



KEYNOTES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Rhapsody in Blue

Our 65th anniversary season concludes with a "Suite Mother's Day" program, featuring three



LAWRENCE ECKERLING,
PIANO SOLOIST AND CONDUCTOR

concert suites plus George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, with Maestro Eckerling as pianist and conductor. (Read more about what's involved when conducting from the keyboard on the next page in the "Behind the Scenes" column.)

The concert opens, however, with an overture, that for Leonard Bernstein's Broadway "operetta" *Candide*. Bernstein (1918-1990) worked on *Candide* and *West Side Story* concurrently and they share a sophisticated melodic quality. The *Candide* Overture is typical of an operetta overture in its use of a number of the themes used later in the show itself.

Our first suite is one of the most popular and best known of all suites, the Suite No. 1 from *Peer Gynt* by Edvard Grieg (1843-1907). Grieg was asked by Hendrik Ibsen to compose music to accompany the stage action of his play *Peer Gynt*, and Grieg supplied what many consider his masterpiece, totaling 26 numbers and 90 minutes of music for orchestra, chorus, and vocal soloists. The Suite No. 1 comprises four numbers, including "Morning Mood" and "In the Hall of the Mountain King."

Howard Hanson (1896-1981) has a strong Evanston connection, in that he both graduated from and taught at Northwestern University, as well as composing a work commemorating the 100th anniversary of its founding. His best known score is the Symphony No. 2 "Romantic", used extensively for the soundtrack of the film *Alien*, but his most ambitious work is the 1934 opera *Merry Mount*, which is set in New England at the time of the Puritans. His suite, like that by Grieg, consists of four sections lasting about 15 minutes in total.



The suite from the ballet *Appalachian Spring* by Aaron Copland (1900-1990) is much more of an independent piece than the two other suites on our program. *Appalachian Spring*, premiered in 1944, followed *Rodeo* and *Billy the Kid* as the third in a triptych of Copland ballets on "Americana" subjects and composed in a populist musical idiom. The original version of *Appalachian Spring* is for a chamber ensemble of only 13 instruments and lasts about 37 minutes. The following year Copland rescored the ballet for full orchestra, cut about 12 minutes of music, and also reordered several sections of the music to create the suite to be performed at our concert.

Our grand finale is George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, with Lawrence Eckerling both conducting and playing the piano solo. In order to conduct while playing, Maestro Eckerling and the piano will be facing the orchestra, which means every seat in Pick-Staiger Hall will have a keyboard view!

I trust that you have enjoyed this 65th anniversary season, and our upcoming 66th will continue with superb programming, soloists, and orchestral playing. See the flap on this issue of *Keynotes* for the all of the exciting details plus an order form. All orders received by the close of the May 8 concert will not incur the handling charge! 🎧

—David Ellis



MUSICAL INSIGHTS
FRIDAY, MAY 6, 2011
1:30 PM

MAESTRO ECKERLING
PLAYS GERSHWIN

3200 GRANT STREET, EVANSTON

 **Presbyterian Homes**

BEHIND THE SCENES



LAWRENCE ECKERLING,
MUSIC DIRECTOR

The first time I ever saw a performance with a pianist conducting from the piano in a performance, it was Leonard Bernstein conducting *Rhapsody In Blue*! At the time I was an extremely young conducting student. And I immediately asked the question, how is it possible? Can one actually conduct and play at the same time? My youthful answer was that it was not possible. One could play, and “then” conduct, but one couldn’t do both at the same time. And therefore, one “shouldn’t.” This of course was based on the premise that conducting was about beating time. Well, conducting is about beating time, but it’s also about much more than that. It’s about unifying a concept for the orchestra. This happens through the face, through the eyes, by “listening” to each other, etc. If you factor in “all” of what conducting is, then it most certainly is possible to conduct and play at the same time. (Admittedly, unless one has an extra hand, it’s still not possible to beat time and play simultaneously!).

So it does require that the orchestra think of the soloist/conductor as a chamber music partner, and get information that they usually get watching, and instead get it from listening. And it does require in a few key places where watching would really be helpful, but not possible, for the orchestra to really be rehearsed in certain transitions so that those transitions can be made.

The benefits of doing this are that the soloist and the conductor are in complete agreement, helping a singular point of view to emerge!

Only very good orchestras can do what is necessary to bring off such a performance, and it is a testament to the Evanston Symphony Orchestra that they are up to this task. I am truly looking forward to performing this work with them, and trust in their abilities to play “chamber music with me” as we perform Gershwin’s favorite classic.

It is again that time of year to renew your subscriptions for next season.

I’m always excited and looking forward to the start of a new season. First, an enormous amount of work and love go into the planning for each of our concerts. The experience of our audience is vitally important to our whole organization, and so great care is taken to present rewarding and enjoyable programs. We try very hard to give you something old and something new, and combine familiar with the less familiar, and we try and present them in interesting ways!

Our first concert features 17 year old Colton Peltier performing the 1st Piano Concerto of Franz Liszt in honor of the 200th anniversary of his birth. That concerto is surrounded by Schubert’s beautiful “Unfinished” Symphony and an audience favorite by Dvořák, his 8th Symphony.

