



NEWS & NOTES

From The Maestro



For the first time in fourteen years, I attended a YMM performance as an audience member! It was great to be back and even more exciting to be back on the podium after three months.

The Sunset Center has proven to be a beautiful place for our concerts. I was impressed with the newness, neatness, and cordial atmosphere of the hall. The lobby is inviting and provides a friendly place for conversation and interaction among audience members. The stage lighting sets the orchestra very well and the acoustics allow for a melding of sound that helps to mask individual sounds that may be more apparent on recording.

It is also impressive to see the great audience support we have. The encouragement the community gives our young musicians is so important.

I want to thank David Dally for conducting in my absence and working with repertoire that he had not selected. Special thanks also go to the board of directors, the private and public school and music teachers, and coaches that held the organization together. Change is never easy, no matter how old we are. So I particularly want to thank our many students who took advantage of the

opportunity to learn new things in a different way in continuing the development of our orchestra program.

Now as we begin a new calendar year, we look forward to more great music making. Our goals remain the same: to play better with better balance, better intonation and with the most musicality the music itself demands of us.

On February 26 we present the winner of our annual solo competition, Ahmed-Mehdi Najm, flutist. Ahmed is very dedicated to his instrument and intends to pursue his music well beyond this, his senior year. It is always rewarding to hear these excellent student soloists.

The program will also feature music by Massenet and Johann Strauss' "Die Fledermaus Overture." The youth orchestra will play some very exciting selections from the "Bartered Bride" of Smetana and the famous Bacchanale from Saint-Saens "Samson and Delilah." Opening their portion of the concert will be a suite from Richard Wagner's "Tannhauser."

I offer a new year's toast to you and yours. This year more than ever, "Here's to Your Health!!"

—John Larry Granger, Music Director



Photos by Patrice Ward

Champion of the Arts

Edward Ballengee, a member of the YMM Board of Directors, was recognized by the Arts Council for Monterey County as a Champion of the Arts in Philanthropy. A dinner and award tribute were held on Sunday, January 22 at Quail Lodge in Carmel Valley to honor and thank leaders who have demonstrated a strong commitment and passion for the arts in our community. YMM would like to offer it's warmest congratulations to Edward and thank him for his years of outstanding service and support!



Concerto Competition Winner - Ahmed-Mehdi Najm

We would like to share with you an interview with Ahmed-Mehdi Najm, YMM student and winner of our annual concerto competition. Ahmed is a senior at Monterey High School and studies flute at the San Francisco Conservatory. His numerous musical honors include National Flute Association High School Flute Choir Competition Winner, and being invited to participate in the Oberlin flute institute this last summer with Michel Debost. Ahmed will also be featured as a soloist in our upcoming concert on February 26 at Sunset Center.

I understand that you have lived, as well as studied and performed music, in many places throughout the world, is that true? How has your exposure to these diverse cultures contributed to your music?

WELL! I was born in Paris after which I lived in Senegal, Ghana, Pakistan, New York City, Lebanon, Virginia, and now California. This international perspective has been an exceptional contribution to my music. Living in so many diverse environments you develop a sensitive appreciation for each culture. It could be in the rituals, holidays, and celebrations, but mostly in their habitual mannerisms: their speech and articulation, their smiles, the tone in their laughter, the way they interact with each other.

Since we moved about every three years or so, I have learned to adapt quickly to different environments and people, which is also reflective in the way I approach different styles of music.

Most importantly! To me, the purest sense of musicality comes from folk and indigenous music present in all these cultures. You get an interpretation direct from the heart, uninhibited by dynamics, tempos, markings etc... For example: the evocative syncopated rhythms in West African music, the intricate harmonic presence in Asian folk music, or the raw passion portrayed in nationalistic music.

I have heard that you picked up the flute on your own, and that until relatively recently you were self-taught. What attracted you to the flute, and to what do you attribute your successes?

To begin with, my first choice was tuba. Unfortunately because of some size issues, things didn't quite work out! But for me it was more the music itself that attracted me. The flute was just the toy I chose to share my musical expression and passion. Eventually the flute became my best friend. I have been playing flute for five years, of which I have studied privately (with three different teachers) for the past year and a half.

