

2013

"The festival's current offerings, under the artistic direction of the composer and pianist Marc Neikrug, are varied and enticing." ~ *The New York Times*



Jul 14 –
Aug 19

Santa Fe
CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL
Marc Neikrug, Artistic Director
Intimate. Compelling. Unforgettable.

season
41



VISION, MISSION, AND HISTORY

Vision

To be a model chamber music festival in a distinctive setting and to be recognized worldwide.

Mission

To bring together the world's finest musicians to perform chamber music in all its forms;

To build a broad and knowledgeable audience of all ages;

To provide diverse educational opportunities; and

To enhance the cultural environment of Santa Fe and New Mexico.

History

Since it was founded in 1972, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival has become one of the world's preeminent music festivals, guided by a visionary spirit and dedicated to artistic excellence and innovation. Contributing to its magic is the Festival's unique Santa Fe setting, nestled amid the timeless splendors of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

With legendary cellist Pablo Casals as honorary president, the Festival's 1973 inaugural season hosted 14 artists performing six Sunday concerts in Santa Fe and additional appearances in other New Mexico and Arizona communities.



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Today, 38 summers later, under the spirited artistic leadership of composer/pianist Marc Neikrug, the Festival invites scores of distinguished musicians, along with emerging young talent, during its 6-week season. Thousands of enthusiastic patrons young and old return year after year to enjoy the more than 80 concerts, recitals, master classes, youth concerts, and open rehearsals, including an Albuquerque Series that made its debut in 2008. In addition, in the off-season, the Festival reaches out to adults and young people in Santa Fe schools with innovative and inspiring musical adventures.

The Composer-in-Residence program, inaugurated in 1976, encourages communication among composers, musicians, and audiences through premieres of Festival-commissioned works, performances of a composer's other works, and concerts featuring the composer as performer. Since 1980 the Festival has commissioned more than 50 works from such eminent composers as Aaron Copland, Ned Rorem, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, John Harbison, Gunther Schuller, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Steven Stucky, and Brett Dean, among many others, thereby contributing significantly to contemporary chamber music repertoire.

In the 2010 season, the Festival begins an exciting new Artist-in-Residence program featuring opera superstar, mezzo-soprano Susan Graham in its inaugural year.

Concerts take place in the intimate, historic St. Francis Auditorium at the New Mexico Museum of Art, the Lensic Performing Arts Center in Santa Fe, and at Simms Auditorium at Albuquerque Academy.

Beginning in 1981 Festival performances have been broadcast on national radio networks, including the WFMT Fine Arts Network, American Public Radio, Minnesota Public Radio, and National Public Radio (NPR). The Festival currently produces a series of 13, hour-long broadcasts distributed nationally by the WFMT Radio Network; performances are also heard on *Performance Today*.

The Festival also maintains a strong tradition of community service, including the *Music in our Schools* program—a music education series for grades K–8 in the Santa Fe Public Schools.

The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival has garnered enthusiastic acclaim not only from music lovers, but also from art aficionados with its 20-year series of collectible posters and program book covers of Georgia O'Keeffe paintings. The tradition continues with other artists, including Dan Namingha, William Lumpkins, Harry Fonseca, Nils Hogner, Laura Gilpin, William Penhallow Henderson, and Emmi Whitehorse.



THE DENVER POST

March 11, 2013

Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival 2013: Packing in the music for six weeks

The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival runs just six weeks, but a lot happens in that tiny time-frame. More than 40 concerts are on the schedule for the 2013 season, and the programs are ambitious.

The season starts small July 14 with Brahms Piano Trio No. 1 as the highlight and ends very big on August 19 with the Santa Fe Desert Chorale taking the stage.

It's hard to pick best bets, but here are a few things that should interest music fans making the drive to Santa Fe this summer.

Star of the show: Pianist Garrick Ohlsson is the fest's artist-in-residence this year. He'll perform three times.

Big names: Pianists Jeremy Denk, Inon Barnatan, Anne-Marie McDermott, Shai Wosner; violinists Daniel Hope, Ida Kavafian and Lily Francis; flutist Tara Helen O'Connor. Plus the Orion, Johannes, Miami, and Shanghai String Quartets.

Special attraction: The "Years of Wonder" mini-festival, each featuring music from three of the chamber scene's favorite composers: Mozart, Schumann and Gesualdo. The four concerts are spread through the season and feature the Santa Fe Desert Chorale.

New stuff: The fest premieres two pieces this year, composer Marc-André Dalbavie's Piano Quartet and Thierry Lancino's String Quartet.

There's plenty more and it's all on the website. Time your visit with something at the Santa Fe Opera and you can pretty much nail the best of New Mexico on one trip.

There are numerous subscription packages available. Info atsantafechambermusic.com. You can also call 505-982-1890.



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February 14, 2013

Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival Announces 2013 Season, 7/14-8/19



The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, with Artistic Director Marc Neikrug and Executive Director Steven Ovitsky, announces its 2013 season, which runs from July 14 through August 19, 2013.

Highlights of this summer include distinguished pianist Garrick Ohlsson as the Festival's 2013 Artist-in-Residence; a four-concert mini-festival entitled "Years of Wonder" that focuses on four exceptionally prolific years in the lives of Gesualdo, Mozart and Schumann, featuring the preeminent Santa Fe Desert Chorale in performances of Gesualdo's ethereal Book V madrigals; the launch of a week-long string quartet

workshop for young composers that comprises daily rehearsals, mentoring by Marc Neikrug and top publishing executives, and world premiere performances of the resulting works; a commissioned premiere by Thierry Lancino and a co-commissioned premiere by Marc-André Dalbavie. Now in its 41st season, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, nestled in the breathtaking Sangre de Cristo Mountains, annually brings audiences a summer season filled with compelling chamber music programs performed by world-renowned artists. In addition to presenting the masterworks of the chamber music repertoire, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival is dedicated to supporting living composers and perpetuating the chamber music medium, which has resulted in the premieres of over 50 newly commissioned works since 1980.

"We are especially excited for this summer's Festival, because it is structured in such a way that clearly highlights the masters of the past, today's consummate artists, and emerging talent that will keep the chamber music art form alive for generations to come" observes Marc Neikrug, who celebrates his 16th season



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as Artistic Director of the Festival. "For instance, the 'Years of Wonder' mini-festival not only looks at the work of three revered composers-Gesualdo, Mozart and Schumann-but more specifically, four particular years in their lives that resulted in some of their most revered works. As part of this festival, we are extremely pleased to welcome back the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, one of the premier choral ensembles in the United States, who will perform Book V of Gesualdo's madrigals. These madrigals, written 400 years ago, are intensely expressive pieces that are guaranteed to move the audience, even more so because they are being performed by one of the best chorales in the nation."

Neikrug continues, "We are also thrilled to welcome Garrick Ohlsson as our Artist-in-Residence this summer. It has been 10 Years since Garrick debuted with the Festival in 2003, and it's so exciting for us to have him return for three separate concerts. Audiences rarely get to hear this incomparable pianist in a chamber music and recital setting."

Juxtaposing the performances of works by classical music masters at the Festival is the launch of a new program for young composers. The week-long workshop welcomes composers Reena Esmail, David Hertzberg and Elizabeth Ogonek who will each write a string quartet that the FLUX Quartet will rehearse with them daily, providing immediate feedback and suggestions for fine tuning. As an experienced composer himself, Marc Neikrug will oversee all rehearsals and counsel both composers and performers. Additionally, executives from publishing companies G. Schirmer and Boosey & Hawkes will meet with the three composers to discuss various aspects of the music business, and what is involved when young artists seek to have their works published, performed and recorded. The week culminates with the FLUX Quartet performing the world premieres of all three works in a concert

that also includes Marc Neikrug's String Quartet No. 4.

In addition to the world premieres by the workshop participants, audiences will hear the world premiere of Thierry Lancino's String Quartet, a Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival commission that will be performed by the Orion String Quartet, as well as the New Mexico premiere of Marc-André Dalbavie's Piano Quartet, a co-commission between the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and La Jolla Music Society for Summerfest.

