

Sustaining Notes

The Newsletter for Symphonie Jeunesse Youth Orchestra for Strings

Vol. 2
No. 3
March 1,
2021

SJO News

March this year marks one year since SJO's last rehearsal. Noting this is emotional – we have greatly missed seeing everyone and hearing your musical progress. We fervently hope that the pandemic has not unduly impacted our families and offer our sincerest sympathy if it has.

We do, however, have some positive points to share. This year we have not been forgotten by several of our faithful supporters and have received a small number of very helpful donations for which we are exceedingly grateful. These ensure that when we are ready to resume rehearsals, we will be able to do so. We are also pleased that "Sustaining Notes" continues to receive warm responses from our members, families, and friends. We appreciate your readership and look forward to continuing together.

This month we acknowledge Women's History Month as well as the birthdays of Jessica P. on 3/12 and Maddison M. on 3/13.
Congratulations, ladies!

Mrs. T.'s Listening List

Each year in the US since 1935, March has been designated Women's National History Month by Presidential proclamation. The month of March is set aside to honor women's contributions in American history.

When Mr. "T" and I were graduate students at the New England Conservatory in Boston, MA in 1976, we were able to hear the Boston Symphony Orchestra when season ticket holders couldn't use their tickets and donated them to conservatory students who couldn't afford tickets. Each week students would sign up on the list to try and receive tickets to the symphony and if you were lucky, your name would be called. All we had to do to use the tickets was write a thank you note to the donor who gave up their tickets. We got to hear a lot of great music by one of the nation's greatest orchestras. There were no women in the orchestra! All men. By 1977, I believe one woman was finally admitted by audition!

During this month of March I would like you to explore some of the music of the following composers, musicians and conductors who contributed greatly to the expression of music:

- ◇ Hildegard von Bingen (1098~1179) first woman composer; German
- ◇ Fanny Mendelssohn (1805~1847) German pianist and composer
- ◇ Clara Wieck Schumann (1819~1896) German pianist and composer
- ◇ Dora Pejačević (1885~1923) Croatian composer, pronounced Pay-ah-say-vich
- ◇ Nadia Boulanger (1887~1979) French; first woman to conduct the London Philharmonic
- ◇ Marin Alsop (1956) American conductor and violinist
- ◇ Rebecca Clarke (1886~1979) British-American violist and composer
- ◇ Elizabeth Pitcairn (1973) violinist; plays the 1720 Red Mendelssohn Stradivari, The Red Violin
- ◇ Jacqueline du Pre (1945~1987) British cellist and child prodigy

This is just a very modest sample of the contribution of women in classical music. I hope you will find these and others as you explore the contribution of women in music. I am going to start with Dora Pejačević!

Vivo Vocabulary

Allargando ~ (Italian) broadening

Affettuoso ~ (It.) tenderly

Sostenuto ~ (It.) sustained

Motif ~ specific melody or series of notes used in different ways throughout a piece of music

Dal Segno ~ (It.) D.S. from the sign; music to be repeated

Concerto Grosso ~ orchestral form popular in the 17th & 18th centuries featuring contrasting lines of a smaller & larger group of instruments

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Where Are They Now?

SJO Alumni Update

Aaron and Nicholas (Nick) Ainsworth are twin brothers who graduated from Cajon High School in 2015. Nick joined Symphonie Jeunesse in 2009 as a member of the Cello section. Aaron, a saxophonist by training, joined soon after as a percussionist, accompanying the group on its many adventures from Cambria to Disneyland and everywhere in between.

The pair went on to attend Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN where they graduated with dual degrees in Education and Political Science with Highest Honors in May 2019.

In large part due to the impact that their many wonderful teachers from San Bernardino had on them, after graduation Aaron and Nick decided to join Teach For America, an organization dedicated to ensuring that all kids regardless of ZIP code get access to an excellent and equitable education. Both were placed as teachers at a Title I school in Las Vegas, NV.

Aaron is now in his second year of teaching 3rd grade and will graduate with a Master's degree in Curriculum & Instruction from UNLV in May 2021. Nick teaches a K-2 Special Education class and will also graduate from UNLV with a Master's degree this spring.

Both have been profoundly impacted by their experience within and outside of classrooms in San Bernardino and Las Vegas and

want to magnify their impact for students. In the future, Nick and Aaron are interested in pursuing further study of education policy to become quantitative education researchers. In the meantime, however, they are soaking up the lessons they are learning in the classroom and from their wonderful students. They are eager to pay forward the amazing education their dedicated teachers, schools, and family provided them.

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Accent On

Mrs. Vicki Greaves **SJO Board Treasurer**

Hello, SJO. I hope everyone is well and in good spirits.

My musical journey started in elementary school choir. Back in those days my older sister played clarinet in the school's band. She was not one to practice at home, so I used her books and instrument to teach myself to play. I guess I did a decent job because when I went into band for the first time in junior high, I was first chair for half the year. After that I skipped Intermediate level and was moved up to the Advanced band. Once I was in Advanced band I was completely lost! I was able to read music and play what was in front of me but at the beginning of every class we played scales. I had no clue what was going on! When the director would call out, "Let me hear D" I would play my D but

then everyone started moving on to different notes. I was too embarrassed to ask for help so I bowed out of band quietly. I did continue singing throughout high school and college, though.

My band experience helped me appreciate and love the teaching atmosphere in SJO. Here the kids teach each other without judgment and Mrs. T. takes time to slow things down to teach the music correctly before taking things up to tempo.

As a parent I wanted to set my children up to go farther in life than I had. This is why I put my girls into both gymnastics and strings. I was afraid to do a cartwheel as a child and I struggled musically learning to sing harmonies. Around the age of 12, I did not continue playing instrumental music. So keep playing your scales!

My family's strings journey began when my older daughter was taught how to play the viola by Mrs. T. at Palm Ave Elementary in 2006. My younger daughter, Chani, started learning cello in 5th grade with Mrs. T. and then joined SJO in 2014. I am excited to get back into Saturday rehearsals and I am blessed by the beautiful music these youths freely give.

~ Coda ~

I feel I must fight for my music because I want women to turn their minds to big and difficult jobs; not just to go on hugging the shore, afraid to put out to sea.

~ Ethel Smyth
British composer, 1898 - 1944