



KEYNOTES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Rainbow/Eternal Light

The title of the third concert of the Evanston Symphony Orchestra's 66th season refers to the two most recent compositions on our program: *Rainbow Body* (2000) by Christopher Theofanidis and *Lux Aeterna* (1997) by Morten Lauridsen. Yet despite calendar dates, much of the music in these masterpieces sounds less modern than that in the other two works of the concert: the Sibelius Seventh Symphony (1924) and Smetana's *Moldau* (1874).

Christopher Theofanidis (b. 1967) titled *Rainbow Body* as a reference to the Tibetan Buddhist belief that when an enlightened being dies physically their body is absorbed directly back into the universe as light. His principal musical inspiration was a chant "Ave Maria, o auctrix vite" by the medieval mystic Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179). Hildegard's chant is first heard about two minutes into this 13 minute piece, and then recurs several times in between variations and developments of the chant.

Lux Aeterna (Eternal Light) includes references to "light" in the Latin texts for each of its five movements. Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943) composed this choral song cycle in 1997 as a response to the death of his mother, and it is meant to provide consolation similar to that of Renaissance sacred music and of Brahms' *German Requiem*. Lauridsen's choral style is highly popular with choruses; the three best selling choral octavos distributed by Theodore Presser are all by Lauridsen, and include the *O Nata Lux* movement from *Lux Aeterna*. The Chicago Chamber Choir, prepared by its Director Timm Adams (see the inside for an interview with him), will join the ESO for this performance.


The Seventh Symphony of Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) was his farewell to the symphonic form and almost to composition. This Finnish national hero composed nothing after 1926, although the musical world was hoping for an Eighth Symphony. Sibelius believed that a symphony needed a "profound logic" which created a connection



MAR 11, 2012
2:30 PM
PICK-STAIGER CONCERT HALL



CHICAGO CHAMBER CHOIR

between all of its themes, and his Seventh is the ultimate expression of this belief. It is played in a single 24-minute movement which contains the four separate sections of a standard symphony, and which provides the solo trombone with a particularly prominent role. Bedrich Smetana (1824–1884) is commonly thought of as the father of Czech music, and his orchestral masterpiece is the cycle of six symphonic poems titled *Ma Vlast* (My Fatherland). The *Moldau* (1874), or *Vltava* in Czech, which closes our concert, is the second of the cycle and depicts the course of this great river from its origin deep in the forests until its triumphal climax as it flows through Prague. Its principal theme, among the best known melodies in all music, is actually a Swedish folk tune which Smetana learned while living in Goteburg, Sweden. 

—David Ellis



MUSICAL INSIGHTS

FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2012

1:30 PM

3200 GRANT STREET, 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

Applause

Our February 5 concert provided wonderful playing by the musicians of the ESO. I loved our soloist, and I loved the way the orchestra played. I assume that most of you reading this attended the concert, and you will recall something very interesting at the end of the Shostakovich First Symphony. Just a few people started to applaud, and then there was silence. It was only after I had asked the orchestra to stand that the applause came (and very generous applause, I must say).

This incident made me think about what actually happened, and why. We first must go back to the incredible playing of Bella Hristova in the Khachaturian Concerto. During the first movement cadenza Ms. Hristova was mesmerizing. And she played an upwards scale with such conviction that there was a period of silence before she continued. And that silence was REALLY silent...except for one excited audience member who uttered an exclamation because they were obviously exhilarated. Then the cadenza continued, and after the movement concluded everyone applauded, even though it was just the first movement. Yes, it was THAT good. But "rules" were broken. Someone uttered sounds during the cadenza, and the entire audience applauded between movements.

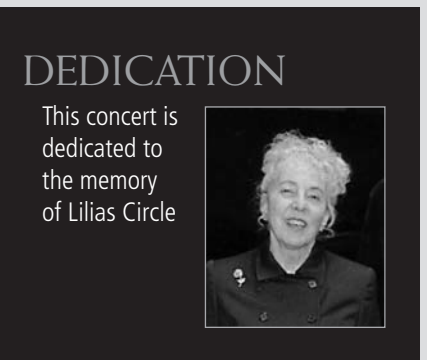
Jump ahead to the Shostakovich Symphony, where in the 2nd movement there is a big climax towards the end. A brief silence is followed by three dramatic solo chords on the piano. Before the first piano chord some applause started. Clearly some people thought that was the end of the movement, but it wasn't. Now some audience members were embarrassed. (Perhaps they felt ignorant, or were made to feel stupid.) And then the third and fourth movements were connected, without the normal pause. And if the audience members hadn't read the program notes, they might not have known that fact. And so the symphony ended, and maybe 2 or 3 people started to applaud, and it was as though they were shushed by other audience members for applauding at the wrong time! (Never mind that it was the correct time).

