

SSUSA NEWSLETTER

SCHUBERT SOCIETY OF THE USA

Vol. 5, No. 3, 2007

Dear Members and Friends,

I am well along in recovering from being struck by an SUV last January 7 on Broadway, walking about one block from my apartment building. During recuperation, I had some time to think about plans for this issue, hoping to make it shorter than usual. But then I realized that I was preparing to publish a 2006 interview with American baritone Nathan Gunn from our “reporter in the field,” Lisa Hooper. I’ve added some 2007 updates at the end of the interview. Despite the lag in getting the interview to you, I think you’ll find Mr. Gunn’s thoughtful comments and perceptive observations as fresh as if he had spoken them only days ago.

This will be the second newsletter that has been distributed both as an e-mail attachment and in hard copy. By using electronic publishing we’ve been able to save substantially on printing and postage costs, which have just increased, and that helps to maintain dues at a stable level. The savings have been applied to support of a young American vocal student Brendan Sliger for his study of Schubert Lieder this summer in Graz, Austria, and for a May “Schubertiada” by young Bulgarian artists who perform under the name of *Bulgarian Concert Evenings*.

As I peruse the programs of the current and upcoming seasons of many symphony organizations, I am struck by how fewer Schubert selections are being offered. It seems to be consistent, and this is not the first year that I’ve noted this falling off of Schubert in orchestral programming. While the Unfinished is popular, the Great C Major doesn’t show up as often. Of course, there are only nine symphonies to choose from – the same as Beethoven. Schubert seems to be holding his own in the Lieder and chamber music arenas. I have no explanation for this but if you have some thoughts about this phenomenon, please feel free to share them with our readers.

In this issue, you’ll find a 25% discount offer from University of Rochester Press for SSUSA members for both volumes of Scott Messing’s *Schubert in the European Imagination*. Volume one, *The Romantic and Victorian Eras* (2006), and volume two, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (2007) comprise a much needed examination into Schubert reception and interpretation. The breadth and depth of coverage is astonishing and opens a new path into Schubert studies.

Please note the announcement in the following pages about our new Advisory Board member, Professor Dr. Manfred Wagner. I am very pleased that Prof. Wagner accepted this appointment and his presence on our Advisory Board can only add luster to our name.

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ADVISORY BOARD NEWS

SUSAN KAGAN has begun recording all of the solo piano sonatas by Ferdinand Ries (1784-1838) for Naxos. Ries's father was a friend of the Beethoven family during a period when Beethoven's father was ill and the family was in great financial need. Ferdinand became a piano student of Beethoven's and later a very dear friend. The series' first CD was just issued. In July, she was honored at the American Beethoven Society's convention with the Ira F. Brilliant Lifetime Achievement Award for Beethoven Performance and Studies and she gave the keynote lecture-recital of Ries's "Grande Sonate Fantaisie 'L'Infortuné,'" in F# Minor, Op. 26 (1811).

SEYMOUR LIPKIN will perform on February 13, 2008 in the concert series *Bulgarian Concert Evenings in New York* sponsored by the American Foundation for Bulgaria. The concert takes place at the Bulgarian Consulate General, 121 East 62d Street at 7:30pm. For more information about BCENY and reservations for the recital, call 212-726-0428 or send an e-mail to <bg_concerts@yahoo.com>.

JEROME ROSE is the cover story by Patrick Meanor in *Clavier*, July/August 2007, in which Rose discusses his life as a young piano student and his later career and teaching. You can read the article at the pianist's web site: <www.jeromeroose.com/Clavier2.aspx>.

TAMARA ROUSSANOVA. We are pleased to introduce a new Honorary Member of the Advisory Board, Tamara Roussanova, Professor of Piano Performance at the Russian Academy of Music (The Gnessin Institute), Moscow. She is also a Board Member of the Russian Schubert Society, founded in 1994 by Professor Yury N. Khokhlov. The Russian Schubert Society's celebration of Schubert's bicentennial in 1997 was marked with an international conference of musicologists as well as a special concert series. The Society's current president is Prof. **Alexei Nasedkin** of the Moscow Conservatory. We hope to exchange web links in the near future.

LARRY TODD was named a 2007-2008 Fellow (William J. Bouwsma Fellowship) of the National Humanities Center with his project *Becoming Fanny Hensel: The Life and Music of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel*.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

HEATHER ARDEN sent us news of interesting Schubert programming in Cincinnati for the upcoming 2007-2008 season. If you live somewhere in the vicinity, let me know and I'll send you the listing (too long for the newsletter).

