

# CON BRIO



*Oregon Music Teachers' Association, Inc.*  
**Eugene District**

Affiliated with the Music Teachers' National Association, Inc.



Opus 203

June 2009

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## *June Meeting*



Come celebrate the year with us! Our final meeting of the 2008-2009 season will be a very special one. Carolyn and Jim McHan have invited us to their lovely home on the evening of **June 8**. Please plan to arrive at 7:00 PM...or later if necessary because of your teaching schedule. Bring whatever you would like to share for a potluck and remember that family members are welcome.

Neil and Cathy Patton will perform for us, so we can look forward to a delightful program of music for piano and flute. Included will be Neil's original compositions, one a world premiere! Aren't we fortunate that the talented young student-pianist so many of us remember has become a respected OMTA professional here in our own district!

*Virginia Buhn*

District Vice-President & Program Chair

## *Festival of Popular Music*

Sunday, October 18th, from 1:00 to 5:00 PM  
United Lutheran Church  
2230 Washington St (Corner of 22nd and Washington), Eugene

Please mark your calendars now before summer carries you away! For more information, contact:

*Soria Phillips-Meadow*

Festival of Popular Music Chair (484-7090)

## *CON BRIO Now On Our Website!*

Beginning with the **September 2009** issue of *Con Brio*, our newsletter will only be available to members on our district website. The current issue—June, 2009—is the last to be mailed to our membership. All members will continue to receive an email reminder when the new issue of *Con Brio* is available. The email will also include a direct link to *Con Brio* on the district website.

If you do not have access to a computer, please contact me at (541) 998-2947 to make arrangements to have a copy of *Con Brio* printed from the website and mailed to you.

*Wyatt Burger*

*Con Brio* editor





## Treasurer's Report

Checking Account balance on 05/01/2009: \$ 322.99

### EXPENSES

May 1, 2009 - June 1, 2009

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
05/08/09	Con Brio - May issue	64.00
05/11/09	Spring District Recitals	18.44
05/11/09	PEAK Internet	19.90
05/11/09	Qwest telephone	37.29
05/11/09	Daniel Burgh-composition celebration adjudicator	210.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$349.63</b>

### INCOME

May 1, 2009 - June 1, 2009

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Spring District Recitals	854.00
Valley River Inn (brunch)	284.90
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,138.90</b>

Checking Account balance on 06/01/2009: \$ 1,112.26

Respectfully submitted,

*Wyatt L. Burger*

Eugene District Treasurer



## Con Brio

June 2009

*Con Brio* is the newsletter of the Eugene Chapter of OMTA, published and distributed monthly, except July and August.

President: Carolyn McHan      Corresponding Sec: Sarah Burch  
 Vice-President: Virginia Buhn      Recording Sec: Neil Patton  
 Treasurer: Wyatt Burger      Past President: Claire Wachter

*Con Brio* founder and first publisher: Lea Mirabella

All materials for publication are due on the Saturday preceding the first Monday of each month.

*Con Brio* is mailed to all members on the Wednesday prior to the monthly meeting, and can also be accessed on the district website.

Wyatt L. Burger, editor  
 e-mail: [westlanepiano@cvcable.com](mailto:westlanepiano@cvcable.com)

## President's Message

Dear Members

Yesterday we returned from a twelve day trip to England and Scotland where we experienced a peek at our English speaking heritage. We marveled at their efficient train system, delighted in their castles and quaint old villages, appreciated their beautiful music, and enjoyed their hospitality. A wonderful way to be reminded of the rich history of this world.

Many of you will also have time in the weeks ahead for vacations, a change of pace and some time for relaxing. I wish you a pleasant summer in whatever activities you choose.

There are two more OMTA events this summer for us all to enjoy. You are cordially invited to our District potluck here at our home next Monday June 8 at 7:00 PM. And do include plans to attend our State Convention right here in Eugene at the U of O July 31-August 2.

Musically yours,

*Carolyn McHan*

Eugene District President

## *Spring District Recitals*

The **Spring District Recitals** took place on Sunday, May 3, at the lovely Wildish Community Theater in Springfield. There were seven recitals, beginning at 12:00, and ending with the final recital at 6:00. The student and teacher involvement was high, with 122 students performing, representing 22 teachers. Students performed a variety of music from many different genres, on piano, violin, and clarinet. All the recitals started and ended on time. Thank you so much for accurately timing your student performances! Congratulations to all the teachers who participated for preparing so many students to perform so well!

