




# KEYNOTES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF  
THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA


LAWRENCE ECKERLING, MUSIC DIRECTOR

## Three 'B's

Note that our concert title is not "*The Three B's*," a phrase coined by the noted German conductor Hans von Bülow which refers to Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. Our three 'B's' do include Beethoven, but his "Eroica" Symphony is joined by masterpieces by Max Bruch and Samuel Barber.

The program begins with the *School for Scandal* Overture of Samuel Barber (1910–1981), which was his first orchestral work, written as a graduation thesis at the Curtis Institute of Music in 1931, and premiered in 1933. This nine minute showpiece is meant to typify the 1777 English upper class comedy of the same name by Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and is a stand-alone sonata form movement. It is notable for its beautiful theme for the solo oboe, the first of many lyrical oboe solos from this American romantic composer. (When this theme is reprised it is played by the oboe's close relative, the English horn).

Max Bruch (1838–1920) was a leading German composer of the Romantic era whose list of works numbers close to 100, and includes three symphonies, three violin concertos and many other works for solo instrument with orchestra. However, he is now known primarily for his Violin Concerto No. 1 in G Minor, which is the second work on our program. The extremely influential virtuoso Joseph Joachim gave the premiere of the standard version of this concerto in 1868, and many years later stated that "the Germans have four violin concertos." His list included the concertos of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Brahms, and the Bruch G Minor, which he said was "the richest, the most seductive." The Symphony No. 3 of Beethoven (1770–1827), titled the "Eroica" by the composer, is among the most influential works in the history of music, and particularly in the symphonic form. Its 50 minute length is roughly twice that of the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart. The climax of the



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development section of its first movement contains chords with a dissonance level never before heard. The second movement funeral march (*Marcia Funebre*) simply disintegrates at its conclusion. The central section (Trio) of the third movement scherzo features some of the most difficult horn parts ever composed. The finale is based on a simple dance tune which Beethoven utilized in several other works; see Maestro Eckerling's column on the next page for more on Beethoven and this tune.

The "Eroica" (1804) was originally dedicated to Napoleon, but Beethoven crossed out the dedication on the score when he learned that Napoleon had declared himself an Emperor. The theme of heroism remains, however, and is typified by the key of E Flat Major, which is particularly kind to the French horn. One of the most remarkable features of the "Eroica" is that all of its large scope and grandeur is achieved with the relatively small orchestral forces of a Mozart or Haydn symphony, but with the addition of only one instrument — a third horn! 🎷

—David Ellis



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**MUSICAL INSIGHTS**

**FRIDAY, MAY 2, 2014**

**1:30 PM**

**MEET SANG MEE LEE**

**1611 CHICAGO AVE., EVANSTON**

The  
**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](mailto:esomusic@evanstonsymphony.org). Visit our website [evanstonsymphony.org](http://evanstonsymphony.org).

# BEHIND THE SCENES



I recently saw on Facebook a question posed... If you could sit down for an hour to talk with someone, past or present, who would you choose to talk to? My reply was "Beethoven." Obviously, that isn't possible. While I surely would

love to know the details surrounding his metronome markings in his symphonies (and it's something we likely will never know), he did leave some unique information which can be seen as documentation that we don't have with many other composers. He has left us two particular groups of compositions which show earlier versions and later versions based on the same material. The first group is his three *Leonora Overtures* and the *Fidelio Overture*, in which one can actually see how his ideas progressed or changed from his first version to his final version. The other group, which pertains directly to our upcoming concert, is his use of a particular theme, with the final version being the theme and its associated variations which make up the whole of the last movement of his Third Symphony, the ("Eroica").

In researching for this article and for our upcoming Musical Insights pre-concert lecture, I was startled to come across what is now believed to be the origin of this theme, which is actually a piano sonata by Muzio Clementi in G Minor, Op. 7, No. 3. The theme is obviously stated, though in G minor instead of Beethoven's key of Eb major. I'll play a part of it at Musical Insights on May 2nd and it is totally fascinating! (And before anyone starts calling Beethoven a plagiarist, Beethoven's transformation of that theme is totally original, so that title would not apply!)

This Clementi piano sonata was completed in 1782. Beethoven first used this theme, but transformed, in his set of Contradances dated between 1800 and 1802, and in his ballet the *Creatures of Prometheus* dated 1801. Because of the inexact dates available for the Contradances, it's not possible to say which came first. But certainly the Contradances are very primitive, and not even an exact quote of the theme, but rather an outline, and using similar harmonies. You can hear its influence, but can't call it identical by any means. The last section of the *Creatures of Prometheus* on the other hand, is the identical theme. In some cases, portions of it are scored almost exactly as it is in the Third Symphony. And there are wonderful treatments of this theme. And if for no other reason, it's worth hearing because of the ending, which is vintage Beethoven!

Beethoven then wrote 15 Variations and Fugue in E Flat, usually referred to as the "Eroica" Variations. This is a uniquely individual solo piano work in the same key as the Third Symphony, and also dates from 1802.

