



quarter notes

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE FAMILIES & FRIENDS OF CONCORDIA CONSERVATORY

SEPTEMBER 2015

Concordia Conservatory Vision Statement

Our vision is to enrich the lives of the people in our community through music.

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171 White Plains Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
914/395-4507

www.concordiaconservatory.org



Conservatory Concert Series at The Wartburg

by Yasmeen Safai



As a person ages, the music that has written the soul of time is preserved. Music, whether it be classical, jazz, or popular, is timeless. It transcends time and age and becomes a medium of communication that far outweighs normal speech. Such is the case at the Concordia Conservatory Concert Series at The Wartburg.

The Wartburg is an assisted senior living facility, rehab center, and retirement home located in Mount Vernon. Concordia Conservatory students have been performing at the facility for the past five years with coordination by the director of volunteer services, Ms. Ann Frey. However, this past year, due to the rising success of the program, Ms. Frey and Kathleen Suss decided to establish a concert series at The Wartburg which consists of four performances per year. This summer, the Chamber Music, Musical Theatre and Vocal Arts summer camps performed for the residents.

Ms. Frey has noted that Concordia students “stand out” as performers at The Wartburg. Not only do they prepare their pieces with practice and professionalism, but they are “interested, respectful, and unafraid” to connect with their audience as they go around and speak to the senior residents. Thus, their music transcends the gap of age between younger and older and serves as a bridge between times that seem so distant from each other.

When asking about the role of music in people’s lives, Ms. Frey explains that “music brings back memories” and the memory is always “pleasant.” As the students play, she recalls the residents closing their eyes or singing along as they are transported to an age of happiness, love, and bliss; that, is truly the gift of music.



Our Biggest Senior Class Where Are They Headed?

This record setting Conservatory graduating class has truly blazed a distinctive path. Unique and diverse, these seniors came together through the shared passion of music. Now they go to their next educational endeavor with the understanding and deep knowledge of musical expression.

Alexandra Bolanos—Princeton University
 Khamen Bynoe—University of Hartford
 Max Cutrupi—Manhattanville College
 Nicole Giangola—Villanova University
 Jim Grant—Washington and Lee University
 Bailey Herzfeld—Queens College
 Ross Hoch—Williams College
 Yanni Louka—Lehigh University
 Tesia Khawaja—SUNY Stony Brook University
 Emely Martinez—Manhattan College
 Stefrances Martin—SUNY Buffalo

Hannah McCarthy—Boston College
 Ilana Morris—University of New Haven
 Morgan Morrison—Carnegie Mellon University
 Kylie Regan—SUNY New Paltz
 Mary Grace Reisman—Wheelock College
 Abigail Roesser—University of St. Andrews
 Yasmeen Safaie—McGill University
 Thomas Smyth—Loyola University Chicago
 Andrew Walter McNeill—Bowdoin College
 Eleanor Watson—CUNY Baruch
 Austin Weinreb—Iona College

Conservatory Summer Camps: A Counselor's Perspective

by Ross Hoch

The Conservatory's diverse array of summer camps wrapped up on August 7th and were once again a rousing success. Campers new and old collaborated on wide-ranging programs such as theater, songwriting, rock music, classical chamber music, and even circus technique and tricks. As a graduating senior who has studied at Concordia for the past 12 years and has never been to the summer camps at the Conservatory, watching the camps unfold really brought home the qualities that have always made the Conservatory such an important place in the community.

At chamber music camp, I was struck by how all the campers felt comfortable enough to play their instruments freely and passionately within the informal and welcoming environment. This is an area where I think that Concordia truly stands out from other music schools where there is plenty of structure while maintaining a relaxed environment that makes playing music the most enjoyable. Whether at camps or during year-round programs, the atmosphere of friendliness and community allows students to play their instruments with unbridled enthusiasm, and most importantly, having fun.

