



# String MASTERPIECE

March 7, 2020

## TUSCARAWAS PHILHARMONIC

# Eric on Loving Classical Music

The March concert featuring music for strings summons up some vital old memories and makes me think again about the importance of music and the role it plays in our lives. Some Alzheimer’s patients, we are told, will achieve a degree of lucidity and recollections upon hearing music from their past, and the power of hearing music again after a long absence is part of my own experience in this upcoming concert.

When I was in the eighth grade, growing up in St. Albans, Vermont, I fell in love with classical music. I forsook pop music and devoted myself to classical music wherever I could find it—which was not easy.

There was no resident symphony orchestra, as there is here in Tuscarawas County, so I had to rely on recordings (and school bands and church choirs—oh, and Canadian Broadcasting, on occasion) to get my fix of this newly discovered treasure trove of sonic, emotional, and spiritual sustenance.

In St. Albans, there were two stores that sold records. Woolworths, where I purchased a Philadelphia Orchestra recording of Grieg’s “In the Hall of the Mountain King,” and Powers.. uh...what was it? A pharmacy/florist/stationery store that also sold records and musical instruments. I used to trawl the store for rock albums and later, looked in vain for classical recordings. The “Classical” bin held the same three albums over the course of several years. Two were “Easy

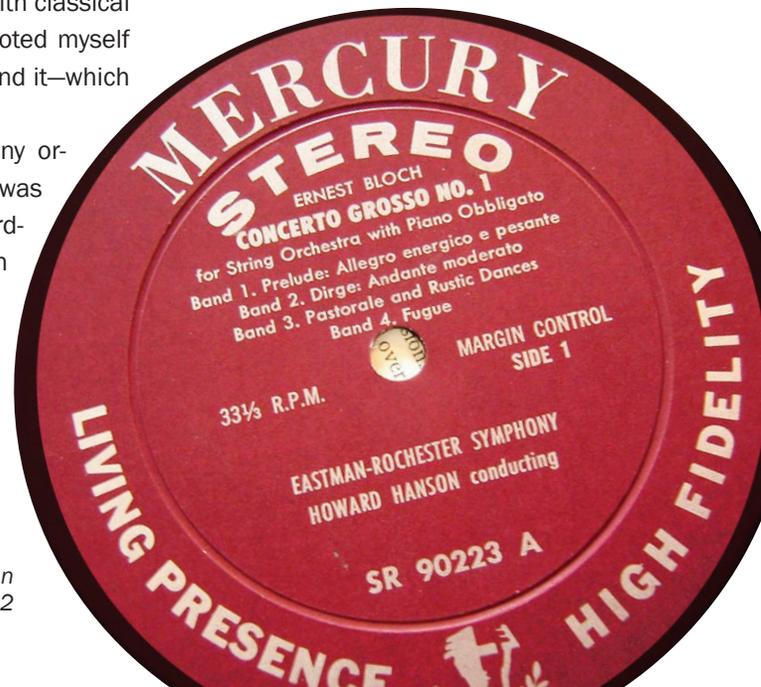
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# The Children's Chorus Goes on Tour!

We love it when the community comes out to hear us at our various performances through the semester, but we realize that not everyone in our community has that ability and privilege. So, TPCC is bringing the concert to them! This day-long event will be spent singing short concerts and doing crafts with residents of local nursing home and assisted living facilities.

Saturday, March 27th  
1 – 5:30 p.m.

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Listening” Montovani and Lawrence Welk volumes, and one was an old RCA recording of the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra playing music by someone I had never heard of: Ernest Bloch.

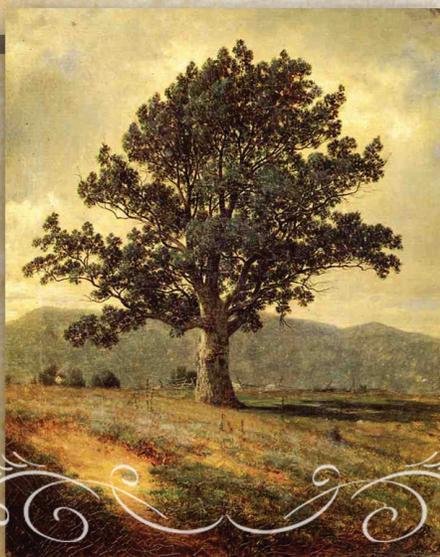
Finally, out of some desperation, I think, I purchased the last—a faded and forlorn low budget recording that had sat in the bin for as long as I could remember. The “Concerto Grosso #1 for Strings and Piano Obligato” was electrifying from the start and became a favorite. Here was music that took the model of the Baroque concerto grosso (think of Bach’s *Brandenburg Concerti*) and gave it an update. The language had a decided 20th-century twist, with some dramatic dissonances and unexpected rhythmic jolts, but it also finished with a dynamic fugue of Bachian rigor. I look forward especially to sharing it with the advanced students from our summer camp program who will join us on March 7.