The flute is a highly eclectic instrument. It is found in just about every culture that appreciates the power of music. Perhaps, I like to think that I am connected to it because of its international character! The flute also allows for a fascinatingly wide variety of colors and sounds, offering a near infinite amount of roles for it to play!

MOST OF ALL: To me there is no greater thrill than flying high above the orchestra in total ecstasy!

What is your connection to Hue's *Fantasie*, and what do you hope the audience will take away from your performance of it?

Well, for one thing, it was a Paris Conservatory exam piece, so it meets every difficult aspect of playing the flute: lyrical playing, rhythm, articulation and double tonguing, scales, intervals, and virtuosity. What is most appealing to me about this piece is that its story-like feel allows for a multitude of characters that the flute gets to portray: a hero, a romantic, a villain, etc. So I get to tell a story! I hope the audience appreciates the blockbuster bravado of the piece. It has everything you look for at the box office: heroism, love, beauty, battle, magic, and OF COURSE, a triumphant ending!



Ahmed-Mehdi (center) with his parents

Tell me about your current private instructor and what advice (if any) she has for you in performing *Fantasie*.

I study with Yaada Weber at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, along with mentorship from all of my past and current teachers and directors. Mrs. Weber has been teaching at the Conservatory for fifty-one years. She is an expert on the physiological and psychological aspects of playing the flute. When I came to her, my wrists, back, neck- just about everything- would ache for hours after I played. After only a couple lessons with Mrs. Weber, the pain was all gone! Through her I have learned that the flute is an extension of my body, and the real instrument is not just the flute, but the whole body! Mrs. Weber teaches me as if I were a professional, expecting only what is in entirety. Mrs. Weber also studied composition with Darius Milhaud, which is extremely beneficial, because I am learning to do something very difficult: I have to approach musicality through means of emphasizing harmonic structure, and inflection within the sound. In other words, being free in interpretation, while still paying full respect to what the composer has written.

I know you are in the process of auditioning for university music programs across the country, tell me about your hopes for the next few years... and even beyond college.

I would like to attend a music institution that creates an environment in which I can fully understand the capabilities...

Interview continued on next page...

Gordon Getty Recital Benefits YMM

...of my instrument, so nothing can infringe on communicating the musical ideas in my heart. Furthermore, whether it is playing principle in the New York Philharmonic, or teaching privately in my own studio, I know I will be fully content as long as I am making music!

What has music and music education meant to you in your life?

My last year in Virginia, I had the privilege to be a drum major and conduct our symphonic band for about two weeks. I was suddenly faced with the immense responsibilities and power a conductor can have while on the podium over a mature group. The difficult task of communicating from conductor to ensemble was made very evident. As a musician in two of Mr. Granger's ensembles, his talent in this aspect of music making is incredible! Mr. Granger might not even realize, but his euphemisms, metaphors, and analogies are profoundly affective in communication with the youth of the orchestras. Often times, I have had directors try to interpret music with very complex ideas, but Mr. Granger puts it in any terms to make the orchestra do exactly what he wants!

Music itself is my driving force. It is the means through which I express my emotions and passion. It is how I feel most connected to the natural world. It is how I feel of best service to society.

Is there anyone in particular that you would like to thank or mention?

Foremost, I would like to thank my mom, dad, and sister. Despite the fact that they couldn't tell you the difference between a sharp or flat, they have blindly supported my dreams and aspirations. I would like to thank my teachers and directors for giving me an infinite amount of inspiration. My peers for laughing with me and for making wonderful music together! Anyone who has given me any support and love.

Interview by Chris Sentieri, Orchestra Manager

Over 120 guests attended a sold-out recital on November 11th benefiting Youth Music Monterey's Youth and Honors Orchestras. The program included the premiere of composer Gordon Getty's work, "Ancestor Suite" and select performances by members of Youth Music Monterey's orchestras.

Getty's "Ancestor Suite" was performed by pianist Kristin Pankonin. The music is based on Poe's work, "The Fall of the House of Usher". In a unique opportunity for guests and students, the composer himself introduced the crowd to his performers and music, describing the inspiration and story behind the works premiered. A vocal piece by Getty, "Where is my Lady?" was also included on the program and sung by soprano Lisa Delan. Student performances included works by Kreisler, Mozart, and Burton.

