



KEYNOTES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Music from the English Countryside

All three works on this third concert of our “Musical Passport” season evoke the beauties of the English landscape (and seaside), having been composed in Suffolk, Sussex and Surrey, but all three were actually premiered in London.

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976) began planning his opera *Peter Grimes* in sunny Escondido, California in 1942 when he read a series of poems titled *The Borough* by George Crabbe. Aldeburgh, on the North Sea in Britten’s native Suffolk, is the location for these poems, and after deciding upon the character Peter Grimes as the subject for an opera, he returned to England to compose it. The premiere in 1945 was an immense success; *Peter Grimes* is now viewed as the most important English opera since the 17th century. Britten assembled several major orchestral excerpts to form the *Four Sea Interludes* (Dawn, Sunday Morning, Moonlight, and Storm).

The Cello Concerto of Edward Elgar (1857–1934) was the last major work of his life, and ranks with that of Dvořák in the cello concerto repertoire. Elgar himself told a friend after its 1919 premiere “If ever you are walking on the Malvern Hills and hear the main theme of the Cello Concerto it’s only me—don’t be frightened.” Although Elgar was from the west of England, he composed this Concerto in a house named Brinkwells, located in Sussex not far from London. The Cello Concerto has four movements, rather than the three which are the norm for concertos, but is the shortest and most concentrated of Elgar’s important orchestral works.

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) was a pioneer, along with his closest musical friend Gustav Holst, in exploring and documenting English folk songs; he also compiled and edited the *English Hymnal* (1906). His Fifth Symphony draws upon these traditional elements



of English music for its inspiration, as well as upon themes from his opera *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. The 1943 premiere of this deeply spiritual symphony provided a transcendent escape from the horrors of World War II and the blitz, and it retains a very high standing among Vaughan Williams’ nine symphonies. It was composed at Leith Hill in Surrey, the home of the Wedgwood family of pottery fame, just 15 miles from Elgar’s Brinkwells. Vaughan Williams’ mother was the daughter of Josiah Wedgwood III and the niece of Charles Darwin, which may help explain why in spite of the religious nature of so much of his work, Vaughan Williams was actually a “cheerful agnostic.”



WENDY WARNER

—David Ellis



MUSICAL INSIGHTS

FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2013
1:30 PM

FREE
OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC

MEET
WENDY WARNER

1611 CHICAGO AVE., EVANSTON

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North Shore
A retirement hotel



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. 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.

BEHIND THE SCENES



LAWRENCE ECKERLING,
MUSIC DIRECTOR

This time of year is always exciting for me. A big reason for that is that while currently in the middle of the ESO season conducting rehearsals and performances, I am also simultaneously crafting together the following season for the ESO.

Finalizing programing

and identifying and engaging guest artists is a particular joy for me, and I always get pumped up getting all of the pieces of the puzzle to fit together!

Next season's theme celebrates the City of Evanston, surrounding festivities for its 150th Anniversary. It's particularly fitting since the Evanston Symphony Orchestra has been an important institution for the city of Evanston for almost 70 years.

We open next season with our official "Evanston 150" concert, which includes representation by other Evanston institutions. Student twin pianists Kyle and Ryan Jannak-Huang, students at the Music Institute of Chicago will be featured in Camille Saint Saën's delightful *Carnival of the Animals*, and narrating the Ogden Nash verses before each movement will be Toni-Marie Montgomery, Dean of the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University. Also featured on this concert will be Ravel's *Bolero* and Mussorgsky's *Pictures At An Exhibition*, both featuring solos by many members of the ESO, illuminating the "Community" aspect of a great Community Orchestra.

And opening the concert will be the world premiere of Mark Gresham's *Evanston Fanfare*, a fanfare for brass composed specially for the Evanston Symphony Orchestra!

Our next concert features an "all-Hungarian" 1st half, pairing Bartók's great *Dance Suite* with Franz Liszt's *Totentanz* for Piano and Orchestra, music based on the ominous "Dies Irae" chant, which evokes the day of judgment. Russian pianist Gleb Ivanov will perform. And this concert closes with the stirring Finnish patriotism of the 2nd Symphony by Jean Sibelius.

