

TOPEKA SYMPHONY *Allegro!*

Music for Northeast Kansas

Volume 50, Issue 2

Topeka Symphony Orchestra
John Wesley Strickler, Ph.D., Music Director and Conductor

October 2008

Sounds of Celebration 2008-2009

All concerts start at 7:30 pm

“Bold, Elegant, Sublime”

October 4, 2008

Masterworks I

David Everson, Horn
Beethoven, Mozart, Brahms

“The 3 Pianists”

November 1, 2008

Masterworks II

Marina Lomazov, Inna Faliks, Alexander Ghindin
perform

Grieg, Ravel, Rachmaninoff

“Celebrate the Season”

December 3, 2008

Discovery I

Tabitha Reist Steiner, Harp

“American Heritage”

January 17, 2009

Discovery II

200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s birth
Copland: A Lincoln Portrait

“For the Love of Sound”

February 14, 2009

Masterworks III

Richetta Manager, Soprano
Strauss, Wagner and Mendelssohn

“Hollywood Spectacular”

March 14, 2009

Discovery III

Wizard of Oz, Ben Hur, Gone with the Wind

“Keyboard Kaleidoscope”

April 18, 2009

Masterworks IV

Linda Maxey, Marimba
Puts: Marimba Concerto
Saint-Saens: Symphony No. 3 “Organ”

Hello and welcome to the 2008-2009 Topeka Symphony Season!

The new season is dynamic and exciting!

Many symphony organizations in our country experience turmoil due to constant turnover of music directors and continuous financial difficulties. The Topeka Symphony is fortunate to not experience these challenges.

Music Conductor John Strickler's 20th anniversary season will be celebrated throughout the year. The concert programs will feature selections recognizing various concerts in the past 20 years. The Board of Directors is delighted that Maestro Strickler has worked with us these many years. His efforts at continually upgrading the orchestra and programs have been extraordinary. We are grateful.

The Topeka Symphony continues to enjoy a solid financial base. The costs for the orchestra and related programs continue to rise. However, the corporate and individual donors continue to step up and provide the needed support. For this, we are indebted to our loyal patrons. The level of financial support and ticket sales are made possible by you, by your support and by your commitment.

We believe the Topeka Symphony is the ‘crown jewel’ of the arts in Northeast Kansas. Thank you for your support in making this possible.

Enjoy the 2008-2009 season as we continue working to take the Topeka Symphony to the next level.

Larry E. Wolgast, President



Symphony Suppers are back!

Back by popular demand!

Pre-Concert Suppers! Concert Previews!

Enjoy a pre-concert dinner, served to you at your table,
with your friends and family
prior to each Masterworks Concert.

Take the worry out of cooking dinner those evenings.

Watch your mail for more information or call 232-2032 to make reservations.

More TSO events!

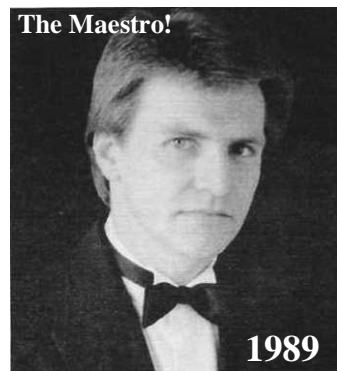
Nov. 8—Halls Night of Shopping

Nov. 16-Youth Ensembles Concert

Dec. 12-Youth Talent Audition Deadline

Celebrating 20 years!

Maestro Strickler celebrates his 20th season with an anniversary performance of Symphony No. 2 by Johannes Brahms. Twenty years ago eighty-nine applications for the position of TSO Conductor/Music Director were received from all over the United States and from Israel, Norway, England, Canada, and South Africa. The Search Committee chose four finalists to guest conduct during the 1988-1989 season. Coming to Topeka from California, John Wesley Strickler rehearsed and then led the orchestra in his "audition" concert on January 18, 1989. It received rave reviews by orchestra musicians and audience members. After this extensive eight month search, Dr. Strickler became only the third conductor in the history of the Topeka Symphony.



The June 1989 *Allegro!* announcing his appointment, reads "John brings an extensive background of teaching, conducting, and management skills and experience to the Topeka Symphony Society. Many players have conveyed their thoughts to the Search Committee that John will encourage their best work and lead them to new heights of musical excellence. These are exciting times for our Symphony Society. Dr. Strickler's main draw to Topeka is the opportunity to conduct and manage a fine and promising Symphony Orchestra."

