

PRELUDE

Vol. XLVIII, No. 1, September, 2020 Eugene Symphony Guild Newsletter

Mission Statement: The Eugene Symphony Guild supports the Eugene Symphony Association through fundraising, community education, and volunteer services.



THE NEW EUGENE SYMPHONY GUILD YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION

What happens when a pandemic shuts down Symphony performances, Youth Concerts and our Guild activities? Creativity and flexibility take over. No one wanted to cancel this year's Young Artist Competition, so a plan was made to have a virtual competition.

In previous years, in a room in the U of O School of Music and Dance, a panel of five judges, members of our Symphony, and our Music Director Francesco Lecce-Chong, observed and listened to the scholarship applicants live and in a rehearsal studio. Outside in the reception area, nervous students awaited their turn and anxious parents tried to stay calm. Each applicant was heard and evaluated, and after time for discussion and studying score sheets, the winners were announced and presented with their awards.

This year was different. Applicants submitted videos of their performances and Education & Community Engagement Director Katy Vizdal compiled the videos for judges to review individually online. As of this writing, the video submissions are being reviewed and scored as we speak! Stay tuned for the results in the next Prelude issue.

The online format seems to have made a difference in the number of participating applicants in the competition. Perhaps, students

were able to take advantage of more practice time. Or, making a video was easier than having to drive to Eugene on a day that may or may not have worked with their schedule. Whatever the reasons, and after a lot of direct marketing, we surpassed our goal and received 44 video submissions!

Young musicians applied from all over the state. In the Senior division, some were students at local colleges and universities. Some were out-of-state residents studying here, some were Oregon residents studying at other universities, including Indiana University, University of Texas and Harvard. All instruments of the orchestra were represented.



The winners will be announced at the end of the month and in the October issue of the Prelude we will learn who they are.

Sandra Weingarten

Guild Calendar—September

September 9 - Board Meeting (10:00 a.m.) – via Zoom

September 16 - Membership Meeting (10:00 a.m. social, 10:30 a.m. meeting) – via Zoom. Installation of officers and guest speaker Scott Freck to talk about updated Symphony schedule.

Membership and Board meetings are being held via Zoom until further notice. All zoom meetings may be attended via phone if there is no computer access or if a maximum number of attendees allowed is reached.

2nd Interview with Francesco Lecce-Chong

On June 15, 2020 by Kam Chan

Thanks to the encouragement of the ESG Board, I joined Carolyn and Karalyn in interviewing Maestro Francesco Lecce-Chong back in June. The experience was indeed delightful, educational and inspirational. I am grateful to our Maestro for giving us his time and sharing his insights. While the two other interviewers focused more on professional matters and larger social concerns, my segment delved into our Maestro's personal background and some fun facts you wouldn't find on a typical CV.

I have always been intrigued by our Maestro's hyphenated last name and what ethnic ancestries it represents. My curiosity was even further magnified when I learned that he had grown up in a Mennonite Church in Boulder, Colorado. I was convinced that our Maestro has a uniquely American diversity story to tell.

Maestro Lecce-Chong's mother is a third generation Italian-American and his father is third generation Chinese-American. The name Lecce has its origin from a beautiful town in Italy. His parents met in college, travelled around a lot, and lived in Japan for a time. Francesco was born in San Francisco. The family moved to Colorado when he was five years old. He was home schooled and attended Quaker church with his parents. As the practice of silence at a Quakers' meeting was difficult for young Francesco, the family made the decision to join the Boulder Mennonite Church. Both faiths embrace pacifism and social justice as part of their central core beliefs. The one crucial difference for young Francesco was that there is music in Mennonite services. When he was a student in NYC, he relished being the only musician in his church there. He got to perform at all of the services and learn all of the hymns forwards and backwards. In a moment of reflection, Francesco shared that perhaps the early training of sitting in silence (15 minutes for children his age) at Quakers' meetings, "brutal" as it might have been for him as he called it, had somehow instilled in him an ability to better cope with the silence imposed by this pandemic.

