

RPYO *News of Note*

Maureen Placilla, Editor

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From the Podium

By Dr. David Harman

A *Touriffic* Season

Our RPYO has begun a journey that should prove to be as memorable as it is exciting. Preparation for the November concert is well underway and we're in the process of building toward our tour program as we learn a variety of really challenging and stimulating pieces. For our tours, we have traditionally offered a blend of American pieces that we hope will showcase some of the best aspects of our county's orchestral heritage. This year is no exception. We'll serenade our listeners with wonderfully attractive pieces by Barber, Copland, Gershwin, and Bernstein.

To our ears, these pieces seem really user friendly and easy to enjoy. They're a part of our own musical upbringing and, as a result, almost instantly understandable to us, because we've had them in the back our minds for longer than we can perhaps even remember. When *exactly* did you first hear *Hoe-Down*, for example? Although our homegrown music may be familiar to us, it's still often filled with performance difficulties, but somehow it may seem easy for us to access the emotional meaning of these pieces. That makes the technical difficulties of say, *The Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*, easier to practice. It may be hard to play, but we somehow sort of know how it should sound. That innate understanding forms a big part of the cultural gifts we will share with our tour audiences. We're an American group performing American music. That's something very special to offer to interested foreign audiences.

The other aspect of our touring tradition is that we always perform pieces by composers from the countries

we visit. Even though the locals know their own musical milieu as well as we know ours, it's a special treat for us to learn compositions which reflect their cultural heritage. This aspect is especially exciting for this particular tour since we're visiting three different countries that have distinct musical traditions and treasures.

We'll learn some very clever music by Poland's Witold Lutoslawski that uses the idiom of folk music and also shifts the metric pulse in dance-like and unusual ways. Dvorak's *Carneval Overture* is filled with 19th-century lyricism that is so wonderfully typical of that region's most celebrated composer. As for Hungary, we have what is probably the masterwork from that country's most significant composer.

Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* is just that, a true concerto for the entire ensemble. That's expressed on a variety of levels for individual solo players, for sections of the ensemble and for the orchestra as a whole. It's like chamber music on a really large scale in the sense that performing it well demands reliability and interdependence. That can be tricky if you're only focusing on your own individual part. Often one's own part can seem isolated in part because Bartók's musical language is so different from what we know well, like Bernstein's pieces, for example. Learning Bartók's language should really be part of the musical tourism that we get to experience. (con't next page)

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Once we understand that his harmonies are often built on perfect fourths rather than thirds, that he sometimes uses superimposed chords, that there are rhythms that are both intricate and embellished by shifting meters, the music starts to make a whole lot of sense. As we progress from playing just our own individual part of the musical puzzle and start to realize how our part connects and relates to the rest of the musical structure, appreciation of the piece becomes easier.

It's a lot like studying a foreign language. If you try to learn a language that is really removed from anything you already know, the initial impression is often simply a blur of apparently disjointed sounds. But, after working to parse out sounds and words, things start to make sense. Eventually, understanding is achieved, but only through a good deal of thought, application and practice.

Although some of our pieces may not be from our native musical language, I feel confident that our audiences in Poland, Slovakia and Hungary will really appreciate that we have done our best to learn something about their musical culture and by doing so, to experience something important about who they are while also offering them a glimpse of ourselves through playing some of our own musical monuments. It's a type of mutual cultural respect that we can bring to our tour and it's a way to make our world a friendlier, more considerate and tolerant place. Szép! Csodás!
(Beautiful! Wonderful!) DH



Concert Preview:

20th Century Musical Voices

November 5 at 7:30 p.m.

Hochstein Performance Hall

Works of Bernstein, Barber, Copland, Gershwin, Beethoven and Bartók

The opening concert of our 2006-2007 season offers a special treat: an all-20th century musical program (with the delightful exception of Beethoven's *Romance in F* performed by our distinguished soloist, Juliana Athayde.) The great quartet of mid-20th century American composers are all there: Gershwin, Copland, Barber and Bernstein, plus one of finest and most original composing voices of Europe of the same period, Béla Bartók.

