

# RPYO News of Note

Fall 2007

## **Congratulations to David Harman!**



Our own maestro, David Harman, has been selected as Musician of the Year for 2008 by the Rochester chapter of Mu Phi Epsilon in recognition of his many contributions to the musical life of the Rochester community, in particular his leadership of the

University of Rochester Symphony and Chamber Orchestras, the Penfield Symphony Orchestra, and the Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra. The award will be presented at a concert in March in Kilbourn Hall at the Eastman School of Music. Mu Phi Epsilon is an international professional music fraternity whose mission is the advancement of music and musicianship in this country and throughout the world. Distinguished Rochester winners of this recognition include Joseph Werner of the RPO and RPO Music Director Christopher Seaman.

## **Bring Your Best For Some Serious Fun**

*David Harman*

Our RPYO is off to a great start with a season filled with many substantial musical challenges to enjoy together. The major pieces by Shostakovich, Rimski-Korsakov and Respighi that we'll prepare are real masterworks. In fact, all of the pieces we'll be playing this season are ones likely to appear on the season programs of fine professional orchestras. It's fabulous music that requires a great deal of dedicated effort to process and perform successfully. Those of us who worked hard to make last year's tour so successful may be especially eager to tackle the repertoire that we have in store for us this season. We recognize the need for everyone to bring his or her best preparation and effort to each rehearsal, as well as to our concerts. When dedication and commitment

are strong throughout our entire orchestra, there can be an attitude of serious fun that helps encourage our musical team's best and most joyful results.

What does it take to make that happen? There must be the desire to bring the best possible effort to each rehearsal from every member of our musical team. Everyone has stresses in daily life that can eat away at our ability to do our best. Schoolwork, household chores, social obligations and lots of other things can get in the way of sitting down and really knowing our orchestra music. For the RPYO to perform really well, we can't just think about the music when we're at rehearsal and assume that we'll learn it well enough to play it by the time the performance rolls around. The pieces are simply too difficult for a casual approach. You need to work on the music both on your own and, perhaps, also with your private teacher to achieve your best results. Does that mean that everyone will play things perfectly all the time? No, but it does mean that there will be an honest effort to make that attempt, even in rehearsals. That's also part of the fun. For our orchestra to succeed at the highest possible level, we have to take the advice of that *(continued on next page)*

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great composer Gustav Mahler who observed that, “The Music exists beyond the notes.” By that, he meant that in order to get to the real feeling and meaning of great music, we have to learn the notes and rhythms as quickly as possible so that we can make sense not only of our own individual part, but also of how it all fits together. It’s musical teamwork at the highest level with a common dedication to doing things as well as possible.

When we have 100 talented and skilled players all dedicated to doing things as well as possible, amazing musical results can, and do, appear. Some of the best musical moments we can ever experience may happen not in concerts, but in rehearsals, when everything magically goes just right. We don’t have to wait for a concert to experience fabulous musical joys. We can create them as we work together in rehearsals to discover the music that lives beyond the notes and rhythms.

Each rehearsal is designed to take the music apart and put it back together in ways that make it more accurate and intelligible for us as performers and, as a result, to those who will enjoy our finished product at the concert. That process often involves working on technical and musical details. That time is essential to improving and refining our knowledge of the piece. Although that work may involve some other section of the orchestra for several minutes at a time, it’s not a reason for you to lose musical focus. Keep using your ears and invite yourself to stay involved in the musical task at hand, even if you’re not playing. If your section is not “on the musical hot seat”, it’s often fun to try to understand through listening what is going on with the rest of the orchestra. Where is the musical line coming from before you get to play your part? When do you pass it on and to what other section or sections? What’s going on elsewhere in the orchestra while you’re playing your part? How much can you hear in another section’s part that will eventually influence your own musical contributions? Are you well in tune with yourself, your section and with the rest of the ensemble? That’s a lot to consider.