*Sarah Burch*

Spring District Recitals Chair

## *Let's Support SHO!*

SHO (Support **H**ult **O**perations) is an active group dedicated to providing assistance to the Hult Center. Among other things, they provide assistant ushers for events, give back-stage tours and sponsor free performances twice each month in the Hult lobby. But most important is the recognition they give to the young people in our community who are involved in the arts. Each month they honor a **Performing Arts Student of the Month**, presenting them with an award, a \$100 scholarship, tickets for Hult events and a photograph which is featured in the lobby. How meaningful it is...and how infrequently it occurs...for our young musicians, actors and dancers to receive public recognition!

Among those to receive the honor this year were Tatum Sohlberg, student of Pat Morse, Courtney LaFranchi, student of Virginia Buhn, and Jenna Han, student of Christine Mirabella. They were invited to perform on May 21 in the lobby of the Hult Center with a large audience in attendance. During the next school year nominations can be made by using the form available online from SHO. Students need to be not only talented and proficient in their art, but actively performing in the community. And remember, SHO would appreciate having each of us as a member to support their activities.

## *Spring Syllabus*

Our Spring Syllabus took place May 14-17 at teacher's studios and University of Oregon classrooms. There were 191 participating students, 26 teachers, and 8 adjudicators (two teachers and two students were from the Lincoln District).

Successful evaluations:	116
Successful demonstrations:	35
Successful auditions:	27
Forfeits:	13

For level X, there were 14 students who performed as follows:

Successful evaluations with distinction: 2 - Courtney LaFranchi (teacher Virginia Buhn), and Natalie Wong (teacher Melissa Thieme).

Successful evaluations:	6
Successful demonstrations:	1
Successful auditions:	3
Forfeits:	2

Special thanks to Claire Wachter for helping to arrange, once again, nice classrooms at the University of Oregon. I also wish to thank all of the participating teachers for being patient, flexible, and accommodating with scheduling.

*Lucy Clevenger*

District Syllabus Chair

## *OMTA Fundraising Opportunity!*

We would like to invite you to support this OMTA fundraising opportunity once again by simply referring the host family program to your students' parents. Please encourage them to host some wonderful Chinese students. For flyers, please contact LuAnn Langford at [luannlangford@teachmusic.us](mailto:luannlangford@teachmusic.us).

**What:** Hosting Chinese middle/high school students participating in the 2009 Summer University of Oregon Music/English Camps.

**Website:** [www.teachmusic.us/hostfamily.html](http://www.teachmusic.us/hostfamily.html)

**When:** July 6 to July 15 (10 days); July 16 to July 25 (10 days); July 25 to August 2 (9 days)

**Note:** Host family provides transportation, breakfast and dinner on weekdays; 3 meals a day on the weekend and occasional sack lunches. Students may share a room but must have their own bed. Host families are strongly encouraged to take 2 students. All host families are invited to participate in student concert and group activities and socials.

**Stipend:** Stipend will be offered to cover expenses for meals, transportation, laundry and all activities. Host families are encouraged to donate part or all of their stipend to OMTA.

**Contact:** LuAnn Langford (541) 517-5915      [luannlangford@teachmusic.us](mailto:luannlangford@teachmusic.us)

## *A Contemplation on Music*

*The following is the welcome address to parents of the incoming freshman class at Boston Conservatory, given by Karl Paulnack, pianist and director of the music division at Boston Conservatory.*

One of my parents' deepest fears, I suspect, is that society would not properly value me as a musician, that I wouldn't be appreciated. I had very good grades in high school, I was good in science and math, and they imagined that as a doctor or a research chemist or an engineer, I might be more appreciated than I would be as a musician. I still remember my mother's remark when I announced my decision to apply to music school—she said, "you're WASTING your SAT scores." On some level, I think, my parents were not sure themselves what the value of music was, what its purpose was. And they LOVED music, they listened to classical music all the time. They just weren't really clear about its function.

So let me talk about that a little bit, because we live in a society that puts music in the "arts and entertainment" section of the newspaper, and serious music, the kind your kids are about to engage in, has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with entertainment, in fact it's the opposite of entertainment. Let me talk a little bit about music, and how it works.

