

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- *St. Matthew Passion* Art Exhibit—An Inspiration
- Meet Richard and Juanita Schubert
- Patron Spotlight
- *Celtic Cavalcade* Review by Joe Compton
- FYI: What is the Role of the Concertmaster?
- *Triple Play* Sneak Peek
- In the News—We're Preparing for Our Annual Online Auction

ST. MATTHEW PASSION ART EXHIBIT—AN INSPIRATION

The Philharmonic is joining forces with the Tuscarawas County Center for the Arts to host an exhibit featuring art inspired by Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*. Students from the University of Mount Union, Kent State University at Stark and local artists will exhibit their work on display the week of March 18. In addition, the Center will host a reception on the evening of March 23 from 6 to 8.

J. S. Bach's inspiration for *St. Matthew Passion* is obvious—the lyrics chronicle the passion narrative from *The Gospel of Matthew*, specifically chapters 26 and 27. His intent, as a musician and devout Christian, was to artistically present the story at Good Friday services in Leipzig, and the nature of his work was considered novel.

Just as Bach was inspired to compose *St. Matthew Passion*, the result of his endeavor is intensely stirring in its power and beauty, enough so that great effort went into preserving the work and making it accessible beyond its original

scope.

Bach's oratorio might not have enjoyed long-lived international acclaim outside of 18th-century Leipzig had Mendelssohn not brought it to light a full 100 years after its debut, and had the Bach Society not later introduced it to the English-speaking world. Helen Johnston, a student at Queen's College, translated *St. Matthew Passion* into English, and the founder of the society premiered a performance of the version in London in 1854.

Since then, the music and lyrics of the *Passion* have served to inspire generations of musicians, artists and patrons around the world. We look forward to seeing new works of art based on Bach's masterpiece right here in the Valley.

Join us for the exhibit at the Center for the Arts on Saturday evening, and then attend the performance—presented in English—on Palm Sunday afternoon. You'll be inspired.



THE SAINT MATTHEW PASSION | March 24 | 3:00 P.M. | Performing Arts Center

Dear Tuscaffiliates

When I envisioned myself in a conducting career, one of the visions I had was that of being a musical leader in a community that would be comprised of singers and instrumentalists who would join with me to study and prepare the *St. Matthew Passion* of Johann Sebastian Bach on a regular basis every few years. I recall vividly the first time I heard the opening chorus—in a Sunday school class when I was in my twenties—and I was floored by the utter mastery it displayed and the emotional power of this complex piece. The portentous bass pedal, the soaring melodic lines and the dramatic cries of one choir to another make for an arrestingly dramatic over-

ture. On further acquaintance, I was even more amazed that, after that astonishing opening chorus, Bach was able to produce more music that spun out the familiar story in a manner that was gripping, wrenching, and then, deeply consoling.

It's music that, especially, calls us all to rise to the occasion—a line, if I may say so, so infused with meanings I could preach a sermon. Over the past few months I have been directing the chorus in its rehearsals and—I do not exaggerate—every phrase reveals something more in itself—some further potential for expression, for connection, for meaning. This has been for all of us, an experience worth repeating. And we will. And we will.



Eric Benjamin
Conductor

MEET RICHARD & JUANITA SCHUBERT



THE TUSCARAWAS Philharmonic will perform *St. Matthew Passion* with a community chorus, one that has been rehearsing for weeks in preparation for this masterful work. Among our chorus members are two veterans of Bach's sacred oratorio—Dick and Juanita Schubert will be singing bass and soprano respectively, and let's just say this is not their first go around with the *Passion*.

The Schuberts, now living in Walnut Creek, are originally from the Cleveland area. They lived in Bay Village and later Hinckley; and while Dick worked for B. F. Goodrich, Juanita was a faculty member of the Cleveland Institute of Music and did volunteer work for The City Mission.