Additional highlights of the 2013 Festival season include:

"Bach Plus" celebrates J.S. Bach's timeless music, as well as works by his contemporaries and those that were later inspired by him. Figuring prominently in the series is "Reflection and Revolution: Music in the Time of Goya," a multimedia presentation hosted by guitarist Richard Savino that showcases the romantic Spanish painter's work alongside music written during the same time period. Also featured in this Saturday series are Samuel Baron's arrangements of Bach's monumental The Art of Fugue for string quartet and wind quintet.

Baritone Matthew Worth in Schumann's song cycle Dichterliebe (A Poet's Love) and Mahler's Songs of A Wayfarer conducted by Lawrence Foster, as well as soprano Lucy Shelton performing one of her signature roles in Schoenberg's melodrama Pierrot lunaire.

Mexican composer Mario Lavista's atmospheric Marsias for Oboe & Eight Crystal Glasses with surprise guest "crystalists."

7th Annual Chefs' Gala Benefit on July 16 begins with a performance by pianist Inon Barnatan, followed by a private dinner featuring 20 of Santa Fe's premier chefs each designing their own four-course menu and table décor.

The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival's

Albuquerque Series at Simms Auditorium has been expanded to four concerts, allowing audiences outside of Santa Fe to enjoy the superb programs and performers that the Festival brings to New Mexico every summer.

Additional composers featured in the Festival include Beethoven, Berg, Brahms, Chausson, Dohnányi, Dutilleux, Dvorák, Enescu, Schuloff, Shostakovich, Stockhausen, Stravinsky, Suk, Tchaikovsky, Vivaldi, and many more.

Returning artists include pianists Garrick Ohlsson, Jeremy Denk, Inon Barnatan, Anne-Marie McDermott and Shai Wosner; violinists Daniel Hope, Ida Kavafian and Lily Francis; flutist Tara Helen O'Connor; and the Orion, Johannes, Miami, and Shanghai String Quartets, among many others.

Artists making their Festival debut are pianist Soyeon Kate Lee, violinist Benjamin Beilman and clarinetists Carol McGonnell and Patrick Messina.

Subscription packages for the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival are on sale now. Ticket information is available through the Festival website at www.SantaFeChamberMusic.com, and tickets can be purchased by calling 888-221-9836 or 505-982-1890. Single tickets for individual concerts will be available for sale on Monday, February 25.

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS IN DETAIL

Garrick Ohlsson - 2013 Artist-in-Residence

Internationally renowned pianist Garrick Ohlsson serves as the Festival's 2013 Artist-in-Residence, performing on two separate chamber programs in addition to a solo piano recital. These are Ohlsson's first Festival performances since making his debut in 2003. A consummate artist that regularly appears with the world's top symphony orchestras, Ohlsson seldom performs in a chamber music or recital setting,

making his appearances with the Festival this summer a particularly exceptional treat for audiences to experience.

Garrick Ohlsson's first Festival concert this summer is on Sunday, August 11, in a performance of Ernest Chausson's Concerto for Violin, Piano & String Quartet in D Major, in which Ohlsson is joined by violinist William Preucil and the Orion String Quartet. On Thursday, August 15, Ohlsson performs a solo piano recital. And on Sunday, August 18, Ohlsson performs Ludwig Thuille's Sextet for Winds & Piano along with flutist Tara Helen O'Connor, oboist Robert Ingliss, clarinetist Patrick Messina, bassoonist Theodore Soluri and horn player Julie Landsman.

Since winning the 1970 Chopin International Piano Competition, pianist Garrick Ohlsson has established himself Worldwide as a musician of interpretive and technical prowess. Although long regarded as one of the world's leading exponents of the music of Frédéric Chopin, Ohlsson commands an enormous repertoire, which ranges the entire piano literature. A student of the late Claudio Arrau, Garrick Ohlsson is noted for his masterly performances of the works of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, as well as the Romantic repertoire. To date, he has at his command more than 80 concertos, ranging from Haydn and Mozart to works of the 21st century, many commissioned for him.

"Years of Wonder" Mini-Festival

This four-concert "festival within a festival" focuses on the masterpieces of Gesualdo, Mozart, and Schumann written in the years 1611, 1786, 1788, and 1842—each a particularly productive year in the composers' lives.

"When the Orion String Quartet told me they wanted to play all three Schumann quartets this summer, I noticed that all three of these works, in addition to his piano quartet and piano quintet, were written in the space of one year," Neikrug explains of the Festival's initial

inspiration. "These are five of Schumann's greatest works. I found this spurt of creativity fascinating, so I decided to research other composers and see if there were similar patterns. I found that Mozart wrote his last five piano trios in about a year and a half, and the Italian prince and composer Carlo Gesualdo wrote his fifth book of madrigals-some of the most beautiful music I've ever heard, yet also some of the most difficult to perform-in the space of one year. I'm very excited to present these works side by side over the course of four concerts, as it will be a wonderful contemplation of the genius these composers accomplished over a short period of time."

The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival welcomes back the Santa Fe Desert Chorale-one of the nation's premier choral ensembles-in the performances of Gesualdo's ethereal Book V madrigals, which will be spread out over the course of the four concerts on August 12, 14, 15 and 19. Over the course of the "Years of Wonder" mini-festival, Gesualdo's madrigals are joined by Mozart's Piano Trios Nos. 2, 4, 5 and 6; and Schumann's String Quartets Nos. 1 and 3, along with his Piano Quartet and Piano Quintet. The musicians performing the Mozart and Schumann works are violinists Ida Kavafian, William Preucil and Benny Kim; violist Steven Tenenbom; cellists Peter Wiley and Eric Kim; pianist Anne-Marie McDermott; and the Orion String Quartet

String Quartet Workshop for Young Composers

In keeping with the Festival's commitment to supporting living composers and contributing new works to the chamber music repertoire, Marc Neikrug introduces a new program this summer that will guide three young composers through the process of creating and revising a new work for a world premiere performance. The week-long workshop welcomes composers Reena Esmail, David Hertzberg and Elizabeth Ogonek. Each will write a

string quartet that the FLUX Quartet will rehearse with them daily, giving the participants a chance to fine tune their works as they work together with the musicians.

"In my opinion, one of the most difficult things to compose is a string quartet, and I think it is nearly impossible if you do not have some kind of feedback," Neikrug observes. "Sometimes, the work is written and performed as is, and the composer might be so unhappy with it that he or she completely starts over. What we want to do with this new workshop is create a model where composers have the opportunity to write something and have a professional quartet rehearse it and refine it over the course of one week. This allows the composers to make adjustments each day based on what they are hearing, so, at every rehearsal they are bringing their work closer and closer to the final envisioned product. This is certainly a unique learning experience for emerging composers, and we're providing it at a point in their careers when they will benefit from the experience most."

An experienced composer himself, Marc Neikrug will oversee rehearsals. Additionally, executives from the publishing companies G. Schirmer and Boosey & Hawkes will meet regularly with the three composers to discuss career development strategies for succeeding in the music industry. The week-long intensive workshop culminates on Friday, July 26 with the FLUX Quartet performing the world premieres of all three works in a concert that also includes Marc Neikrug's String Quartet No. 4.

Indian-American composer Reena Esmail enjoys working in both the Western and Hindustani classical music idioms. Esmail holds a bachelor's degree in composition from The Juilliard School and a master's degree from the Yale School of Music, where she is currently pursuing a doctoral degree. Her primary teachers have included Susan Botti, Aaron Jay Kernis, Christopher Theofanidis, Martin

Bresnick, Christopher Rouse and Samuel Adler. She has won numerous awards, including the Walter Hinrichsen Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and two ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards. Esmail was a recipient of a Fulbright-Nehru grant for the 2011-2012 year and spent the year living in New Delhi, India, where she was affiliated with the Faculty of Music and Fine Arts at Delhi University, and studied Hindustani vocal music with Gaurav Mazumdar.