The orchestral version of Gordon Getty's Ancestor Suite premiered at the Moscow Conservatory in Russia on October 16th, 2005, with the Russian National Orchestra under the baton of Mikhail Pletnev.



Photo by Patrice Ward

New Executive Director Joins YMM

As the new Executive Director of Youth Music Monterey, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for such a warm welcome!

Born and raised right here on the Monterey Peninsula, my commitment to this community and our youth is strong and deep. I am excited to be part of a local organization that encourages our children to shine in such beautiful and artistic ways - through music! The fact that I am not musical in spite of eight years of piano lessons makes me even more admiring of the talented young musicians in our programs.

I started with Youth Music Monterey in early November and was plunged immediately into helping Board, staff and volunteers prepare for the first concert of the 2005-2006 season. What a success! The Orchestras, under the direction of guest conductor David Dally, gave outstanding performances that were enjoyed by everyone who attended - and never was Mozart's Magic Flute Overture played to a more

appreciative audience. I am now eagerly awaiting the upcoming concerts in February and May (see the calendar of events for more details). We hope to see you there.

I also want you to share in our most recent good news. Youth Music Monterey has received a matching grant from the Harden Foundation in the amount of \$15,000 (to be split equally between the Youth and Honors Orchestras and South County Strings). This means that your donation to YMM will be matched dollar for dollar by the generosity of the Harden Foundation, so its a great way to double the impact of your gift! We count on the generosity of individuals like you to help keep our programs available to children across Monterey County.

Again, I am so happy to be a part of this wonderful organization, and I look forward to meeting and working with you all this concert season, and on into the future!

—Audrey Lorca, Executive Director

Message from the Board President

Dear YMM Family Members,

After a rather hectic start to our 2005-2006 season, we are back on track, and it is so wonderful to have the opportunity of this newsletter to bring updates and news of recent YMM events to you. I especially want to thank everyone who helped to assure that our programs continued without interruption despite the recent challenges. It is reassuring to see the dedication shown by board members, staff, volunteers, teachers, students and their families. It is refreshing and encouraging to know that there are so many wonderful individuals in our community who are willing to support music in our students' lives through unwavering support of our programs.

It is indeed an exciting and inspiring mission. Those who work with our organization are so impressed with the hard work and achievements of the young people in our programs. And I am seeing increased appreciation for

the importance of encouraging our students in their music education and performance: Local professional music organizations are reaching out to our students and their families with generous invitations and opportunities that support their exposure and education in music; our donors continue to generously support their studies; and our recent search for an Executive Director revealed candidates who look to share their talent and skill motivated in part by the reward of being associated with such a constructive and positive force in our community.

One such candidate, Audrey Lorca, now joins YMM as our new Executive Director. She brings considerable skill and experience to our organization. I am pleased to introduce her to all of you. Please join me in welcoming her to our organization, and in enjoying another wonderful season of great music and achievements!

—Dorothy Micheletti, President of the Board

Calendar of Events

YOUTH & HONORS ORCHESTRAS

SUN, FEB 26, 3:00 PM

"Siriusly Stellar" and the Annual Concerto Showcase

Come be uplifted by 'stellar' performances of works by Massenet, Brahms, Strauss and others, as well as a performance by our annual concerto competition winner.

Sunset Center, Carmel

SAT, MAY 13, 3:00 PM

"Vacation Destinations"

Join us for an exciting season finale featuring a work by Pulitzer winning composer Paul Moravec, titled New York Dances, in our annual joint concert that fills the stage with over 100 student musicians from YMM and the Santa Cruz County Youth Symphony. Sherwood Hall, Salinas

SOUTH COUNTY STRINGS

TUE, FEB 14, 7:00 PM

Family Concert

Valentine's Day Concert.

Soledad High School All-Purpose Room, Soledad

THU, APRIL 6, 7:00 PM

South County Strings & the Hartnell College Orchestra

Join us for an exciting joint performance featuring traditional Mexican folk songs.

