

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



of SAN ANTONIO

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NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This summer I had the immense pleasure of spending two weeks with the students from our inaugural COSA Music Institute (CMI). These students arrived on the first day very quiet and unsure of what to expect. At lunch on those first couple of days they were talking quietly within the groups of people they already knew. Then on the third day at lunch time, I heard something new: talking, laughing and giggling. It had happened! All of the kids were sitting together and they had become kids of CMI not kids from this school or that school. What a great day that was! This program was one of the most rewarding experiences I have had and I am so thankful I was lucky enough to be able to experience it. Thank you to all of the students from CMI for putting all the hard work and dedication into the program—you guys rocked it!

- Lori Skinner

OUR MISSION

The Chamber Orchestra of San Antonio (COSA) is devoted to cultivating the realm of classical music for new and versed music lovers through education and performances that present rarely experienced as well as timeless works.

OUR VISION

COSA's vision is to bring a new, shared experience of international classical music to listeners of all ages, backgrounds, and aspirations. COSA believes that the universal language of classical music encompasses human emotion, edifies the spirit, and promotes understanding of the world.



By Silvia Santinelli

The summer of 2016 became a watershed moment for COSA with the launch of CMI, the Chamber Orchestra of San Antonio's educational program specifically designed to expand on the organization's original mission, that of cultivating and educating new audiences, with the vision of providing an integrative educational musical experience for students of all backgrounds, levels, and aspirations.

For those of you who are not yet familiar with CMI, COSA Music Institute holds as one of its long term

goals the incorporation of an entire school to offer a wide variety of music-related programs. CMI developed two of these programs in the areas of string chamber orchestra and chamber music ensemble as its focus for 2016.

The highly anticipated summer program took place at Edison High School from June 20 to July 2. Our faculty and COSA Young Artist String Chamber Orchestra members, originally from many parts of the world, arrived from different universities and music schools across the nation. Many of our visiting artists and faculty members were at some point members of El Sistema orchestras from Venezuela. We invited them to be a part of CMI because they are also fully committed to music education as a catalyst for edification and understanding of diversity across communities around the world. During the course of the program, we saw the light in the eyes of our students as the faculty shared their dedication and optimism in striving to serve this noble art, while passing on their passion for music to the next generation of students, music professionals, and fine art supporters. *Continued on Page 2*

2016-17 SEASON PREVIEW



By Robert Ehlers

This fall marks the beginning of COSA's fifth official season and its third as a resident company of the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts! COSA's 2016-17 season promises to be its most intriguing yet.

COSA will perform *20th Century Icons* on October 15, 2016, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Argentinian composer, Alberto Ginastera, and feature contemporaneous composers. The program will include Aaron Copland's Two Pieces for Chamber Orchestra, Rudolf Barshai's arrangement of Dmitri Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony Op. 110, the Ginastera Concerto for Strings, as well as a piece for the San Antonio Chamber Choir, Ginastera's "The Lamentations of Jeremiah." José Luis Gomez, Music Director designate of the Tucson Symphony, will guest conduct in his first COSA appearance.

On February 15 and 17, 2017, COSA will continue its *Realizations* series with an arrangement for chamber orchestra of Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, with soprano and narration in a collaboration with the Opera San Antonio, another Tobin resident. The performances of this timeless medieval love story will take place over the weekend after Valentine's Day. Gemma New, Music Director of the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra and Resident Conductor of the St. Louis Symphony, will conduct in her second COSA appearance, Jenna Black will perform as soprano, and Andrew Thornton will direct and narrate.

On May 12-13, 2017, COSA will feature its first piano concerto in *Myths Abound*. Winner of the 1987 Naumburg International Piano Competition and acclaimed Beethoven interpreter, Anton Nel, will perform Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4, influenced by the myth of Orpheo and Eurydice. Other works include Christoph Willibald Gluck's "Dance of the Furies" and the Chaconne from the opera *Orphée et Eurydice*. The final work will be Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's last symphony, No. 41 "Jupiter." Gemma New will also conduct this concert.

Major sponsors are the Department for Culture & Creative Development and the Texas Commission on the Arts. Please join these great sponsors by renewing your support, whether in sponsoring a particular musician or providing general funds. Thank you for your continued generosity. We look forward to seeing you at the performances, for which tickets are available at TobinCenter.org or through COSA's website. Performances will begin at 7:30 pm and 8:00 pm (*Tristan und Isolde*) at the Tobin's Carlos Alvarez Studio Theater.

