

SSUSA NEWSLETTER

SCHUBERT SOCIETY OF THE USA

Vol.1, No.1, 2003

Dear Friend,

The SSUSA came into being on January 3, 2003. I take this opportunity, in the first issue of our newsletter, to send you the official announcement. That the SSUSA was founded in the year that marks the 175th anniversary of Schubert's death is, as a law professor of mine used to say, a "mere fortuity." Here is the SSUSA **MISSION STATEMENT**, which is the best expression of who we are:

The purpose of the Schubert Society of the USA (SSUSA) shall be the encouragement and advancement of studies and research about the life, works, historical context, and reception of Franz Peter Schubert, and the dissemination of information about the study and performance of the music of Schubert.

The goals of the Schubert Society of the USA are to:

- Provide a forum for communication among the membership.
- Encourage exploration of new ideas concerning Schubert and his era.
- Offer assistance to scholars for research, performance projects, etc.
- Present reviews of new publications, recording, and unusual performances.
- Support educational projects dealing with Schubert.
- Announce activities concerning Schubert and of the Society, e.g., symposia, festivals, concerts - local, regional, national, and international.
- Report on work and activities in other parts of the world.
- Encourage interdisciplinary scholarship by establishing connections with relevant and appropriate organizations.
- Serve as a central clearinghouse for information about Schubert materials in the USA. These goals will be achieved in part by publication of a Society Newsletter and by maintenance of the Society's web site on the Internet.

The SSUSA is young, and feeling early growing pains. We ask your indulgence of this youngster who needs and wants your support in order to thrive. Let us hear from you ... join us in making the SSUSA an organization of national stature and professional respect, as befits the greatness of the composer to whom we dedicate this society.

Janet I. Wasserman
Founder and Executive Director
Newsletter Editor *pro tem*

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PERFORMANCES

LILAC TIME

Mannes College of Music, July 30 and 31st, 2003, New York, New York

Yes, that "Lilac Time" -- Heinrich Berté's adaptation from the Bartsch novel *Schwammerl* -- about the three Viennese girls with rhyming names, the non-existent prima donna Madame Taliani, a Johann Michael Vogl far too young to be part of Schubert's crowd of drinking buddies, a really *nice* Schober, and so on. The evening's program describes the work as "the immortal operetta" -- but it is immortal fiction from start to finish. The fun begins on the mortal side once you notice that the program is printed on lilac-colored paper. However, this overview is not in any sense a standard critical review since the production came out of a Mannes College summer opera workshop. That is, the cast consisted of students who enrolled for the Mannes Extension Division's summer course -- a course that is not part of the more intensive, year-round conservatory curriculum. These students' musical and acting abilities spanned the spectrum of just barely to good. What the students had in common, along with the program's director Marian Thompson, was the opportunity and desire to have quite a bit of fun along with a lot of hard work during a New York City summer, trying out their fledgling operetta wings -- voice and acting ability or not -- and to glory in Schubert's music. This was, in short, a student production consisting of neophytes (with several exceptions, including the ballerina).

While I was present at the opening night, I was invited (actually, I asked to be invited) to attend a semi-dress rehearsal -- semi-dress because you saw as many sneakers, tee shirts, and jeans as you did flouncy costumes. The rehearsal I attended was three days before the opening. In the succeeding days of rehearsals, Marian Thompson, the director, and her production staff, and especially a very hard-working music director and accompanist R. Stewart Powell, worked a minor miracle in getting the cast to stop stumbling into each other, face the audience, speak up, sing, and, *act*. This, admittedly, went only so far based on the highly varying abilities of the cast members. Opening night jitters were in evidence. The excellent costumes and props gave the cast a boost in supplying an attractive stage ambience. Costumes have that built-in ability to help actors feel more like the characters they are portraying. There were forgotten lines on opening night but cast members and prompter were handy in supplying a few reminding words. At the finale, the audience was cheering and applauding happily. Deservedly so. It took a lot of nerve, or chutzpah, or whatever you want to call it, to do what the students did. For some of the cast, this may be their first and last time on a musical stage. For others, this production was part of their decision to go forward with professional voice training. They had fun (and so, we hope, did their butterflies), the audience had fun, and for nearly three hours we listened to Schubert.