Elizabeth Ogonek was born in Anoka, Minnesota and moved to New York City when she was four. She began formal music studies at the Manhattan School of Music Preparatory Division at age five, concentrating on piano. It was not until her junior year in high school that she began composition studies with Matthew Van Brink. She received her bachelor's degree from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University and her master's degree in composition from the University of Southern California, Thornton School of Music. Her composition teachers have included Matthew Van Brink, Don Freund, Claude Baker, Michael Gandolfi, Samuel Adler and Donald Crockett. Ogonek is the recipient of a 2007 Morton Gould Young Composer Award (ASCAP), the 2010 Dean's Prize from Indiana University and the 2010 PACO Youth-for-Youth Commission. Her music has been performed by ensembles such as the Wellesley Sinfonietta, Dinosaur Annex, the Brillaner Duo, members of eighth blackbird and the Britten-Pears Ensemble.

David Hertzberg began his musical studies in composition, violin, and piano when he was eight years old at The Colburn School in Los Angeles. In 2012, he earned his bachelor's degree from The Juilliard School, where he studied with Samuel Adler. He is currently enrolled in the Accelerated Master of Music program at The Juilliard School, where he holds the Jerome L. Green Fellowship. In 2012, he was awarded a Charles Ives Scholarship from the

American Academy of Arts and Letters and an ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award. In 2012, David was also named Composer-In-Residence for Young Concert Artists, a post which he will hold through 2014. His upcoming projects include a commission from the new YCA ensemble miXt, which will premiere his new work this season at The Kennedy Center in Washington, DC and at Merkin Concert Hall in New York, a commission from the New Juilliard Ensemble, which will premiere at Alice Tully Hall, and a 2012 Jerome Fund Commission for the PRISM saxophone quartet, which will premiere in New York and Philadelphia in the 2013-14 season.

Commissions and Premieres

The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival is dedicated to supporting living composers and perpetuating the chamber music medium, which has resulted in the premieres of over 50 newly commissioned works since 1980. This year, in addition to the workshop composers' world premieres, audiences will hear the world premiere of French composer Thierry Lancino's String Quartet, a Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival commission that will be performed by the Orion String Quartet on Sunday, August 11. Before that performance, Lancino will participate in a pre-concert discussion with Marc Neikrug on the art of composing.

On Wednesday and Thursday, July 17 and 18, French composer Marc-André Dalbavie's Piano Quartet—a co-commission between the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and La Jolla Music Society for Summerfest—will receive its New Mexico premiere featuring violinist Lily Francis, violist Teng Li, cellist Nicholas Cannellakis and pianist Inon Barnatan.

Thierry Lancino's groundbreaking work in both electronic and traditional composition places him at the forefront of his musical generation. Recently, Lancino was awarded a prestigious co-commission by the Koussevitsky Music Foundation, the French Ministry of

Culture and Radio France, which resulted in the 2010 world premiere of Requiem with a subsequent release by Naxos recordings, performed by the Radio France Chorus and Philharmonic Orchestra at the Salle Pleyel. Other orchestral commissions include his Violin Concerto (2005) for the Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra and The Death of Virgil, an orchestral suite for the Orchestre National de France (2000). In 2005 he wrote ONXA, a chamber work for mezzo-soprano and strings that had its U.S. premiere at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival in 2008. Also in 2008, his Cinq Caprices for violin and piano were heard at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. In March 2009, the Jeune Chœur de Paris and music director Laurence Equilbey presented the world premiere of Lancino's choral work Who is the Third? at the Opéra Comique in Paris.

Marc-André Dalbavie had his first music lessons at age six and later studied at the Conservatoire de Paris. In 1985 he joined the research department of IRCAM where he studied digital synthesis, computer assisted composition and spectral analysis. He currently lives in St. Cyprien and teaches orchestration at Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris. In 1994 he was awarded the Rome Prize, and that same year was one of three composers to win the Ernst von Siemens Music Prize. In 1998, The Cleveland Orchestra appointed him composer-in-residence for two years. In 2004, he was made a Chevalier des Arts et Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture. Dalbavie has received commissions from some of the world's most prestigious orchestras, such as the Chicago Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw, Orchestre de Paris and BBC Symphony Orchestra; as well as for organizations such as Carnegie Hall, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, London's Proms Festival, Aspen Music Festival, Marlboro Music Festival, Radio

France's Présences Festival and Cité de la Musique in Paris. He is currently writing the music for a new Peter Martins ballet to be premiered by New York City Ballet.

"Bach Plus" Series

The "Bach Plus" series, consisting of five concerts, celebrates J.S. Bach's timeless music, as well as works by his contemporaries and those who were later inspired by him.

Figuring prominently in the series is the Saturday, July 27 presentation of "Reflection and Revolution: Music in the Time of Goya (1746-1828)," a multimedia event created and hosted by guitarist Richard Savino. Through music and visual illustrations, Savino will draw parallels between the romantic Spanish painter's work and the music which was being composed across Europe at that same time.

On Saturday, August 10, Samuel Baron's acclaimed arrangements of Bach's monumental The Art of Fugue for string quartet and wind quintet will be performed by the Orion String Quartet and a Festival wind quintet consisting of flutist Tara Helen O'Connor, oboist Robert Ingliss, clarinetist Patrick Messina, bassoonist Theodore Soluri and horn player Julie Landsman.

Other composers performed on this series are C.P.E. Bach, Handel, Vivaldi, Suk and Stravinsky.

7th Annual Chefs' Gala Benefit

On Tuesday, July 16, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival will hold its 7th Annual Chefs' Gala benefit. The evening begins with a 6pm performance by internationally renowned pianist Inon Barnatan at the First Presbyterian Church. Following the performance are cocktails and hors d'oeuvres in the Santa Fe Convention Center Courtyard and an exclusive, private dinner in the Convention Center's Sweeney Ballroom. Each of the 250 guests experiences the creations of one New Mexico's finest chefs; over 20 such culinary masters participate in the dinner, and they each design their own four-course menu and table décor for a selection of the tables.

Table and chef assignments are made by a double-blind drawing, and are not revealed until the guests arrive.

The Chefs' Gala is the largest annual fundraising event for the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. All proceeds from the Gala support the Festival's annual summer season, as well as its year-round musical Education and outreach programs for children and adults in the greater Santa Fe community.

Tickets for the evening are \$600 per person, which includes a \$250 tax-deductible donation to the Festival. For more information, call Allison Hooper at 505.983.2075, ext. 111.

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artistic leadership of composer/pianist Marc Neikrug, the Festival invites scores of distinguished musicians, along with emerging young talent, to participate in its 6-week season. The Festival encourages communication among composers, musicians, and audiences through premieres of Festival-commissioned works, the programming of works by living composers, and concerts featuring the composer as performer. Since 1980, the Festival has commissioned more than 50 works from such composers as Aaron Copland, Ned Rorem, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, John Harbison, Gunther Schuller, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Steven Stucky and Brett Dean, among many others, thereby contributing significantly to contemporary chamber music repertoire.

Concerts take place in the intimate, historic St. Francis Auditorium at the New Mexico Museum of Art, The Lensic Performing Arts Center in Santa Fe, and at Simms Auditorium at Albuquerque Academy.



MUSICALAMERICA

August 14, 2012

Music & the Brain: Enter the Scientists

By Susan Elliott



Several years ago, Dr. Cheryl Willman commissioned composer/violinist Marc Neikrug to write a dedication piece for the opening of the University of New Mexico's new Cancer Center in Santa Fe. She is the director of the Center; he is the artistic director of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. The piece,

premieres in 2010, with mezzo-soprano Susan Graham, baritone Matthew Worth, and the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, describes itself in the title: *Healing Ceremony*.

Neikrug, a 25-year Santa Fe resident whose wife is a native American, has long been a believer in music capacity's to heal – soul and body. Willman, too, is a believer. Fast forward to Aug. 4, 2012, the first of a three-day, first-time symposium titled "Music, the Brain, Medicine and Wellness: A Scientific Dialog."

"We are counting on you scientists to legitimize and quantify what we musicians have always known," Neikrug told a packed house at the opening session, in Santa Fe's Eldorado Hotel. "And that is that music's affect on people is far more than just 'It sounds nice.'"

Held in conjunction with the festival's 40th anniversary, the event brought together for the first time some of the nation's top neuroscientists with musicians and medical personnel. "I knew that this field was emerging as a real science," said Neikrug in describing the event's genesis in a later interview. "Music therapists know it, musicians know it. The idea was to put everyone together and assess where this field is going and where do we go from here?"