In the late 1950s, Robert Shaw established a permanent chorus connected with the Cleveland Orchestra, and he admitted members by audition. The Schuberts auditioned for him, and they were both accepted—Juanita recalls Shaw liked to hire couples.

They rehearsed with Shaw every Monday evening, "and it was all business," said Juanita. Their first performance with the orchestra was Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*.

Then in 1962, the orchestra and chorus performed Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*. Soon after, the chorus was to participate in Pablo Casals' festival in Puerto Rico, and Shaw

chose half of the chorus to make the trip. The Schuberts were included in the select group, and they were on their way.

In Puerto Rico, they performed under the direction of Casals himself, and Juanita recalls the world-renowned cellist and conductor at the podium. Casals was quite elderly at the time, but he conducted with great vigor, she said, and he instructed the chorus, saying, "You cannot sing this *Passion* without knowing this Jesus."

From Puerto Rico, the chorus traveled to the Dominican Republic, and despite political unrest and armed guards at every turn, they performed the *Passion* in Santo Domingo. From there, they flew to New York and performed the *Passion* once again in a packed Carnegie Hall.

"After that, we flew back to Cleveland and resumed our normal life," said Juanita. She and Dick sang with the chorus for six years and resigned when Shaw left Cleveland for a position in Atlanta. "After he left," Juanita said, "We thought we can't get any better than that, so we left and went on to do something else."

Now retired, the Schuberts have traded occupations for vocations—Dick is a skilled woodworker, and Juanita makes hand-crafted jewelry. They sell their work in various art shows, and all the proceeds go to The City Mission.

Upon moving to the Tuscarawas Valley, the Schuberts were "delightfully surprised to find the Tuscarawas Philharmonic and Eric Benjamin," and they continue to sing together with their new-found chorus. "It's something we can do together," said Juanita.

DR. DAN AND MARY MILLER

"Music has always been important to us. Classical music 'lifts the soul' and makes life worth living. We feel fortunate to have such an outstanding orchestra in the area, and we have been impressed with the leadership and quality of the orchestra. Playing in the orchestra for a number of years was a very enjoyable experience for me (Mary). As parents and grandparents we support the Philharmonic so future generations can continue to experience and enjoy its creative programming."

Dan and Mary Miller of Walnut Creek are co-sponsors of the *Saint Matthew Passion* performance, and they are excited to have their daughter, Cynthia Spiegel, return to the area as a guest soprano soloist for the program. Mary was a cellist with the Philharmonic for several years, and we welcome their continued involvement.

PATRON
SPOTLIGHT

OTHER ST. MATTHEW PASSION SPONSORS: *The John & Orlena Marsh Foundation, Park Village Health Care Center, AAA of Tuscarawas County*

CELTIC CAVALCADE REVIEW

by Joe Compton

THE TUSCARAWAS Philharmonic's February concert, *Celtic Cavalcade*, was an extraordinary show. As the audience was whisked away by the first notes, we were no longer in snowy Tuscarawas County—we were traveling across the Atlantic Ocean to the misty lands of Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

The orchestra provided melodies that flowed seamlessly from meaningful notes to vivid scenes in our heads. Throughout the entire evening, many surprises came out of every corner of the Performing Arts Center. One of my favorite surprises was during the selection *Orkney Wedding and Sunrise* when the bagpiper came up out of the pit and joined in with the orchestra. The piper added a touch of uniqueness to the rest of the orchestra sound because it was full and bright, which created a smooth contrast that I enjoyed very much. A lot of people were curious as to how the bagpiper would sound with the group, but after the concert they were pleased that the pipes added a clean harmony.

As the second half of the performance started, the whole crowd lost it when the conductor, Mr. Eric Benjamin, came to the stage dressed in a kilt. Their faces lit up, and from that moment we knew that the second half of the evening was going to be just as good as the first.

The violinist who started the second half was Elizabeth Langford, and her performance made the crowd want to get up and dance. Her foot never stopped keeping the beat as she stringed out beautiful melodies. It was a shame she had to stop so soon, because everyone was moving right along with her.