During the rest of this 36th RPYO season, the orchestra will perform other music by American composers and pieces by composers from the Central European countries we will be visiting on our April 2007 concert tour.

Bernstein's *Overture to "Candide"* has practically become an RPYO tour theme song. With irrepressible energy, it expresses the mood of youth, optimism, and inventiveness and always captivates audiences here and abroad. If the *Overture to Candide* is a show-stopper, then Barber's *Adagio for Strings* pulls at the heart-strings, drawing musicians and listeners together as if in one single extended breath that ultimately releases into a sigh. Copland's *Hoe-Down* gets feet tapping and voices yelping in an old-fashioned American country dance. Gershwin's *Selections from "Porgy and Bess,"* with some of the best loved music from the American stage, brings us the yearnings, loves, and tragedies of a poor black southern community in the 1920s.

Beethoven's Romance in F for Violin and Orchestra

is beloved by violinists everywhere for its gorgeous lyrical themes and very substantial technical challenges. This work and its

companion *Romance in G*, were the only solo pieces Beethoven wrote for the violin outside of his magnificent Violin Concerto.

The Concerto for Orchestra has become Béla Bartók's most popular work and is regarded as his masterpiece. It is not a concerto in the usual sense with a solo instrument interacting back and forth with the orchestra. Here various sections of instruments interplay with the larger ensemble, displaying their virtuosity against the orchestra as whole. In his time Bartók was the world's greatest authority on folk music in Central and Eastern Europe. He collected folk songs and dances from remote regions of his native Hungary and from Transylvania and Bulgaria. Incorporating these unfamiliar and complex melodies, scales and rhythms into his music, he created wholly original sounds. As our ears have gradually become accustomed to the diverse sounds of world music, his compositions may not appear to us as "dissonant" or "harsh" as audiences used to feel. But they still have the freshness and vigor of music that has its roots in real people's lives.



INTRODUCING: JULIANA ATHAYDE, *Concertmaster of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra*

The RPYO is excited and proud to be able to present Juliana Athayde in a performance of Beethoven's *Romance in F major* at our concert at Hochstein on November 5.

Ms. Athayde joined the Rochester Philharmonic as its concertmaster last season. Her selection was the culmination of a search of four years' duration, following the departure of Ilya Kaler, the RPO's previous concertmaster. The appointment of Ms. Athayde was a surprise to many who have seen mostly

men in at least their 30s or 40s occupying these coveted positions. She is the first female concertmaster in the RPO's history, and, at 26 years of age (having won the position at only 24), certainly the youngest musician ever to hold that position in the RPO.

But her selection was not surprising to those who are aware of big changes in the orchestral world and the increasing numbers of highly trained and talented young women occupying seats in all sections of orchestras throughout the country. And it was not surprising to those who knew about Ms. Athayde's background and her many musical and personal talents.

Ms. Athayde comes from a musical family in the San Francisco Bay Area with a violin teacher mother and a father who is a junior high school band director and jazz musician. One sister, Gabrielle, is a cellist at the Oberlin Conservatory. The youngest in the family, Eliana (still in high school), plays classical and jazz bass and tenor saxophone. Brother Kyle is a freshman jazz trumpet and vibraphone player at the Juilliard School. Music filled the house, so it was natural that she wanted to play an instrument as soon as she could hold one. She began her violin lessons at age two and a half, with family friend Dorothy Lee, and, assisted by her sense of perfect pitch and a great desire to learn and play as much as she could, she progressed very rapidly as a violinist.

By her sophomore year in high school, Ms. Athayde attained the pinnacle for young violinists in the Bay Area, the seat of concertmaster of the San Francisco Youth Symphony Orchestra, after playing with the Youth Orchestra since age twelve. Her dream of becoming a concertmaster of a major orchestra had its roots in the three years she held that position in San Francisco. During her years in the SFYO she was a student of San Francisco Symphony violinist, Zoya Leybin.