And the great Third Symphony ("Eroica") uses that theme to underlie the entire last movement, dated 1804. Most scholars would say that this is Beethoven's ultimate use of that theme in a set of variations, and I would agree completely. If you are so inclined, it is very enlightening to hear the various excerpts of the works mentioned above in succession, and then conclude with the great Third Symphony. But even if you don't, you'll get to hear Beethoven's final thoughts on this theme at the Evanston Symphony's upcoming performance on May 4th. 🎻

—Lawrence Eckerling  
Music Director,  
Evanston Symphony Orchestra

## The ESO Celebrates Its Musicians' Anniversaries

Many of the musicians in the ESO play with the orchestra for many years. All our musicians are volunteers. They attend weekly rehearsals throughout the season, often including sectionals, as well as two dress rehearsals for each concert. Their dedication and commitment to the success of the ESO is very much appreciated. Last year the Board instituted a program to recognize our musicians each year who have achieved milestone anniversary dates for the number of seasons with the ESO. Please join us in acknowledging the following service anniversaries achieved at the end of last season and those we will honor as of the end of the current season:

### 50 years:

Lynn Malnekoff

### 40 years:

Gloria Boyell

Ellen J. Morris

Nancy Robertson

### 30 years:

Karen Boyaris

### 25 years:

Julian Arron

Susan Champagne

Marcia Erickson

Richard C. Holbrook

Mark Westbrook

### 20 years:

Susan Arron

Elizabeth Bauer

Cheryl Haack

Lester Jacobson

Jennifer McGeary

Chitaka Nishikiori

Penelope Sachs

### 15 years:

Rhea Davis

Richard von Holst

### 10 years:

Caroline Dehnert Moyer

Tom Denman

Kimberly Duncan

Paula Eatman-Fischer

Arlene Haas

Joshua Huppert

Nancy Liskar

Michelle Martens

Lawrence Pinto

Shelley Powell

Joshua Sachs

Sara Swain

### 5 years:

Abigail Brass

Ed Coster

William Dawson

Alexis Eyler

Anna Gillan

Barbara Julis

Andy Malovance

Benjamin Melsky

Dennis Morris

Ruth Rozen

Susan Schneider

Ryan Sedgwick

Susan Sevcik


John Sommerville

Laura Stone

# Illinois Council of Orchestras Honors Maestro Eckerling

Recognizing his achievements with the ESO, the Illinois Council of Orchestras named Music Director Lawrence Eckerling "Conductor of the Year" for Community Orchestras. The award will be presented at the May concert.

Criteria used in the selection include innovation in programming and soloist selection, personal involvement in community, relationship with musicians and board and

quality of performances. "Maestro Eckerling was deemed by the committee to have the highest level achievement in each of these areas," said Gregory Clemons, director, ICO awards program. 



## Meet Sang Mee Lee



The first few days of kindergarten were a bit confusing for Sang Mee Lee. "Where are all the other kids' violins?" wondered the precocious 5-year-old. Her bewilderment is quite understandable as she had already been playing the violin for over half of her very young life and would later that same year solo with the Chicago Businessmen's Orchestra! Sang Mee, the middle child of Korean immigrant parents, was born in Evanston and raised in Highland Park. Her mother is an accomplished pianist and wanted to be sure that her children had musical training, an objective Sang Mee's father wholeheartedly supported. Sang Mee was enrolled in a Suzuki violin program a few months before she turned three, so between then and her first days of kindergarten, almost all of her interactions with children were in a group where with every child was also playing a violin. "All the kids in the Suzuki class would play together and go through the repertoire every week," she said. "We had a real sense of community" – which no doubt explains her confusion in kindergarten!

We asked Sang Mee why she chose the violin and not the piano, especially given her mother's training and the fact that her older brother was already playing the piano by the time Sang Mee was born. Sang Mee replied that her mother is quite petite – all of five feet tall – and had greater challenges with the keyboard because of her smaller hands. She suspected her daughter might be petite as well and therefore thought that the violin would be a better instrument for her. This was a wise decision: Sang Mee told us with a laugh that she towers over her mother by two inches!

Sang Mee said that music has always been a part of her life, but she sometimes struggled with it growing up because it had become so much a part of her identity. She was so serious about music at such a young age that the other kids knew her as "the girl who plays the violin." These middle school woes were laid to rest when 12-year-old Sang Mee was fortunate enough to perform with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. She terms the experience a "seminal moment." "I practiced so much!" she said. "But if you're not going to practice for the CSO, when *are* you going to practice?! And there I was, up on stage with

extraordinary musicians in a great big beautiful hall. It was an amazing experience." It was also the deciding factor: after the performance, Sang Mee knew what she wanted to do with her life.

Sang Mee chose to concentrate on music, but said she had to revisit that decision several times as she grew older because she realized that choosing music meant she was not choosing something else. Music always won out, though, and after graduating from Highland Park High School, she earned both a bachelor's and a master's in music performance at Juilliard. She has performed extensively as a soloist and given recitals in the United States, Europe and Asia. Here in Chicago, Sang Mee is the youngest artist to have appeared on the Dame Myra Hess Series and has also performed on Ravinia Rising Stars. She is currently on the faculty of the Music Institute of Chicago.

When asked what else she does besides music, Sang Mee laughed, saying that when she has time, she enjoys cooking, but usually departs from the given recipe. "When you're creative in one part of your life," she added, "it's hard not to be the same in other parts of your life as well." She enjoys spending time with her family and loves the outdoors; although not a camper, she enjoys hiking, running and biking.

While some classical musicians turn to other forms of music – rock and roll, jazz, Celtic, heavy metal – for fun, Sang Mee said she's more of a traditionalist. "I grew up in a generation where the path was a bit more singular," she said. "I only studied classical music." She loves to read through chamber music with friends and particularly enjoys performances where disciplines overlap, such as music with dance or visual arts. "Add two artists and it exponentially gets very creative!" She went on to note that, as a musician, listening to a piece of music in a concert is very different from playing that same piece of music; the latter experience becomes almost visceral. "Studying the music and making decisions on how to focus on it brings another level of relationship with other performers and the composers."

We welcome this extremely talented and thoughtful violinist to our stage. 

—Kelly Brest van Kempen

# Romanticism Endures



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WAGNER *Overture to Tannhäuser*



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BARBER *Violin Concerto*  
Desiree Ruhstrat, Violin

HANSON *Symphony No. 2 "Romantic"*



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