



Notes



A NEWSLETTER OF THE CHESHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Upcoming CSO Concerts in the 2024-2025 Season:

Fall Concert: A Musical Sense of Humor	Nov 8 2024
Mozart: <i>Marriage of Figaro</i> Overture	
Rossini: <i>The Barber of Seville</i> Overture	
Haydn: <i>Symphony No. 45</i> , (Farewell)	
Offenbach: <i>Orpheus in the Underworld</i> Overture	
Bernstein: <i>Candide</i> Overture	
Beethoven: <i>Symphony No. 5</i> , 1st movement (with narration)	
Holiday Concert:	Dec 13 2024
Festive holiday music	
Spring Concert:	Mar 21 2025
Sea and Land	
Mendelssohn: <i>Hebrides Overture</i> , Op. 26	
Handel: Selections from <i>Water Music</i>	
Sullivan: <i>HMS Pinafore</i> Overture	
Gade: <i>Symphony No. 1</i> , Op 5 ("On Sjoland's Fair Plains")	
Pops Concert:	May 9 2025
International Flare Pops	

From the Conductor: A Musical Life

What are the keys to living a rewarding and happy life? Many advise to get your rest, eat healthily, reduce your stress, exercise, stay socially connected, and keep your mind active. Participating in a musical ensemble fulfills many of these suggestions for good living. Community musicians come together to rehearse and perform collaboratively. In doing so, they create a community, friendships, and stay socially connected. Together, they struggle to woodshed difficult passages and then celebrate when they master it and perform it musically. For exercise, there's bowing, fingering, abdominal breathing, and masterful beating, striking, and hitting of percussion instruments. The

mental challenge of playing music exercises the brain. Reading music, creating the desired pitches, watching the conductor, and performing the many nuances sharpens the musician's mental acuity. Rehearsal time is a wonderful distraction from life's worries. Concentrating on making music together thwarts the never-ending worries of our day-to-day lives. The joy of making music most often softens our troubles and releases stress.

It may be a stretch to say that music fulfills every facet of a happy life, but it is close. Does playing music help you to make good food choices? Probably not, considering the bake sales at concerts. However, it does keep

everyone away from their refrigerators for a couple of hours during rehearsals and performances. Does playing music help you to get a good night's rest? It all depends on whether earworms are swirling around in our heads or whether rehearsals keep musicians up past their desired bedtimes.

My suggestion on pursuing a rewarding life is to embrace music. Find a community musical organization to join by playing an instrument or by singing. Attend as many musical performances as you can. Music may just be your key to a fulfilling and happy life.

Dr. Hilarie Clark Moore
CSO Conductor

What's New with Cheshire Symphony Orchestra?

The CSO has an exciting new program of music planned for the 2024-2025 season. We start with our fall concert in November, highlighting the musical sense of humor of some of the most well recognized composers of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries (see page 2). Our December holiday concert will present an array of festive music from around the globe. In March, we will follow with selections that portray composers' interpretations of people's relationships with the sea and with land. Finally, our May pops concert will bring light classics from Gershwin, Copland, Gliere, Anderson, Ketèlby, Fucik,

Johann Strauss, Jr., Suppé, Bizet, and others.

The orchestra recently received a CT Cultural Fund Operating Support Grant. These funds will be used to purchase a new conductor's podium and percussion cabinet. Any remaining funds will be used to purchase percussion instruments.

As you may or may not know, funding for the arts is becoming scarce in today's economy. Therefore, we are asking for continued support from our community members. Many employers offer matching funds for an employee's donation to a non-profit organization. If you own a business, buying an ad is a

great way to give while you receive the return benefit of new customers supporting your business. No donation is too large or too small! The back page of this newsletter provides a QR code to link to our website where you can join our mail list or give an online donation, and details other ways to support the CSO. As always, we are grateful for your attendance at our concerts and all of your ongoing support!



Cheshire Symphony Orchestra's 2024 Fall Concert Program: A Musical Sense of Humor

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791): *The Marriage of Figaro Overture*



Mozart's opera buffa, *The Marriage of Figaro*, premiered at the Burgtheater in Vienna on May 1, 1786. The composer himself conducted the first two performances from the keyboard. The opera was composed in just six weeks, the overture in two days. The librettist, Lorenzo da Ponte wrote that "as fast as I wrote the words, Mozart wrote the music..."