An interesting instrument was introduced following Miss Langford—the hammered dulcimer played by Tina Bergmann. This instrument was intriguing, and its sound was a mixture of a xylophone and a stringed instrument.

Soon after the instruments performed, it was time for a vocal piece. Kyle Kelvington, the tenor soloist, sang a soft arrangement of *Danny Boy* that brought a somber mood to the atmosphere. His strong voice carried the tune sweetly through the air to our ears.

Shortly after, the concert came to a close with an exciting, upbeat jig. Accompanying the orchestra for this piece was the O'Hare School of Irish Dance. This group literally shined as they hopped and stomped all around the stage showing off their colorful costumes. Some of the dancers were so talented that they looked as if they were weightless as they moved their feet to the tempo of the Irish jig.

The Tuscarawas Philharmonic never fails to satisfy, and this concert went above and beyond the normal expectation. It was full of life and enthusiasm, with just enough calmness to bring out all the emotions in everyone lucky enough to be there that night. It will be exciting to see what surprises the next event will hold.

Joe Compton, a sophomore at Dover High School, is on the Board of Trustees.



WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE CONCERTMASTER?

Short answer—the concertmaster is the principal first violinist who sits directly to the left of the conductor, but there is more to the job than stage geography.

The concertmaster (in European orchestras, the player is simply called the “leader”), represents the orchestra, first before the audience, and then before the conductor. Our concertmaster, Mary Bontrager, is the last musician to enter the stage before a performance. She accepts applause from the audience and quiet foot taps from her colleagues,* and she then oversees the tuning process by signaling the oboist to sound the tuning note. The concertmaster signals when the orchestra should stand and sit, sometimes simply by example. She also plays any violin solos that are written as part of the orchestral composition.

In preparation for performances, the concertmaster will instruct string players with technical guidance, such as bowings. Have you noticed that string players move their bows in unison? That doesn't happen by accident.

**Musicians will often “applaud” by tapping their feet on the stage floor, and they'll shuffle their feet to acknowledge a colleague's well-played solo.*

COMING APRIL 20, 2013



Triple Play: Shostakovich, Haydn, Vandall

Shostakovich...Haydn...Vandall. New Philadelphia's Robert Vandall is an internationally celebrated composer of some of the most favorite music of piano students and piano teachers around the world. We'll celebrate him right here in the Tuscarawas Valley as we present two of his delightful piano concerti performed by students who will have competed for the honor. Also, Kent State's Donna Lee will perform Shostakovich's *Piano Concerto No 2 in F Major*.

Vandall: Concertino in C • Vandall: Concerto in G

Haydn: Symphony #88

Shostakovich: Piano Concerto No 2 in F Major

Special Guests: Robert Vandall and Donna Lee

IN THE NEWS

TUSCARAWAS PHILHARMONIC IS PREPARING FOR OUR ANNUAL ONLINE AUCTION



Starting on April 14, 2013, Tuscarawas Philharmonic will be auctioning off hundreds of fun and unique items. This is a fundraising event, and the more items we have for bidding, the more successful we'll be.

So we're asking for your help—Give a little and get a lot in return.

Whether you have one item or several to contribute, your participation is an invaluable part of our fundraising efforts.

By donating an item or service directly online, you'll be

helping to raise money for our organization, and businesses receive a mention

on our site that can link back to their own website.

You may donate quickly using our online form (see www.TuscarawasPhilharmonic.org) or by contacting auction manager Bud Winn at bwinn@roadrunner.com or 330-364-1843.

■ Tuscarawas Philharmonic • P.O. Box 406 • New Philadelphia, OH 44663 • 330.364.1843

■ www.TuscarawasPhilharmonic.org • *State of the Art* editor: Robyn Martins

■ Performing at the Kent State Tuscarawas Performing Arts Center • Box Office—330.308.6400