About half of the 200 attendees were musicians, about half were scientists and/or medical professionals. They hailed from 30 states and nine countries -- rather a remarkable turnout for a first-time gathering of folks in a just-germinating field. Each of the participating lecturers spoke about their work in that virtual space where music and medicine come together.

Not that the fields of music and science are strangers – the two have been linked since the days of the Renaissance. Among more recent examples, 19th-century composer Alexander Borodin was a scientist, particularly noted for being the first to link cholesterol to heart disease; Zubin Mehta studied medicine before turning to music; British conductor Jeffrey Tate was a doctor. The Longwood Symphony Orchestra in Boston, comprised of trained musicians, unpaid, who make their living as health-care professionals, is just one of a large number of doctors orchestras in the U.S., according to pediatrician Lisa Wong, the orchestra's pianist and president. Wong has just published her first book, "Scales to Scalpels: Doctors Who Practice the Healing Art of Music and Medicine," a topic she also covered as part of the conference. (She confessed to once having been part of a rock band called the Septic Shocks.)



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Prior to her lecture Wong accompanied Adrian Anantawan, a rising Canadian violinist born without a right hand. At age nine he was fitted with a prosthesis, enabling him to play well enough to get into the Curtis Institute and ultimately earn a Masters Degree from Yale University. Wanting to give something back, Anantawan made a return trip to perform at the rehab center that built his prosthesis (Holland Bloorview Kids Rehab Center), which had since established an active music therapy center. Today, he runs the Virtual Chamber Music Initiative out of the Center, bringing together musicians, educators, doctors, and researchers to adapt musical instruments for children with Cerebral Palsy, Spinal Muscular Atrophy and Rett Syndrome.

Anantawan's story was just one of countless examples of music's power to heal and to empower the isolated and/or disabled. Petr Janata described his research into how hearing music can stimulate a memory – that phenomenon of hearing a song from, say, our teenage years and remembering the place(s) and people with whom we associate it; how that memory “unfolds like a movie.” He defined the Medical Prefrontal Cortex (MPFC) as the place where music, memory, and emotion link and showed a video of an otherwise immobilized or unsteady Parkinson's patient who, when music was played for her walked in an even, steady gate.

There were several other demonstrations of the links between music and physical movement, along with illustrations of the areas of the brain that are activated by music. Pamela Heaton, a professor of psychology at the University of London and an expert in music and autism, showed a video of an autistic child who couldn't speak until, by working with a music therapist who matched the two syllables of Hel-Lo with the pitches of a major third, was able to make sounds – for the first time in his life – and eventually speak in full sentences.

Aniruddh Patel, a senior fellow at San Diego's Neurosciences Institute and an associate professor of psychology at Tufts University, discussed the neuro connections between music processing and the brain. His research, along with that of several others at the conference, indicates that musical training can help children learn to read (another reason to put music back in the schools, a mantra of the conference), as can rhythm; that moving together in sync with music increases children's ability to work together as a team. We saw a video of a cockatiel who couldn't help himself when he heard music – he *had* to dance on his perch; Patel reported that the bird had made 13 unique but repeated choreographic moves over the course of his research.

That music aids socialization was a common theme; so was its affect on mood without pharmacological intervention (at which point we were reminded of Ayatollah Khomeini's famous quote, “there is no difference between music and opium”). We heard that singing soothes not only babies, but cows at milking time; what the brain looks like when one “hears” a smile in someone's voice; how and why low pitches are more threatening and powerful than high ones; how the major-minor, happy-sad correlation is invalid because it's completely relative – what is minor in one culture is major in another, so there really is no scientific evidence of the effects of key on the brain.

As neurologist/Dr. Gottfried Schlaug reminded us constantly, "Our challenge is to translate all this data into ways that are useful, so we can artificially induce" the affects of music in the brain. Schlaug -- director of the Music and Neuroimaging Laboratory and division chief of Cerebrovascular Diseases at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (and that's only part of his title) -- was among the MDs who has classical music piped into his operating room, a scientifically proven method of a better outcome for the patient (not to mention the surgeon).

The general atmosphere throughout the event, which was punctuated with chamber music concerts in the evening at the nearby Lensic Performing Arts Center, was very, very positive. Contact information was exchanged, stories shared, research notes compared. Neikrug, who had no easy job convincing funders that this was a good way to honor a music festival's birthday, was very pleased, as was Dr. Willman.

"I have dreamed about this day for years," said Neikrug. "I just wanted to give a tiny little push to the back of this giant thing that's rolling down the hill."



SANTA FE REPORTER

July 11, 2012

Success from Excess

Santa Fe's 40th Chamber Music Festival does it all

By John Stege



SFCMF's artistic director, Marc Neikrug, has been at the job for 14 seasons; so presumably, when he claims to present "the best music in impeccable performances," he knows what he's talking about.

Just ask Marc Neikrug, longtime artistic director of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, what he thinks about audiences here in the City Diff, and be prepared for a shock. "They are way, way better than in New York: more open, more engaged, more willing to be surprised," Neikrug says. "They really want to be here, and

they're loving everything the festival does."

A cynic might say—*sure, Marc. If you say so.* But Steve Ovitsky, SFCMF's executive director and head moneymen, says that the figures agree. Last year, the festival exceeded its \$500,000 projected



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budget for ticket sales by \$24,000 and finished the season with a small surplus. This year's projected sales budget, a big increase to \$575,000, was over 60 percent sold as of two weeks ago, and another surplus is expected. (Typically, 40 percent of the season's tickets sell during the festival itself.) Somebody's doing something right.

Credit Neikrug's programming. Since this is the SFCMF's 40th season, expectations run high, with some unusual and costly programs on the docket. Neikrug's magic formula for inventing a season involves striking a balance among three elements: contemporary, state-of-the-art pieces; high-quality unfamiliar or unknown works from any period; and those iconic must-dos.

The festival's contemporary repertoire this summer includes four SFCMF commissions and co-commissions. A young American composer, Helen Grime, appears on the first concert, July 15/16, with the premiere of her work, "Snow and Snow." Another world premiere, on July 26, features the internationally renowned composer, Magnus Lindberg. Two more American commissions arrive later in the season: David Del Tredici's String Quartet No. 2 on August 12 and Aaron Jay Kernis' "Perpetual Chaconne" on August 13.

That second programming element comes in two parts—remarkable works by secondary composers and little-heard works by the big guys. Among the former, witness a couple of Dohnányi pieces and piano quintets by Elgar and Zdeněk Fibich, for example. As for the latter, well, just stand back. Four large-scale, rarely performed 20th-century masterworks promise to be the season's centerpiece.

To wit: Berg's post-*Wozzeck* Chamber Concerto, for 16 instrumentalists with

Oliver Knussen conducting, appears on the July 29/30 concerts. Next, Alan Gilbert leads Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No. 1 on August 5/6 and his Chamber Symphony No. 2 on Aug. 8/9. Then, with Gilbert still in charge, Richard Strauss' late (1943) Sonatina No. 1, for 16 wind instruments, will be heard Aug. 12.

Not to be neglected, Neikrug's warhorse strategy includes both Mozart piano quartets, the Mendelssohn Octet, string sextets by Brahms and Dvořák, abundant scatterings of Bach and Beethoven, and to conclude the season, Schubert's ineffable C Major String Quintet.

Among the artists new to the festival this season, bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni—singing Maometto II in Rossini's eponymous opera—will be soloist in a couple of Bach cantatas and a selection from Schubert's *Schwanengesang*. Another newcomer, pianist Kirill Gerstein, the current holder of the prestigious Gilmore Award, delivers a solo recital on July 24 featuring Schumann's "Carnaval" plus some Gershwin arrangements—a not-to-miss concert that's another of the festival's popular noon offerings.

Other unmissable programs, in addition to those mentioned earlier, include the July 27 tribute to the late Peter Lieberman with music by Knussen and Lindberg as well as Lieberman; the quirky Schoenberg/Kreisler/Johann Strauss put-together on Aug. 8/9; and the all-Schubert concert closing the season on Aug. 20.