At the same time, the camps offer an experience that cannot be replicated in year-round instruction. The summer camp experience is a chance to experiment. Most of the kids in the 4-week chamber music camp had not done chamber music before. Many kids learned how to play the piano the first time in Beginning Keys Camp. Some even mixed and matched interests to go from chamber music to rock band camp or songwriting to sports camp. Yet, I think the most impressive aspect of my summer at Concordia was the collaboration and community that developed over the course of the camps here. At the beginning of camp, many of the campers had never played in an ensemble with anyone before. By the end of camp, after weeks of spending hours with each other learning and playing, these same kids were keenly in tune with each other—both musically and personally. That is the experience of learning to collaborate and team up through practice, while also socializing and playing together each day. That is what I think makes the camp experience at the Conservatory so unique.



Conservatory Summer Music Festival 2015

Concordia Conservatory's Summer Music Festival took place on July 22 & 23 in the Sommer Center. The festival is an annual summer tradition at the Conservatory and performances occur over the course of two days. On July 24, the culminating Conservatory camp events included outreach performances at The Wartburg Adult Day Care in Mount Vernon. This following camps participated in the festival.

Vocal Arts

Led by faculty members Sheri Hammerstrom, Sun Young Chang, Jon Klibonoff and counselor Aryas Safaie.

Musical Theatre

Headed by Concordia Conservatory faculty members Matt Van Brink and Walker Lewis with counselors Olivia Damasco, Katie Suss and Kellie Williams.

Camp Band Bash

Led by faculty member Bob Gingery and counselor Luke Gray.

Chamber Music

Led by faculty members Keith Kreindler, Jee Sun Lee, Caroline Park, and Evelyn Wadkins and counselors Jillian Quigley and Ross Hoch.

Songwriting & Composition

Led by Matt Van Brink with counselor Chris Landy

Our Two-Week Intensive Camp Adventures

Chamber Music by Jon Klibonoff

Every day brought new discoveries to all of us. Besides working consistently on repertoire for our performance on August 7, we spent time at the computer listening and watching performances of both the music we studied as well as topics that were raised in our discussions. The kids were very inquisitive and that led to a very spontaneous flow of discussions such as the copyright infringement case brought against Led Zeppelin's Stairway to Heaven, a song we adapted and performed. Leadership, creativity, partnership and finely tuned listening skills were among the many things we explored. And of course, learning to juggle on our daily break with Kevin Flanagan!

Violin Traditions From Around The World & Summer Keys by Melissa Alexander and Emily Kalish

This summer, Summer Keys combined with a new camp, Violin Traditions From Around The World. Campers played Celtic, Klezmer, and American fiddle styles, as well as folk music and dancing from France, Italy, and Israel. All of the campers had opportunities to play the music from these various cultures, taking different roles in small to larger ensembles. The violinist each wrote their own solos based on a simple fiddle tune and the structure of the songs were perfect for the pianists to learn basic accompanying skills.





JOIN US FOR THE
**CONSERVATORY
ON PARADE**

**Saturday
September 12
3:30–5pm**



A Discovery Day & Welcome Back Event For All!

Concordia Conservatory starts the 2015–16 school year with its annual “open house.” Join us and experience music performances & demonstrations, meet & mingle with students, faculty and staff.

DISCOVERY DAY

Children and adults can try out a wide range of instruments under the guidance of the Concordia Conservatory faculty. This is a great opportunity for beginners as well as students considering a second instrument.

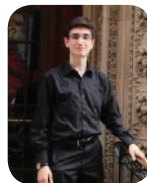
WELCOME BACK

All current and returning students and families are invited to socialize with faculty and staff and enjoy student and faculty performances and refreshments.

It is our hope that all students and families in the Early Childhood, Youth & Adult programs will attend this fun-filled event.

Conservatory Student J.P. Redmond at the CURTIS INSTITUTE OF MUSIC Young Artist Summer Program 2015

by J.P. Redmond



Conservatory student J.P. Redmond attended The Curtis Institute of Music’s Young Artist Summer Program (YASP). YASP was created to give young musicians ages 14–22 an opportunity to experience this celebrated Conservatory firsthand. This summer, there were 91 participants, mostly orchestral musicians, but also pianists, composers, and conductors. As well as regular activities related to our majors, we all sang in choir, rehearsing every morning under the baton of organist and conductor Patrick Kreeger.