Our third concert features violin virtuoso Sang Mee Lee, head of the string department at the Music Institute of Chicago, performing Bruch's beloved 1st Violin Concerto in G Minor. Also included is Barber's Overture to *The School for Scandal* and Beethoven's great Third Symphony ("Eroica").

The closing concert of this celebratory season honors another anniversary. In honor of Verdi's 200th Birthday, we will be joining forces with the North Shore Choral Society to perform Verdi's monumental Requiem. Vocal soloists include Sarah Hibbard, Stacy Eckert, Eric Ashcraft and Aaron K. Stegemöller. I can't wait to hear this work with its huge forces, including off-stage trumpets, in the Pick-Staiger Concert Hall. I get excited just thinking about it!

Next season promises to be exciting, rewarding, uplifting and celebratory. I hope that you will subscribe today!

—Lawrence Eckerling

Music Director, Evanston Symphony Orchestra

Important Subscriber Information

After reading the "Behind the Scenes" article directly above, I hope that you are as excited about our upcoming "Celebrate Evanston!" season as we are.

Please note the flap to the right, which includes a complete listing of the concerts on one side and an order form on the other side. I want to draw your attention to three very important items about ticketing for next season.

1. This year the deadline for ensuring your same assigned seats will be **July 15** rather than the normal date of June 15, because our final concert this year is on June 16. However, please do not miss the July 15 date for our receipt of your order because we expect strong demand for tickets
2. In order to ensure the maximum choices of seating for subscriptions, single ticket orders for the June 15, 2014

Verdi Requiem concert will be filled after our first concert on November 10, 2013, subject to availability at that time. Single ticket orders for all other concerts will be filled on July 31, 2013.

3. We will not be able to accommodate free ticket exchanges *into* the Verdi Requiem concert. Our normal policy of free ticket exchanges between concerts (as long as the tickets being turned in are for a concert not yet played) will remain in effect for all other concerts and for exchanges *out of* the Verdi Requiem concert.

Thank you for your loyalty to our orchestra and please subscribe before July 15!

—David Ellis

General Manager



WENDY WARNER

Wendy Warner on Elgar's *Concerto for Cello in E Minor*

Wendy Warner describes herself as “shy,” but you’d never think so from the enthusiastic talk about music and the bubbly laugh that came across the airwaves from Columbus, Georgia, where Wendy teaches at the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University. She is an extremely talented musician with many accolades, but because the Elgar *Concerto for Cello in E Minor* is a standard of the cello repertoire, we decided to concentrate our questions on that great piece of music. You can read more about Wendy and her stellar career at www.wendywarnercello.com.

Wendy was a protégée of the great Mstislav Rostropovich at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and winner of the fourth Rostropovich International Competition in Paris at age 18. She said that Rostropovich didn’t want to give her lessons based on the Elgar because, in his view, “he didn’t play it well and therefore never performed it well,” a sentiment Wendy understands. “Elgar’s concerto has a specific emotion, a different kind of intensity from the concertos of Shostakovich, Prokofiev and Dvořák. It’s rhapsodic and operatic; you have to bare your soul in a different way than you would with, say, Bloch’s *Schelomo*. It has English restraint, yet is elegant. It’s hard to find a balance and easy to over-emote. You make it your own — or maybe not!”

She finds the Elgar not as technically difficult as some other works for cello, but says that the second movement does move at lightning speed. One of the more difficult things for the soloist is timing the vibrato with the orchestra. She especially likes the last page of the piece, where the soloist has to capture the essence and the drama “without overdoing it.” As with any work, Wendy tries to bring an interpretation that serves and justifies the music. She says she is always growing as a musician and her interpretation will be different in ten years.