Stanton High School Auditorium, King City

WED, MAY 24, 7:00 PM

Family Concert & Playathon

South County Strings recaps the year with a concert, prizes and refreshments.

Stanton High School Auditorium, King City

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL THE YMM OFFICE AT (831) 375-1992 OR WRITE: INFO@YOUTHMUSICMONTEREY.ORG

Wine Tasting A Great Success!

On January 29, YMM hosted the second annual "A Taste of Wine and Music" at Saint Mark's Episcopal Church Hall in King City. A fundraiser for the South County Strings program, the evening netted over \$5,000 to help support violin, viola, and cello instruction for hundreds of students from the south county community ranging from Gonzales to Bradley.

The evening kicked off with stringed instrument demonstrations by local elementary, middle and high school students who live in areas where - except for South County Strings - music education programs are sparse or nonexistent. Their performance was enthusiastically received, and smiles were broad, both from performers and members of the audience. Thank you, South County, for such warm hospitality for our young musicians!



South County Strings Program

Coupon Book Fundraiser \$10.00

For great values & deals when you shop or dine in Soledad, Gonzalez & King City

Purchase from a SCS musician, parent, or board member or mail a check for \$10 to: YMM/South County Strings Coupon Book, 2511 Garden Road C175, Monterey CA 93940

Looking for Office Space

YMM is looking for a new office space that would accommodate the growing needs of our organization. In order to preserve as much of our funding as possible for our programs and students, we are looking for someone locally who would be willing to donate approximately 1,000 square feet starting in June. If you are interested or can offer ideas or suggestions, please contact the YMM office at 831-375-1992.

Donations & Angels

Yes, I want to join the family!

I would like to make a one-time gift:

\$50 \$1,000
 \$100 \$2,500
 \$250 \$5,000
 \$500 other \$ _____

Music-by-the-Month: I would like to donate on a monthly basis. Please charge \$ _____ to my credit card (complete information at bottom) on the:

5th of each month
 20th of each month

*Please contact YMM by phone or in writing to change your Music-by-the-Month arrangement.

Angel Network: I would like to enroll in the Angel Network:

Angel, \$500 Donation
 Archangel, \$1,000 Donation

*Yes! Angel Network memberships may be made through the Music-by-the-Month program.

My Information

Name _____

My name as I/we wish to be acknowledged _____

Address _____

City, ST, Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Email address _____

My Payment

Check enclosed made payable to Youth Music Monterey.
 Visa/Mastercard (circle one)

Account # _____

Amount to be charged _____ Expiration date _____

Name on card _____

Signature _____

Billing address if different from above _____

Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Tax ID # 94-286-3607.

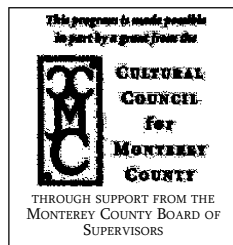
Please return form and donation to:
 Youth Music Monterey
 2511 Garden Road, C-175, Monterey, CA 93940

Thanks and Appreciation to Our Supporters

FOUNDATIONS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, & SCHOOL PARTNERS

Barnet J. Segal Charitable Trust
 California Teachers Association, King City Elementary Chapter
 Carmel Womens Club
 Community Foundation for Monterey County
 Cultural Council for Monterey County
 David & Lucile Packard Foundation
 Fenton Founders Fund for Youth Music Monterey of the Community Foundation for Monterey County
 Harden Foundation
 King City Rotary Club Foundation
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 Soledad Rotary Club
 Soledad Unified School Board Fund
 The Upjohn California Fund
 The William McCaskey Chapman & Adaline Dinsmore Chapman Foundation
 Unitarian Universalist Church of the Monterey Peninsula
 United Way of Monterey County
 Wachovia Foundation Matching Gifts Program
 Yellow Brick Road Benefit Shop

This list includes gifts given since February 1, 2005 and is current as of February 3, 2006. Please contact alorca@youthmusicmonterey.org with any corrections to your listing. Thank you!



Names in blue indicate members of the Angel Network, who are bridging the gap between tuition and program costs. If you are interested in becoming an Angel or Archangel, contact the YMM office at 375-1992 to be invited to a complementary luncheon at Tehama Golf Club in March or April 2006.