The first people to understand how music really works were the ancient Greeks. And this is going to fascinate you; the Greeks said that music and astronomy were two sides of the same coin. Astronomy was seen as the study of relationships between observable, permanent, external objects, and music was seen as the study of relationships between invisible, internal, hidden objects. **Music has a way of finding the big, invisible moving pieces inside our hearts and souls and helping us figure out the position of things inside us.** Let me give you some examples of how this works.

One of the most profound musical compositions of all time is the *Quartet for the End of Time* written by French composer Olivier Messiaen in 1940. Messiaen was 31 years old when France entered the war against Nazi Germany. He was captured by the Germans in June of 1940, sent across Germany in a cattle car and imprisoned in a concentration camp.

He was fortunate to find a sympathetic prison guard who gave him paper and a place to compose. There were three other musicians in the camp, a cellist, a violinist, and a clarinetist, and Messiaen wrote his quartet with these specific players in mind. It was performed in January 1945 for four thousand prisoners and guards in the prison camp. Today it is one of the most famous masterworks in the repertoire.

Given what we have since learned about life in the concentration camps, why would anyone in his right mind waste time and energy writing or playing music? There was barely enough energy on a good day to find food and water, to avoid a beating, to stay warm, to escape torture; why would anyone bother with music? And yet, from the camps, we have poetry, we have music, we have visual art. It wasn't just this one fanatic Messiaen; many, many people created art. Why?

Well, in a place where people are only focused on survival, on the bare necessities, the obvious conclusion is that art must be, somehow, essential for life. The camps were without money, without hope, without commerce, without recreation, without basic respect, but they were not without art. Art is part of survival; art is part of the human spirit, an unquenchable expression of who we are. Art is one of the ways in which we say, "I am alive, and my life has meaning." (*continued on page 6*)

## Member Profile Judy Powell

*Member Profile* presents a brief biographical sketch of new members to our Eugene District OMTA. This month's profile is by *Judy Powell*.

My music degree is from the University of Redlands, CA where I attended on a vocal scholarship. Before college, 12 years of piano studies led to many opportunities to accompany choirs, soloists and special groups including the University Men's Quartet where I met my husband, Ned. How grateful I am for that piano background because I was able to pay for the greater part of my post-graduate vocal studies as a studio and audition accompanist in New York City, the Aspen School of Music and Germany.

Professionally, I have sung leading roles in Opera, Musical Theater, Concerts, Oratorio, TV & radio commercials, toured with the Roger Wagner Choral and still perform a One-Woman-Show from the piano. Besides my love of "trodding the boards," I absolutely adore teaching and have maintained a voice studio for over 35 years with students singing in major Opera Houses, Musical Theater, TV, and Las Vegas shows. Since moving here from S. southern California in 2004, I teach piano as well and direct the choir at the Center for Spiritual Living. The exchange of ideas through OMTA is a very positive thing. I appreciate the informative meetings.

—Judy

## OMTA State Conference

July 31 - August 2, 2009

University of Oregon

Conference Artist: **Santiago Rodriguez**

### June District Meeting & Potluck

7 PM, June 8, 2009

home of Carolyn McHan  
34324 Deerwood Drive, Eugene

### District Telephone Number

for teacher referrals: **242-1024**

The deadline for submitting materials for the  
September 2009 issue of *Con Brio* is  
Saturday, September 5, 2009.

Send to [westlanepiano@cvcable.com](mailto:westlanepiano@cvcable.com)

During the Summer and into the Fall, I will be expanding my **piano tuning and repair service**, and will be accepting new clients. If you have students who do not already have a technician for their pianos, I would appreciate your referrals. Please call me for more information, a list of references, or if you have any questions.



**Wyatt Burger (541) 998-2947**

Visit the OMTA website at

[www.oregonmta.org](http://www.oregonmta.org)

where you will find

*Music News* online

Forms for OMTA Syllabus and festivals

OMTA billing form

Directory of Oregon districts

Calendar of events

Updated contact information for *Bethany Foster*:

1855 Kingsley Road, Apt. 172

Eugene, OR 97401

Phone: (541) 515-8241

Eugene District website: [www.oma-eugene.org](http://www.oma-eugene.org)

## A Contemplation on Music (continued from page 4)

On September 12, 2001, I was a resident of Manhattan. That morning I reached a new understanding of my art and its relationship to the world. I sat down at the piano that morning at 10 AM to practice as was my daily routine; I did it by force of habit, without thinking about it. I lifted the cover on the keyboard, and opened my music, and put my hands on the keys and took my hands off the keys. And I sat there and thought, does this even matter? isn't this completely irrelevant? Playing the piano right now, given what happened in this city yesterday, I seems silly, absurd, irreverent, pointless. Why am I here? What place has a musician in this moment in time? Who needs a piano player right now? I was completely lost.