STEPHEN CASALE celebrated the first professional performance of his completion of the Scherzo movement from Schubert's Unfinished Symphony. On September 20, the Toronto Philharmonia under the direction of Kerry Stratton gave the season-opening program led off by the Unfinished and Casale's superbly orchestrated Scherzo. It was a world premiere for us all.

On a personal note: I was in the audience representing the SSUSA which sponsored the Scherzo section of the performance. The audience of devoted Torontonians gave Steve their abundant applause and appreciation for his Scherzo. We were both very gratified to receive a warm and cordial reception from Maestro Stratton and executive director Linda Rogers, and we were

impressed by the fine musicianship of the orchestra. All in all, it was a memorable and evocative evening for Steve Casale, Kerry Stratton, the Toronto Philharmonia, the SSUSA and - need I mention? - Franz Schubert.

PUBLICATIONS

Rita Steblin and Frederick Stocken, "Studying with Sechter: Newly Recovered Reminiscences about Schubert by his Forgotten Friend, the Composer Joseph Lanz," *Music and Letters* 88 (2007): 226-265. With the permission of the authors, the article can be downloaded and printed from <<http://ml.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/88/2/226?etoc>>.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

In a rather disquieting juxtaposition across a few weeks, we found "Concert Hall? How About Music Museum?," by **LAWRENCE KRAMER** [SSUSA Advisory Board] , *The New York Times* (June 3, 2007); "Newspapers Trimming Classical Critics," by Daniel J. Wakin, *The New York Times* (June 9, 2007); and "Classical Music Imperiled: Can You Hear The Shrug?," by Edward Rothstein, *The New York Times* (July 2, 2007). Kramer's article proposes that classical music venues mimic the museum by using its experience as a repository of the musical past in much the same way as museums do about the art historical past. Taken together, these three articles in the leading newspaper in one of America's major classical music home bases bode ill for classical music's survival here. Not to forget what is happening everywhere else in the USA where support of the arts is dwindling, classical music is of precipitously declining interest to the younger generations, music and arts classes have disappeared from schools, music critics and book reviews are being dropped from daily and Sunday newspapers and fewer young Americans enter our music conservatories. In July, the New York Philharmonic announced its replacement of conductor Lorin Maazel with a New Yorker, Alan Gilbert. Is his being American and young (at forty young for a conductor of one of America's leading orchestras) going to reverse these trends? One can only hope.

Want to be a friend? Then visit Franz Schubert's page at **My Space** and sign up to be a friend of Franz at <www.myspace.com/franzschubert1828>. The page's owner is quite anonymous but someone we'd like to know better.

English novelist **Ian McEwan** often cites Schubert's compositions in his novels, such as the Octet and the String Quintet in C major, by having a character listen to the music. In his novel *Saturday*, McEwan's main character listens to Schubert while driving around London. In interviews, the novelist has admitted his love of music and of Schubert.

The **Juilliard School** has nearly completed the digitization of all the manuscripts recently donated by Juilliard's Board chairman Bruce Kovner. There are some wonderful Schubert items in the collection but not all the Schubert manuscripts have been digitized yet. You can view the available Schubert pages of the autographs and listen to the music at <www.juilliardmanuscriptcollection.org/home.html>.

A past author in the SSUSA Newsletter, **George Gopen**, on the Duke University faculty, has been appointed permanent director of the Chamber Arts Society of Durham. This season's concerts include the Emerson String Quartet, Tokyo String Quartet with Leon Fleischer, Takacs String Quartet, Ying String Quartet with Christopher Taylor, Gryphon Piano Trio, Abegg Piano Trio, and the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet.

If you are going to be in New York City on January 19, 2008, seriously consider buying a ticket to the all-star recital at Carnegie Hall, a program called **SCHUBERT SONGS** with **Dorothea Röschmann**, soprano; **Ian Bostridge**, tenor; and **Thomas Quasthoff**, bass-baritone, with Julius Drake at the keyboard. The program includes "An Mignon," "Der König in Thule," "Gretchen am Spinnrade" and "Szene aus Goethes Faust." This will be one of those rare moments that the theatrical newspaper *Variety* used to call "boffo." For information contact 212-247-7800 or <www.carnegiehall.org>.

After Carnegie Hall in January, there is **Thomas Quasthoff** in Boston's Symphony Hall to sing "Winterreise," with James Levine at the piano, on February 24, 2008. Having been at TQ's New York debut in Winterreise at Lincoln Center in January 1999, I can only urge that you go. For information contact 888-266-1200 or <www.bso.org>.