Janet I. Wasserman

NEW BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter, eds., *Music and German National Identity*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Leo Black, *Franz Schubert: Music and Belief*, London: Boydell Press, 2003.

Lorraine Byrne, *Schubert's Goethe Settings*, Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2003.

John Daverio, *Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Michael Hall, *Schubert's Song Sets*, Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2003.

David Montgomery, *Franz Schubert's Music in Performance: Historical Realities and Ideals, Pedagogical Evidence, Modern Problems* (Monographs in Musicology, Vol. 11), New York: Pendragon Press, 2003.

Brian Newbould, ed., *Schubert the Progressive: History, Performance Practice, Analysis*, Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2003.

Schubert's Winterreise; A Winter Journey in Poetry, Image, and Song: Franz Schubert and Wilhelm Müller, fwd. John Harbison, essay Susan Youens, photos Katrin Talbot, trans. Louise McClelland Urban, + CD of *Winterreise* performed by baritone Paul Rowe and pianist Martha Fischer, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003.

Janet I. Wasserman, "A Schubert Iconography: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Painters, Sculptors, Lithographers, Illustrators, Silhouettists, Engravers, and Others Known or Said to Have Produced a Likeness of Franz Schubert," in *Music in Art; International Journal for Music Iconography*, [City University of New York, Research Center for Music Iconography], XXVIII, 1-2, 2003, 199-241.

ON SSUSA PUBLICATIONS

The goal of *SSUSA Publications* is to stimulate a vital exchange of ideas among our members and readers about any aspect of the life and work of Franz Schubert and about subsequent scholarship, performance history, reception history, and so on, as delineated in our Mission Statement. The editorial intent is to be interdisciplinary in content and coverage. For a copy of our *Guidelines for Contributors and Submission Categories*, please contact me by postal mail or by e-mail. The Guidelines cover a range of publications and types of material.

While I have undertaken the very temporary job of editing the Newsletter, the SSUSA needs two unpaid editors: one for the Newsletter and one for the Journal. Both positions require a background in music scholarship, knowledge of Schubert's life and works, editorial experience, and familiarity with design, layout, and print production. We will also consider several volunteer associate editors having similar backgrounds to balance the workload. Please forward your CV to Janet Wasserman at: SchuSocUSA2003@aol.com.

MISCELLANY

- Earlier this year, the world premiere of *Schubert's Shadows*, subtitled *A Biographical Drama with Classical Music*, was performed at the Aetna Theatre of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut. The three performances of the work written by Harry Clark, cellist, took place on January 23, 25, and 26. The only character is Johann Michael Vogl, portrayed by actor John McDonough, who in 1838 (ten years after Schubert's death) discovers songs by Schubert - a dramatic device. The Lieder were performed by Philip Cutlip, baritone, and Sanda Schuldmann, piano. The Clark-Schuldmann Duo is the founder of Chamber Music PLUS, the resident ensemble at the Wadsworth Atheneum. The ensemble's web site is at <<http://chambermusicplus.org/>>.
- In July, we received word from Antti Sairanen of his ongoing efforts in reconstructing Schubert's opera *Sakontala*. Mr. Sairanen, director of Les Musiciennes du Monde in Denmark, has found a publisher for the opera, for which his organization commissioned the Danish composer, Karl Aage Rasmussen, to create a two-act version from Schubert's unfinished sketches. Mr. Sairanen plans to visit New York this autumn, and we look forward to more detailed information from him for our ongoing coverage. If you would like to contact Mr. Sairanen, he can be reached at: antti.sairanen@rnet.dk. Please let him know that you saw this notice in the SSUSA Newsletter.
- We are pleased to report on the SSUSA's sponsorship of a recital by the ensemble *Colleagues in Concert*, Susan Kagan, director. *Colleagues in Concert* dedicates its Fall 2003 performance calendar to the commemoration of Schubert's 175th death anniversary. Schubert died on November 19, but a prior commitment at the concert venue for that date moved the observance to November 20. Our warm thanks go to Susan Kagan for organizing the event. The details are as follows: Thursday, November 20, 2003, 7pm at Lang Recital Hall, 695 Park Avenue (corner of 68th Street), 4th Floor Hunter College North, New York, NY 10021. For tickets, call the Kaye Playhouse Box Office (which handles all ticket sales for Hunter College venues) at 212-772-4448. General admission is \$10; \$5 for seniors and students. The evening's program is:

- String Quintet in C, D956
- Piano Trio No. 2 in Eb, D898

with

Nancy Wu, *violin*; Ming-Feng Hsin, *violin*; Bruno Eicher, *violin*; Ronald Arron, *viola*;
Gerald Kagan, *cello*; Justin Kagan, *cello*; Susan Kagan, *piano*.

In addition to the November 20 event, subsequent Schubert commemorative recitals on the *Colleagues in Concert* schedule include:

- Sunday, December 7, 2003, 2pm, at Wave Hill, 675 West 252d Street, in Riverdale (The Bronx), New York, with the Piano Quintet in A "The Trout", D667, and the String Quintet in C, D956. Wave Hill's box office telephone is 718-549-3200.
- Thursday, January 15, 2004, at 5pm, a free all-Schubert program (TBA) at the Bruno Walter Auditorium of the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023-7498. For recorded program information call 212-642-0142. Note that the nearest entrance to the Bruno Walter Auditorium is at Amsterdam Avenue near 65th Street.
- If you plan to attend the November 13-16, 2003 annual meeting of the American Musicological Society in Houston, look for our full-page ad in the meeting program. While you are at the AMS

meeting, please feel free to share the information on page 3 above about our search for an editorial staff. We would appreciate if you would help spread the word about the SSUSA.

- For Schubertians in the New England area, contact Dr. Henny Bordwin of The American Schubert Institute, 87 Hillside Road, Newton, MA 02461-1442, telephone: 617-527-1905, e-mail: bordwin@aol.com. Dr. Bordwin will provide information about the ASI and the programs and artists it supports.
- Based on the amount of mail received from performing arts organizations in New York City, we take note of the increased number of Schubert recitals and concerts in the 2003-2004 season. This may be reflected in other places around the US. We would like to hear from readers about such events in their home communities both before and after the fact, along with their comments and reviews.
- Please note that the SSUSA has established a *GUIDE FOR DONATING MATERIALS TO THE SCHUBERT SOCIETY OF THE USA, INC.*, which is available upon request. While this donation policy is geared to long-term development for the SSUSA, we are especially eager to start as soon as possible in establishing a specialized Schubert reference collection of books and journals. Such a reference collection will be used to assist in answering queries from readers of our web site and newsletter about anything relating to Franz Schubert. Queries have already been received since our guest pages were first published online earlier this year.
- To assist online readers and the general public who need a short list of books and web sites about Franz Schubert, a bibliography compiled by Janet Wasserman was just published online in September 2003 at a site called *Fields of Knowledge*. No author attribution is cited online for any submission; all authors at this site remain anonymous. To view the bibliography, see "The Infography about Schubert, Franz (1797-1828)" at: <<http://www.infography.com/content/289184344135.html>>
- Plans have been announced on the Internet for a most unusual winter journey. During a fortnight in January 2004, American tenor David Pisaro will hike across the English countryside during which time he will film his journey and also perform Schubert's *Winterreise* thirteen times in a variety of venues, described as "village halls, churches, special schools and public houses along the route, even to the front parlours of isolated farmsteads, where his only audience will be the bewildered farmer, his family and sundry animals." His travel companion/driver/accompanist at the piano, Quentin Thomas, will be allowed the warmth and security of local accommodations while Mr. Pisaro replicates the "lovesick wanderer travelling by foot through the depths of winter." Mr. Thomas will also record his part of the journey as well as produce an analysis of the song cycle. See more about this musical hike at: <<http://www.winterjourney.com/>>