



KEYNOTES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Midlife Masterpieces

Maestro Lawrence Eckerling and the Evanston Symphony Orchestra will be joined by the dazzling violin soloist Chee-Yun for our opening concert on Sunday, October 26 in Beethoven's *Violin Concerto*. This is a change in both our soloist and repertoire from our original programming. Read all about it in Maestro Eckerling's new column "Behind the Scenes."



CHEE-YUN

All three works on our concert were composed when each composer was in the prime of his life. Two of them were premiered in 1899 and became signature works for their creators. **Jean Sibelius** (1865–1957) was born into a Swedish-speaking family in the Russian Grand Duchy of Finland. He went to a Finnish-language school all through his teens and then began to study law at the university. He soon switched to music studies in Helsinki, Berlin, and Vienna. Sibelius wrote seven symphonies, a violin concerto, numerous tone poems and a large amount of chamber music, but *Finlandia* became one of his best known works. The genesis of this work was a melodrama that Sibelius had written to a poem by Finnish writer Zachria Topelius. Sibelius extracted six tableaux from this melodrama, ending with a movement called Finland Awakens. In 1900, Sibelius reworked this movement into an independent tone poem and changed the name to Finlandia.

Like Sibelius, **Ludwig van Beethoven** (1770–1827) wrote only one *Violin Concerto*, which was premiered in December of 1806. Beethoven had studied the violin as a young man and even made part of his living as an orchestral violinist at the beginning of his career. Among the string works that he wrote there are ten violin sonatas and two charming romances for violin and orchestra. Unfortunately for Beethoven, the concerto was not well-received and despite

severe revision by Beethoven of both the solo and orchestral parts, never gained popularity in his lifetime. Luckily for us, in 1844 Felix Mendelssohn conducted a concert where the 12-year-old violinist Joseph Joachim played the solo, and it has been popular ever since.

Edward Elgar (1857–1934) had a less auspicious start as a composer than either Sibelius or Beethoven. Two of his earlier jobs were bandmaster at the Worcester County Lunatic Asylum and music director of the Worcester Amateur Instrumental Music Society. From the mid-1880's to the mid-1890's he slowly built his reputation as a composer. Elgar's *Variations on an Original Theme (Op. 36)*, which was also premiered in 1899, has become his most popular major work, as well as the most analyzed and discussed. This piece, popularly known as the "*Enigma Variations*" is a theme and a set of fourteen variations which represent Elgar, his wife, and twelve of his close friends, including his publisher, Augustus Jaeger. Among the friends that you will hear are a cellist, a violinist, an incompetent pianist, and even a friend's bulldog.

Welcome to our new season! We're excited to share this music with you! 🎻

—Julie Westbrook



**MUSICAL
INSIGHTS**

FRIDAY,
OCTOBER 24, 2008
1:30 PM

Violinist Chee-Yun will appear and play, along with Maestro Eckerling, for a pre-concert lecture/recital in the Assembly Hall of Presbyterian Homes, 3200 Grant St. in Evanston.



Presbyterian Homes

THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA IS AN ILLINOIS NOT-FOR-PROFIT COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA PROVIDING DIVERSE, ENJOYABLE AND ACCESSIBLE MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT THAT ENRICHES THE ORCHESTRA, THE AUDIENCE AND THE COMMUNITY.

BEHIND THE SCENES



LAWRENCE ECKERLING,
MUSIC DIRECTOR


It was suggested to me by our General Manager that people are fascinated with what happens behind the scenes, so it occurred to me that this was the perfect name for this column.

Back on July 24th I received an e-mail from our originally scheduled guest violinist stating circumstances which required her to back out of her performance with the Evanston Symphony Orchestra this October. No matter the legitimacy of the reasons, it meant that we needed to find a violinist to play the Prokofiev 2nd Violin Concerto, and FAST. There are two management companies, both out of New York, that are like "pre-management" agencies. It is where fabulous, young guest artists have their first experience performing 50 plus concerts a year, many as concerto soloists with orchestras. Touring and playing that many concerts while developing a huge repertoire takes time and experience, and while they get this experience, they offer prices to orchestras (like the Evanston Symphony Orchestra) at rates significantly lower than they will later receive with major management companies. This is a win-win situation....IF...an artist that we want or need is available!