I am all for rituals at a classical music concert. I like dressing up, and I like our orchestra dressing up. It makes us feel like we are about to perform a special event, and I think that a concert IS a special event. But "rules" which are not born out of one's ability to enjoy the music, but are rather due to a sort of "snobbery" that enables one person to show their superiority over another is not a good thing. I don't like it when conductors "shush" audiences, or have tantrums on the podium if a cell phone goes off or if people are coughing.

I want applause to happen at concerts because people are touched by the music. I want that to be a natural reaction, rather than because "now" is the correct time to applaud.

If I had it to do over again, when people applauded after the first movement of the Khachaturian Violin Concerto, I would have turned around and taken a bow and encouraged our soloist to do the same, rather than just stand there and wait for the applause to stop. Doing what I did was the first contribution in telling an audience that it was wrong to applaud.

History shows that not applauding between movements is a 20th century phenomenon. Audiences frequently applauded between movements during the "romantic" 19th century. Let's make a pledge that here at the Evanston Symphony Orchestra we will encourage people to show their appreciation for the hard work of the volunteers on the stage whenever they are moved to do so. We may consider that a major step in bringing the audience and orchestra closer together both with each other and with the music. 🌈



—Lawrence Eckerling
Music Director, Evanston Symphony Orchestra

ENCORE PERFORMANCE

Members of the Evanston Symphony Orchestra are playing at the Chicago Chamber Choir concerts on March 24 in Chicago and on March 25 in Northbrook.

TIMM ADAMS AND THE CHICAGO CHAMBER CHOIR

The Chicago Chamber Choir went through several incarnations before settling into its present form. It began in 1996 as an *a cappella* choir called “Luminaria” for a thesis project, but once the thesis was finished, so was Luminaria. One of the singers, Toria Burrell, restructured the group in 1999 as “Cantabile,” which then became the Chicago Chamber Choir. Burrell, a graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, directed the group for a year; she then took some time off to raise her family, at which point Timm Adams took over as Artistic Director. Burrell remained with the CCC as its composer-in-residence, however, and this past fall rejoined the group as a singer.



The CCC comprises about 40 voices ranging in age from mid-20s to 50s and in profession from musicians and music teachers to doctors, lawyers, IT experts, science and math teachers and others. All had been in strong choral programs and wanted to continue to experience the sheer joy of singing with a talented group. One of the CCC’s goals is to “bring music to individuals [often] overlooked by the performing arts community.” They have thus performed in Chicago’s inner-city schools, retirement homes, homeless shelters, and rehabilitation centers. Timm Adams’ background lends a certain theatricality to the performances, and a concert is often a dramatic journey: in October they delighted their audiences with Halloween-themed music sung in elaborate costumes.

Timm Adams—the extra “m” was an eighth-grade act of self-assertiveness—grew up in a Baptist family, so piano-playing and hymn-singing were a matter of course. Timm first studied piano and was playing in church when he was 11. He earned a bachelor’s in music education from Liberty University followed by a master’s in vocal performance from Baylor, where he was awarded graduate teaching assistantships in both opera and theatre.

After Baylor, Timm took to the stage and performed extensively throughout the Southeast and Midwest. He was Joseph in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, Cosmo in *Singin’ in the Rain*, and Will Parker in *Oklahoma*, among others—including Ariel, the rollerblading robot, in *Return to the Forbidden Planet!* He also got to know the Alaskan coast as an entertainer aboard Royal Caribbean’s Legend of the Seas. He was nominated for a Kansas City Drama Desk Award for Best Director in 1997, then was hired in 2001 by Rockford College, where he is now Associate Professor of Music and very involved in all aspects of the school’s vocal program, especially its musical theatre productions.

The Chicago Chamber Choir has just written a new mission statement that speaks to celebrating the “unlimited potential of the human voice.” Timm says that he’s in awe of the human voice because it’s the “most personal of instruments.” It’s set apart from an orchestral instrument because it has a text, which gives it a distinct purpose and intent, and thus it can sometimes better touch the human heart. Timm particularly loves the American songbook, especially the vernacular of the 20’s and 30’s and the old hymns, including spirituals and shape-note music; the latter is an *a cappella* branch on the American music tree also called “Sacred Harp,” a reference to the human voice. Timm’s love of vocal music is evident in the glorious sound produced by the CCC.