With both of his parents of ethnic ancestries renowned for their cuisines, Francesco grew up appreciating excellent Italian and Chinese food. Moreover, he has always loved cooking. During his student days in NYC, he enjoyed preparing elaborate dinners complete with wine selections for his friends. He would always make his own fresh pasta. His go-to dish to make for guests is risotto. He likes that it is a dish that requires specific care and attention while also being very versatile. He explained that it can be a side dish or main course, it can be vegetarian or with meat, and it can be paired with a variety of wines. It became quite obvious to me that he is as adept in the kitchen as he is on the stage at the concert hall.

Francesco related that in the past few years, his hectic work schedule has kept him from attending regular church services and from entertaining his friends with his culinary skills. Because of the pandemic, instead of traveling extensively for performances, Francesco and his fiancée Chloe are spending this unusual summer working remotely from his family's home in Boulder, Colorado. This has given him the opportunity to reconnect with his childhood Mennonite Church community and to return to the kitchen. I felt that in very different ways, both settings are of solace, inspiration and joy for the Maestro.

As it turns out, Chloe also loves cooking. Together, they have been trying out many new recipes. Francesco used to think that he was the better cook, but now he feels that that is no longer the case. He conceded that Chloe's cooking is more diverse and she makes fabulous breads. Her focaccia was high on his list of recommendations. Chloe has also started a herb garden. Although Francesco did not say so, I bet they are making good use of these fresh herbs.

I must confess that towards the end of my interview, I was feeling hungry and starting to picture in my mind, a plate of scrumptious looking risotto, served with a slice of toasted focaccia and a glass of Italian red wine. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could work out a way for Francesco to give us a lesson on cooking risotto?



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Your Board of Directors has been meeting through the summer to prepare for the upcoming season during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Some of us have been meeting in person outside with social distancing and while wearing masks. Sally Robinson has graciously volunteered her garden for these meetings. Some of us have attended meetings via Zoom. It has been wonderful to see each other throughout this unusual situation.

Since social distancing, self isolation and face masks are still in effect, our Guild membership meetings will be held via Zoom. I have asked Jerril Nilson to provide an explanation on how to access our Zoom meetings via computer or phone. If any members are not familiar with Zoom you could ask a family member or friend or neighbor how to do it. Prior to each meeting an invitation to the upcoming Zoom meeting will be sent out to members. We have planned the themes of the Fall meetings and they will appear along with the schedule in the roster which will be mailed out in October. For those with no computer, a contact person will be designated for you to call in advance of the meeting time to obtain the phone number and meeting code number.

We have contributed \$10,000 to the Eugene Symphony Association which is part of the \$25,000 we pledged last Fall. The decreased amount is due to the cancellation of our main annual fundraiser, Music in the Garden. We are planning on sending additional money to the symphony this Fall, but will not be able to reach the total of our pledge this year. We plan to hold another non event fundraiser this Fall and hope to raise a similar amount to what we raised last year.

We are planning to continue interest groups. Weekly walking with Nancy has been continuing and anyone wishing to join the group on Tuesday mornings should contact Nancy Holloman. Information will be forthcoming regarding other interest groups which would meet via Zoom.

Our September membership meeting will be held on Wednesday morning, September 16, at 10:00 am (social time), 10:30 am (meeting time) and highlight the formal installation of board officers and a presentation by a staff member of the ESA on what the schedule is for the symphony this coming season. This schedule has been fluid as information comes in on the spread of the virus in Oregon, but the ESA has a three tier plan that is adjustable as the situation allows.

Susanne



These are more photos of Susanne's wonderful garden bounty....



The **Weekly Walking Hour** has been scheduled for these Tuesday mornings from 9:30-10:30 a.m. on September 8, 15, 22 and 29. If you are new to the group, please call Nancy Holloman to be added to the email notification of the starting point. Walks begin in different places each week and are usually on level ground. **Armchair Travelers** and **Book Notes** will not be resuming until further notice due to the pandemic.