But that's just a start. The SFCMF's bountiful 2012 season, what with 44 concerts featuring 36 different programs, promises to be a glorious 40th. Which may be yet more proof that nothing succeeds like excess.



May 2008

The SANTA FE CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

An interview with Executive Director STEVEN OVITSKY

FanFaire: It's known that the legendary Pablo Casals was the honorary president of the Festival's inaugural season. But could you tell us more about its origins? Was there an individual or a nucleus group who had the inspiration to celebrate chamber music in this most enchanting city? Who provided the leadership for the Festival in its early years?

OVITSKY: The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival was founded to present and celebrate the incredible art of chamber music. Santa Fe's incredible beauty, cultural strength and location was a natural choice to compliment the focus of a summer music festival.



PABLO CASALS

PABLO CASALS was the honorary president of the Festival's inaugural season in 1973, with ALICIA SCHACTER the Music Director from 1973—1991, followed by HEIICHIRO OHYAMA from 1992 – 1997. For the past eleven years, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival has been led by music director and composer MARC NEIKRUG, who has not only contributed to the Festival's growth and reputation as a presenter of great chamber works, which was begun by the Festival's founders, but also as a champion and consistent contributor to contemporary chamber music repertoire, a tradition the festival began in 1980. Marc has brought the number of commissions to an incredible 47, more than any other chamber music festival today.

The Festival, now in its 36th season, prides itself on the range of chamber works and the various contemporary composers that have contributed to the Festival over the years, ranging from AARON COPLAND, to NED ROREM, to LEE HOIBY, to this year's composers, KAIJA SAARIAHO, ROBERTO SIERRA, HUANG RUO and JOAN TOWER.

FanFaire: Did the founders find encouragement in the phenomenal success of Santa Fe Opera? And with Santa Fe Opera having set the stage, so to speak, was there immediate community support for the Festival? Does the Festival have a relationship with Santa Fe Opera?



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OVITSKY: The success of the Santa Fe Opera reinforced, I'm sure, the Festival founders' selection of Santa Fe. The community is an extremely culturally oriented and knowledgeable one, and there was strong early support for the Festival. The festival, in its early years, had a history of threatening financial issues, which I'm delighted to say is no longer.

The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival is a financially stable organization with a strong endowment, generous annual support and solid ticket sales. This past fall, the Festival celebrated the culmination of the 2007 season with the successful completion of our 35th Anniversary Endowment Campaign, which surpassed its \$5 million goal by \$1.7 million.



We are proud of our close relationship with the Santa Fe Opera. We regularly engage some of the Opera orchestra musicians and singers. This year, for example, baritone LAURENT NAOURI, the Opera's *Falstaff*, will sing Schumann's "Dichterliebe", mezzo-soprano ISABEL LEONARD who sings Cherubino in *The Marriage of*

Figaro for the Opera, will sing Handel's *La Lucrezia* for the Festival, and mezzo-soprano MONICA GROOP, who appears in the title role of *Adriana Mater* will also sing the US premiere of LANCINO's "Onxa for Mezzo-soprano, Cello & Strings."

FanFaire: Could you give us a cross-section picture of the Festival audience? Surely you must have a big subscriber base. Do your subscribers come from far and wide? And are you able to build on this, say, from the thousands of tourists that come to Santa Fe? Do you have audience members who come for the entire season?

OVITSKY: The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival attracts audience from across the United States and abroad who love the high level of music making and varied programming and the wide variety of national and international guest artists the Festival presents each season. We have non-local patrons who come to Santa Fe for one or two concerts and those that come for the entire Festival season. That said, about 40% of our ticket sales are to visitors, and 60% to full and part-time Santa Fe residents.

FanFaire: What is the Festival's primary mission? Commissioned works have been among the Festival highlights for many years - this season, for example, you will premiere four co-commissions (in addition to the world premiere of other new significant works, e.g., by the Festival's Artistic Director, MARC NEIKRUG). Is the commissioning of new works one of the Festival's primary missions - as perhaps one of the the best ways of expanding the chamber music repertoire?

OVITSKY: The Festival's primary mission is to present and promote chamber music of the highest quality in all its forms by the world's finest musicians, and to build a broad and knowledgeable audience of all ages. Its mission also is to provide diverse educational opportunities and to enhance the cultural environment of Santa Fe and New Mexico.

The Festival seeks to serve as a model chamber music festival, and has transformed the chamber music festival model by extending its musical hallmark, that of a presenter of great masterpieces and champion and contributor to the contemporary repertoire, to include works of fine art by local artists, underscoring the relationship music has with other art forms.

FanFaire: The Festival also has a wide array of guest performing artists - this season they range from super stars (such as PINCHAS ZUKERMAN) to the up-and-coming

(such as ISABEL LEONARD and the ESCHER STRING QUARTET who not only will perform in concert but, interestingly, will also be taught a masterclass by their "seniors" in the field - the ORION STRING QUARTET). Could you walk us as well through the process of selecting up-and-coming artists as well as programming for the Festival? Is this type of masterclass a regular feature of the Festival?

OVITSKY: Master classes are a regular part of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival season. The Festival's music director, MARC NEIKRUG, is always on the look-out for the most talented young musicians, and hears from colleagues around the world about young talent. Each year four young musicians are selected; often a violinist, violist, cellist and pianist. They perform as a piano quartet and also with some of the more established festival musicians. We then hold a series of master classes with each of the young musicians. This year, the Festival invited the ESCHER STRING QUARTET as our young musicians. They will have a master class taught by DANIEL PHILIPS of the renowned Orion String Quartet.

FanFaire: The Festival's long-standing success must owe a lot to an exemplary partnership between you as Executive Director and the versatile and dynamic composer-pianist-conductor MARC NEIKRUG as Artistic Director. How long have you been working together and how would you characterize this partnership? What would you cite as MARC NEIKRUG's unique contributions to the Festival? And what particular challenges confront you as the Executive Director?

OVITSKY: Thank you. Marc and I have been working together since 2004. Marc brings not just his skills as a musician (he's an accomplished pianist) and music director to the table, but also his talent as a composer. This unique combination of skills allows him to create interesting and well balanced programs of chamber masterpieces and contemporary works, to have the Festival present commissioned premieres by the world's best contemporary composers and also to seek out and engage the up-and-coming artists of tomorrow for Festival audiences each season.

As the Festival's executive director, I am continually working on finding new avenues through which to help the Festival continue to grow. One example of this is the wonderful relationship the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival has with The WFMT Radio Network (since 2005) and the United Kingdom's BBC Radio 3 (since 2007). I'm proud to say that the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival is one of very few chamber music festival to be broadcast nationwide – since 2005 the Festival's 13-week, hour-long radio series has been produced and nationally distributed by The WFMT Radio Network, and since 2007, the Festival's series has been aired on BBC Radio 3's Lunchtime Concert Series.

FanFaire: It seems to us that Santa Fe is a city in which ALL the arts prosper. How would you characterize the relationship between the city's various art establishments - does rivalry coexist with, say, a spirit of community? Do they support one another, and if so, in what ways?

OVITSKY: Santa Fe is an incredible city, where indeed, all the arts do prosper. All the various arts establishments support each other in the spirit of a cultural community. As I mentioned, we have a close relationship with the Santa Fe Opera; we find that many of our concert-goers also attend the opera, sometimes even on the same day. We also have strong ties with businesses throughout the community as a result of our annual presentation of art by local artists, throughout the Festival season. The arts, I think, in and of themselves, foster a sense of community.

FanFaire: We notice that Festival's activities are not limited to Santa Fe. You also hold events in nearby Albuquerque and occasionally also in Arizona. How do these fit in with

the Festival's avowed missions? Do your activities begin and end with the summer Festival or do you hold other noteworthy events at other times of the year?

OVITSKY: Arizona was actually a tour concert some years ago. While the Festival's base is and will continue to be Santa Fe, and the majority of our presentations take place at St Francis Auditorium and the Lensic, the Festival does seek, as part of its mission to educate audiences about and to promote chamber music to the broadest audiences possible, to present concerts in other states and locations. The Festival's Albuquerque concerts are part of a new partnership with KHFM, Albuquerque's commercial classical music radio station. We are thrilled to be working with KHFM in their new live concert series, inaugurated earlier this year.