But in this case, I struck out. No one from those companies were available (at least whose playing I "loved"), and the Board had already approved our budget for the year. I then thought of some artists I had worked with before, and immediately thought of Chee-Yun. She had been an artist at one time with one of the management companies I described above. But now she has the same management as Daniel Barenboim and Midori! I called her management anyway just to see. And her management said, well...the timing is perfect because she was performing the Beethoven *Violin Concerto* live on Korean television with the Seoul Philharmonic two weeks after our concert date. And she wanted experience doing another performance with a good orchestra before going on television! So if we were willing to accommodate the piece, Chee-Yun would make herself available to us, and the ESO Board was willing to take the budgetary actions to feature such a superb violinist.

It sounded like a dream come true, except that the Beethoven Concerto is close to 20 minutes longer than the Prokofiev concerto. It would mean that the program would have to be modified. And I had to ask myself, "How many people have already purchased tickets because they wanted to hear the Prokofiev concerto? Or the Haydn symphony?" But deep down I knew from first hand experience how amazing Chee-Yun is, and I know that our audience will adore her. So I removed the twenty five minute Haydn symphony and in its place put Sibelius' beloved, and much shorter, "*Finlandia*."

For those disappointed in not hearing Haydn's "*London*" Symphony or Prokofiev's *Second Violin Concerto*, we'll play them in a future season. But I also know how spectacular Chee-Yun is, and how much you will enjoy her Beethoven!

Lawrence Eckerling
Music Director, Evanston Symphony Orchestra 

MEET OUR SOLOIST: CHEE-YUN


The Evanston Symphony's violin soloist on our opening concert, Chee-Yun, was born in Korea into a large extended family. Her parents loved classical music and her mother wanted to study music, but in a male-dominated culture, she was not allowed to do so and resented being a girl; so she broke with tradition. She saw to it that Chee-Yun and her sisters took music lessons, hoping that they would become music teachers.

The sisters had very different habits. Chee-Yun, who started piano lessons at the age of 4, practiced so many hours a day that her mother, fearing for her child's eyesight, stopped her lessons. "But I still wanted to play an instrument," Chee-Yun relates. "My second oldest sister was playing the violin, which she hated to practice; she really wanted to study classical ballet. I told her that I'd practice it for her so she can become a ballerina! I was 6 years old when I first picked up the violin." When she entered the biggest competition for young Korean musicians two years later, Chee-Yun took the grand prize, and she continued to win prizes. "I saved some of my competition money," she confides, "But a lot of the money went to my Barbie Doll Collection."



CHEE-YUN,
VIOLINIST

Chee-Yun got used to crowds at an early age because her large family gathered often, which has helped her as she tours the world. She enjoys becoming familiar with a variety of cultures. "I love to travel, and I've always been curious," she says. But things don't always go smoothly. Such was the case in Caracas, Venezuela. "I was just about to launch into the recapitulation near the end of the first movement in the famous Bruch Concerto,

and I finished a phrase with a big up-bow, but I lost control of the bow; I managed to catch it somehow. After the concert, the audience members complimented me on my circus catch, not realizing it was all an accident!" 

—Lilias Circle

FEBRUARY CONCERT PRESENTING ONLY MUSIC "MADE IN AMERICA"


Our February 8, 2009 concert is one of the most eagerly awaited in many seasons. Maestro Eckerling has assembled a program which covers our nation's musical history, starting with classics by Charles Ives and Samuel Barber, and then presenting the Illinois premiere of **Joseph Schwantner's** *Chasing Light...*, part of **FORD MADE IN AMERICA** made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund. This is the largest orchestral commissioning consortium in the nation's history. Mr. Schwantner, a Chicago native with a doctorate from Northwestern University, will be in attendance for this premiere. Introducing *Chasing Light...* will be local favorite **Henry Fogel**, past president of both the League of American Orchestras and of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Ford Made in America



This program is made possible by
Ford Motor Company Fund.

The second half of the concert will feature the compositions of fiddle/violin virtuoso **Mark O'Connor**. He will appear as soloist in the final movement of his Fiddle Concerto and in his "*Fanfare for the Volunteer*." Also featured is Mark O'Connor's greatest hit, his "*Appalachia Waltz*" in its string orchestra arrangement. His fusion of bluegrass, country, and jazz styles with the classical symphony orchestra has resulted in sold-out houses throughout America, and season subscribers are the only ones assured of having their reserved seats for this February "*Made in America*" special!