CMI 2016



CMI 2016 *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

Throughout the two-week program, we witnessed activities that allowed for intellectual and artistic growth through individualized lessons, youth chamber orchestra and faculty chamber ensemble rehearsals, as well as master classes, lectures, and outreach concerts, including the inaugural at Blue Skies of Texas senior independent living center, where the audience proved that musical enrichment can last a lifetime.

As the highlight of our summer program, CMI held its final two concerts at the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts with our students performing alongside our faculty artists. These sold-out concerts marked the culmination of an intense music program that provided many opportunities for students to advance in their music education and for the faculty members to collaborate and pass along their commitment to the art of music making.

CMI could not have happened without the untiring efforts of so many coordinators and collaborators, nor without a strong desire to leave a mark of excellence and achievement since the inception of the Chamber Orchestra of San Antonio's mission and vision eight years ago. From the faculty, who brought their confidence to communicate through music the essence of being, to the volunteers, school districts, and administrators, along with the group of sponsors and patrons, all contributed immensely in the effort to help ultimately shape our students in becoming well-rounded individuals with strong foundations and values centered in the art of music.

Our hearts are filled with gratitude over several individuals whose volunteer work, passion, and love of music eventually shaped the success of CMI: Pablo Escamilla, Roger Caballero, Anthony Medrano, Robert Sabo, Miguel Guzman, and last but not least, Robert Ehlers. To all of them a round of applause and our utmost appreciation.

If you would like to become involved, please let us know! We look forward to counting on your support for the summer of 2017.

DR. EHRISMAN SALON FUNDRAISER & 2ND ANNUAL *Savor the Music*

By Anne Marie-Grube

Salon Fundraiser at Dr. Ehrisman's

Set in the heart of the Monticello Historic District, Dr. Wayne Erishman opened the doors to his 1930's Spanish style home for COSA's first salon fundraiser of the year. With about 50 attendees, the evening's music was performed by Tenor Rafael Moras, Jr. and featured Spanish music composed in the early 20th century. Accompanied by his father Dr. Rafael Moras, who altered between the piano and the accordion, the evening was an inspiration to all who attended. A BIG Thank You to Dr. Ehrisman for hosting such a wonderful evening!

Savor the Music

The 2nd Annual Savor the Music was held at the St. Anthony Hotel's beautiful Peraux Room on June 28, 2016, and is now considered the largest fundraiser event for COSA. More than 50 tickets were sold, underwritten again by Roberto Espinosa at Northwestern Mutual, raising close to \$9,000 for COSA! As Adam Tutor (the Rivard Report) described it: "Savor the Music: Pleasing the Palate by Soothing the Soul!" Performing music inspired by the St. Anthony's founding and history, guest musicians Francisco Fullana, Simón Gollo, Jorge Martinez-Rios, and Mihai Marica, played music selected by Artistic Director Paul Montalvo. Combined with St. Anthony Executive Chef Michael Mata's creative menu, the music and cuisine made for a memorable, one-night only, 5-course meal. 56 attendees enjoyed an ensemble enriching all 5 senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. Thank You to Roberto Espinosa, the St. Anthony Hotel and staff, and all our attendees for your support! And mark your calendars- next year's 3rd Annual *Savor the Music* is set for June 27, 2017.



photo credit (above): Elisabel Balderrama



photo credit (below): Siggie Ragnar

François Minaux

Current Position:

I am Principal Flute of the Chamber Orchestra of San Antonio and Second Flute of the Round Rock Symphony in Round Rock, TX. I also teach the flute at Hays CISD Middle and High Schools in Hays and Buda, TX, and give private flute lessons in my recording studio in East Austin.

Training:

I received a "Premier Prix de Musique de Chambre" from the Municipal Conservatory of the 12th arrondissement in Paris, a Master of Music from the Yale School of Music in 2006, and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from UT-Austin in 2011.

Teachers:

Jean-Pierre Sabouret (Paris Opéra) in chamber music, Valérie Hamslem (Paris), Ransom Wilson (Yale U) and Marianne Gedigian (UT-Austin).

Favorite Composer(s):

Robert Fripp, Henryk Górecki, Christopher Rouse, Claude Debussy and Igor Stravinsky.

Favorite Solo/Work:

Requiem (Fripp), *The Firebird* (Stravinsky), and *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune* (Debussy).