FanFaire: What in your opinion sets this Festival season apart from past seasons?

OVITSKY: Each season is unique, due to the variety of programming and guest artists on the season's roster, not to mention the new commissions by composers around the world. MARC NEIKRUG programs fresh and compelling programs each season. It's so difficult to pick just one or two things to mention about this incredible season, but I would say that the variety of premieres that we have this season – 4 Festival commissioned premieres that include KAIJA SAARIAHO's *Serenatas*; ROBERTO SIERRA's *Concierto de Camera*, HUANG RUO's *Real Loud* and JOAN TOWER's *A Gift*, the world premiere of MARC NEIKRUG's new work, *Piece for Pro Piano Hamburg Steinway Model D & Marimba One*, and the US premiere of LANCINO's *Onxa for Mezzo-soprano, Cello & Strings* plus the completion of the second installment of the Beethoven String Quartets by one of the world's renowned interpreters of the works, the ORION STRING QUARTET, is definitely exciting.

Through a grant from the NEA, we'll have a special American Composers Residency program that will feature Roberto, Joan and Marc this season, providing opportunities for audiences, musicians and students to interact with the composers and talk to them about their works.

Also new this season is our first collaboration with the famed Sibelius Academy of Helsinki's new Santa Fe Composer's Workshop. Finnish and American composers and performance students will work under the supervision of KAIJA SAARIAHO and cellist ANSSI KARTTUNEN. They will then be featured at a free concert in August.

Our program book program cover this season is "Morning Song" an original painting especially for the Festival by the acclaimed Navajo artist, EMMI WHITEHORSE.

FanFaire: That you have been able for many years now to sustain a 6-week long festival devoted solely to chamber music is an eloquent testament to your and MARC NEIKRUG's leadership. It not only speaks volumes about the state of chamber music but also bodes very well for the future of classical music in America. Are you confident that classical music has a bright future in America and that the reports of its certain upcoming demise are premature and, quoting Mark Twain, "greatly exaggerated"?

OVITSKY: For 36 years, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival has continued to grow and expand its presence in the classical chamber music world, which certainly couldn't happen if there wasn't great interest in the music from audiences. This year, for example, we're seeing an interest in attending festival concerts from a group of younger listeners who are also planning some fun social events after the performances. Classical music, in all its forms, is a part of our cultural heritage, as are all the arts, and it seems to be doing just fine.



SANTA FE REPORTER

August 29, 2012

That's All, Folks!

SFO and SFCMF bid adieu for the season

By John Stege



The acequia running nearby shows a few yellow leaves; too cool for breakfast outside today; the overgrown garden needs a firm hand. Summer is slowing and the summer music scene is *finito*. An imaginary curtain rang down at the Santa Fe Opera last Saturday night, and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival closed up for the year. So now—a little accountability?

Charles MacKay, the SFO's general

director, tells everyone that the company isn't risk-averse. From its first season, the SFO has never feared the new and unfamiliar—think 56 premieres since 1957. And 2012? On the face of it, this looked like one of the scariest repertoires ever.

Yes, *Tosca* opened the season, though it turned out to be the least successful of the five-opera season. Opening night in June was vocally stronger than when I



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revisited the show during the final week. Thomas Hampson had joined the cast as Scarpia and, while an imposing stage figure, his voice lacks the heft and diabolism that the role demands. Happily, though, the nearly legitimate-rape of Tosca in the second act had been toned down.

Bizet's *Pearl Fishers* isn't exactly risky, although not smack in the middle of the standard repertory either. And the SFO provided an imaginative, easy-on-the-eye and vocally excellent show, well worth reviving.

The riskier business?

Strauss' *Arabella* contains some of his most alluring music, though often mired in a plot that requires forbearance. But with Andrew Davis in the pit and Erin Wall in the title role, backed up by a top-notch cast and sympathetic staging, this became one of the finest Strauss showings in the company's history.

Scarier still, Szymanovsky's *King Roger* was virtually unknown by most opera buffs. Until now, that is. Mariusz Kwiecien's towering performance in the title role, Evan Rogister's command of the forbiddingly complex score and Stephen Wadsworth's effective direction made this a not-to-be-missed occasion. But as a risky revelation, Rossini's tragic masterpiece *Maometto II* trumped the entire season. Who would have known? Revised repeatedly since its 1820 premiere, we heard it just about as Rossini intended, complete with spectacular *bel canto* singing, strong staging from David Alden and a complete sense of musical drama from SFO's chief conductor, Frédéric Chaslin. Luca Pisaroni triumphed in the title

role, and Leah Crocetto made a debut that will long be remembered.

For its 40th season, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival both surprised and delighted with rare programming as well. Four world premieres were probably a record for the festival, with new works by Helen Grime, Magnus Lindberg, David Del Tredici and Aaron Jay Kernis. Mostly admirable piano recitals occupied three of the popular Music at Noon concerts, with young pianist Inon Barnatan making an especially powerful impression.

The standard repertory was well and truly served throughout the SFCMF's 40 concerts, too. If I had to choose—impossible task—just two works to represent the festival's standard of excellence, I'd pick the Brahms Clarinet Trio on the July 29 and 30 programs, featuring pianist Lindberg, cellist Anssi Karttunen and clarinetist Chen Halevy. Then, for the final work of the season, Schubert's String Quintet, D. 956, in an ineffable reading by the Tokyo Quartet with cellist Lynn Harrell.

But for the summer's centerpiece the SFCMF programmed four large-scale, rarely-performed chamber works by Alban Berg, Arnold Schoenberg and Richard Strauss. Berg's 1925 Chamber Concerto received a bravura performance with Chaslin conducting his 15 instrumentalists. Then Alan Gilbert, the SFCMF's artist-in-residence, led both of Schoenberg's Chamber Symphonies plus the Strauss Sonatina No. 1 in three stunning concerts.

Difficult music. Terrific performances. See you next year.



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

August 9, 2012

ART THERAPY

With Music on Their Mind

By STUART ISACOFF

Santa Fe, N.M.
The three-day symposium on “Music, the Brain, Medicine and Wellness” that took place here from Friday through Monday represented an unlikely pairing. In one corner were the musicians: purveyors of magic who make us wistful, edgy, ecstatic or cheery simply through their artful shaping of tones and rhythms. In the other were the scientists out to prove there’s really no such thing as magic. The first group provokes chills; the second clinically charts their neurological correlates.

At least that’s what I thought before arriving. As it turns out, those scientists are also capable of dispensing some powerful magic.

Perhaps the most striking moment of the symposium came when Gottfried Schlaug of Harvard Medical School and the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center revealed the results of an approach he has developed, called auditory-motor mapping training, using pitch and rhythm to heal autistic children who are incapable of speaking. A video camera captured a boy, almost 5 years old, at various stages of the treatment: Although unresponsive at the beginning, after 10 sessions he suddenly uttered a word: “bubbles.” It was the moment at which his parents heard his voice for the very first time. (Autistic children love anything that makes bubbles, noted Dr. Schlaug.) After 40 sessions, he was speaking simple sentences as well as his name. As this progress played out on

screen, a gasp went up from the entire audience. It was a dramatic example of how music is now being employed to revive dormant pathways in the brain.

There were many such mind-bending moments at this gathering, though no one had known beforehand exactly what to expect—least of all the organizers. “I had been a board member of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival for several years,” reported Cheryl Willman, director of the Cancer Center at the University of New Mexico, who co-created the event with the festival’s artistic director, composer Marc Neikrug. “When we were planning the dedication of the new Cancer Center, I commissioned Marc to write a piece.” Mr. Neikrug recalled that he was simply going to write an overture for the occasion, but realized he had a unique perspective to share thanks to having lived on an Indian reservation with his Native American wife. “I worked with one of my nephews to put together a healing ceremony text based on the Native American concepts of the four elements and the four directions. The intention was to put anyone who was suffering into a receptive state, to facilitate recovery.” When Dr. Willman saw the positive effect on the patients, the two began to talk about a conference that would seriously examine the healing possibilities of music.