The plot of the opera recounts a single "day of madness" in the palace of Count Almaviva near Seville, Spain. A wise-cracking servant, Figaro the barber, foils his master's plan to seduce the servant's bride-to-be. It is a charming tale of love and mistaken identity among nobility and their servants. The overture, written last, does not quote any material from the opera, but its brilliance and nonstop hustle set the emotional tempo for the "crazy day" to follow. It is a lively curtain raiser for both concert and operatic versions. Opening with a scurrying unison motive, this work is in sonatina form (sonata form without the development). The effervescent and infectious musical activity sets the right tone for anticipating great things to follow.

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868): *The Barber of Seville Overture*



Rossini was undeniably the finest composer of opera buffa -- operas rich in light-hearted and comic antics filled with singable tunes. Giuseppe Verdi lauded the praises of *Barber of Seville*, "For abundance of real musical ideas, for comic verve, and for truthful declamation, [it] is the finest opera buffa in existence." Besides his great operas, he transformed the operatic overture into a discreet and flourishing work of art in its own right. Rossini's overtures include an array of opening ideas, original orchestral effects and his famous crescendos. Rossini did not invent the crescendo, but what he does with the crescendo is unique. His crescendo, a long insistent build-up of orchestral sound over a repeating figure (ostinato) helps propel the action into wonderful and hilarious climaxes.

The overture has an interesting story. Rossini was a speedy composer and a savvy businessman. Reportedly, Rossini wrote the

opera in 13 days. Typically, Rossini wrote his overtures last. This overture was not performed at the opera's premiere. However, its content had been used previously as an overture for his opera seria *Aureliana in Palmira* and his historical opera *Elisabetta, regina d'Inghilterra (Elizabeth, Queen of England)*. Some historians say that the original overture was lost shortly after the premiere. Rossini, well supplied with an old chest filled with musical snippets, full operas and manuscripts, reputedly then rummaged through it and borrowed this overture for the opera's later performances. Others affirm that he ran out of time and "double dipped." Regardless, it is remarkable that essentially the same piece could serve to introduce an opera seria, an opera buffa, and a historical tragic opera, showing the adaptability of Rossini's basic style to a variety of dramatic situations.

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809): *Symphony No. 45 (Farewell)*



Haydn's playful wit often found its way into his music, and there is no better example than in the "Farewell" symphony. In the summer of 1772, Haydn's patron, Prince Nicholas Eszterházy, relocated his family and court to his country home, Eszterháza. Unlike previous summers, however, this particular year the prince refused to allow any of the musicians' families to accompany them. As the summer wore on, the musicians counted the days until they could return to their wives and children in Eisenstadt. By the autumn of 1772, the prince indicated he intended to remain in the country for a few more months, and the musicians grew frantic.

At his players' request, Haydn included a pointed message to the prince in the closing Presto – Adagio of his 45th symphony. As the movement unfolds, Haydn incorporated a clear "farewell" into each musician's score: he stopped writing individual parts (Haydn wrote the words "No more" at the end of each player's music). As their music ran out, each instrumentalist extinguished the candles on his music stand and exited the stage one at a time, until only Haydn and his concertmaster Luigi Tomasini were left playing a rather forlorn duet. Prince Nicholas had a robust sense of humor himself; according to the story, the prince said, "If they are all going, so too must we."

The next day, the whole court returned to Eisenstadt.

The Finale of Symphony No. 45 is a wonderful visual and aural joke for both players and audience, but the preceding movements are full of interesting moments as well. Haydn's choice of F-sharp minor as the home key for this symphony hints at the unusual nature of this music; no other 18th century composer wrote a symphony in this key. In the 18th century, difficulties related to tuning made F-sharp minor a problematic key for all but the best musicians.

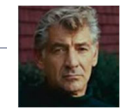
Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880): *Orpheus in the Underworld Overture*



Offenbach, a German-born French composer, had a "devilish skill at skewering icons of culture with sparkling, witty, and adroit caricatures that was unparalleled in French comedic theatre at the middle of the century, and more or less established himself as one of the most important creators of operetta." Critics and moral guardians of the time were outraged by his satire of "sacred" and dignified topics. Offenbach satirized the popular opera, *Orfeo*, which was composed by the 18th century composer, Gluck. Its premiere created a scandal which, of course, increased ticket sales.

The overture concludes with the risqué *Galop Infernal* which shocked the Parisian audiences and later influenced the famous dance the Can Can.

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990): *Candide Overture*



Bernstein's original Broadway musical, *Candide*, was based upon Voltaire's well-known novella. Bernstein wrote it as an operetta in the vein of Offenbach and Gilbert and Sullivan. It opened on December 1, 1957, and was not a smashing hit. Over the years, it has gone through many transformations and now it has achieved an enduring place in the musical theatre repertoire. Similar to Bernstein's musical personality, the work sparkles with innate wit and general "cheekiness."

