

EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Annual Review for 2008/09



Lawrence Eckerling, Music Director

August 2009

64 Years And Counting!

ESO's just ended season proved to be a standout in many ways. Highlights included:

- All-time records set for season attendance, tickets sold and subscriptions
- Highest attended concert in our history in February 2009 with violinist Mark O'Connor and the Illinois premiere of Joseph Schwantner's *Chasing Light....*
- ESO was one of only four orchestras in the US selected for a residency with Mr Schwantner
- Delightful afternoon of seasonal joy at *An Evanston Symphony Christmas* in December
- Continuation of a series of four free open-air concerts at the Westfield Old Orchard shopping center with a highly successful ESO concert on June 28
- Prudent financial controls; a strong balance sheet
- Positive press coverage, in Evanston Roundtable and Pioneer Press; Dorothy Andries headlined the February concert as "an unqualified success"
- Dedication of the May 3 concert to retiring Evanston Mayor Lorraine Morton
- Growing list of supporters and contributors including Allegra Print and Imaging, Allstate, City of Evanston, Evanston Community Foundation, First Bank & Trust, Generations Fund, Illinois Arts Council, Kiwanis Club, Presbyterian Homes, Romano Brothers & Co, Seyfarth Shaw Charitable Foundation, and Target. Thanks to all of them!
- Successful "Share the Stage" individual fundraising effort. Many thanks to all who participated and rose to the challenge!

Reaching Out

Lawrence Eckerling, Music Director of the Evanston Symphony Orchestra, is a strong supporter of music education for all ages. "Music education must be an important component in our school system because music is a vital part of humanity," he said at District 65 offices in March.



Maestro Eckerling was observing at our ESO program, Music In Your World, which we coordinate for Evanston School District 65. The ESO brings this highly popular program to 250 pre-schoolers enrolled in Head Start, Pre-K for All, and Pre-K at Risk. Led by Northwestern doctoral student, Charles Taylor, we introduce music, dance, music concepts and musical instruments to under-privileged three to five year olds, who love this program. Members of the orchestra bring their instruments and love of music to share their expertise with the children. It is well documented that the study of music requires skills and discipline in learning which are helpful in other disciplines.

This program enjoys strong community support. The Evanston Community Foundation has partially funded this program and will do so again next year. The Kiwanis Club of Evanston and City of Evanston Cultural Fund are other funders. We are very grateful to all these organizations which help us with this important outreach program. Maestro Eckerling sums up the importance of this program: "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."



Excellence Recognized

The 2008/09 season gave us another reason to celebrate. Past President Penelope Sachs was named Board President of the Year by the Illinois Council of Orchestras, honoring her highly successful five year tenure guiding the ESO Board.





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Musical Insights remains a popular offering at Presbyterian Homes, which will again be our generous sponsor in 2009/10. Thanks to Julie Westbrook, David Ellis, and Music Director Lawrence Eckerling, plus our concert soloists who are able to appear, for making this continuing free public lecture series possible.

Coming Up for 2009-10

Musical highlights of our upcoming “Spectacular Sounds” season will include: October 25 – Saint-Saens’ “Organ” symphony and Poulenc’s Two Piano Concerto with the Kotlyar-Shifrin Piano Duo; February 7, 2010 – ESO principal trumpet Don Cagen in the Concerto of Haydn plus the sonic spectacular Sinfonietta of Janacek (partially supported by a grant from the Elizabeth Cheney Foundation); March 21 – Wendy Warner performing the Dvorak Cello Concerto; and May 2 – the much requested return of violinist Irina Muresanu in the Tchaikovsky Concerto.

We are pleased to announce that **Romano Brothers & Co** will again sponsor a delightful afternoon of seasonal joy at *An Evanston Symphony Christmas* on December 6, 2009. Due to its ongoing support of this concert as well as other Evanston cultural organizations, Romano Brothers & Co was named the second recipient of the Leadership Award presented by the Arts & Business Committee of the Evanston Arts Council.

Permanent assigned seating for our Pick-Staiger concerts has been a smashing success, with subscription renewals at an all-time high!



L to R: Paul Giddings, Dick Romano, Joe Romano, Penny Rotheiser



Maestro Eckerling and ESO take a bow at Westfield Old Orchard



Composer Joseph Schwantner, Mayor Lorraine Morton, ESO Board President Cheryl Haack, and Music Director Lawrence Eckerling

For more information on the ESO's 2009-2010 season, visit www.evanstonsymphony.org and stay connected by following us on Facebook and Twitter!