It’s especially difficult to really enjoy the process if you’re also battling your own part’s notes and rhythms. However, if you’re really on top of your own musical responsibilities, you can enjoy the experience of the sound we’re creating together in ways that should be both serious and fun. That’s the payoff for bringing your best effort to each of our rehearsals. The results for the whole orchestra are really worthwhile and the fun you have for yourself is the result of all the effort you contribute. Thanks for bringing your best! DH

**Concert Preview**  
**RPYO’s Season Opening:**  
**Shostakovich’s Fifth**

Sunday, November 4 at 7:30 pm  
Performance Hall at Hochstein  
Conductor: David Harman

**Soloist: Rebecca Gilbert, RPO Principal Flute**

Brahms	Academic Festival Overture
C.P.E. Bach	Concerto for Flute and Strings
Bizet	Carmen Suite No. 1
Shostakovich	Symphony No. 5

This musical opening of the RPYO’s 37<sup>th</sup> Season brings some new and almost new repertory to the RPYO, plus an old friend. Last season, as the orchestra prepared for its Central Europe Tour, it faced a tremendous challenge in the Bartok *Concerto for Orchestra*. Impressed by how much the orchestra matured as an ensemble as it worked through the Bartok masterpiece and by how much pride the students took in their stunning performances of a difficult work, Dr. Harman believed the orchestra was ready to face another major musical challenge this fall: Shostakovich’s *Symphony. No. 5*.

The RPYO has performed this great work only one other time, in 1979, under the direction of then Music Director Howard Weiss. This is symphonic music with a magnetic appeal to young musicians: intense, passionate, questioning, anguished, yet full of love of life. Each part of the orchestra has its

significant role. The strings have beautiful melodies. Woodwinds have their dance-like and playful passages. The brass range from mournful to majestic and triumphal. The harps are strongly present. And at times the percussion steal the show.

The Fifth is Shostakovich's most frequently played symphony, though he composed fourteen others. It was written in 1937 to rehabilitate the Russian composer with Stalin, who reacted to Shostakovich's earlier, more modernist works as decadent. Popular from the start, it has never lost its attraction to audiences. As the personal drama and anguish of the composer's life has come to light following his death in 1975, this symphony has become even more intriguing to listeners. There is much in the music to make them wonder what the composer was really telling them.

Our old friend in the concert program is Brahms' *Academic Festival Overture*. Brahms wrote this to commemorate his receiving an academic award. Always the imaginative composer, here he borrowed some popular German student tunes and subtly wove them into a delightful but still substantial musical acknowledgment of the honor he received. The RPYO performed six years ago Bizet's *Carmen Suite No. 2*. This time it is the First Suite that will be heard, written for a little different mix of instruments and comprised of some different, but still familiar, selections from the opera.

C.P.E. Bach's *Concerto for Flute and Strings* is a completely new piece for the RPYO, suggested by our soloist, the RPO's Principal Flute Rebecca Gilbert. She knew that the RPYO rarely had the opportunity to play music from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Composed by a son of J.S. Bach, a very popular composer in his day, the concerto will display to the fullest Ms. Gilbert's extraordinary mastery of the flute.



## Introducing Rebecca Gilbert

Susan Basu

Rebecca Gilbert is the holder of the Charlotte Whitney Allen Principal Flute Chair in the



Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Since she came to Rochester in 1996 as Principal Flute, she has been acclaimed for her highly expressive playing and technical mastery of her instrument.

Ms. Gilbert grew up in Lomira, Wisconsin, where she started playing the flute at the age of nine in school. Her love for the instrument flourished, and she went on to study flute performance at Oklahoma State University. From there she earned a Master of Music degree from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and studied at the Centre International de Formation Musicale in Nice, France.

Before coming to Rochester she performed as Acting Principal Flute with the St. Louis Symphony and played with the Boston Symphony at the Tanglewood Center.