And then I, along with the rest of New York, went through the journey of getting through that week. I did not play the piano that day, and in fact I contemplated briefly whether I would ever want to play the piano again. And then I observed how we got through the day. At least in my neighborhood, we didn't shoot hoops or play Scrabble. We didn't play cards to pass the time, we didn't watch TV, we didn't shop, we most certainly did not go to the mall. The first organized activity that I saw in New York, that same day, was singing. People sang. People sang around fire houses, people sang *We Shall Overcome*. Lots of people sang *America the Beautiful*. The first organized public event that I remember was the Brahms *Requiem*, later that week, at Lincoln Center, with the New York Philharmonic. The first organized public expression of grief, our first communal response to that historic event, was a concert. That was the beginning of a sense that life might go on. The US Military secured the airspace, but recovery was led by the arts, and by music in particular, that very night.

From these experiences, I have come to understand that music is not part of "arts and entertainment," as the newspaper section would have us believe. It's not a luxury, a lavish thing that we fund from leftovers of our budgets, not a plaything or an amusement or a pass-time. Music is a basic need of human survival. Music is one of the ways we make sense of our lives, one of the ways in which we express feelings when we have no words, a way for us to understand things with our hearts when we can't with our minds.

Some of you may know Samuel Barber's heart-wrenchingly beautiful piece, *Adagio for Strings*. If you don't know it by that name, then some of you may know it as the background music which accompanied the Oliver Stone movie *Platoon*, a film about the Vietnam War. If you know that piece of music either way, open like a walnut; it can make you cry can slip beneath our conscious reality to good therapist does.

*Music has a way of finding the big, invisible moving pieces inside our hearts and souls and helping us figure out the position of things inside us.*

I bet that you have never been to a wedding where there was absolutely no music. There might have been only a little music, but I bet you there was some music. And something—people get all pent up with all kinds of emotions, and then there's some musical moment where the action of the wedding stops and someone sings or plays the flute or something. And even if the music is lame, even if the quality isn't good, predictably 30 to 40 percent of the people who are going to cry at a wedding, cry a couple of moments after the music starts. Why?

The Greeks. Music allows us to move around those big invisible pieces of ourselves and rearrange our insides so that we can express what we feel even when we can't talk about it. Can you imagine watching *Indiana Jones* or *Superman* or *Star Wars* with the dialogue but no music? What is it about the music swelling up at just the right moment in *ET* so that all the softies in the audience start crying at exactly the same moment? I guarantee you, if you showed the movie with the music stripped out, it wouldn't happen that way. The Greeks: **Music is the understanding of the relationship between invisible internal objects.**

I'll give you one more example, the story of the most important concert of my life. I must tell you I have played a little less than a thousand concerts in my life so far. I have played in places that I thought were important. I like playing in Carnegie Hall; I enjoyed playing in Paris; it made me very happy to please the critics in St. Petersburg. I have played for people I thought were important; music critics of major newspapers, foreign heads of state. The most important concert of my entire life took place in a nursing home in Fargo, ND, about 4 years ago.

I was playing with a very dear friend of mine who is a violinist. We began, as we often do, with Aaron Copland's *Sonata*, which was written during World War II and dedicated to a young friend of Copland's, a young pilot who was shot down during the war. Now we often talk to our audiences about the pieces we are going to play rather than providing them with written program notes. But in this case, because we began the concert with this piece, we decided to talk about the piece later in the program and to just come out and play the music without explanation.

Midway through the piece, an elderly man seated in a wheelchair near the front of the concert hall began to weep. This man, whom I later met, was clearly a soldier, even in his 70's, it was clear from his buzz-cut hair, square jaw and general demeanor that he had spent a good deal of his life in the military. I thought it a little bit odd that someone would be moved to tears by that particular movement of that particular piece, but it wasn't the first time I've heard crying in a concert and we went on with the concert and finished the piece.

When we came out to play the next piece on the program, we decided to talk about both the first and second pieces, and we described the circumstances in which the Copland was written and mentioned its dedication to a downed pilot. The man in the front of the audience because so disturbed that he had to leave the auditorium. I honestly figured that we would not see him again, but he did come backstage afterwards, tears and all, to explain himself.