The Officers of the new ESG Board of Directors for 2020-2021

Suzanne Shapiro	President (with help from Carolyn Abbott & Sandra Weingarten)
Corky Hughes	Executive Vice President
Ginger Fifield	Fundraising Vice President
Jerril Nilson	Promotion & Publicity Vice President
Karalyn Walker Sprung	Social & Education Vice President
Sally Robinson	Secretary
Kam Chan	Treasurer
Carolyn Abbott	Past President

As all of you should be aware due to articles in Prelude, Eblasts and phone calls, we have voted for our new Board by voice vote through our Calling Committee. Sylvia Kaufman and her callers, Glenda Hay, Pat Ross, Dorothy Kays should be given a big hand for their efforts in calling every member to obtain their vote. The vote was taken in a very methodical way, with each member asked the same question and a tally kept. Members were given a two-week period to return phone calls if messages were left. In some cases, members were called 2 or 3 times before a vote was obtained.

As of July 28th, Sylvia had heard from all callers and the result was that we reached out to 81 members, receiving 70 "yes" votes with 11 non-responders. With the 70 "yes" votes a quorum was reached and the slate of officers for the coming year was confirmed. Congratulations to these officer members who have agreed to be in leadership positions during this unusual time which calls for creative ideas and thinking "outside the box". Especially thank you to Suzanne Shapiro who is taking on an unprecedented 3rd year as President! An informal installation of officers will take place in August so that they can get busy planning for the coming season starting in September. A formal installation will take place with the whole membership when we start our General Meetings. Carolyn Abbott, Nominating Chair

To all members: Thank you so much for your renewal information sheets, checks and donations. We are in the process of planning fun and interesting meetings over Zoom for the foreseeable future. Fundraising plans are in the works and musical, social and interest groups are gearing up for the coming season. We know you will be looking forward to being part of our Symphony Guild organization this year. Carolyn Abbott

Missing our Meetings.....



2020/21 Guild Calendar

Membership and Board meetings are being held via Zoom until further notice of safety to meet indoors.

All zoom meetings may be attended via phone if there is no computer access or if a maximum number of attendees allowed is reached. Please check one of our three Presidents [Suzanne, Carolyn, or Sandra] for the number to call.

- July 14 Board meeting plus incoming members via Zoom (2:00)
- August 19 Board Meeting (10:00 am) – via Zoom
- September 9 Board Meeting (10:00 am) – via Zoom
16 Membership Meeting (10:00 am social, 10:30 am meeting) – via Zoom (Installation of officers and speaker)
- October 14 Board Meeting (10:00 am) – via Zoom
21 Membership Meeting (10:00 am social time, 10:30 am meeting) – via Zoom (member memorials and musician)
- November 11 Board Meeting (10:00 am) – via Zoom
18 Membership meeting (10:00 am social time, 10:30 am meeting) – via Zoom (members share art work)
- December 9 Board Meeting (10:00 am) – via Zoom
16 Membership Meeting (10:00 am social time, 10:30 am meeting) – via Zoom (members share art work, holiday sing along)
- January 13 Board Meeting (10:00 am)
20 Membership Meeting (10:00 social time, 10:30 am meeting)
- February 10 Board Meeting (10:00 am)
17 Membership Meeting (10:00 am social time, 10:30 am meeting)
- March 10 Board Meeting (10:00 am)
17 Membership Meeting (10:00 am social time, 10:30 am meeting)
- April 14 Board Meeting (10:00 am)
21 Membership Meeting (10:00 am social time, 10:30 am meeting)
- May 12 Board Meeting (10:00 am)
19 Membership Meeting (10:00 am social time, 10:30 am meeting)
- June 9 Joint Board Meeting (10:00 am)
11 Music in the Garden Party
13 Music in the Garden Tour
- 22nd Annual Luncheon & Installation of Officers – TBA

The 2020/2021 Eugene Symphony Season is fluid depending on the pandemic and social gatherings permitted.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO MAKE A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE DURING THE YEAR.

Behind the Curtain — Symphony News



Greetings, Guild members -

Summer begins to wane, and fall beckons. When I last wrote to you in June, I think we were all hopeful that the pandemic that has cast our lives into such disarray would be closer to under control by now. Alas, we're not there...yet....

As we all know by now, large gatherings of people simply won't be possible for a while, and we really have little sense of how long that will be. During June and July, the ESA admin team along with Board leadership considered a wide variety of what I would call 'planning scenarios,' looking at a number of variables for what might be possible, and the financial ramifications for each. We did an in-depth cash flow analysis for each version, ranging from the blissfully optimistic to the darkly pessimistic.