During her years in Rochester with the RPO, Ms. Gilbert has appeared in numerous solo and chamber music performances throughout the region, has presented master classes in flute performance throughout the United States, and has been very active with the Rochester Flute Association. She has taught flute at Ithaca College as well as in her home studio.

Ms. Gilbert has been a dedicated supporter of the RPYO for over ten years, regularly serving as an Adjudicator and Mentor to the RPYO flute section. She has inspired our flutists musically and personally, generously sharing her experience and knowledge with them.

## RPYO Fall Retreat September 14-16, 2007

*Tina and Randy Curren, Retreat coordinators*



The Fall Retreat at the Rotary Sunshine Camp was musically productive and a lot of fun again this year, despite the sometimes uncomfortably cool temperatures. We'd like to acknowledge and give special thanks to **Tony Placilla**, Master Chef, who came all the way from Baltimore to share his kitchen expertise with us again, and to **Mani Eghbali**, who jumped in at the last minute to manage the kitchen with great success; to **Mary Ellen Womack** and **Bonnie Kramer** for coordinating kitchen help and for creative troubleshooting; to our resident physician, **Zach Kramer**; to our activities director, **Peter Iglinski**; to our chaperone coordinator, **Rich Yarmel**; to master luthier **Ken Sullivan** and yoga instructor **Amy Metzendorf** for kindly taking the time to come to Rush and share their expertise with us; to the 15 RPO mentors who led sectional rehearsals; to all the chaperones and to everybody who helped with activities, food preparation, and cleanup; and last but not least to **Mrs. Basu** and **Dr. Harman**, without whom none of this would ever be possible!

### **Memories of Retreat...**

*Glenna Curren, alumna cello player*

Throughout my life I have accumulated so many music-related memories that it is difficult to choose just one favorite. Memories of my youth orchestra are the most special of all. It was in this orchestra that I finally found a niche of kindred spirits, which has made my high school career bearable. The orchestra begins every year by going on a two-night retreat in the country, which is arguably my favorite weekend of the year. During the entire weekend, musicians play about nine hours of music in sectional and orchestral rehearsals. Although a great thing about the experience is bonding with fellow musicians, the part I love most is the music-making and the way that the peaceful environment enhances it.

Retreats take place each fall at a camp used by handicapped children during the summers. Getting to the campus requires a half-hour drive through the gorgeous autumnal farm country of Western New York. The campus itself is simple, made up of rustic buildings and pathways edged with fragrant pines. Set back from the road and sheltered by trees it is an idyllic setting, quiet and pleasingly isolated. Being there I feel liberated from the everyday stresses of the world.

My first retreat stands apart from the others in my memory because the experience was so completely unfamiliar--even a bit frightening--and every aspect of it was fresh and exciting. Socially it was rather intimidating since I was among the youngest and knew almost no one, but it remains the musical experience which I remember with the most nostalgia. If I could choose to repeat any experience from high school, it would probably be that first evening rehearsal in the "barn", a recreational building with a high ceiling and big sliding doors, wide open. As I sat playing in the buggy, chilly, dimly-lit barn I felt such a sense of magic, swept along as if in a sparkling tide of meteors. I remember particularly fondly rehearsing Aaron Copland's Hoedown and Leonard Bernstein's Overture to Candide, and feeling such a sense of freedom, immersed in music and surrounded by nature.

That was my first time being inside such a wonderfully rich sound. I was awed by the high level of playing, awed by the cellists on the front stands who seemed to play perfectly. As a new member I focused more singly on the music than any other year, worrying at every wrong note and marveling at the sound.

This October as I walked for the last time along those paths, I thought back to the first year and felt a wave of sadness. I am amazed at how much I have grown since that first year. I will miss the orchestra, and I will miss looking forward to and experiencing those three days of being removed from the world. I may never see that beautiful place again, but I can transform the memory of it into a lasting, present part of myself.