The Chicago Concert Choir first appeared on stage with the ESO in our February 2010 concert, when they sang the original Thomas Tallis canon as counterpoint to Ralph Vaughn Williams’ *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. Their performance lasted barely two minutes, but left the audience with a sense of wonder and was described as “ethereal,” “stunning” and “breathtaking.” These words and more will describe their performance with the ESO on March 11. 🎵

—Kelly Brest van Kempen

ESO EXTENDS ITS OUTREACH PROGRAMS TO INCLUDE MASTER CLASSES AT ETHS

In addition to virtuosic playing, violinist Bella Hristova, soloist at our February 5 concert, is also a gifted teacher. Maestro Eckerling learned that she enjoys giving master classes, so the ESO approached her about the possibility of teaching a master class at Evanston Township High School.



Scheduling issues were resolved and, thanks to a generous grant from the USG Corporation Foundation, Ms. Hristova appeared at ETHS on February 3, during her residency with the ESO. Charles Abplanalp, Director of Orchestras, selected two outstanding violinists from the ETHS Orchestra for the opportunity to work with Ms. Hristova.

The class was conducted in typical master class format. The student played through a prepared musical selection and then Ms. Hristova provided a lecture/demonstration about technique and expression, working with each student for about 20 minutes before the entire ETHS orchestra, giving each orchestra student the opportunity to witness and learn along with the performing student, as well as to hear Ms. Hristova play. Time was reserved at the end for a few questions. The students were very interested to learn that Ms. Hristova plays a violin made in 1655 by Stradivarius’ teacher, Nicolò Amati.

Complementing its outreach programs for seniors and preschoolers, the ESO hopes to make one of its soloists each season available to the ETHS instrumental music programs for a master class and continue this outstanding learning experience for high school students. 🎵

THE ESO BRINGS RHYTHM AND SONG TO PRE-SCHOOLERS

During the first week of February, nearly 500 pre-schoolers sang, danced and played percussion instruments. They were participating in the Evanston Symphony Orchestra's much loved music education program, *Music In Your World*. During the week, teachers Charles Taylor and Greg Guadalupe brought songs, dance and over 50 different percussion instruments to 28 different classes at both the McGaw YMCA Children's Center and to District 65's pre-schools, Head Start, Pre-K for All and Pre-K at Risk.



The ESO brings these classes four times during the school year. In March, the students will have a chance to play quarter-sized violins. Each session, the children sing songs and learn musical terminology. This year the songs are an African song called *Bulawayo*, and another catchy song called 'It's About Me'.

Music In Your World is made possible by grants from the Evanston Community Foundation and the Kiwanis Club of Evanston.

Maestro Eckerling sums up the importance of these music classes. "Our children need to learn how to feel things deeply, how to give and how to love. No other discipline can teach this like music can, and with a lifelong impact."

The research data consistently demonstrate that children's cognitive abilities show measurable improvement with even a limited exposure to musical training.



PHOTOS BY STRIKE 2 PHOTOGRAPHY

CELEBRATE OUR 66TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON— WITH YOUR GIFT TO THE ESO'S 2012 ANNUAL FUND!

You share the excitement of a live symphonic performance each time Maestro Eckerling and the orchestra take the stage. For 66 years, supporters like you have helped bring music into our community.

The ESO keeps ticket prices low because we're committed to keeping live concerts accessible to everyone. We earn only about half our operating budget from ticket sales. The other half comes from contributions—from generous music lovers like you. Your gifts also support the ESO's music education programs *Music In Your World*, in partnership with School District 65 and the McGaw YMCA, that strengthen educational outcomes and enrich the lives of our children.

We value every gift given and all ESO donors are featured proudly in our concert programs. In addition, leadership donors of \$125 or more are featured on our special **Share the Stage**—each chooses a favorite instrument to sponsor! Gifts of \$125–\$349 are *Section Members* and gifts of \$350 or more are *Principal Players*. Of course, every gift, whatever its size, inspires others to give and ensures the ESO remains a strong and vital part of our community.

Make your tax-deductible gift today! Please look for the **ESO Share The Stage** in the Pick-Staiger lobby at our March 11 concert. You can make your donation at intermission—and choose the instrument you wish to sponsor. Watch your mailbox for more information on **Share The Stage**...and thank you for your support!

DONATION LEVELS

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