These ideals, coupled with a detailed understanding of our funding streams, led us to make the positive decision to **keep moving forward** and planning activities even though they may need to be adapted. Accordingly, on July 22, the Board of Directors adopted the following resolution:

"ESA's Board of Directors supports the continuation of planning for performances, and music education and community engagement activities during the 2020/21 season that are civically allowable, medically advisable, and financially feasible. The Board expects that these activities will be conceived and executed with careful thought to controlling expenses and mitigating risk. Further, the Board expressly rejects the concept of shuttering all activities for the season, as doing so would be damaging to ESA's short- and long-term future.."

So what does this mean for musicians and audiences? Great question.

As of right now (and this could change quickly as circumstances in Oregon, nationally, or globally evolve) **we are imagining that we will schedule concerts at the Hult Center about once a month beginning as early as October.**

Initially these performances will involve a smaller number of players than usual, perhaps no more than 30 or so per program so that we can safely distance the musicians onstage, using chamber orchestra-appropriate repertoire. These concerts may have a very small audience if allowed by current civic restrictions, or may not. Either way we are planning to video the concerts and make them available to patrons for streaming within a week or so after the performance.

As the pandemic and its impact on the country continue to evolve, we will adapt our plans accordingly. Our firm hope is that local, state, federal, and community responses will make us safer in coming months, enabling us to gradually grow the size of the orchestra onstage and the number of patrons we are able to welcome into the hall.

Concurrently, **we have resumed our work in Music Education and Community Engagement starting in late August.** We have surveyed the orchestra musicians to determine who is willing and able to do various engagement activities, and I'm happy to say we received a great response. Thankfully, we have quite a bit of restricted grant support for these programs (meaning, it's money given by government or foundation entities that can't be spent on anything else), so we feel very good that we will be able to deliver our mission safely and soon in those ways. I'll also add that it is important for our individual donors and subscribers to know that we're continuing to employ musicians and serve our community during this time.

Finally, I want to offer reassurance that we are working as hard as we can to find a sustainable path through this uncertainty. As I wrote to the orchestra a week or two ago, I will share this closing thought with all of you: **We're all in this rowboat together as we attempt to cross a stormy sea, and everybody has an oar. Let's row together.**

My best,

Scott
Scott Freck
Executive Director

Behind the Radio Curtain, with Scott Freck

Greetings again, Guild members! Your intrepid editor asked me if I might write a bit about the process by which our new radio series on KLCC-FM is created. As opposed to our long standing broadcasts on KWAX, hosted for nearly three decades by Caitriona Bolster and now helmed by Peter van de Graaff, these programs are more ‘produced’ and incorporate interviews, brief clips of music for explication, and short works or movements of longer works, rather than whole symphonies and the like.

As such, they are a bit more time-intensive, as we generally just deliver the CDs of concert recordings to KWAX and let Peter do the rest. In the case of the KLCC programs, they are made up of up to four different kinds of source material, all stitched together into a seamless hour-long production. I’ve never quilted, although I admire the craft that goes into them, so I can only imagine that creating a quilt from scratch might be similar – various components of piecework are created separately and then layered together into a finished whole.

I will now pause to humbly share that it is indeed I who makes these programs, using a skillset I learned at my previous orchestra, the North Carolina Symphony. When that ensemble hired a new Music Director in 2004, we also launched a monthly radio program on NPR affiliate WUNC. I had never done anything in radio before, but armed with a modicum of musical knowledge and a yen for learning new things, I got a hot tip and successfully recruited nationally recognized journalist David Hartman to be the host. (Some of you might remember David as the original host of *Good Morning, America!* from 1975 to 1986). David did the interviews with conductors and artists, I wrote the scripts, and together with a staffer from WUNC, we started making concert programs. I learned SO much writing for David – how to write for the ear and not the eye, how to unfold a narrative, and most of all, how to write efficiently. My first script for David in 2004 came to eight pages, and my last in 2010 ran to about three-and-a-half. All told we made about 50 of these programs together, and I remain forever grateful to David for his patience and tutelage – he is one of the finest humans I have ever known.

So, with those tools in my belt, when the pandemic shut down our concert activity, I set out to make a ‘magazine-style’ program, with a behind-the-scenes feel.