Bernstein also blends classical and popular musical elements in his overture.

(Continued top of page 3)

The overture is written in sonata form. This perfect “curtain opener” features some of the most memorable tunes: “The Best of All Possible Worlds,” “Battle Music,” “Oh, Happy We,” and “Glitter and Be Gay” from the show. It has become the composer’s most popular orchestral work.

Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770-1827): *Symphony No. 5, 1st Movement (with narration in the spirit of PDQ Bach)*



Beethoven’s opening gesture in the first movement of *Symphony No. 5* is the most famous beginning of all classical music. It is the germinal cell from which

the entire movement grows. The development section is a paragon of cohesion, logic and concision. The recapitulation roars forth after a series of breathless chords that pass from strings and brass.



PDQ Bach is a fictional composer created by Peter Schickele (1935 – 2024). Schickele was an American composer, musical educator, parodist, satirist,

performer, recording artists, and radio host. In his narration of the first movement of Beethoven’s *Fifth Symphony*, PDQ Bach combines parodies of musical scholarship and slapstick comedy. In the spirit of PDQ Bach, the Cheshire Symphony Orchestra will present its own narration that conveys Beethoven’s sense of drama, the composer’s rhythmic vitality, and his imaginative structural details. Sit back, enjoy the antics and possibly learn how this movement is novel and dramatic.



Roger screws up.

When I graduated from high school in 1963, my parents gave me a ‘cello* by Richard Duke, a well-known English violin maker of the 18th century. He made ‘cellos as well, though fewer of them. He was the instrument maker for the royal family, as in those days royals were supposed to be able to make music (think of taking keyboard lessons with Handel). Mine is dated 1770. The first piece I played on it was a sonata by Johann Galliard (d. 1747); I had the feeling that it magically played itself and sounded just right. Because I haven’t aged as well as the instrument has, I stopped bringing it to CSO in 2023 and got myself a modern Czech ‘cello that I can carry to those rainy winter rehearsals without feeling that I am challenging fate.

Ben Foster
CSO Cellist



* ‘Cello is a shortened form of the Italian word violoncello, which means ‘small large violin.’ The cello came to the limelight for the first time in northern Italy in 1550. The oldest cello that exists to date is known as The King. Andrea Amati built it between 1538 and 1560. It is currently housed at the National Music Museum in South Dakota.

Meet the Cheshire Symphony Orchestra CSO Board Co-Presidents Brenda Tousignant and Sue Lonergan

Bassoonists Brenda Tousignant and Sue Lonergan met at the CSO about 32 years ago. Brenda was one of the original members of the orchestra, before it even acquired its current name. Sue joined two or three years later, and both have been active members ever since.

Sue took up the bassoon in middle school and Brenda in college. Both transitioned from other wind instruments; Sue played the flute and Brenda the clarinet. They loved the sound of the bassoon and were happy when the opportunity to learn it arose. Bassoon also offered many more opportunities to play with other musicians and musical groups.

They recall the history of the CSO over the past three decades. It grew from a small group to about 50 musicians and moved

around town, first rehearsing at Cheshire Academy, then the Congregational Church, and for a long time at Dodd Middle School and Elim Park. Concerts were held at Cheshire High School, Cheshire Park and Recreation building, St. Bridget School, and Elim Park. The CSO then moved to St. Peter’s Church, where it has stayed since about 2016.

Brenda and Sue became co-presidents around the time the orchestra moved into St. Peter’s Church. As presidents, Brenda and Sue are very busy with the behind the scenes activities of the orchestra. One of their many duties is to recruit instrumentalists for orchestra when needed. Sue is our primary liaison between the orchestra and St. Peter’s Church. Both Sue and Brenda keep us connected to the

Cheshire community and local and regional school

music departments. They agree that they work well together. “We try to work as a team with the rest of the group and value the thoughts and wishes of the orchestra members.”

When asked their hopes for the CSO, they said they hope it will continue to grow. “It’s also nice to see we’re growing into our home at the church, that we can now house a percussion cabinet and Hilarie’s podium and store timpani and other percussion instruments. The church is not just a space we’re using to rehearse in, but a real home for the orchestra.”





CHESHIRE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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ON FACEBOOK!**

Visit our website:

www.cheshiresymphonyorchestra.org

Thanks to the CSO Music Director, Board of Directors and St. Peter's Church

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and the joy of music!**

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Photo: John Van Vlack



"Music can change the world."

Ludwig van Beethoven