INDIVIDUALS & BUSINESSES

Orchestra (\$250+)

Dean and Joanne Storkan
 Donald R. Riehl
 Jacquelyn & Leo Gillespie
 Jim and Maureen and Brill
 John Jeffrey Green
 Jon & Aldene Fanoe
 King City Valley Bears
 Leos & Anne Valerie Anderle
 McCormick & Company, Inc.
 Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Rowe
 Sherrie & Tom McCullough
 Spencers Stationery
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Conductor (\$500+)

Anna Lambourne
 Anonymous (2)
 Barbara Roach
 Bonnie L. Strickler
 Charles Grauling & Nancy Jones
 Clint & Diana Thelander
 David Keaton
 Donald McEnry Davis
 Dr. John L. & Mary Jane Nicholson
 Dr. Lizah & Mr. Steven McLaughlin
 Dr. Marty Field & Andre de la Torre
 Du Young & Ester Jeong
 Elizabeth Gill Brown
 Elizabeth J. Wade
 Frank Hevrdejs
 Gary & Jeanette Kihs
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 Gordon & Amanda Freedman
 Harold & Rochelle Walton
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 José Henrard & Gwen B. Rohr
 Joseph & Elizabeth Heston
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 Lamont & Toni Johnson
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 McGraw-Hill Companies
 Community Partners Matching Gift Program
 Michelle Smith & Clint Jones

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 Ms. Carrie McWilliams
 Myung & Karen Suh
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 Scott & Judy MacClelland
 Soledad Rotary Club
 Steven & Nancy Chang
 Susanne Stevenson
 William & Nancy Doolittle
 William Knapp & Daria Maldonado-Knapp
 Zigmont J. Le Towt III

Composer (\$1,000+)

Andrew and Elena Allison
 Anonymous
 Betty Pemberton
 Boggiatto Produce, Inc.
 California Orchard Company
 David & Susan Gill
 David and Margaret Dally
 Dr. David Awerbuck & Dr. Astrid Holberg
 Dr. John Koostra
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 Granite Construction, Inc.
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 Nanci Hubby
 Patricia Rivette
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 Patty Powell & Michael Thomas
 Ruth S. Hartmann
 Salinas Land Company
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Virtuoso (\$2,500+)

Ed and Mona Zander
 Brooks & Antonia Fiske

Grand Patron (\$5,000+)

Anonymous (2)
 Frank & Denise Quattrone
 HSBC
 Meyer Equipment Company

Welcome Andrew Allison

YMM would like to extend a warm welcome to its newest board member,

Andrew Allison. Andrew strongly supports Youth Music Monterey's efforts to extend and enhance music education opportunities for local students. He states, "Anybody who sees how hard these kids are working on their music, and the obviously pleasure they derive from it, would be hard pressed not to be enthusiastic about YMM." He is also interested in working to develop future audiences for classical music. We are excited to have Andrew aboard and look forward to working with him!

Youth Music Monterey

2511 Garden Road, C-175
Monterey, CA 93940
(831) 375-1992

WWW.YOUTHMUSICMONTEREY.ORG

Youth and Honors Orchestras

John Larry Granger, Music Director

South County Strings

Steve Ettinger, Lead String Instructor
Debbie Cirimele, String Instructor
Rosemarie Nikolakakis, String Instructor
Donna Wynn, String Instructor

Additional Staff

Audrey Lorca, Executive Director
Chris Sentieri, Orchestra Manager

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Edward Ballengee
Mary Ballengee
Mary Castagna, Secretary
Brooks Fiske, Treasurer
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Photos by Patrice Ward



Photos by Patrice Ward



The Youth & Honors Orchestras of Youth Music Monterey present:

“*Siriusly Stellar*” and the Annual Concerto Showcase

featuring Ahmed-Mehdi Najm performing
Georges Hue’s flute concerto- *Fantasia*

Conducted by John Larry Granger

Sunday, February 26, 2006

3:00 PM (doors open at 2:30)

Sunset Center, Carmel

For information or tickets,
please call:
831-375-1992