The process of course begins with the concerts themselves. As I’m sure you’ve noticed from all the microphones and wires hanging above the Silva stage, we bring a sound engineer to capture high-quality archival recordings – Bill Barnett of Gung Ho Studios does the honors, and typically he arrays 16 very sensitive mics of various sorts.

Francesco and I then choose which programs have both the most compelling performances and most interesting backstories to tell. I then rough in a script with introductions for each piece and interview subject, writing just enough to have a shape to the conversations to come, before booking time at one of KLCC’s small recording studio rooms. There I record telephone interviews with Francesco, the guest soloist, or composer, using a system that patches a phone line through a sound mixing board, which is attached to a computer using digital editing software called Cool Edit Pro.

Once recorded, using a similar program called Audition by Adobe on my laptop, I go through each interview to find interesting sections about each of the musical works, clean up some of the inevitable ‘ums’ and ‘ers’ that populate organic human speech, and generally tighten them for time. (You’d be surprised how much editing can be done within an interview, sometimes splicing even between parts of a word or sound....it’s a little scary, actually....).

Once those are in good shape, I’ll go back to finish the script in order to make it flow easily with the content in the interviews, including intros and outros, as they’re called. I then book more time in the KLCC studio, and record my voiceover of the script. This part can take up to 45 minutes as I am far from a professional voice, and my mistakes and restarts are many (someday maybe I’ll make a blooper reel of all the times I had to say “Ludwig van Beethoven” in order to get it just right...).

Then it’s back to Audition to edit the voiceover into bite-sized pieces that can be inserted into a multi-track session, alongside the interviews and concert recording clips. (Continued on next page)

Behind the Curtain, with Scott Freck (Con't)

Often, if the interview subject is describing a particular musical moment, I'll fade in a clip underneath their speech so we can hear it nearly simultaneously – that's the most fun part, and I'd like to think adds a lot to the finished product. Occasionally, I'll add in a fourth source, such as a sample of the medieval hurdy gurdy I used in the July program to illustrate one inspiration for Missy Mazzoli's *Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)*.

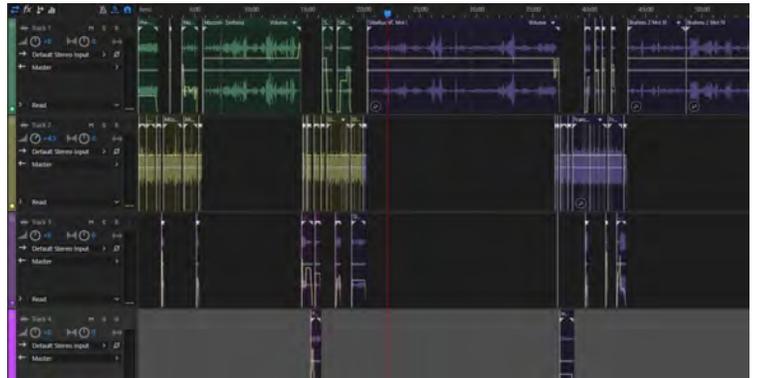
Then, once all of the sources are assembled, it's quilting time! Each of the 40 or so sound files can be individually or collectively manipulated – moved around in time relative to the other clips, faded in and out by volume, and adjusted so that each element falls nicely into place, one after the next. I find it both challenging and rewarding, and aim for a finished program of exactly 59 minutes to match KLCC's broadcast window.

The third and final installment of this series will be on Sunday, September 20 at 1pm, and then will be available for streaming for 30 days after that. This program will feature music from our February 2020 concert, including an illuminating interview with guest conductor and pianist Jeffrey Kahane. I hope you can tune in, and will have a bit more insight into how it all works!

Scott Freck



David Hartman



Multitrack editing session for KLCC broadcast

Feel free to print a copy of the Prelude when it is delivered to your email for future reference. Current and past issues of the Prelude can be found on the Guild website, <https://eugenesymphonyguild.org/membership/newsletter> Editor: Judy England



Eugene Symphony Guild
115 West 8th Avenue, Ste. 115
Eugene, Oregon 97401

September



“Musical innovation is full of danger to the State, for when modes of music change, the fundamental laws of the State always change with them.” – Plato