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For more information or an ESO concert and event, please contact David Ellis, General Manager, at (847) 864-0100. Work or Evanston Symphony Orch. PO Box 778, Evanston, IL 60204-0778. Email us at comm@evansonsymphony.org. Visit our website at evansonsymphony.org.

THE EVAnton 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.

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, MUSIC DIRECTOR

March 21, 2010 concert of the Evanston Symphony, sponsored by Presbyterian Homes. We begin with the last orchestral music ever composed by Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826), the overture to Oberon. This opera was literally the death of Weber. He learned English in order to set his libretto to music, and then, despite suffering from tuberculosis, traveled against his doctor’s orders to London to oversee its premiere in April 1826. A cold and foggy English spring hastened his untimely demise in June. Weber was a founder of German Romanticism with his operas, and the Oberon Overture is a splendid example of his gift for melody and orchestration, particularly for the horns.

Beethoven’s Eighth Symphony dates from 1813 and was composed concurrently with his Seventh Symphony. More pertinent to the Eighth is another “symphony,” one of his most revered works, Wellington’s Victory, also called the “Battle Symphony.” This was reputedly Beethoven’s most popular composition during his lifetime, and used a new instrument titled the Panharmonicon to create sound effects such as musket and cannon fire. Its inventor, Johann Nepomuk Maelzel, also constructed ear trumpets to help relieve Beethoven’s deafness, but is best known as the creator of the metronome. This brings us back to the Eighth Symphony—the second movement starts with repeated chords in the woodwinds which precisely imitate the ticking of the metronome. The metronomic figures tick along quickly enough to ensure that what is normally the slow movement of a symphony is not at all slow, which helps to make this Beethoven’s shortest and happiest symphony.

Our concert concludes with the greatest of concertos for cello and orchestra, that of Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904).


david Ellis
WHY THE ESO

We asked some of our patrons and donors why the Evanston Symphony Orchestra matters to them...

"With a first-rate conductor and outstanding musicians, the ESO can be counted on to provide an enjoyable concert every time. We support the ESO because it is a community orchestra. We drive in from NW Indiana and wouldn't miss it!" – B.M.

"Our daughter plays with the orchestra and we are so proud of her every time we see her play." – T.R.

"Our city is a wonderful place to live and we just love that we have a first class orchestra here, too. We enjoy the concerts." – H.K.

"Thank you for bringing music to where I live, Presbyterian Homes. I love listening to Maestro Eckerling at Musical Insights." – F.D.

"We look forward to your holiday concert every year. It's part of our family tradition." – D.L.

The ESO brings music to so many—though our concerts, educational outreach programs in schools and the community, take a moment to reflect on why the ESO matters to you ... and consider making your gift today. Thank you! 

OUR CONCERT SPONSOR, PRESBYTERIAN HOMES, SHARES SOME NEWS WITH YOU

Presbyterian Homes has launched www.SeniorCareAnswerTeam.org, a new online resource for caregivers of older adults — perhaps an adult child who is caring for a parent or someone who is caring for a spouse or relative. The site helps give caregivers a better understanding of available care services so that they can choose the right kind of support for their family member.

Information at www.SeniorCareAnswerTeam.org includes how to determine whether a family member needs help, the different types of senior living and community services, and suggestions for discussing the need for more support with a loved one. The site also addresses financial concerns and resources. Most important, an easy-to-use online form is available so that users may ask questions of the Senior Care Answer Team, a multidisciplinary group of highly experienced health care professionals from Presbyterian Homes.

"Throughout our years of experience, we've learned that every family's situation is different, and most feel they are in uncharted territory. The array of terms, choices and financial considerations is overwhelming," says Lisa Vandermark, director of memory care at Westminster Place of Presbyterian Homes. "We wanted to provide a comprehensive site with answers to questions people have most often and a way for them to ask questions specific to their circumstances."

"We welcome questions from anyone — not just those considering a move to a Presbyterian Homes' community," Ms. Vandermark continued. "The information and answers we provide are not specific to our organization. This site continues our mission of serving older adults wherever they may live."

