

PRELUDE



Vol. XLIV, No. 48 December 2021 Eugene Symphony Guild Newsletter

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

Fall Non-Event Update!

As of mid-November, we are over halfway to our Fall Non-Event goal of \$10,000!

If you haven't already done so, it's easy to participate, and help your Guild raise money for our fabulous Symphony this Fall. Please take a minute to fill out your RSVP card and mail it, with your check, using the return envelope provided. Or you can simply go to our website :

eugenesymphonyguild.org – and donate using your credit card.

Thank you to our many members and friends who have contributed already, your support is greatly appreciated!

Sally Robinson

DECEMBER GUILD MEETINGS

Board Meeting: December 8, 10:00 on Zoom Guild Board Meeting

Important Guild Events in December, 2021:

December 1, 11:00 on Zoom Sally Robinson will host the second planning meeting for Music in the Garden, 2022. Invitations will be sent to those already contacted and anyone else who is interested in helping with MIG. Call Sally for invitation.

December 9, 6:30 in Silva Hall Guild Pre-concert Talk.

December 9, 7:30 in Silva Hall - Symphony Concert sponsored by the ESG.

December 15, 4 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. at the Quail Run Clubhouse, 345 Covey Lane. The **Guild Christmas Party**. Please RSVP to Sandra Weingarten or Ginger Fifield.

Happy Holidays to one and all....

President's Message



Dear Members:

I hope you all enjoyed the Thanksgiving Holiday this year and our mostly beautiful fall weather in November. Now, Happy

Holidays to all as we prepare to celebrate our various religious days in December.

As I write this, we have not yet held our November 17th General Meeting to which everyone has been invited. The Board is hoping for a good turn-out for the November meeting and the December 15th Christmas Party from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. at the Quail Run Clubhouse, 435 Covey Lane. It's exciting to think about and plan for these "back to normal" get-togethers. We're taking steps to make them safe for everyone by establishing our double vaccination and mask-wearing requirements. We'll also space out seating and eating arrangements. So if you haven't sent in your RSVP for the Christmas Party yet, check your calendar and call Ginger Fifield, 760-550-0515 or Sandra Weingarten, 541-466-3247. Let's get back together safely!

It has been a busy fall for the Board as we concentrate on several important matters. Our Non-Event Fall Fundraiser is in progress with good results so far. The Strategic Planning Committee has recommended a sweeping revision of our website, which the Board approved, and which is taking place over a period of weeks. The Membership Committee has designated membership recruitment as the most important action to take as we come out of

the pandemic and can begin interacting with the community again. And, Musical Chairs and Music in the Garden VPs and Chairs have begun initial plans for getting those events up and running.

Eventually, all of our members will be asked to take part in a Membership Drive, so keep eyes and ears open for communication about that. We have fallen behind in adding new members through the pandemic and will need everyone's help in catching up to our desired membership count. We have added four people this fall. Hurray! But, we need many hands in order to fulfill our purpose of supporting the Symphony as we have in the past. You will see membership as an area of continuing focus through the year.

The ESA has asked that the Guild sponsor the December concert which means we get more advertising space in their Program Book which covers the December and January concerts. We are also offered ten free tickets to the December concert for those wanting to sit in the "Box Seats" allotted for sponsors. You will be hearing more about this so keep on the look-out for more information.

So, as we move into our Holiday times, we hope to see you at the December Concert and the ESG sponsored Pre-Concert Talk. And, see you on December 15, (remember to RSVP per above) at our first Holiday Party in two years!

Carolyn Abbott – Co. President



DECEMBER CONCERT PREVIEW by Melva Boles

On December 9, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. the **Winter Dreams** concert will feature Erina Yashima of the Philadelphia Orchestra as guest conductor. Our guest performer is violinist Paul Huang in his Eugene debut. Compositions on the program include *Lyric for Strings* by George Walker (1922-2018); *Violin Concerto No. 4 in D Major* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791); and *Symphony No. 1 in G Minor "Winter Daydreams"* by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893).