“It had always been his dream,” Dr. Willman said, “and I wanted to help him. We decided not to do the usual sort of thing—how the great composers were bipolar, and so on. Instead we wanted to look at the state

of science today on the subject. We used a trio concept—inviting scientists, musicians and music therapists—knowing full well that there is a dynamic tension between those groups. The most important lesson I learned from a mentor was the best things happen when you make people who do different things talk to each other. The boundaries from those disciplines have to collide in order to change the way we think.” They received funding support from Gabrielle’s Angel Foundation for Cancer Research.

Examining the healing possibilities of music.

It was a whirlwind of a convocation. The Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, celebrating its 40th year, provided high-level musical performances. And many of the presentations, all delivered by leading figures in both the research and treatment branches of the field, suggested intriguing paths to pursue.

Laurel Trainor demonstrated that young children who synchronized their movements through musical activities became more socially cooperative than those who didn’t; Aniruddh Patel revealed a strong link between rhythm and reading skills; Petr Janata illuminated the relationship between music and memory. Michael Thaut parsed music’s ability to override faulty brain circuits in patients with loss of motor control. And David Huron offered a fascinating explanation of why music touches our emotions—based on the

study of animal behavior. Given the richness of these findings, Josephine Briggs rightly raised alarm bells over the dearth of music programs in our schools.

What happened to that expected friction between the right-brain and left-brain camps? As the program went on, my trepidation about encountering what Friedrich Schiller called “the disenchantment of the world” seemed unfounded. Nevertheless, I decided to check on the emotional temperature of the scientists by conferring with Dr. Schlaug. Did he find this work as miraculous as I did?

“Sometimes something looks like a miracle, but it comes about through knowledge and skill. There is some explanation for the outcome,” he stated.

Still, I ask, wasn’t it emotionally jolting when that little autistic boy began to speak? “We have several children who have spoken for the first time,” he replied. “We had stroke patients who couldn’t speak, but we got them to sing. It keeps me going to find ways to coax the brain into doing something it is not doing. But it’s not about me—it’s about the patient and the patient’s family.”

“But,” I insisted, looking for agreement that this stuff is, indeed, magical, “doesn’t it give you chills?”

“Yes,” he conceded with a smile. “It definitely gives you chills.”

Mr. Isacoff’s latest book is “A Natural History of the Piano: The Instrument, the Music, the Musicians—From Mozart to Modern Jazz and Everything in Between” (Knopf).



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THE LAS CRUCES **Bulletin**

August 3, 2012

A mosaic of beauty and entertainment

By Gerald Kane

My second reviewing pilgrimage up Interstate 25 took place last week, and was far more cerebral than my first reviewing adventure earlier this month.

The two operas we attended dealt with far more weighty issues and were less expository and more substantive than “The Pearl Fishers,” “Tosca” and “Maometto II.” (See the July 20 issue of the Las Cruces Bulletin for a review of the earlier operas.) Surprisingly, the best bon-bon in this metaphoric box of cultural chocolates was a concert we were lucky to attend. It was part of the 40th anniversary season of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival.

We began by attending a much heralded and highly anticipated production of Karol Szymanowski’s rarely performed 90-minute Polish masterpiece “King Roger.” It was mythic, mystical and profound. Images and themes treated in “King Roger” provide an allusional twist to “The Bacchae” by Euripides.

“New York Times” critic Anthony Tommasini sat alongside us and reviewed the same opera in last week’s edition – as favorably as I will do now.

“King Roger” mixes choral chant,

extended lyric monologues and modern lush melodies and orchestrations. It treats the age-old struggle between organized faith and deep seeded spiritual passion. Which element wins out at the end? You’ll have to see for yourself.

With a running time of only 90 minutes with no intermission, “King Roger” cannot help but present us with a riveting and thought provoking evening. One would expect additional productions of “King Roger” around the world in coming years.

This production features a stellar cast, with extraordinary voices and exceptional acting and stage effects. It stars “bari-hunk” Mariusz Kwiecien in the title role. Known for his powerful voice and chiseled, seething good looks, Kwiecien has been a one-person publicity machine in promoting himself, along with productions of “King Roger” – for which he has developed quite a reputation – around the world.

The homo-erotic production of “King Roger” at the Paris Opera in 2009 stirred up tremendous controversy in the world music community. By contrast, the Santa Fe version is tamer.



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It keeps the passion under the surface, yet percolating strongly, vibrantly and consistently throughout, thanks especially to the keen musical direction of acclaimed conductor Evan Rogister.

I would be remiss not to mention the awesome vocal gymnastics of the amazing Erin Morley as Roger's conflicted, frustrated wife, Roxana, and the power of William Burden's mysterious portrayal as the "faith-alternative, hedonist Shepherd."

For those interested in seeing an unconventional, disturbing and thought-provoking work, "King Roger" is highly recommended.

The reviews by other critics from near and far have been uniformly positive, praising the musical aspects of the opera, along with the innovative direction by Stephen Wadsworth and awesome scenic design by Thomas Lynch, which ranges the gamut from ornate iconography to amazingly abstract.

The second opera we attended is far less controversial and very popular. Richard Strauss composed "Arabella" between 1929 and 1932, in the shadow of Adolf Hitler's rise to power. In light of the world economic situation, elements of this story of economic pretense and deception are uniquely relevant.

This disturbing tale faded gentility and deception revisits the milieu of late 19th-century Vienna, which Strauss and his longtime librettist Hugo von Hofmannsthal explored two decades earlier in their most popular work, "Der Rosenkavalier" (1909-10).

"Arabella" shares lush orchestration and some gorgeous vocal lines with "Rosenkavalier." In addition, this popular work contains a couple of vocally demanding roles that are wonderful vehicles for lyric sopranos, two tenors and two baritones.

Alas, von Hofmannsthal died suddenly after completing Act One of "Arabella."

Strauss labored singularly for a few years, making sure he completed the story with just the right touches of romance, repression and latent, up tight passion to bring the opera to a satisfying, if not drawn out conclusion.

In addition to top-notch voices, led by Erin Wall, Heidi Stolper and Mark Delavan, the flowing scenery of the Santa Fe Opera production by Tobias Hoheisel takes on a character of its own. Ornate Victorian set pieces float in mysteriously and effortlessly when needed. They add so much to the romance of the far-fetched tale of mistaken identity and pretense. The scenic design would fade to nothingness were it not for the appropriate eerie lighting by David Finn.

One cannot minimize the role of conductor Sir Andrew Davis, who kept this lengthy opera moving along at a good pace.

In summary, both "King Roger" and "Arabella" provides much for audience members to ponder. Each, in their own way, confronts issues which are subtexts in today's complex world. Both operas merit your attention.

Attending a single concert each year at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival reminds me of the most famous line about a box of chocolates from the classic film "Forrest Gump" – "You never know what you're going to get."

Each year, during our second four-day trip up to Santa Fe, we include a single concert on a Thursday evening. We have been uniquely blessed, but this year, fate presented us with the best bonbon in the box.

Whether or not you are familiar with chamber music, a trip to Saint Francis Auditorium is worthy of your consideration for any number of reasons.

You will not hear better musical sound anywhere else. Once a church, the auditorium's viga roof soars above and

resonates in an extraordinary way. Music played or sung within these walls is celestial. You are able to differentiate the sounds of each instrument and voice in a mystical way.

The other artists who are a part of the Festival roster may not be household names, but their skills are amazing. As Anthony Tommasini, chief music critic for the New York Times wrote in a recent review of one of last week's Chamber Festival concerts, "The festival can seem like an outpost of the New York music scene" ... and it is four hours from our community. Aficionados from all over the country travel to attend these concerts.

Do not deprive yourself.

We attended a varied evening featuring a string quartet by Samuel Barber performed by the Miro quartet, the string quartet in residence at the University of Texas in Austin.

The music was quirky, clever and in a word, delightful.

This was followed by a violin concerto by Beethoven featuring the amazing violinist and violist Ida Kafavian, Founder of Music from Angel Fire and a long-standing member of the renowned Beaux Arts Trio in New York. Together with her sister Ani, she has made music for years.