What he told us was this: "During World War II, I was a pilot, and I was in an aerial combat situation where one of my team's planes was hit. I watched my friend bail out, and watched his parachute open, but the Japanese planes which had engaged us returned and machine gunned across the parachute cords so as to separate the parachute from the pilot, and I watched my (continued on page 7)

## *A Contemplation on Music* (continued from page 6)

friend drop away into the ocean, realizing that he was lost. I have not thought about this for many years, but during that first piece of music you played, this memory returned to me so vividly that it was as though I was reliving it. I didn't understand why this was happening, why now, but then when you came out to explain that this piece of music was written to commemorate a lost pilot, it was a little more than I could handle. How does the music do that? How did it find those feelings and those memories in me?"

Remember the Greeks: **music is the study of invisible relationships between internal objects.** This concert in Fargo was the most important work I have ever done. For me to play for this old soldier and help him connect, somehow, with Aaron Copland, and to connect their memories of their lost friends, to help him remember and mourn his friend, this is my work. This is why music matters.

What follows is part of the talk I will give to this year's freshman class when I welcome them a few days from now. The responsibility I will charge your sons and daughters with is this:

If we were a medical school, and you were here as a med. student practicing appendectomies, you'd take your work very seriously because you would imagine that some night at 2:00 AM someone is going to waltz into your emergency room and you're going to have to save their life. Well, my friends, someday at 8:090 PM someone is going to walk into your concert hall and bring you a mind that is confused, a heart that is overwhelmed, a soul that is weary. Whether they go out whole again will depend partly on how well you do your craft.

You're not here to become an entertainer, and you don't have to sell yourself. The truth is you don't have anything to sell; being a musician isn't about dispensing a product, like selling used cars. I'm not an entertainer; I'm a lot closer to a paramedic, a firefighter, a rescue worker. You're here to become a sort of therapist for the human soul, a spiritual version of a chiropractor, physical therapist, someone who works with our insides to see if they get things to line up, to see if we can come into harmony with ourselves and be healthy and happy and well.

Frankly, ladies and gentlemen, I expect you not only to master music; I expect you to save the planet. If there is a future wave of well-being on this planet, of harmony, of peace, of an end to war, of mutual understanding, of equality, of fairness, I don't expect it will come from a government, a military force or a corporation. I no longer even expect it to come from the religions of the world, which together seem to have brought us as much war as they have peace. If there is as future of peace for humankind, if there is to be an understanding of how these invisible, internal things should fit together, I expect it will come from the artists, because that's what we do. As in the concentration camp and the evening of 9/11, the artists are the ones who might be able to help us with our internal, invisible lives.

## OMTA Conference 2009 University of Oregon School of Music July 31 - August 2

### *Schedule of Events*

<b>Friday, July 31</b>		10:00 - 12:00	Presentations Rotation (Susan Bruckner, Scott McBride, Susan Chan)
9:00 - 12:00	MTNA Certification Exams		
9:00 - 10:00	Syllabus Adjudicators Meeting	12:00 - 1:00	Buffet Lunch (Art Museum)
10:00 - 11:00	District Presidents' Roundtable	1:15 - 2:00	Composer of the Year recital (reception follows)
10:00 - 11:00	Syllabus Advisory Board Meeting		Beall Hall
11:00 - 1:15	OMTA Board Meeting	2:45 - 3:30	Student Composition Workshop (Neil Patton, Eularee Smith)
12:00	Conference Registration opens	3:45 - 5:15	Hal Leonard Showcase (Scott McBride Smith)
1:00 - 1:40	Welcome: Dean Brad Foley	6:00 - 7:30	Banquet (Hilton Hotel)
1:45 - 2:45	U of O Faculty Recital	8:00 - 9:00	Santiago Rodriguez Concert (Beall Hall)
3:00 - 5:00	Master Class with Santiago Rodriguez		Reception to follow
3:00 - 5:00	Presentation for string teachers		
7:00 - 10:00	U of O Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art		
<b>Sunday, August 2</b>			
		9:00 - 10:15	General Membership Meeting (Beall Hall)
9:00 - 9:45	Phyllis Pieffer, past president MTNA (Beall Hall)	10:30 - 12:30	Lecture & Master Class with Jane McGrath (Beall Hall)