Below is a bit about the institute from J.P.’s perspective.

In the afternoon, composers attended a composition seminar, taught by Curtis grad student Alyssa Weinberg. We listened and studied modern music, beginning in the 1930s with the first percussion ensemble work, Edgar Varèse’s “Ionisation.” We then looked at minimalism, modern string writing, and technique.

One high point for me as a composer was to attend the orchestra rehearsals every evening. There was a different conductor every week, and all of them were incredible. Troy Peters and Adam Flatt, each gave an all-program conducting class which introduced us to basic conducting techniques. The orchestra did wonderfully under these conductors and performed a 45-minute concert at the end of each week.

In addition to classes, lessons, and composing, we also went on several excursions throughout Philadelphia. We took an in-depth tour of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, as well as trips to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Independence Hall, and soccer games at the University of Pennsylvania.

Overall, YASP was a great experience; thank you again to all of those who supported me!

Dates to Remember

SEPTEMBER

- 8** Conservatory Opens for all classes & lessons
- 12** Conservatory-On-Parade
3:30–5:00pm, Stein Hall
- 14–15** Conservatory Closed
Rosh Hashanah
- 21** High School Senior Advisement Meeting
6:00pm, Stein Hall Rm. 101
- 23** Conservatory Closed
Yom Kippur
- 25** Auditions for Holiday Community Musical
Pageant!
3:00–6:00pm, Stein Hall Rm. 101
- 26** Auditions for Holiday Community Musical
Pageant!
9:00am–12:00pm, Stein Hall Rm. 101

OCTOBER

- 3** Practicing Workshop with Exec. Director
Kathleen Suss
10:00am, Sommer Center Chapel
- 12** Conservatory Closed
Columbus Day

Julie Schmidt



Position at the Conservatory: Voice

Birthplace: Wichita, Kansas

Current Residence: Cresskill, New Jersey

Where did you go to school? I got my Bachelor's Degrees in Vocal Performance and Theory/Composition from Wichita State University in 1984, and my Master's Degree in Vocal Performance from Florida State University in 1986. I also received an Associate's Degree in Nursing in 2012, and I am a Registered Nurse.

When did you realize that music was more than just a hobby and more of a passion to pursue professionally?

I played piano by ear when I was about four years old, and took lessons and sang in choirs up through high school. I was also very interested in many subjects, including math, writing, and acting. When I was choosing a college major, I recalled that music was the first thing that I had shown any interest or talent in, and decided that would probably be the best fit for me. It has not always been easy, but it has always been a rewarding life.

What is your favorite type of music to sing? To listen to? I love to sing all types of music, but have had the most success with opera, art song, choral and jazz. I enjoy most types of music, except when the singers are screaming, because my throat gets tight and sore in sympathy! I love 20th century orchestral music, like Shostakovitch, Lutoslawski, Penderecki, Ravel, Stravinski and Gershwin. I love great film scores like all of John Williams (Star Wars, Schindler's List), John Barry (Out of Africa, James Bond movies), Ennio Morricone (The Mission), and Michael Giacchino (The Incredibles). My taste in pop music clusters around '70's rock bands, but today I like Rhianna, Jessie J, Pink, Justin Timberlake, Bruno Mars, Adam Levine, Coldplay.

Where do you perform when you are not teaching at the Conservatory? I sing now and then on Broadway with "Phantom of the Opera," and have performed with that company since 1992. I also conduct my church choir in Cresskill, and LOVE doing that.

What is the motto, saying, or philosophy that you teach by? We all need music in our lives, just like we need food, water and air. It's been with us since prehistoric times, and it is part of being human. So whether or not you plan to make music your profession, make music a part of your life. You'll be much happier!

What do you think makes the Conservatory so unique? I think the location makes it unique. What a beautiful neighborhood, so close to the culture of New York, and filled with teachers who have been trained at the best universities and conservatories.