Another source of classical recordings was the town library, which housed a very modest collection of albums on loan. It seems I was the only

person in town who checked the recordings out. Once, I had selected a recording of contemporary music by Japanese composers (a remarkable recording, but it still amazes me that someone purchased it for the collection in my hometown), and the librarian looked at it and then just handed it to me, suggesting that if anyone else came in wanting it, they would call me.

One classic gem I found in the collection was the “Violin Concerto” by Felix Mendelssohn. I knew Mendelssohn’s name but did not know this masterpiece. It quickly became a favorite, and I was rather proud that this was so—I was a brass player and liked music with epic climaxes crowned by thundering brass choirs. The Mendelssohn violin concerto was all grace and lightness, profound elegance and vivacious charm—and it won my heart and has never failed to captivate me.

I was delighted when our guest soloist, Kaylee Bontrager, chose it as her vehicle for our March concert. And how wonderful that there is a Tuscarawas Philharmonic, if only to give us this splendid opportunity to hear this soloist in this magical music.



The Tuscarawas Philharmonic Adult Chorus  
Presents

## Choral Songs

♫ March 22, 2020 • 3 p.m. ♫  
First Christian Church of New Philadelphia

*A FREE performance featuring choral favorites by Bach, Barber, Mozart, Handel and more!*

*Under the direction of Eric Benjamin*

# A Chat with Kaylee Bontrager

*Q: What are some of your earliest memories of playing the violin?*

I have a blur of memories of practicing by myself and with Mom, my first teacher. I remember a few specific moments of rehearsing in the music room with the family quartet and playing in nursing homes and churches. I also remember Suzuki group lessons with Cornel Zotta and studio recitals.

*Q: Your siblings all play string instruments as well—do you ever play as a family?*

My mom and siblings and I have played together as a quartet for many years. Even before we could read music, we practiced together and prepared little concerts. These days our schedules don't line up frequently, but if we have the opportunity to play for a wedding or another gig, we still love playing together.

*Q: Have you ever experimented with other instruments or taken lessons on something other than the violin?*

I took piano and guitar lessons for a few years, and I maintain my piano abilities. I also love to sing and sang in multiple choirs in high school.

*Q: You toured with the Schubert Octet in Linz, Austria. Tell us some highlights from that experience.*

The octet experience was incredible! I loved getting to know fellow orchestra members better and playing together at such a high level. Connecting with students from Bruckner University in Linz, Austria, was very cool as well—it's amazing how well we can communicate through music. The coaching from Cleveland Orchestra members and Maestro Franz Welser-Möst were incredible, and it was so fulfilling to study the music in depth and really unify our articulation, dynamics, and expression.

*Q: Your family has traveled together quite a bit—what are some of your favorite vacation spots?*