George Walker was an American composer, pianist and organist and the first African American to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music. Walker was first exposed to music at the age of five when he began to play the piano. He was admitted to the Oberlin Conservatory at 14 and later to the Curtis Institute of Music to study piano with Rudolf Serkin. He received his doctorate from the Eastman School of Music and taught at Rutgers University for several years, retiring in 1992. He published over 90 works and received commissions from major orchestras. Written in 1946, his *Lyric for Strings* is his most performed orchestral work. Originally titled *Lament*, it is dedicated to Walker's grandmother. Walker is known for his counterpoint, and the piece contains climactic moments of harmony. Somewhat akin to the history of Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*, *Lyric* was originally the middle movement of a string quartet that proved so popular the composer repurposed it into a larger orchestral work.

Wolfgang Mozart was probably the most prodigious musician ever born. His early tours around Europe not only made him famous, but familiarized him with many musical styles that he synthesized in his own works. Wolfgang's father Leopold was an excellent violinist and esteemed author of violin technique; he taught his 6 year old son to play violin. Mozart learned quickly and was soon making music with his father's colleagues and friends. He was introduced to the music of Italy's finest violinist composers; Nardini, Boccherini and Tartini provided him with models for violin concertos. However, Mozart eventually transcended the limits of these models. Wolfgang wrote at least five **violin concertos** between 1773 and 1776 most likely for his own use as concert master of the Archbishop of Salzburg's orchestra. His *Violin Concerto No. 4 in D Major* consists of three movements: Allegro, Andante Cantabile and Andante

Grazio. The Allegro movement begins with a trumpet-like fanfare in full unison orchestra (but with no trumpets) followed by a whimsical little tune in strings. The Andante Cantabile is "songful" and reflective, and the final movement alternates between a gentle contredanse (contra dance) and an energetic jig rhythm. The soloist engages in rapid passage-work. Gracefulness and rollicking good humor exist side by side. Mozart's wit is on display!

Tchaikovsky was a sensitive young boy born into a large middle-class family in provincial Russia. He attained a law degree and became a civil servant but studied music privately, showing only average ability. However, he left his job to concentrate on music at St Petersburg Conservatory where he studied for five years under Anton Rubinstein. There, his technique progressed rapidly. He moved to Moscow to teach and compose. He composed his *Symphony No. 1* in 1866, but it was not performed until 1868. The work caused Tchaikovsky more pain and suffering than any of his other works, in part because he kept showing his work to his former teacher Rubinstein for critical feedback. Rubinstein, a slavish follower of sonata form in his own works, insisted that Tchaikovsky should also. Tchaikovsky eventually realized that he would have to work "around the rules" in order to grow and develop as a composer. This meant adapting the sonata form and symphonic structure to accommodate the music he was gifted to write. He continued to make revisions to the work for eight years. The first performance of the revised version took place in Moscow in 1883, 15 years later.

There are four movements: the first two titled *Daydreams of a Winter Journey* and *Land of Gloom, Land of Mist* are followed by a Scherzo and a Finale based on a variation of the Russian folk song "I will plant, young one." The charming melodies and vivid orchestration give little hint of the trouble it cost the composer. The unmistakable Tchaikovsky sound is already in every measure replete with an exhilarating conclusion of orchestral fireworks, proving that even in his First Symphony, he was a master of the grand finale.



MEMBERSHIP MOMENTS

We've had quite a run of new members the last couple of months. When things get a little safer pandemic-wise, we'll have a "Meet and Greet" event for them with Board members and others welcoming them and answering questions they may have. Also, we'll try to get some pictures of them in the next *Prelude*. Our members are so friendly and welcoming, I know you'll make a special effort to talk to them when you see them!

I saw Phyllis Villec at the last Concert and it was wonderful to know she is getting out after recuperating from her stroke. Thanks to new member Pamela McClure Johnston for bringing her. I also talked to Eileen Russell at the concert and she is moving along with life after Roger's death. Everyone was so happy to be getting out to in-person concerts!

Our longtime leader, Suzanne Shapiro and her husband Marc are going through a difficult stage with his cancer recurrence and she is focusing her full energies on his care. Cards would be appreciated.

Do let me know of any news that should be public regarding our members. Also, please read the President's letter to get more information on what is happening with Membership efforts at this time.

Carolyn Abbott - Membership Chair

FALL NON-EVENT UPDATE

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Thank you to our many members and friends who have contributed already – your support is greatly appreciated!