In February, we have an all-Russian program featuring violin virtuoso Bella Hristova in the fireworks of Khachaturian’s Violin Concerto. The program ends with Shostakovich’s 1st Symphony and opens with Mussorgsky’s *Night On Bald Mountain*.

Our March Concert welcomes back the Chicago Chamber Choir under the direction of Timothy Adams. You may remember that in February of 2010 they performed a short Thomas Tallis work as a prelude to our performance of the Vaughan Williams Fantasia on that same theme. They were so exquisite that I have invited them to perform one of my favorite choral works of all time, Lauridsen’s *Lux Aeterna*. Also on the program is Sibelius’ 7th (and final) Symphony, a prize-winning orchestral showpiece titled *Rainbow Body*, and that audience favorite, Smetana’s *Moldau*.

Our final concert is special in that each work originated in a different form. We have Leopold Stokowski’s orchestration of Bach’s Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, originally for organ, as seen in Walt Disney’s *Fantasia*. We also have Brahms’ Piano Quartet in G Minor dazzlingly orchestrated by Arnold Schoenberg (which we endearingly sub-title Brahms’ 5th Symphony!), and we present world renowned (and Chicago Symphony principal) flutist Matthieu Dufour, who will perform Mozart’s 2nd Flute Concerto (originally Mozart’s Oboe Concerto).

This promises to be a magnificent season, and I hope to see you all there! 🎻

—Lawrence Eckerling
Music Director, Evanston Symphony Orchestra

RUTHANNE DEWOLFE RETIRES FROM THE CELLO SECTION AFTER 25 YEARS

Ruthanne has been a member of the cello section with the Evanston Symphony Orchestra for 25 years. She is delighted with having played this long with the ESO, but has finally decided to retire. We tried to Ruthanne to pick her favorite concert across that time, but Ruthanne assured us that she loved every concert! She has also always had a happy relationship with her stand partners. ‘We share serious moments and we share happy moments,’ Ruthanne says.

One of Ruthanne’s favorite concert recollections is from when we were still playing our regular concerts at ETHS. The piece in question was the “Forest Murmurs” from Wagner’s opera *Siegfried*. All through the rehearsals, the cellos had been told to be quieter at one vital entrance, but they couldn’t get it right. At the concert, the conductor conducted with very small gestures, keeping the orchestra quiet. But most of the cellos couldn’t see the beat because he kept his hands so low that only the first desk could see them. At the vital entrance only the front desk of the cellos came in, followed a measure later by the second desk and then by the rest of the cellos. Success! Perfect quiet cello entrance. Ruthanne says the cello section still laughs about that concert.

Ruthanne will be a subscriber next year and remain a generous donor. Thank you for all your dedication and commitment, Ruthanne. 🎻

—Penelope Sachs



RUTHANNE DEWOLFE AMONGST THE
CELLO SECTION

THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
THANKS PRESBYTERIAN HOMES FOR THEIR
SPONSORSHIP OF THIS WONDERFUL CONCERT

Presbyterian Homes’ Online Resource Serves Caregivers of Older Adults

Presbyterian Homes’ SeniorCareAnswerTeam.org is a new online resource for caregivers of older adults — perhaps someone who is caring for a spouse or relative or an adult child who is caring for a parent. 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 the Senior Care Answer Team web site 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, hiring a caregiver and other resources. Most important, an easy-to-use online form is available so that users may ask questions of the Senior Care Answer Team. The team is made up of 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.” 🎻





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Schubert's Unfinished October 23, 2011

ROMANTIC

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, CONDUCTOR

- SCHUBERT** Symphony in B Minor "Unfinished"
- LISZT** Piano Concerto No. 1 in Eb Major
Colton Peltier, Pianist
- DVOŘÁK** Symphony No. 8 in G Major

Night on Bald Mountain February 5, 2012

RUSSIAN

Lawrence Eckerling, Conductor

- MUSSORGSKY** *Night on Bald Mountain*
- KHACHATURIAN** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra
in D Minor
Bella Hristova, Violin
- SHOSTAKOVICH** Symphony No. 1 in F Minor

Eternal Light March 11, 2012

RAINBOW

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, CONDUCTOR

- THEOFANIDIS** *Rainbow Body*
- SIBELIUS** Symphony No. 7 in C Major
- LAURIDSEN** *Lux Aeterna "Eternal Light"*
Chicago Chamber Choir
- SMETANA** *Vltava, "The Moldau" from Ma Vlast*

Dufour Plays Mozart May 13, 2012

REORCHESTRATION

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, CONDUCTOR

- BACH** Toccata & Fugue in D Minor
(ORCH. STOKOWSKI)
- MOZART** Flute Concerto #2 in D Major
Mathieu Dufour, Flutist
- BRAHMS** Piano Quartet in G Minor
(ORCH. SCHÖNBERG)



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The ESO thanks you for your support. All contributions are tax deductible and will be listed in the concert program.