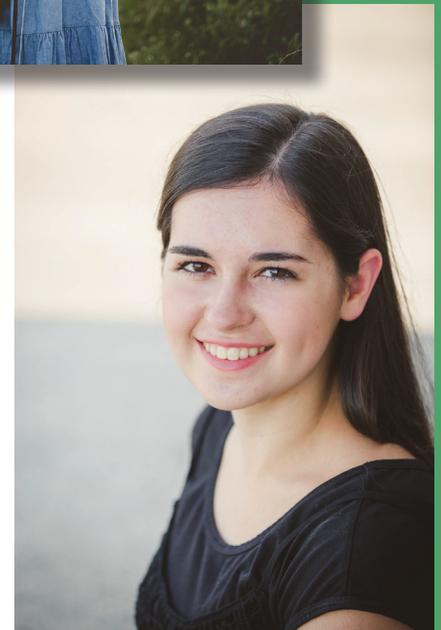
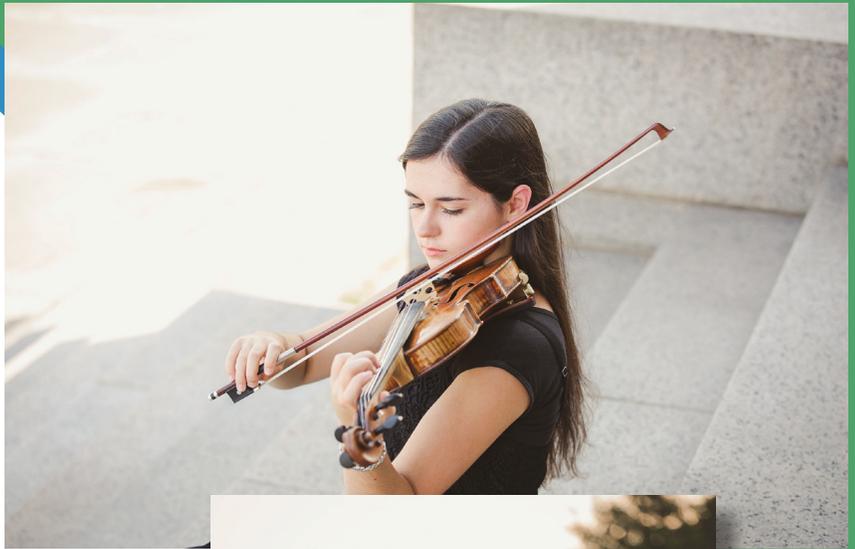
I love sightseeing, especially in big cities and national parks. Some of my favorites were San Francisco, New York City, the Grand Canyon, and Rome, Italy. It was also a phenomenal experience to go on tour with my youth orchestra to Austria, Slovakia, and Hungary, and I would love to experience more of Europe!

*Q: What other interests or hobbies do you enjoy?*

When I have free time, I love baking and reading. Spending time with friends is also important to me.

*Q: What is your ultimate goal as a musician?*

I hope to settle down in a community and get to know the people in my area, play in an orchestra and freelance, and perhaps form a teaching studio. I will keep exploring the amazing solo, chamber, and orchestral music out there and continue the endless, but fulfilling pursuit, of mastery.



# Now Registering for Performing Arts Camp 2020! To be held June 15-18

**STRING CAMP:** from 9 a.m. to noon. The program is open to all string players through 12th grade.

**PERCUSSION CAMP:** from 1 to 4 p.m., is specifically designed for percussionists who have completed grades six through nine.

The week will culminate in a combined concert on stage at the Performing Arts Center, with both groups performing. The concert, beginning at 6:30 p.m., is free and open to the public.

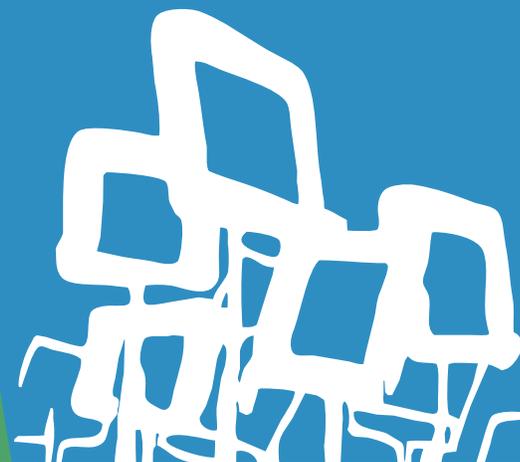
**COST:** \$105

**DEADLINE:** May 7. Register by April 15 to receive a \$10 discount.

Register online at [camp.tuscphil.org](http://camp.tuscphil.org). Parents interested in enrolling their young musicians may also contact the coordinators. Mary Cooper—330-243-4122, [marypatricecooper@gmail.com](mailto:marypatricecooper@gmail.com); Joan Wenzel—330-204-5647, [wenzelj82660@gmail.com](mailto:wenzelj82660@gmail.com).

The annual event is sponsored by Barbour Publishing, Dover Chemical, Progressive Foam, ProVia, and The Floyd and Doris Kimble Foundation.

## TUSCARAWAS PHILHARMONIC



## PERFORMING ARTS CAMP

## DIFFERENT DRUMS

April 4, 2020



The Tuscarawas Philharmonic Honor Band has become a highly-anticipated special feature of the academic music season. This year we also feature the University of Akron 4th Floor Percussion Ensemble with their director Dr. Larry Snider. The grand finale is grand indeed—Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes of Carl Maria Von Weber by the German composer Paul Hindemith.

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- [www.TuscarawasPhilharmonic.org](http://www.TuscarawasPhilharmonic.org) • *State of the Art* editor: Robyn Martins
- Performing at the Kent State Tuscarawas Performing Arts Center • Box Office—330.308.6400