## **MPulse Ann Arbor Double Reed Institute**

*Hannah Reilly, bassoon*

This summer I had the opportunity to attend the MPulse Ann Arbor Double Reed Institute at the University of Michigan. Now, going to a “Double Reed Camp” for two weeks may not sound like fun at first, but it was actually an amazing experience. I got to work with professors from the university, meet other students from all over the country, and obviously, play a lot of music. MPulse Ann Arbor is a summer arts camp held at the University of Michigan that contains several different programs for high school students involved in the arts, and while I was in the Double Reed Institute there were several other programs going on for Vocal Arts, Flute, Harp, Saxophone, and Musical Theatre.

The master teachers of the Double Reed Institute, Dr. Jeffrey Lyman and Dr. Nancy Ambrose King, kept us busy for two weeks with daily reed-making workshops, master classes, lessons, practicing, and of course, reed-making parties. In addition to that, everyone in MPulse took conducting and Dalcroze classes. On the weekends we also had recitals for students, faculties, and even the MPulse counselors, who were current students or graduates from the School of Music. Overall the experience was incredible, and the highlight of my summer.



## **What we did this summer**

*The following activities were attended by at least one RPYO musician this past summer.*

Arranging/composing class with Nancy Strelau  
Bowdoin International Music Festival  
Brevard Music Festival  
Bristol Hill Music Camp  
Cobblestone Arts Center  
Crane Youth Music Camp  
Eastman Jazz Studies Camp  
Eastman Middle School Band Camp  
Eastman New Horizons  
Eastman Trumpet Institute  
Finger Lakes Chorale Festival  
Fortissimo!  
Fredonia Band Camp  
Harp Maintenance Workshop (Eastman)  
Hartwick Music Festival  
Hochstein Jazz Camp  
Interharmony Int'l Music Festival (The Berkshires)  
Interlochen Advanced Bassoon Institute  
Irondequoit Theatre Guild-pit band  
Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth Program  
at Saratoga Springs  
Le Domaine Forget Music Camp  
Lessons at Meadowmount and Bowdoin  
Luzerne Music Center  
MPulse Double Reed Institute at Univ of Michigan  
NYASTA Summer Camp (Ithaca)  
NYSSA School of Orchestra Studies  
Orchestra exchange to the Dominican Republic  
Percussionist in pit orchestra for “Cats”  
Pit Orchestra for LCP Aida  
Pittsford Summer Enrichment’s “Anything Goes”  
Played at Carnegie  
Saratoga Orchestra  
Signature Music Camp (Ithaca College)  
Strings International Music Festival  
Summit Music Festival (Tarrytown)  
SUNY Potsdam Summer Bank Camp  
Trip to Santo Domino with Brockport HS Orch.  
West Point Summer Leaders Seminar  
Young Artists’ Harp Seminar-Georgia

## ***From the Top comes to Rochester***

*Julia Figueras*

Eight years ago, public radio stations around the country received a cassette (remember THEM?) and a press kit, plugging a new radio show. The concept: highly talented kids from around the country would compete on a new music performance show, in front of an audience of friends and family. Jazz and classical were represented, with everything held together by the host, the always engaging Christopher O'Riley, who juggled interviews with the kids and special guest stars along with accompanist duties from time-to-time. Over the years, the format has been changed and refined: jazz was jettisoned, as was the competitive voting at the end, the Roving Reporter was added, and segments were tightened up. What was left is what Rochester will get to see firsthand in the Callahan Theater at Nazareth College on January 20, 2008: an engaging, enlightening, and sometimes touching hour celebrating classical music and kids.

WXXI-FM was one of the first stations to carry *From the Top*, so it was natural that it should finally bring the show to Rochester, a city filled with extraordinarily talented teens. But sponsoring a radio show can be expensive and complicated, so it was a natural fit to partner with the Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra to make it happen. And it WILL be an event: inside a whirlwind 2 days, *FTT* will arrive, load in, rehearse with the kids (perhaps some of our own!), and tape the live show. About 90 minutes after the On Air sign is lit, it's over, with miscues hitting the cutting room floor before it airs. Tickets for *From the Top* go on sale in November, so mark your calendar for this rare opportunity to cheer on your colleagues and see radio magic created in your presence. It *will* be unforgettable...and fun.