For her college training, Ms. Athayde chose to go to the University of Michigan's School of Music in Ann Arbor, where she studied with the renowned violinist, Paul Kantor, who now teaches at the Cleveland Institute of Music. She spent her

summers as a fellow at the Aspen Music Festival, where she was awarded the prestigious Dorothy DeLay Fellowship and performed with the Aspen Festival Orchestra Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2 under the baton of Joseph Silverstein.

While working on her Master of Music degree at the Cleveland Institute with Paul Kantor, she auditioned for a violin opening with the San Francisco Symphony. At only 22 years old, she won the audition, but had to make a difficult decision: to give up that position in order to study with William Preucil, concertmaster of the Cleveland Orchestra, as the first student in his new Concertmaster Academy. Bolstered by her goal of becoming an orchestral concertmaster herself, she decided to work with Mr. Preucil, one of the most respected concertmasters in the country. The experience, she reports, was intense and immensely rewarding. While in Cleveland, she served as Concertmaster of the Canton Symphony for two years.

After Christopher Seaman heard her performance in Aspen with Maestro Silverstein, she was invited to audition for the RPO. She won the audition in the spring of 2005 and began as Concertmaster of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in September 2005.

Applause and Accolades

It is always a pleasure in these pages to recognize RPYO musicians who have been granted special music awards or stood high in music competitions. Please let us know of distinctions you have earned.

Isaac Tayrien (cello, Canandaigua Academy) was selected to perform a cello solo at the Canandaigua Lake Chamber Music Festival.

Evan Henry (Trumpet, School of the Arts) was one of twelve high school students selected nationwide to attend on full scholarship the Vail (Co.) Jazz Festival Workshop.

Andrew Harrison (Trumpet, Pittsford Mendon High School) was awarded "Best Musician" and "Best Jazz Musician" at his Crane School of Music summer program.

William Cho (Violin, Brighton High School) won first or second prize in several solo competitions this past summer: In June he received First Prize in the Hertzog

Concerto Competition and will perform with the Orchestra of the Southern Finger Lakes next May.

In August, he received Second Prize the Long Island Conservatory International Music Competition's String Category Senior Level (17 years old and up). In September he placed First in the Violin Solo Category and Second in the Chamber Music Category at the Hopes, Talents and Masters International Music Competition in Bulgaria.

D'Arcy Placilla (Cello, Canandaigua Academy) was invited to play a solo for a Yom Kippur concert at Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

Congratulations to all of you!



WHAT YOU DID THIS SUMMER

We have always known that RPYO musicians are talented, versatile, hard-working—and fun-loving. If we need proof, we have only to see how you filled your summer months.

Music, not surprisingly, was a favorite activity. One-third of you attended summer music programs and camps—classical and jazz. (A list of these camps is included below.) Others played in pit orchestras, for weddings, in nursing homes, in marching band and community orchestras, sang onstage, performed chamber music or solos, or simply enjoyed the extra time for practicing or exploring at greater leisure your musical interests.

Several of you did research work in laboratories at RIT, the University of Rochester, and at SUNY Buffalo. Some spent several weeks at academic camps, at summer schools at various universities, and in one case on a scholarship program in Germany. There were at least a few of you who used this time for the Driver's Ed. classes that are so hard to fit in during your busy school schedules.

A couple of you attended special youth conferences, and there were others who volunteered in mission projects in other cities. Of course, there was also work, paid and unpaid, including landscape designing, assisting in hospitals, doing office work, giving music lessons, being Counselors-In-Training at camps, helping with the Canandaigua Lake Chamber Music Festival. A number of you spent intense weeks in sports camps, preparing for the upcoming sports seasons.

Then there was fun: camping, theatre camp, backpacking, swimming, kayaking, tennis, cycling, golfing, and simply relaxing. And for some there was travel, from visiting relatives or national parks in the U.S. and family visits to Asia, to travel in the British Isles and Europe.

SUMMER MUSIC CAMPS ATTENDED BY RPYO STUDENTS

The following twenty-two summer music programs were attended by at least one RPYO musician this past summer.