Subscriptions are still available; see the tear-off flap to the right. 

AN EVANSTON SYMPHONY CHRISTMAS

The annual *An Evanston Symphony Christmas*, sponsored by the Evanston investment firm Romano Brothers & Co., brings you another exciting program of festive music, vocals and dance to usher in your holiday season. It's the best Yule celebration in Evanston and will leave you humming and singing all the way home. Our media sponsor for this must-see, must-hear holiday concert, is Pioneer Press.



The Evanston Symphony Festival Chorus will fill the hall with traditional holiday music, lead an audience sing-a-long and join in a big Hallelujah Chorus finale. Evanston Dance Ensemble returns to perform several beautiful dances from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*. And, of course, what would Christmas be without Santa?

Sunday, December 7, 2008 at 3:00 PM in the Evanston Township High School Auditorium, 1600 Dodge in Evanston. Order on-line at www.evanstonsymphony.org or call 847.864.8804. Ask about our family package discount. 




AN EVANSTON SYMPHONY CHRISTMAS CONCERT SPONSOR

Since 1962, Romano Brothers & Co. has provided professional investment services to individuals, corporations, trusts and foundations. Since inception, not only have they been dedicated to enriching the lives of their clients, but they also continue to be committed to supporting the community in which they work. For the past five years, Romano Brothers & Co. has proudly sponsored the Evanston Symphony Orchestra's annual Christmas concert.



"We pride ourselves on the fact that our portfolio managers and staff extend themselves into the community," said Joe Romano, President. This year, Joe became a board member of the Evanston Chamber of Commerce. Other members of the firm are active in Kiwanis, Evanston Library, McGaw YMCA, Evanston Community Foundation, local churches and many other groups.

The philosophy of investing in their community is born out of the firm's solid, unchanged investment philosophy. "All of our portfolio managers develop personal relationships with their clients and build solid, value-driven portfolios. We never advocate buying fads or trends. Our focus is to reduce volatility and increase profit," stated Joe Romano.

Romano Brothers & Co. employs seven portfolio managers with an average of 20 years of investment experience. The firm manages \$850 million in assets and continues to grow steadily. To read more about the firm visit www.romanobrothers.org. 

IN MEMORIAM

The Evanston Symphony Orchestra family is sorry to announce the loss of two long term supporters of the Evanston Symphony Orchestra, Pat Copher and Ellen Schrodt, both of whom passed away this summer. We will miss them and we send our condolences to their families.

Subscribe to ESO's 2008–09 Season Today!

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October 26, 2008

The Voluptuous Violin

Sibelius Finlandia
Beethoven Violin Concerto—**Chee-Yun**, violin
Elgar Enigma Variations

February 8, 2009

Made in America

Fusion of the Fiddle

Ives *Variations on "America"*
Barber *Adagio for Strings*
Schwantner *Chasing Light...*
O'Connor *The Fiddle Concerto (finale)*—**Mark O'Connor**,
Appalachia Waltz classical violin/fiddle
Fanfare for the Volunteer

March 22, 2009

The Voice of the Viola

Mendelssohn *Hebrides Overture*
Wagner *Siegfried Idyll*
Berlioz *Harold in Italy*—**Charles Pikler**, CSO principal violist

May 3, 2009

The Passionate Piano

Brahms *Symphony No. 4*
Tchaikovsky *Piano Concerto No. 1*—**Cameron Smith**, piano

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Pick-Staiger Concert Hall
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WHEN MAESTRO LAWRENCE ECKERLING TAKES THE PODIUM, THE RESULTS ARE EXTRAORDINARY—NO MATTER THE REPERTOIRE. THIS SEASON WILL BE NO EXCEPTION.

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For more information on ESO concerts and events, please contact David Ellis, General Manager, at (847) 864-8804. Write us at Evanston Symphony Orchestra, PO Box 778, Evanston, IL 60204. Email us at esomusic@evanstonsymphony.org. Visit our website evanstonsymphony.org.



This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council



PO BOX 778
EVANSTON, IL 60204-0778

REMINDER!

MUSICAL INSIGHTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2008, 1:30 PM

CONCERT PERFORMANCE

CHEE-YUN, VIOLIN

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2008, 2:30 PM