Check out *From the Top* online at [www.fromthetop.org](http://www.fromthetop.org)

## ***Ad Journal to debut in spring 2008***

*Jessica Schuster*

Thank you to all who solicited ads for the 2007 - 2008 RPYO program ad campaign. Due to lack of response for the ad journal we are postponing it until the end of the year, at which time we hope you will solicit your end of season messages, one liners, and congratulatory ads from teachers, businesses, family, and friends. The ad journal forms will reappear on the web site (modified) after the second concert in March. The end of year ad journal will contain photos of our graduating seniors and will be a keepsake publication as well as a place for the proud supporters of your child to leave their messages. We hope you will all do your part to make this a successful fundraising effort on behalf of the RPYO. Mark your calendars watch for further information!

## ***Snack Committee***

*Sondra Monachino and Kathy Whalen, Co-Chairs*

Here's to a great year of making your best music! The snack committee is happy to serve our young musicians for another year. We are up and running and you will receive information concerning the schedule and dates of bringing in snacks. Happy Music Making.

## ***Kudos and Applause!!***

Kudos to RPYO musicians who are taking part in the NYSSMA Junior High Regional Orchestra, Band & Chorus performances on November 3 at Roberts Wesleyan College and in the Senior High Regional Orchestra, Band & Chorus performances on November 17 at Attica High School. These are wonderful opportunities to meet other musicians from throughout the region, to play new repertory, and to contribute your fine musical skills to these ensembles.



## **RPYO Musicians in the News**

### **Carolyn Gombert, Channel 10 Scholar-Athlete of the week**

Congratulations to RPYO Horn player **Carolyn Gombert** for being selected Scholar-Athlete of the Week by WHEC-TV, News 10NBC. Carolyn, a senior at Wilson Magnet High School is an avid cross-country runner in the Rochester City League in addition to being number one ranked student in her class and a third year member of the RPYO's horn section.

### **Will Cho, Scholastic Arts Spotlight Award**

Congratulations to **Will Cho** for his recognition by the 2007-2008 Scholastic Arts Spotlight Award program, sponsored by WROC-TV News 8. As an award winner, Will performed on a segment of WROC-TV news in October.

The Scholastic Spotlight Award program is created to recognize outstanding high school senior musicians, visual artists, dancers, and actors in the Greater Rochester Area. This program spotlights students' high accomplishments and talent in an exclusive WROC-TV NEWS 8 NOW campaign that is highlighted by news features and a follow up promotional vignette campaign. The Scholastic Arts Spotlight will culminate in a recognition reception for all student award recipients and an award in the form of a sculpture to be created by a greater Rochester artist representing all four art disciplines.



## **RPYO Musicians perform in string quartets for community events**

**Christy Greer, Lydia Shewan, Mike Sabatka, and D'Arcy Placilla** performed as a string quartet for diners at Max of Eastman Place as part of the RPO's 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary "Red Carpet Spectacular" event. Thank you to Christy for organizing this group.

**Erica Jacobs-Perkins, Rosie Curren, Phil Cistrone, and Margaret Womack** are performing as a string quartet at the Healthy Youth Conference at the Riverside Convention Center on November 7, 2007. This is a conference sponsored by the non-profit Search Institute and hosted by Monroe County and supported by numerous community agencies to promote leadership for developing healthy youth in supportive communities. Many thanks to Erica and Rosie for their efforts in bringing this group together.



**SILLY STRING QUARTET**

## **RPYO Sweatshirts...coming soon**

RPYO sweatshirts will be available for order soon. More information will be forthcoming.

## **Check out our RPYO Web Site!**

Go to [www.rpyo.org](http://www.rpyo.org) for forms, calendar information, and photos of events such as the fall retreat and recent tours.