WENDY WARNER

Wendy Warner never wanted to play the cello—at least initially.

"I didn’t even really like the sound of the cells at first," recalls the virtuosis 37-year-old. "I thought, this is a really masculine instrument and I wanted to be soprano."

Of course, we are lucky that Warner’s mother chose her daughter’s instrument. Since she began studying with Heifetz at age 6, Warner has captivated the classical music world. Her career took off in 1990 when she took first place at the Fourth International Rostropovich Competition in Paris. That same year, she made her New York debut with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mischa Rostropovich. She has since performed with some of the finest orchestras and collaborated with some of the most celebrated composers and ensembles in the world.

Looking back, the longtime Chicagoan acknowledges her career was more than she ever expected. She also notes that her successes came gradually.

"Little by little, things happen when you’re ready for it and then it kind of brings you to the next level," she remarks.

Of course, one of her big breaks was studying with the great cellist Rostropovich. While still in high school at North Shore Country Day School in Winnetka, she traveled to Washington D.C. two or three times a year for intensive one-day sessions with Rostropovich. She later studied with him at the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. The musical giant died three years ago, but his musical legacy endures.

"He always pushed me," she says. "It wasn’t just about being a good cellist... but just never to be satisfied with that, to always strive deeper into the music."

Today, she passes on that spirit to her students at Roosevelt University in Chicago. Besides teaching, she is involved with various musical pursuits. She has formed the Beethoven Project Trio; a CD of a world premiere of a recently discovered Beethoven trio and other unknown trios is scheduled to come out this spring. She is also half of a duo with pianist Irina Novoselska. This year, they were selected as the showcase chamber music ensemble at the Chamber Music America Annual Conference.

Meanwhile, her solo career continues to flourish. She is proud of a recording of Popper and Matz's that was released during the past year. As an adult, she is intent on diversifying. Among her professional goals is to make more recordings. "Now that I'm older I have to find ways to be versatile and find new ways to be creative," she says.

"—Liza Berger
MUSIC IN YOUR WORLD

I had the privilege to participate in and attend the Evanston Symphony Orchestra's (ESO) Music In Your World program last week at Evanston’s School District 65. I was just sitting down to observe the session when the preschoolers, ages 3-5, entered the classroom. Typical for children their age, they were holding hands in a long line. They curiously looked at their teachers and the many strange, colorful instruments laid out on a table in front of them. Today, they would learn about percussion instruments and the musical terms for loud, or forte, and soft, or piano.

ESO music educators, Charles Taylor and Greg Guadalupe, welcomed the children and immediately grabbed their attention. They were animated and fun to watch as they led the children through interactive exercises involving rhythm, movement, clapping, and singing. Music in Your World is highly anticipated and loved by teachers, special needs educators, pre-school students, and parents each year. Due to your generous donations and with the help of grants, the ESO has expanded the program from 125 Head Start, Pre-K for All, and Pre-K at Risk students to 400 students served today.

According to one teacher at the session, “This is an amazing program! The music educators do a fantastic job of bringing musical concepts down to the children’s level. The presentation is so visual. A month later, the kids are still singing the songs.” In addition, this program serves students with special needs. District 65’s inclusion policy allows special needs students to participate in the classroom alongside children in Head Start, Pre-K for All, and Pre-K at Risk classes. According to teacher Linda Van Ausdall, “Music allows teachers and parents another avenue to reach and communicate with these children. We are very grateful for the program and are thrilled to have the ESO back again this year!”

With Charles on the keyboard and Greg on percussion, the session wrapped up with an energized version of “This Little Light of Mine.” By this time, I was also on my feet with the teachers and singing alongside the pre-schoolers. The mood was infectious, and it was a true delight to see how music touched everyone in the room.

I couldn’t think of a better way to end the article without sharing a word of wisdom from our music educator, Mr. Taylor: “Remember, when someone is too loud, make sure to turn to them and say ‘shhhhhh…piano!’” Now that is wisdom from our music educator, Mr. Taylor.

---Veronica Bashbush, ESO Board Fellow

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