In this same *Allegro!* issue, Dr. Strickler states "The orchestra's potential for growth is strong and I am eager to try new things with them...there is an enthusiasm to the group that is exciting to work with." The enthusiasm continues to thrive among TSO musicians, audience and Northeast Kansas communities as the Topeka Symphony embarks on its 63rd season with this grand season opener on **October 4**.



Sunflower Music Festival Musician to perform with the TSO

Also on this opening concert, David Everson performs Mozart's Third Horn Concerto. Mr. Everson is well-known to Topeka audiences as Principal French Horn at the Sunflower Music Festival. He recently celebrated his 17th year with the festival. Mr. Everson currently is Assistant Principal Horn with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. He was previously Principal Horn with the Kansas City Symphony and was also a founding member of the Kansas City Brass, a Grammy Award-nominated brass sextet. Mr. Everson has an active horn studio and is on the faculty of Macomb College. He performs as a chamber musician in the Detroit area as well as in recording studios. He can be heard weekly on NPR with the Detroit Symphony.

The horn for which Mozart composed was different from the current French Horn. Only lip pressure and hand position with the bell were used prior to valves being added. For players of the modern horn, Mozart's concertos are still very demanding; what it must have been like in the eighteenth century is humorously noted by the written remarks Mozart added in one of his horn concertos: "Be a good fellow - Courage!"

Celebrate the Season with the Capitol Federal Traditional Holiday Concert!

Begin your holiday season with the always popular TSO Holiday concert on **December 3**. In addition to your favorite holiday tunes, Harpist Tabitha Reist Steiner, will be featured. She will perform the first movement of *Concierto Serenata* by Joaquin Rodrigo, and Claude Debussys' *Sacred and Profane Dances* with the orchestra.

Ms. Steiner earned a master of music degree from the Peabody Conservatory and a bachelor of music degree from Washburn University. Her playing was lauded as "...some of the most precise and beautifully inflected harp playing..." by the Kansas City Star. She is principal harpist with the Chamber Music Society of Kansas City, the Tulsa Opera Orchestra and the Wichita Grand Opera Orchestra. She has performed with the Kansas City Symphony Opera Orchestra and is active as a freelance harpist. Ms. Steiner teaches harp at Washburn University and Baker University. Her solo CD, *Summer Past*, was released in 2000 on Earthstar Recordings and Publications.



Bring the entire family to this special evening of seasonal music and good cheer! Include this concert in your season package while seating is still available.

Like a Rock Star??

Last spring, the TSO was invited to be one of several first presenters of the 2007 Cleveland International Piano Competition Winner. The 2007 winner was 30-year old Russian pianist Alexander Ghindin (see below). This highly acclaimed competition began in 1975 and presents a \$50,000 prize to the winner—the largest cash award offered by any international piano competition in the world. Held biennially over a ten-day period, the competition begins with the candidates performing solo recitals. Candidates are eliminated by jury vote until four finalists remain to perform with the Cleveland Symphony in the finals. This is the only piano competition in the world that has an orchestra of this world-class stature for its final rounds.

Jane Chandler Holt, former TSO Board member, attended the final round last spring. Comparing the competition to basketball's March Madness she tells us to "think of the Final Four. Piano enthusiasts from around the world follow the competition in the newspaper, on-line and in person. The finalists compete the last two nights to near capacity audiences." She continues, with excitement, "It's wonderful to see classical musicians draw fans like athletes or rock stars!"

Three International Pianists...Three International Composers! One Stage...One Night!

The TSO will reprise a program idea from 10 years ago, when three pianists were featured on one concert. "We got the idea from 'The Three Tenors' and it proved to be a big hit with the audience," Maestro Strickler remembers, "and tickets are going fast this time also!"

The winner of the 2007 Cleveland International Piano Competition, **Alexander Ghindin**, will highlight the program. Mr. Ghindin was the clear favorite from the opening rounds of the competition. "A full week before he won first prize...Ghindin leapt to the front of the piano pack." (*The Plain Dealer*) By the age of 13, he had won the Moscow Young Pianists' Competition and at 14 became youngest ever winner at the 10th International Tchaikovsky Competition in 1994. Mr. Ghindin has won numerous international competitions, performed extensively as a soloist and guest artist with major orchestras and has recorded over 15 CD's.



