelphia Sinfonia's original concert version of Humperdinck's beloved opera *Hansel and Gretel*!

Performed at the Temple Performing Arts Center in May, 2015, Philadelphia Sinfonia was joined by soloists from the Academy of Vocal Arts, the Philadelphia Boys Choir and Chorale, the Philadelphia Girls Choir, and narrator, WRTI's Kile Smith, in a glorious and beautiful production.



Hansel and Gretel curtain call, 2015.

We are thrilled that this holiday season includes our production and recording of this not-to-be-missed holiday favorite. Thank you WRTI!

2016 – 2017 Concert Season

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA

Sunday, January 22, 2017, 3 PM

featuring soloist David Kim, violin
Temple Performing Arts Center
1837 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Sunday, February 26, 2017, 3 PM

First Presbyterian Church in
Germantown
35 West Cheltenham 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 SINFONIA PLAYERS

Sunday, February 19, 2017, 4 PM

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
19 S. Tenth Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Sunday, May 7, 2017, 3 PM

featuring soloist John Thyhsen, trumpet
First Presbyterian Church in
Germantown
35 West Cheltenham 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 SINFONIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Tuesday, March 7, 2017, 7:00 PM

Foulkeways at Gwynedd
1120 Meetinghouse Road
Gwynedd, PA 19436

Wednesday, May 3, 2017, 7:00 PM

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

Big Highlights of the Last Three Festival Concerts



Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Mendelssohn Club's chorus and AVA soloists, 2014



Hansel and Gretel dance and sing in concert opera, 2015



The Sorcerer's Apprentice with Enchantment Theatre Company, May, 2016.

Trivia Quiz

Classical composers were considered the “rock stars” of their day. Just like today, their fans were passionate about their favorite composers. And just like today, these devoted fans were often given a specific nickname (for example, “Beliebers” for Justin Bieber; “Little Monsters” for Lady Gaga; or “Deadheads” for the Grateful Dead). What were Claude Debussy’s fans called?

This quiz is open to all current musicians in our program. The first musician to email Carol Brown (info@philadelphiasinfonia.com) with the correct answer will win a small prize.

And for all the rest of our readers, don’t miss Philadelphia Sinfonia’s performance at 3 PM on January 22, 2017 of Debussy’s *La Mer* at the Temple Performing Arts Center. See why Debussy’s fans were so fanatical about his music!

Visit www.philadelphiasinfonia.com for complete concert information.

David Kim to Solo with PS in Bruch's Violin Concerto

Continued from page 1.

of a concerto with a soloist of Mr. Kim's calibre and stature. And for our violinists, in particular, it will be instructive and truly inspiring to hear and see this work performed by him.

Philadelphia Sinfonia's performance of Max Bruch's violin concerto with Mr. Kim will take place on Sunday, January 22, 2017, at 3 PM at the Temple Performing Arts Center, 1837 N. Broad Street, Philadelphia,

PA 19122. Also on the program are Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C minor* and Claude Debussy's *La Mer*.

For complete concert information, visit www.philadelphiasinfonia.com.

Repertoire

Repertoire Highlights for our 20th Anniversary Season 2016 – 2017

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

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA:

La Mer

by Claude Debussy (1862 – 1918)

Symphony No. 8 in G Major, Op. 88

by Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904)

An American in Paris

by George Gershwin (1898 – 1937)

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C minor

by Franz Liszt (1811 – 1886)

1812 Overture, Op. 49

by P.I. Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

Marche Héroïque, Op. 34

by Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 – 1921)

Concerto Grosso for 3 String Orchestras

by Ralph Vaughn Williams (1872 – 1958)

Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op 26

by Max Bruch (1838 – 1920)
(featuring Philadelphia Orchestra
Concertmaster, David Kim)

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA:

Sinfonia No. 3 in C Major

by C.P.E. Bach (1714 – 1788)

Divertimento in F Major, K. 138

by W.A. Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Theme and Variations for String

Orchestra, Op. 97

by Alexander Glazunov (1865 – 1936)

Spanish Dance

by Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 – 1975)

Simple Symphony, Op. 4

by Benjamin Britten (1913 – 1976)

Tres Minutos (Tango)

by Astor Piazzolla (1921 – 1992)

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA PLAYERS:

Symphony No. 1 in C Major, Op. 21

by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

L'Arlésienne Suite No. 2

by Georges Bizet (1838 – 1875)

Finlandia, Op. 26

by Jean Sibelius (1865 – 1957)

Poet and Peasant Overture

by Franz von Suppe (1819 – 1895)

Sicilienne from "Pelléas et Mélisande Suite", Op. 80

by Gabriel Fauré (1845 – 1924)

Capriol Suite

by Peter Warlock (1894 – 1930)

Coronation March from "Le Prophète"

by Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791 – 1864)

Sinfonia for Winds

by Gaetano Donizetti (1797 – 1848)

Selections from Rodgers and Hart for Solo Trumpet and Orchestra

by Richard Rogers (1902 – 1079)

arr. by Jim Levendis

(A special PSA 20th Anniversary
commission featuring John Thyhsen,
trumpet soloist)

On the Board

A new member joined the Philadelphia Sinfonia Board of Directors in September 2016: Lorna Lynn is a physician who has worked at the non-profit American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) since 2000, where she is currently Vice President for Medical Education Research. Prior to her job at ABIM, Lorna was an assistant professor in the department of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, where she divided her time between teaching and patient care.

Lorna is the parent of Philadelphia Sinfonia cellist, Jacob Lynn-Palevsky, and the parent of Anna Lynn-Palevsky, who was a violinist in Sinfonia from 2010 to 2013, and served as assistant concertmaster her final year. Anna is now a student at Colorado College, where she is a math major and is minoring in music.

Lorna grew up in a very musical household. Her father, George Lynn, was a composer, choral conductor, and organist, and was music director at Westminster Choir College during the 1960's. Her mother, Lucille Miller Lynn, was a singer and music historian. Lorna, herself, has studied violin, piano, classical guitar and voice and enjoyed many types of performing during high school and college.

As a board member, Lorna has a particular interest in student recruitment, data acquisition that aids us in recruitment, and in increasing the visibility of our program and organization in the region. We are pleased to have her experience, personal strengths, and particular interests represented on the board and wish her a warm welcome.

Side-by-Side with the Philadelphia Orchestra in February

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 under the baton of Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Yet this top-of-the-line opportunity awaits our advanced musicians in February....

We are recipients of The Philadelphia Orchestra's 2017 side-by-side program partnership. So that we are well prepared, we are already deep into rehearsals of Dvořák's *Symphony No. 8*, the work chosen for this event by The Philadelphia Orchestra.

This is the third time our program has received this tremendous opportunity. Oddly enough, the previous times have also been in anniversary years!

In 2007, during our tenth anniversary season, we also rehearsed Dvořák's *Symphony No. 8* with The Philadelphia

Orchestra, that time under the baton of Luis Biava, former Conductor in Residence of the Philadelphia Orchestra and also former conducting teacher of our PSA Music Director, Gary White.

In 2012, our fifteenth anniversary, we worked with Philadelphia Orchestra musicians on Brahms' *Symphony No. 2* under the baton of Maestro Cristian Măcelaru, who was at that time Assistant Conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra. Both events were incredible experiences for

the Sinfonia students, and each conductor brought valuable insights to the repertoire that was rehearsed.

This year's particular plum is the chance to sit at the feet and under the baton of one of the world's most in-demand, contemporary conductors. Known for his skill, insight, generosity, and personality, Maestro Nézet-Séguin is a singular musician. How fortunate for this year's musicians to have such an amazing opportunity on February 25, 2017. Happy 20th, PS musicians!



Sinfonia musician Dylan James with Paul Demers, 2012



Sinfonia musician Nellie Smith with Kathryn Picht Read, 2012



The Philadelphia Orchestra/Philadelphia Sinfonia side-by-side rehearsal 2007, under the baton of Maestro Luis Biava.



Cello section, 2012 side-by-side rehearsal

2012 photo credits: Jessica Griffin

Alumna Profile: Alana Youssefian

Violinist Alana Youssefian's musical journey is simply inspiring!

Now an accomplished musician working on her second Master's degree, Alana joined Sinfonia at the tender age of 11. Although it was long ago, Alana still remembers her audition; as she performed the first movement of Édouard Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole*, she wasn't nervous at all. Why? "I could already pick up on the orchestra's welcoming, supportive environment!" That wonderful environment continued to nurture her, both stateside and abroad, turning a self-described shy participant into a world traveler who found Sinfonia to be her "home and family." In addition to touring Argentina with Sinfonia, Alana has since soloed at the Mann Music Center, toured in Switzerland, Germany, and Italy, and performed in festivals throughout the United States.