When asked if she was influenced at all by Jacqueline du Pré’s famous recording of the Elgar Concerto, Wendy responded that anyone who studies this piece *should* be influenced by it. Wendy doesn’t want to mimic du Pré’s style and says she’s a bit more modest and classical in her interpretation. However, “du Pré set the standard. It’s hard to say if anyone else has played it as with as much meaning.” When Wendy performs Elgar’s *Concerto for Cello in E Minor* with the ESO on May 5, she’ll be using the very same bow used by Felix Salmond in the premiere of the work in 1919. While there may not be any resonances from that performance after almost 100 years, we think that Salmond and, especially, Elgar would be impressed by Wendy Warner’s performance of this great work. 🎧

—Kelly Brest van Kempen

Presbyterian Homes Rated Top-Notch Healthcare by U.S. News and World Report



For generations, Presbyterian Homes has been committed to its founders’ vision of providing a place where the dignity of every person is honored, spiritual values are upheld, and excellence of service and quality healthcare is the way of life.

U.S. News and World Report recently awarded five-star overall ratings to The Moorings Health Center in Arlington Heights, IL, and Westminster Place, McGaw Care Center in Evanston, IL. Both properties are part of Presbyterian Homes’ continuing care retirement communities. The health centers offer short and long-term nursing care, rehabilitation services and memory care.

“We’re very pleased to achieve a top rating in this report,” says Linda Dotson, health care administrator at Westminster Place, McGaw Care Center. “I believe it is our team that makes the difference. We have an interdisciplinary team that is very experienced and continually engaged in delivering comprehensive, person-centered care to our residents.”

The ratings were developed using combined information from state health inspection reports, nurse staffing

information and selected quality measures of clinical care reported at the Nursing Home Compare website run by the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Presbyterian Homes’ continuing care retirement communities offer the full continuum — independent living, assisted living, and healthcare availability on-campus if the need arises.

ABOUT PRESBYTERIAN HOMES

Founded in 1904, Presbyterian Homes is a not-for-profit, faith based organization with a national reputation for creating extraordinary retirement communities. Presbyterian Homes serves older adults through its residential and healthcare programs on campuses in Evanston, Lake Forest and Arlington Heights Illinois. The organization is accredited by CARF-CCAC (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities-Continuing Care Accreditation Commission), the nation’s only accrediting body for retirement communities.

To learn more about Presbyterian Homes, visit www.presbyterianhomes.org or call (847) 866-1641. 🎧



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- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| GRESHAM | <i>Evanston Fanfare</i> |
| OFFENBACH | <i>Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld</i> |
| SAINT-SAËNS | <i>Carnival of the Animals</i>
<i>Kyle and Ryan Jannak-Huang, Piano</i>
<i>Toni-Marie Montgomery, Narrator</i> |
| RAVEL | <i>Bolero</i> |
| MUSSORGSKY
(ORCH. RAVEL) | <i>Pictures at an Exhibition</i> |

Hungarian Connection March 16, 2014

- | | |
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| BARTOK | <i>Dance Suite</i> |
| LISZT | <i>Totentanz</i>
<i>Gleb Ivanov, Piano</i> |
| SIBELIUS | <i>Symphony No. 2 in D Major</i> |

Three 'B's May 4, 2014

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| BARBER | <i>Overture to The School for Scandal</i> |
| BRUCH | <i>Violin Concerto No 1 in G Minor</i>
<i>Sang Mee Lee, Violin</i> |
| BEETHOVEN | <i>Symphony No. 3 in E Flat "Eroica"</i> |

Verdi Requiem June 15, 2014

- | | |
|-------|---|
| VERDI | <i>Requiem</i>
<i>North Shore Choral Society</i>
<i>Julia Davids, Music Director</i>
<i>Sarah Hibbard, Soprano</i>
<i>Stacy Eckert, Mezzo Soprano</i>
<i>Eric Ashcraft, Tenor</i>
<i>Aaron K. Stegemöller, Bass</i> |
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Lawrence Eckerling, Conductor

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**Single tickets for Concert 4 (June 15, 2014) will be assigned after November 10, 2013 and will be subject to availability at that time.*

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