



EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Lawrence Eckerling, Music Director

2017-2018 ANNUAL REVIEW

EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S VINCENT FLOOD AWARDED BOARD PRESIDENT OF THE YEAR 2018 BY ILLINOIS COUNCIL OF ORCHESTRAS

"MUSIC FROM MANY LANDS" 72ND SEASON EXPANDS OUTREACH

With the support of record donations from individuals and Board members, plus continued strong earned income from the sale of tickets and advertising, the ESO was able to markedly expand its outreach activities in the areas of Early Head Start and our first ever Young Persons' Concert. Both of these initiatives are described below.

The underlying source of our financial strength was the continuing high artistic quality of the playing of our volunteer orchestra in these six concerts:

- **October 22:** "Beethoven 7" introduced rising star violinist William Hagen in the daunting Sibelius Concerto, with Schumann's *Manfred* Overture and Beethoven's Seventh Symphony completing the program.
- **February 4:** "Rodrigo Guitar Concerto." Music in the Spanish/Latin styles from six different countries was highlighted by the solo guitar of Jason Blair Lewis in Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*.
- **March 18:** "Imperial London" encompassed English music from the *Crown Imperial Coronation March* to Haydn's "London" Symphony and Henry Fogel narrated Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*.
- **May 13:** "Brahms Piano Concerto 1" was stunningly performed by Thomas Pandolfi, and the ESO dazzled in the *Promenade Overture* of John Corigliano and Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* (1945).



Jason Blair Lewis

- **Special Evanston Symphony Holiday Concert:** The holidays are all about the joy of coming together. Evanston Symphony Orchestra once again presented this delightful seasonal concert showcasing music from many genres, all celebrating the holidays. The Evanston Symphony Holiday Gospel Choir sang The Temptations' arrangement of "Silent Night" with the full orchestra.

Evanston Dance Ensemble danced to Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, as well as swinging to Stephenson's jazzy version of "Rudolf, the Red Nosed Reindeer." North Shore Choral Society and Evanston Children's Choir joined us for songs from Handel and Rutter. And everyone joined in for "Hallelujah" from Quincy Jones' "Handel's Messiah: A Soulful Celebration," bringing the audience to its feet.

- **Young Persons' Concert – a new tradition:** For the first time ever, Evanston Symphony Orchestra teamed up with the four orchestra teachers from District 65's middle schools to present a very special free Young Persons' concert. Over 140 middle school students joined the Evanston Symphony Orchestra's musicians on stage at ETHS for the finale of this fun concert. Together students and ESO musicians played side-by-side, performing "Great Gate of Kiev," from Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. ESO also performed music from *Star Wars* and Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*, with Henry Fogel narrating. All musicians, young, old, and in-between, enjoyed themselves enormously. The ESO raised over \$5,000 from this concert to establish a fund for quality scholarship instruments for D65.

ESO would like to thank all its sponsors for making this concert possible, particularly the Gold Sponsors: Evanston Arts Council, Evanston Community Foundation, Craig and Alexis Eyster, Hagerty Consulting, HEART Certified Auto Care, Nature's Perspective, Penelope and Toby Sachs, and Shure Brothers.

Share the excitement at this free concert in 2019!



Evanston Symphony Orchestra's Young Persons' Concert

MUSIC IN YOUR WORLD EXPANDED TO EARLY HEAD START



Evanston Symphony Orchestra is delighted to announce that with a grant from the Evanston Community Foundation, and continued support from First Bank & Trust, Kiwanis Club of Evanston and the North End Mother's Club, we are able to expand our free pre-school music education program,

Music In Your World, to include students and families in Early Head Start. Moms and very young children sing songs and dance together, learning to love music and learn about language. Lessons for 400 pre-schoolers in Head Start and Pre-K will also continue next year.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

These are challenging times for all arts organizations. That makes the ESO's financial stability all the more remarkable. Thanks to strong ticket sales, donations from generous individual donors, strong continuing support from corporations, foundations and members of the Board of the ESO, and prudent financial management by the Board of the ESO, the ESO was financially successful another year. The ESO wishes to acknowledge the following for their support of the ESO: City of Evanston, Elizabeth Cheney Foundation, Evanston Community Foundation, Generations Fund, Illinois Arts Council, The Merion, Presbyterian Homes, as well as our special "Music In Your World" sponsors. Also the following corporate foundations: GGA, Google, McMaster Carr, Pfizer, USG, and W. W. Grainger. Plus this year we received special funding for the Holiday Concert from Bennison's Bakery, Tom and Cathy Carr, Hagerty Consulting, Little Beans Café, and Northwestern University.

A BIG THANK YOU TO TWO VALUED SPONSORS

We would like to thank two very special sponsors for their continuing support this year.

 THE MERION

The Merion continues as the ESO's Musical Insights host and sponsor. The beautiful Crystal Ballroom at The Merion is a superb setting for this excellent concert preview series.

 Presbyterian Homes

Presbyterian Homes sponsored our "Brahms Piano

Concerto 1" concert and provided refreshments for our audience. Maestro Eckerling and vocalist Lynda Dresher performed a recital of standards from stage, screen and the "Great American Songbook" at Presbyterian Homes in April to the delight of visitors and residents there.

A FINAL THANK YOU

After four years as ESO's President, I'm proud to announce that Cheryl Haack, a former Board President and an Orchestra section leader, will be taking over. Which gives me a chance to say thank you to ESO's members and supporters one more time, and to say how proud I have been to be associated with an organization which I think **defines** what a community arts organization should be.

Under Maestro Eckerling's baton, those of you in our volunteer-based orchestra have reached unimagined artistic heights. That achievement has been the foundation on which ESO brings in record audiences, and that in turn has allowed us to play a key role in our vibrant community. I'm so proud of our Young Persons' Concert, our free "Musical Insights" programs in downtown Evanston, the expansion of our Holiday Concert to include more of our community, our "Music In Your World" program of music education for pre-K children, and our new music education for even younger children as part of the "Cradle to Career" impetus. Those are all programs which have been imagined, put together and funded by community volunteers — an amazing accomplishment, but one that ESO's volunteers seem to keep on achieving, year after year. In a virtuous circle, ESO is using the world's greatest music, performed brilliantly, to bring music more deeply and long lastingly into the community around us, and to include that community as part of us.

Under David Ellis' leadership and stewardship, working with the Board and our donors — those of you who make ESO's remarkable music-making and community engagement possible — ESO's finances are sound enough to allow us to stretch, both artistically and in community engagement. (You should know that Mr. Ellis' musical knowledge, working along with Maestro Eckerling, is also crucial to our "Musical Insights" program, and to our printed and on-line materials.)

I can't say thank you here to each Board member, or to each Orchestra member, or to each donor, but in closing I do want to mention a few additional names (in no special order) as people to whom I (and you, as ESO members or supporters) owe a special debt: Cathy Carr, Penelope Sachs, Sarah Flax, Suzanne Torrey and Alexis Eyler. These are the kinds of individuals who make community arts happen, and who make this community special.

— Vincent P. Flood, Board President

BOARD CHANGES

Cheryl Haack, board member and principal second violin, was elected president, and we welcome new board member Todd Wiener for our 73rd season, "Virtuosos," featuring all local artists.