He will perform Rachmaninoff's 2nd Piano Concerto. Rachmaninoff wrote this concerto, which premiered in 1901, following a period of depression due to personal as well as composition difficulties. This work has the distinctly Russian sound common with Rachmaninoff. The Andante movement is one of his most beautiful and celebrated creations. His Russian teacher wept at a rehearsal uttering the word "genius" — not an expression used lightly by Russians. A series of powerful piano chords ends the piece with a thrilling conclusion. This truly brilliant work proved Rachmaninoff had recovered from his previous difficulties.

This stunning concert on **November 1** continues with Piano Concerto for the Left Hand Alone by Ravel and performed by **Inna Faliks**. Ms. Faliks immigrated to the United States from the Ukraine at the age of 10. By then she had already composed an opera and played her first solo recital in Rome. At age 15, she performed with the Chicago Symphony. She has since won numerous competitions and performed extensively throughout the world as soloist and chamber musician. Ms. Faliks "infuses every note with brilliance and personality." (*Hilton Head Competition Review*)

Ravel's Left Hand concerto was commissioned and premiered in 1932 by the Viennese pianist Paul Wittgenstein who lost his right arm in military service in World War I. Ravel's American biographer Arbie Orenstein classifies this concerto as "Ravel's most dramatic work, combining expansive lyricism, tormented jazz effects, a playful scherzo, and driving march rhythms, all of which are scaffolded into one movement of modest dimensions."

Our third international pianist, **Marina Lomazov**, is also from the Ukraine. She will open this concert with the only concerto completed by Edvard Grieg. Before immigrating to the United States in 1990, Ms. Lomazov studied at the Kiev Conservatory where she became the youngest First Prize Winner at the all-Kiev Piano Competition. After numerous top prizes at competitions and an extensive performance schedule, Ms. Lomazov has established herself as "one of the most passionate and charismatic performers on the concert scene and one of the best young pianists in America today." (*Joel Altman*)

The Grieg Piano Concerto opens with one of the most familiar themes in classical music, which is heard in movies, television and cartoons. Grieg wrote this concerto in 1868, at the age of 25, while enjoying the warmer climate of Denmark on holiday from his native Norway. Grieg had doubts about his original orchestration so he overhauled the concerto in the early 1880s. He was still revising it in July, 1907. The final version was completed only a few weeks before his death.

The Topeka Symphony Society
P.O. Box 2206
Topeka, Kansas 66601-2206

Season Opener
October 4
7:30 p.m.

Phone: 785-232-2032
Email: tso@topekasymphony.org
Website: www.topekasymphony.org

"Allegro!" is published by the Topeka Symphony Society.

The Topeka Symphony is sponsored in part by the Kansas Arts Commission, a state agency; the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency which believes that a great nation deserves great art; Washburn University; and ARTSConnect.



Have you purchased your tickets yet?
Don't be left in the Lobby

Season and single tickets are on sale now!

Contact Molly at tso@topekasymphony.org or 785-232-2032

Why leave Topeka? Stay at home with us!



Topeka Symphony Concerts
Don't Forget! New start time!
7:30 p.m.

If you would like to receive TSO email updates,
contact Molly at tso@topekasymphony.org

Topeka Symphony Society 2008-2009 Board of Directors

Larry E. Wolgast, President; Neil Dabler, Treasurer; Ed Webber, Secretary

Sarah Bailey, Liliana Bernal, Jayne Cafer, Betty S. Cleland; Betty Dicus; Ilene Ecord; Cynthia Enstrom; Paul H. Kindling; Christel Marquardt; Gordon McQuere; Deepak Parulkar; Patty Pressman; Eric Rea, Judyanne Somers; Judy Soule; Sophia Spencer, Scott Teeter; Karen Tyler; James Van Sickle

Char Taggart, President Topeka Symphony League; Ruth C. Dickinson, Chair Endowment Trustees; Charles Marling, Honorary Director
Orchestra Committee: Co-Presidents: Lynne Leifer & Art Sandquist; Representatives: Chris Smith, Tracy Teague Tugman, James Mosher

Youth Ensembles Conductors: Steven Elisha, Youth Orchestra; Carolyn Rich Voth, Youth Philharmonic; Carolyn Sandquist, Debut Orchestra