We heard from American Bill Guyn about a friend of his, a Schubertian in Lebanon, **Roger Machalaani**. Prof. Machalaani studied piano in Lebanon with Prof. Jean Rabbath and continued his advanced piano studies in Paris with the eminent pianist and teacher Magda Tagliaferro. Machalaani returned to Lebanon where he entered the musical life of his country to found two church choirs in Beirut and to perform, compose, teach, lecture and record. He is also a writer and musicologist and, under the patronage of the Austrian Ministry of Education and Culture, he organized a Franz Schubert Competition in Lebanon. The highly successful "Schubert Concours," which was taken into the schools and universities, went beyond piano performance to include poetry, music scholarship and art. His recital tours took him abroad and all over Europe where he found special recognition in Austria, and especially in Vienna, the home of his beloved Schubert. The Austrian Ministry of Education and Culture took special note of Machalaani's work on behalf of its great composers - the pianist does not neglect Mozart - by awarding him a presidential decree in honor of his contributions. For example, in 1997 Machalaani organized celebratory evenings in Beirut for the Schubert birth bicentenary which the Austrian Embassy in Tunis asked that he bring to Carthage as a public event. He has recently published several books including *Schubert. Une Maturité Précoce* (1996), *L'Islam en Musique Classique* (1998) and a reference work *Chefs-d'Oeuvres Immortels de la Musique Classique* (2004) as well as a CD, "Roger Machalaani, un Piano Classique du Liban." With all of his great musical and educational accomplishments, life in Beirut has been difficult for Prof. Machalaani as well as for others in the arts. The SSUSA is happy to encourage contact with Prof. Machalaani among its members and friends in order to help him sustain interest in Schubert and classical music in Lebanon. We are certain he would be pleased to hear from you. His books are not yet translated into English which is a project Machalaani would like to encourage and which we hope can be realized. To write to him, send postal mail to: M. et Mme R. Machalaani, c/o Hotel "Sofitel Gabriel Achrafie, Beyrouth, LIBAN / Beirut, LEBANON. The only e-mail address for Prof. Machalaani that we can provide at this time is that of his friend Bill Guyn: <billg176@juno.com>. The SSUSA will accept any messages intended for Prof. Machalaani and forward them.

IN MEMORIAM: JOHN DUFFY

The Winchester Star, March 22, 2007

GETTYSBURG, Pa. — John Charles Duffy, 64, died Thursday, March 15 in Gettysburg. He was the husband of Jeanne Duffy. He was born in Berkeley, Calif., on Jan. 25, 1943, the son of the late John F. Duffy Jr. and Margaret Hessel Duffy. As a graduate student at Brown University, he studied musicology and conducting, and met his wife, Jeanne, who was working on her doctorate in English there. In 1971, he helped co-found the Providence Singers, a choral group that performed a diverse repertoire. He completed his doctorate in musicology at Boston University, and his resulting book, “The Songs and Motets of Alfonso Ferrabosco, the Younger,” was published by the University of Michigan Research Press in 1980. He taught and conducted the choruses at Tufts University in the mid to late 1970s. As a young man, Mr. Duffy studied the trumpet with a leading trumpet player in the Cleveland Orchestra, and performed summers at the Chautauqua Institution in New York. While he was an undergraduate at Wesleyan University, his musical interests shifted to choral and vocal works. He sang and played trumpet on worldwide tours with the Smith-Amherst Chamber Singers, under the direction of Iva Dee Hiatt. During this period, he developed his lifelong passion for the music of Schubert, performing the “Winterreise” song-cycle for his senior recital. In 1980, he left academia to teach for Digital Equipment Corp. Even as he worked in computer technology, he continued to participate in the arts. He sang in the Tanglewood Festival Chorus (along with his wife) and the John Oliver Chorale, among other vocal groups in the Boston area.

While living in the Minnesota in the 1990s, he conducted a performance of Orlando de Lassus’ “The Tears of St. Peter” at the Basilica of St. Mary, a concert broadcast on Minnesota Public Radio. He also took great joy in working with young people in music, leading the students of the Apple Valley High School Music Listening Team to two consecutive state titles, and directing the choir of Normandale Community College on several occasions. He served on the state arts council boards of both Massachusetts and Minnesota. As a music critic, he wrote reviews for the Boston Herald, the Minneapolis Star-Tribune, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, and other newspapers. He was a lifelong member of the Music Critics Association and the American Musicological Society, and he delivered talks on Schubert and other subjects at professional meetings.

Theater was another passion of Mr. Duffy’s. He became an ardent supporter of the Guthrie and other theaters in Minneapolis and, later, the Contemporary American Theater Festival in Shepherdstown, W.V. After moving to Gettysburg, in 1999, he worked at Gettysburg College for several years on the development and early implementation of CNAV, the college’s award-winning portal. He became a member of the Torch Club in 2006. In addition to his wife, he is survived by a daughter, Vanessa, his son Alec, and his granddaughter Tabitha.