How did she accomplish this? Through diligent study, performance, and leadership.

In Sinfonia, Alana earned the honor of serving as concertmaster. She found this experience invaluable. "Being concertmaster of Sinfonia helped my performance and leadership skills more than I could have imagined," Alana says. "I think every string player who wants to have a career in music should [have] the opportunity to lead a section at least once. Leading a section not only helps you gain confidence in your musical ideas but also trains you to keep that confidence and consistency under the pressure of performance. Earning the concertmaster position was an especially great moment for me because I got to lead Sinfonia with fellow musicians who grew up in the orchestra like I did."

With a long stint of performance and leadership with Sinfonia under her belt, Alana moved on to the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, which she credits for making her the musician that she is today. After years of studying mainly classical music, Alana studied contemporary music and historically informed performance — namely, performing music in the appropriate style and on the types

of instruments for which that music was originally written. Alana has now devoted several years to playing baroque violin; in fact, after earning a Master's in violin performance at Rice University, Alana is earning a second Master's in historically informed performance at Juilliard. Alana now plays solo, chamber, and orchestral music, ranging from the Renaissance to Romantic periods, on an instrument that resembles what musicians would have used during those periods.

Along the way, Alana also developed a passion for working as a freelance musician, "basically playing any music, anywhere in the world." Freelancing comes with the excitement of variety and lots of travel.

Alana couldn't be more enthusiastic about conservatory study: "It doesn't matter which school you wind up attending as long as you find a teacher that you love and know will help you reach your full potential[.]" She also recommends that you "get out of your practice room," and take breaks to enjoy other activities that help you to refresh yourself, whether musical or otherwise. Alana advises: study at a conservatory and "dig in to your craft and prepare yourself for the professional world."



Alana Youssefian

And do enjoy your time in Sinfonia — there are so many benefits. As Alana shared: "Sinfonia is the place where I realized that I wanted to make music my career and taught me so much about what it really means to be part of an orchestra. Enjoy those long rehearsals, get to know your fellow musicians across all sections of the orchestra; you never know where you all will end up! Sinfonia trained some of the best musicians I know who I have encountered in places I never would have expected. It always makes me happy to know I got to be a part of such a talented group."

Please feel free to contact Alana at acyoussefian@gmail.com.

Diane Penneys Edelman

Alumni Events

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 2017: ALUMNI WARMLY WELCOMED TO ATTEND FIRST REHEARSAL OF THE NEW YEAR at 3:00 PM

Sinfonia alumni are welcome to attend rehearsals *any* time, but we make a point to have food, coffee and cider available in the 1st Floor Conference Room during rehearsal on the first Saturday of the New Year for alumni who drop by after the holidays. If you will be in town, we would love to see you.

SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2017: PLEASE JOIN US IN VERIZON HALL FOR OUR 20th ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL CONCERT at 4:30 PM

We would not be the orchestra program we are today without the talent, commitment, and participation of all of you, and we would love for you to celebrate with us that afternoon.

SPECIAL, VERY INEXPENSIVE TICKETS will be available for our alumni. Details will follow in our winter issue of *Sonata* and will be disseminated through social media as well.

PHILADELPHIA SINFONIA

Gary D. White
Music Director and Conductor
Judith Mendelsohn
Executive Director
Danielle Garrett
Orchestra Manager and PSP Conductor
Hannah Albrecht
Administrative Coordinator

Board of Directors:

Carol Brown, *President*
Naomi Atkins, *Vice President*
Jean Lowery, *Secretary*
Jerome Pontillo, *Treasurer*
Dawn Evans
Matthew Gurin
Matthew Kremer
Lorna Lynn
ZeeAnn Mason
Carol Steinberg
Jenny Weiner

Philadelphia Sinfonia
PO Box 996
Philadelphia, PA 19105-0996
Tel: 215-351-0363
Website: www.philadelphiasinfonia.com
E-mail: info@philadelphiasinfonia.com

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.



Sinfonia to Air on WRTI; details inside!