Sally Robinson



More photos from Sally's Robinson's garden. At left are "the last of the Ginkgo leaves", and at right are Pineapple Sage. Thank you, Sally!



Behind the Curtain — Symphony News



Greetings Guild members,

I hope you are well! For this edition of the Prelude, and as we prepare to record our third and final ‘Symphonic Concert - Virtual Edition’ on November 18, I thought it might be instructive to share a

little inside intel about how we make these video versions of our concert programs. As you may recall, we created six episodes of what we called *Symphony Soundwaves* last season, first using archival material from prior years, and then creating new content, first using a string quartet and then later with chamber orchestras. We built quite a bit of organizational muscle during that process, and last summer we made the decision to continue to release these on-demand videos for the first three concerts of the 2021/22 season as a bridge back to what we hope are full audiences soon. Here’s how it works!

First, we start with a simple storyboard that lists all of the elements that will go into each program, including who will record introductions for each piece, the duration of each work on the concert program, from where we’ll need to source visual assets such as photos or credits, and who on our team is responsible for what components.

Then, after getting clearances from artists, music publishers, and the like, we have a meeting with our two partner organizations, the Hult Center and Attic Media. Nathan Cox is the Assistant Technical Director for the Hult Center who has a background in film and television, and he directs the camera crew. Our pals at Attic help us ensure good quality in what we’re planning to shoot, and also provide post-production editing (more on that later).

The heavy lifting comes just prior to the beginning of the rehearsal process, as we determine in advance what ‘shots’ we want to capture at each moment of each piece. Much of that score preparation is done by our wonderful and talented Conducting Fellow, Daniel Cho. With input from Francesco and me, he marks up copies of each score with tiny sticky notes emblazoned with a series of hieroglyphics like “R2, P13.”

This is how we capture the essence of each piece of music, ensuring that we have a good flow and show what is happening on stage with individual solos, sweeping sections, and plenty of conductor shots knowing that is an angle that viewers can’t get in the concert hall.

As of last November, when the City of Eugene used some of its federal coronavirus relief funding to purchase new equipment, the Hult Center is now the proud owner of six high-definition cameras and sophisticated switching equipment. Three of the cameras are person-operated, with a member of the stage crew behind each, zooming, panning, tilting, and focusing. The other three are robotic, each no bigger than a can of Folger’s coffee, that are mounted on stage on stands and controlled by a single person using a joystick in the back of the hall behind the seating section. The robotic cameras can be preset to have different views, focusing for instance on an individual musician or the conductor, and with the press of a button, in under a second the robo-cams can shift to the next desired shot.

Together the cameras are dubbed Camera 1, Camera 2, Robo 1, Robo 2, etc., so when Daniel marks in his score he wants “R2, P13” that means Robo Cam 2 should be changed to Preset 13, pointing at whatever we’d chosen in advance. It’s all rather complicated, and we typically take one of the orchestra’s four rehearsals (usually the second one) to build all of the shots we need. Then, for the third rehearsal we’ll refine each shot, tightening the focus, adjusting the iris of each lens so that we have an even amount of light and balanced color across the six cameras, and other small tweaks. Then, for the orchestra’s dress rehearsal (the fourth of four), we run it as the camera crew’s dress rehearsal, too – with Daniel and/or Nathan on a headset communicating with the four camera operators and the crew member who runs the switcher. It’s a very sophisticated computer program that allows us to see all six cameras on one half of a big-screen television mounted in the control room, with a Program and a Preview panel. The Preview is the next shot up in the plan, and Program is what is being recorded to the main video track.

(Continued on page 6)



Behind the Curtain — Symphony News

Thus begins an elaborate dance, with Daniel calling such things as “Ready Camera 2 on violins...take!” which tells the switcher operator to first put Camera 2 into Preview, and then move it to Program where it’ll be captured in the recorded video.

We typically leave Camera 2 as a wide shot of the full orchestra, but use it sparingly in the scripted video, as that is our “iso” shot that we can always cut to if something goes wrong with the other five cameras. We also record each camera independently so that we can adjust timing (or even replace a shot) in the post-production editing process.