Kafavian was paired with Kirill Gerstein, a young, accomplished, award winning pianist, whose bright, assertive technique was dazzling. Gerstein, whose music was contained on an iPad, (a first for me!) also amazed us with his rendition of a contemporary piece, Oliver Knussen's lyrical "Ophelia's Last Dance."

The evening concluded with Bartok's "Contrasts," a work for violin, viola, piano and clarinet. The world renowned Chen Halevi joined Kafavian and Gerstein for this whimsical, delightful final "bite" of remarkable music.

I recommend attendance at any of the concerts in the 40th anniversary season, which runs through Saturday, Aug. 25. You won't be disappointed.

It should be noted that if this is your first trip to see the Santa Fe Opera, you are entitled to a special discount. Mention this to the ticket agent when ordering your tickets by phone. Other specials may also be available for both events.



SANTA FE REPORTER

August 1, 2012

Upping the Ante

Chamber Music Festival: manic brilliance, rhapsodic climax

By John Stege



At Forty, the Chamber Music Festival is still music to Santa Fean's ears. - Shutter Stock

Forty years old already? It can't be that long since I heard several concerts at the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival's inaugural season—six Sunday afternoons back in 1973. The music's still playing in my head: Alfred Brendel's account of Schubert's B flat Major Sonata and Jean Kraft splendidly singing Debussy's "Chansons de Bilitis." The ante's gone up a bit in the years since: over 40 concerts this year, plus

bolder programming and higher performance standards. Observe the first week's concerts. Yes, there was Brahms, Beethoven and Bach, plus some surprises—like a world premiere. Helen Grime's "Snow on Snow" opened the festival on July 15 and 16, featuring Todd Levy, clarinet; Teng Li, viola; and pianist Haochen Zhang. A brief, earnest work referencing the Ted Hughes poem, it provided pleasant sounds but did not



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linger in the memory.

More delightful pleasantries followed: Ernst von Dohnányi's delectable *Serenade*, *Op. 10* with violinist Jennifer Frautschi, Teng Li and cellist Joseph Johnson, and then the familiar Brahms *Piano Trio No. 2*. William Preucil's violin and Gary Hoffman's cello provided loving, lovely sounds, but Zhang's piano seemed a mile away.

The July 22 and 23 concerts opened with a tepid Frautschi and a passionate Jon Kimura Parker collaborating in Bartók's *Violin Sonata No. 1*. The Santa Fe Opera's *Maometto*, Luca Pisaroni, offered four songs from Schubert's *Schwanengesang*; "Der Atlas" made a particularly strong impression. And more Dohnányi concluded the evening: the 17-year-old composer's *Op. 1 Piano Quintet*, his vigorous, buoyant homage to Brahms in a lively reading by Preucil, Frautschi, Hoffman and Parker, joined by violist Aloysia Friedmann.

The third of the SFCMF's popular noon concerts featured, on July 24, a solo recital by pianist Kirill Gerstein, 2010 winner of the exclusive Gilmore Award. After a hesitant start, Gerstein settled down to an idiosyncratic reading of Schumann's "Carnaval," one marked by ultra-sharp dynamic contrasts, lingering rubatos and a *prestissimo* that really meant it. Everything worked, in a crazy, quasi-improvisatory way. Manic brilliance defines the piece, after all, and Gerstein made it sound like the asylum was just a step away.

His second offering, Brad Mehldau's jazzy "Variations on a Melancholy

Theme," had been commissioned by jazz-loving Gerstein. Weaving blues, ragtime and semi-improvised riffs into a complex whole, the work would benefit from some thoughtful scissoring. Two of Earl Wild's Gershwin transcriptions, "Somebody Loves Me" and "I've Got Rhythm" closed the concert.

The SFCMF's "Tribute to Peter Lieberman" on July 27 didn't contain many of the late composer's own works—just two, including his *Three Variations for Violoncello & Piano*, a deft miniature performed by cellist Felix Fan and Andrew Russo. The second piece, another set of three variations titled "Remembering Schumann," was especially notable for its long-spun central variation, a deeply felt, inward-looking lament. The same artists were in charge.

British composer Oliver Knussen contributed two works to the program as well. A Gerstein commission for piano and performed by him, "Ophelia's Last Dance" began as a sinuous, sad waltz, then reached a rhapsodic climax before concluding on an abrupt note of shadowy melancholy.

Another Knussen piece, his "Requiem: Songs for Sue" concluded the program. A setting of four texts (Dickinson, Machado, Auden, Rilke) for soprano—here Tony Arnold—and fifteen instrumentalists conducted by Jeffrey Milarsky, the work glittered with color and texture. You heard Britten, perhaps, and even Mahlerian pensiveness as the requiem moved through its compact, complex sonorities.



The New York Times

August 12, 2011

Santa Fe Celebration Includes New York

By Anothony Tommasini



From left, Liang Wang on oboe, Giora Schmidt on violin, Felix Fan on cello and Lily Francis on viola.

For its 39th season this summer, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival is presenting 78 artists and ensembles performing more than 100 works in 42 programs over 5 weeks. But for a critic from New York and, I would guess, some vacationing New Yorkers in the audience, two recent programs made this important festival seem almost an outpost of the New York music scene. Wednesday evening's program at St. Francis Auditorium, the intimate, acoustically lively hall where most of the concerts are presented, offered the estimable Orion String Quartet, which

performs all the time in New York, in an insightful account of Schubert's great String Quartet in G (D. 887). The program began with a beguiling performance of Mozart's Oboe Quartet in F, featuring Liang Wang, the excellent principal oboist of the New York Philharmonic.

Marc Neikrug, the festival's artistic director, manages to find and present gifted musicians and composers who live in the Southwest. But, inevitably, a festival like this will have a high quotient of artists associated with New York. One, the soprano Dawn Upshaw, is this



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season's artist in residence. The Orion players' familiarity to me did not diminish the impact of their compelling performance of Schubert's last, strangely elusive quartet.

The program also offered Lowell Liebermann's Quartet for Piano and Strings (2010). Now 50, Mr. Liebermann is a prolific composer who has gained popularity for works written in an accessible, neo-Romantic style. This work, a single 18-minute movement, begins with the piano playing a murmuring, repetitive figure and softly chiming chords. The three strings enter, one at a time, with a wistful melody. Mostly pensive, the piece has only one surprise, when the instruments break into whirling, frenzied figurations. The music, though skillfully written, is safe, tame and eager to please. But the pianist Joyce Yang, the violinist Giora Schmidt, the violist Lily Francis and the cellist Felix Fan gave a sensitive performance.

A terrific new piece opened a 60-minute program at noon on Thursday: Sean Shepherd's Quartet for Oboe and Strings, in its premiere performance. And Mr. Shepherd, 32, is from Reno, Nev., which should make Southwesterners here proud. Last year his chamber work "These Particular Circumstances" received its premiere in the New York Philharmonic's Contact! series.

Mr. Shepherd's quartet, inspired by Mozart's Oboe Quartet, was played by the same musicians who had played the

Mozart work on Thursday: Mr. Wang, Mr. Schmidt, Ms. Francis and Mr. Fan. Mr. Shepherd was particularly fascinated, he writes, by the way the oboe in Mozart's quartet, with its "chameleonic role," becomes a conciliatory presence.

Mr. Shepherd's engrossing 12-minute work begins with the oboe playing a fidgety, twisting melody, prodded along by plunked sounds and curt chords in the strings. Is the oboe line agitated or playful? The mood is wonderfully ambiguous, as is Mr. Shepherd's pungent harmonic voice. The oboe maintains its lead role as the piece evolves, spinning out long, restless lines, setting the strings off into a rush of dotted-note-rhythm busyness.

When the oboe turns elegiac, the strings play strummed chords, like a quasi-atonal guitar accompaniment. Eventually the strings take charge, for a while anyway. There are episodes of minimalist repetitions and yearning melodic flights before the dotted-note riffs return, in a transfigured state, to end the work.

After this fresh new piece the Orion Quartet was back, joined by Ms. Francis, for a major Mozart masterpiece: the String Quintet in C (K. 515), in a splendid performance.

The New York presence here will continue next summer, when the artist in residence is Alan Gilbert, who will represent his native city as conductor, violinist and violist.