Bowdoin International Music Festival
Brevard Summer Music Festival
Crane School of Music Summer Youth Program
Csehy School of Music
Eastman School of Music's Music Horizon's Program
Encore School for Strings
Greenwood Chamber Music Camp
Interlochen Music Camp
Juilliard Percussion Seminar
Killington Music Festival
Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Festival
Mansfield Music Camp
Meadowmount School of Music
Music at Port Milford (Chamber Music)
New England Music Camp

New York State Music Festival in Oneonta
New York Summer School for the Arts at Saratoga
Point Counterpoint (Chamber Music)
Skidmore College Flute Institute
Seminar at Western Michigan University
Tanglewood Young Artists' Orchestra
Vail Jazz Festival Workshop



Central Europe Tour

Tour Fundraisers

Spring Bulb Sale

The Bulb Sale was a great success, thanks to the rapid-fire efforts of Becky Loy, Isaac Tayrien's mother, who brought it altogether in a very short time—and to RPYO students who responded equally quickly and thoroughly. Over \$4000 worth of bulbs were ordered, at a 50% profit to the students! Several other parents joined Becky to sort out 1000 bags of bulbs so they could be in the students' hands by October 29, in good time for fall planting. Congratulations and thank you, Becky!

Amavida Coffee and Tea Sale

Jessica Schuster has passed out to students order forms for the organic and fair-trade coffee and tea sale that are due back on November 19 so that the items can be distributed at the December 17 rehearsal. The coffee is excellent and evokes images (and aromas) of Budapest's elegant and renowned coffee houses. Tea, both black and herbal, are very popular throughout Europe, making this a very appropriate fundraiser for our tour.

For additional orders, please contact Jessica Schuster at jvs@rochester.rr.com or by phone at 442-0986. Thank you, Jessica, for all your efforts in providing this fundraising opportunity for our students.

RPYO Musical Showcase on November 17, at 7:30 p.m., at the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford.

This is a voluntary opportunity for RPYO musicians to perform as soloists or in small ensembles in a benefit for the RPYO Tour. It is part of a series of performances held on Friday evenings at the church throughout the year. We very much appreciate the church including us in their series. There are still a few more openings for RPYO musicians to perform. All are welcome to attend. There is no admission fee, but a goodwill offering will be gratefully accepted.

Itinerary Updates

Easter Sunday Church Services

Students who wish to will be able to attend church services on Easter Sunday morning in Warsaw. ACFEA, our tour company, is making arrangements for this. We will depart at a later time for Krakow than indicated in the itinerary that you received.

Concert Program Change for Kraków

We will perform in St. Catherine's Church in Kraków. In order to take advantage of the church setting and acoustics, Dr. Harman decided to make a change in our concert program. We will perform the second movement of Henryk Górecki's Third Symphony: *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*. This work is considered one of the major symphonies of the twentieth century and is music that will bring us closer to Poland's tragic history during World War II when it was brutally occupied by the Nazis.

The second movement is set to a prayer written in a Gestapo prison by an 18-year old Polish girl who knows she will never see her mother again. A soprano from Kraków will join us for our performance there.

We will also perform this work during our March 18 Side-by-Side Concert in Eastman Theatre. Soprano Constance Fee, Artist-in-Residence, Director of the Vocal Department at Roberts Wesleyan College, and an established opera singer, will sing with the RPYO in the Eastman Theatre performance.

Holocaust Awareness Gatherings

The three countries we will visit in Central Europe shared in common victimization and extensive destruction at the hands of the Nazis in World War II, followed by political repression under Communist governments.

Much of the physical destruction of the war has been erased through painstaking restoration of buildings and bridges. We will see, though, signs of former Communist domination as well as of the revitalization of this region since 1990 and the collapse of their repressive regimes.

What will be less visible is the wholesale destruction under the Nazis of the Jewish population throughout this entire region. Jewish communities had existed in Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary for centuries, filling critical economic and cultural roles as traders, artisans, bankers, scholars and musicians.