On the night of the concert, the control room (which is situated in one of the group dressing rooms on the Soreng Theater side of the backstage space at the lowest level of the Hult Center) is abuzz with nervous energy. It’s focused but fun, and we have a series of inside jokes that have developed since we began recording this content last February 2021...my favorite is that we call a shot from Robo 2 the “Starship Enterprise,” with Francesco and the orchestra on the very bottom of the screen and the beautiful sconce lights that festoon the two balconies illuminated like stars in the night sky. It’s always a goosebump moment when we bring that one up.

Typically on the Wednesday before the Thursday concert, we’ll record all of the introductions, such as Francesco’s opening comments, or a musician describing the next piece. Attic Media brings their gear, including camera, lighting, microphone, and a really cool rig that turns an iPad into a teleprompter with a mirror that projects the words onto the glass that houses the camera lens. I often write the first draft of these comments, and then work with each speaker to ensure that it sounds authentic and organic. Everyone LOVES the teleprompter, and after using it here Francesco now insists on one with his other orchestra, the Santa Rosa Symphony.

After six such productions at the Hult Center, we’re getting pretty good at the process, with less and less to fix in editing. About a week after each concert, our friend Jessica Mitchell at Attic Media sends me a draft version of the complete program, including all of the introductions, any graphics that we embed, work and movement titles, end credits, and of course the audio tracks recorded by Billy Barnett of Gung Ho Studios. I’ll go through the draft carefully and make

several pages of notes like “arrive at violin solo 1 second sooner” or “push in on the snare drum here.” Francesco will occasionally offer feedback on the draft too, and then I’ll go to Attic’s offices in the Miner Building on Broadway in downtown Eugene, and together Jessica and I clean up the few remaining loose ends in a matter of three or four hours.

In terms of numbers, for the concert we recorded on September 23, we had 281 separate shots mapped out, using exactly 50 presets in the robo cams and probably another 12 or so with the person-operated cameras. All told across the seven programs to date, we’ve had viewership from more than 15,000 people coming from all 50 states and more than 20 countries, so in a way, more people around the world have seen and heard the Eugene Symphony than ever before.

The programs are available on demand via our website and YouTube channel for a week after each one premieres, and the next one will be released on December 2. Whether you’re able to attend the November 18 concert or not, I hope you can watch the Virtual Edition – tickets are “pay what you can” with a minimum of \$20.

I hope you enjoyed this little peek behind the scenes, and I look forward to seeing you at the Hult Center or one of our Eugene Symphony events soon! Be well, happy holidays, and thanks as always for your work!

My best,
Scott

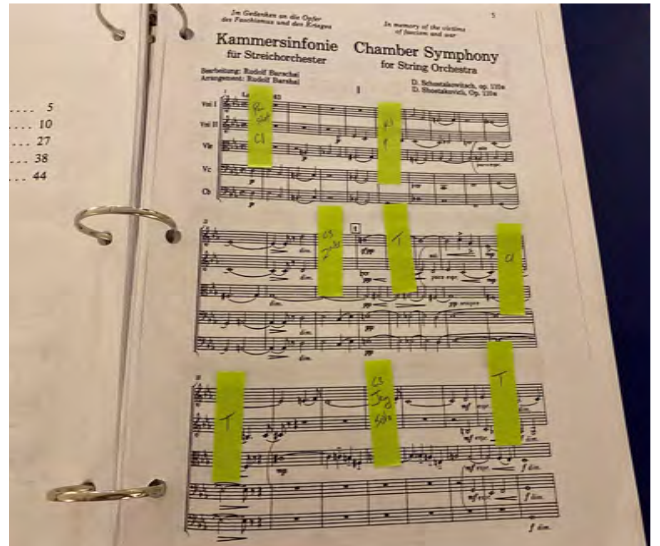
Scott Freck
Executive Director



Behind the Curtain — Symphony News



Nathan Cox [at left] and Daniel Cho
in the Control Room



A “mark-up” or Hieroglyphics... a
marked up score



Jessica Mitchell hard at work in the editing
bay at Attic Media



Francesco recording an introduction in the
Hult Center Lobby



As the leaves trail off leading us to December.... Thank you, Helen Liu, a local artist who has shared her mural art with the Guild, for creating this impermanent street art. Thanks also to Kam, for sharing this with us!

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
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DECEMBER

“If Music is a Place — then Jazz is the City, Folk is the Wilderness, Rock is the Road, Classical is a Temple.”

—Vera Nazarian