The one thing people would be surprised to know about you:

I compose for small ensembles and write lyrics for songs. My music is a fusion between contemporary music, progressive rock and free improvisation. For this I play an electro-acoustic flute custom made for me by Flutes Parmenon in Orléans, France. It has a glissando headjoint, a Barcus-Berry microphone system and a low-A foot joint.



BOARD ACCENT

MANUEL FIERRO



By Mariana Vela

The sound of a bow-to-string glide and the visions of the piano keys have always enchanted Manuel Fierro. Such was his love for music that it led him to graduate with a degree in Music Industry Studies in Mexico City. Devoted to the authenticity of real music, Manuel continued on to become director of the Asociación Protectora de Cine y Música, which protects the music and film industry from plagiarism in Mexico. Now living in San Antonio for ten years, he emphasizes the privilege that San Antonio has when it comes to enjoying the arts. Manuel shares how he loves being able to stroll freely and safely on a concert or museum night. Committed to music and serving on the board of COSA, he sees the arts developing in a new light. "What I like about COSA is that it's a young organization with an honest motive of fostering classical music. This organization simply does everything for the love of music. Everyone is very energetic to see projects fall through. Truthfully, I have never been involved with a group like this."

Looking back on childhood memories, Mr. Fierro describes how all emotions and senses evolve—a reason why he loves classical music. He often wonders if others get the same goose bumps he does after hearing certain pieces. During his spare time with his nieces and nephews, Mr. Fierro enjoys setting a classical music ambiance to spark curiosity in their young minds. Among his favorite pieces by composers like Schubert and Mahler, Manuel is captured the most by Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

photo credit: Sigi Ragnar



photo credit: Demetrius Tapia

By Sarah Szuminski

COSA's 2015-2016 season featured a combination of firsts for the organization along with old favorites: three new series were introduced with each of the season's three concerts, we returned to our home in the Carlos Alvarez Studio at the Tobin Center, audiences were entertained by musicians and conductors both old and new, and as always, the music was sweet.

The Forbidden Composers, a new perennial series, features music by oppressed composers of various eras and was inaugurated in COSA's October 2015 concert of the same name, recognizing works by Jewish composers who were banned by the Nazi regime. In her first appearance with COSA, audiences were both educated and charmed by New Zealand-born Gemma New, Music Director of the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra and Resident Conductor of the St. Louis Symphony. Her informative and conversational addresses to the audience on the history of the pieces and composers was an added bonus!

On a chilly evening in late January, audiences were treated to an intimate performance at COSA's *The 'Unsung' Octet*, which kicked off another new series, *Unsung*, focusing on unsung works for small chamber orchestra. With only eight stringed instruments singing together from a semi-circle just feet from the audience, attendees were able to follow the sound of each bow, pluck, and page turn in a truly special experience.

COSA's May concert, *A Minimal (Re)Composition*, introduced another new series, *Realizations*, to recognize the composer's craft of integrating musical material into new forms. Carlos Izcaray of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra returned to conduct in his third appearance with COSA while Concertmaster Francisco Fullana made his San Antonio solo debut. The all-string pieces were layered with brief addresses from Izcaray, providing audiences with some historical context and understanding of the music in what many said was an all-time favorite among COSA's performances.

As always, we wish to recognize and thank all of our sponsors, donors, and supporters who have made these performances and the continuation of our mission possible.

LORI SKINNER

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DONOR SPOTLIGHT

LAURA & ALAN CHESLER

By Melanie Matcek

Laura and Alan Chesler were introduced to COSA through their good friend and former board member Alice Viroslav. Alice arranged a meeting between Paul Montalvo and Laura about a year and a half ago. Instantly impressed, Laura knew she wanted to be involved and help in any way with the organization.

Despite growing up on opposite sides of the world - Laura in San Antonio and Alan in South Africa - they share a common passion for chamber music. Neither Laura nor Alan plays a musical instrument, but both were introduced to music by their parents and gained a similar appreciation and love for it.

Laura's father was from Europe and loved Mozart, Beethoven, and many other great composers. Their music was always playing on the family stereo. Even as a child, Laura and her brother listened to the Leonard Bernstein children's program on weekends, which her father was adamant about.

A dynamic, entrepreneurial couple; they both own their own companies. Laura's firm is Crossvault Capital Management and Alan's firm is Ehrenberg Chesler Investment Bankers. They have two children: Marton, who graduated from Indiana University and is living and working at Yelp in New York City, and Isaac, a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

We are grateful for their support in furthering COSA's mission and vision.