One-quarter of the population of Budapest was Jewish at the time of the war. Nearly all of these people were taken to camps and murdered. The same story was repeated in cities and small towns all over the area. What often did survive in these were synagogues, some very beautiful buildings that have become museums or returned to their former religious function. But the people who once enlivened whole neighborhoods and practiced important professions have disappeared.

So that we can visit Poland, Slovakia and Hungary with a better understanding of this tragic history, Jessica and Jamie Schuster are opening their Brighton home at 162 Barclay Square Drive to RPYO students, parent chaperones, and Companion Tour participants for a series of **Holocaust Awareness Gatherings**. These will include the showing of films, speakers, pizza and special meals where indicated.

Here is a schedule of the gatherings:

Friday, November 10th 6:00—10:00 p.m.

Shabbat dinner followed by the film *The Pianist*, with Adrian Brody, about a Jewish musician who miraculously escaped the Warsaw Ghetto and the destruction of Warsaw by the Nazis.

Tuesday, November 14th 6:00—8:30 p.m

Follow-up to *The Pianist*: **Speaker:** Angie Suss-Paull is the cousin of the character Wladyslaw Szpilman who is portrayed by Adrian Brody in the movie.

Tuesday, December 12th 6:00—8:30 p.m

Film *Paperclips*: A documentary film about an amazing middle-school project in a small Tennessee community that brings alive the magnitude of the Nazi slaughter of six million Jews.

Tuesday, January 2nd 6:00—8:30 p.m

Film *The Power of Good*: A powerful film about Nicholas Winston, an Englishman who saved

hundreds of Czech Jewish children during the Holocaust.

Speaker: Henry Silberstern, a child survivor of the Holocaust from the Czech Republic.

Tuesday, February 7th 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Film: *The Last Days*. A documentary about the Nazi's "cleansing" of Hungary created by Steven Spielberg from stories of Hungarian survivors. Speaker TBA

Tuesday, March 6th 7:00—8:30 p.m. at Nazareth College

Play: *And Then They Came For Me*: A dramatic, multimedia story of the stepsister and stepbrother of Anne Frank who survived the Nazi occupation of Amsterdam.

Tickets: Regular Price - \$12 ; Subscription Price - \$10.

Approximately 75 minutes; recommended for grades six through twelve.

Tuesday, April 3rd 6:00—9:00 p.m.: Passover Seder at the Schuster's

The RPYO is deeply indebted to the Schuster family for opening their home and organizing these very important Tour preparation evenings.



The October Retreat

What a weekend!

That is what you would expect when you combine the following:

- **Bill Munch's** meticulous and thorough attention to planning details
- **Randy and Tina Curren's** effective and attentive on-site coordination, ably assisted by **Brenda Munch**
- **Josh and Deb Goldowitz's** fundraising, food purchasing, and kitchen organizational efficiency
- **Jim Contino's** mustering of kitchen helpers and **Marc Williamson's** and **Bob Estephan's**

assembling of the all-essential chaperones

- **Tony Placilla's** fabulous cooking (a real challenge when it is *en masse*)
- **John Field's** instinct for what teenagers like to do to relax
- **Zach Kramer's** caring attentiveness to various aches and pains

And add to above:

- Ten hours of intense and highly productive rehearsals over two days with our terrific and terrifically talented **RPYOMentors** and **RPYO Maestro David Harman**
- The lovely, if damp, grounds of Rotary's Sunshine Campus at the peak of autumn color
- Many generous parent chaperones and daytime helpers
- 106 inventive, bright, hard-working, fun-loving, serious-minded teenagers

What you get is a terrific time! Thanks to everyone! And special thanks to Bill Munch who, after doing all the planning and re-planning, got posted by Kodak to China and was not able to enjoy the final fruits of his six years as Retreat Coordinator. Yours was a glorious tenure, Bill. Thank you for so very much.

Please Remember!!

- To bring in "Healthy" snacks during weekly rehearsals.
- Musicians: *PLEASE* remember to clean up after yourselves when you are done with snack.

