



Noteworthy

The Newsletter of the Mendocino Music Festival Association

Allan Pollack
Artistic Director
Conductor

Fall/Winter
2006
Issue 1



A Personal Message from Nancy Harris, Executive Director

I really believe in the Mendocino Music Festival. After all, I am the executive director, so I ought to. Sometimes, however, the process of dealing with the business of the festival keeps me from fully appreciating the entire event. But not this year: 2006 was a splendid season and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

The Board of Directors and the administrative staff and volunteers were elated that we achieved our ticket sales goal for 2006. We projected an increase in ticket revenue of 15% over that of 2005 and we reached that objective. We felt hopeful from the start of the season and jubilant that we were able to make (and slightly exceed) our goal.

The weather was near perfect and the ocean an unceasingly spectacular backdrop to the town of Mendocino's transformation into a musical mecca. I have never heard the orchestra play better. Pianist Stephen Prutsman made Beethoven's Emperor Piano Concerto a magical experience for me; it was as though I had never heard the music before. I was spellbound by the performance of *Symphonie Fantastique*, its mood swings, its power, its passion. *Daphnis and Chloe* is one of my favorite pieces of orchestral music, the one I would choose to play for someone who had never heard a symphony orchestra perform. As I listened I felt swept away to a parallel ethereal universe. For me a live performance is a multi-sensory event, combining visual, aural and physical sensations into an experience that is more than the sum of its parts. It is also the opportunity for group interaction that brings diverse communities together and unites people in their joy of music.

I also enjoyed the performances of the special acts: Chris Smither's soulful blues, Mike Marshall's virtuoso mandolin playing, Caroline Aiken's astounding guitar, Ruthie Foster's remarkable voice, the extraordinary energy of Les Percussions de Guinée and the hilarious artistry of the Austin Lounge Lizards. The daytime concerts were very successful, well-attended and high in artistic values. I won't belabor the point and mention every one of the 22 concerts we presented, but I feel proud of this 20th anniversary season and eager to make the 2007 season even better.

What does the 21st season of the Mendocino Music Festival promise? We intend to continue to present our fine orchestra, a concertized opera, thrilling soloists and exciting special acts. The Piano Series, my personal favorite, will continue as well as the popular Village Chamber Concerts. We intend to expand the Children's Matinee and continue the touching (pardon the pun) Instrument Petting Zoo. The Young Musicians Scholarship Program will continue to grow and flourish (see article). We also intend to upgrade our sound system for those concerts that require sound reinforcement.

We are facing known and unknown challenges. California State Parks has asked us to leave the site that has been our home for the last 20 years (see article). We have attended meetings with representatives of State Parks, pursuing the goal of finding a suitable location that offers us visibility, access to utilities, and preserves the atmosphere and ambience associated with the festival. We are not pleased with this turn of events and hope that we can stay where we are until or unless a suitable alternative site is found. Creating a concert hall from scratch each season is always a challenge and, at least to me, a minor miracle. We have spent years refining the process and creating a site and a process that works well. This new decision by State Parks is a cause for great concern.

Finally, you, our supporters, play the biggest role of all in the Mendocino Music Festival. Without you there would be no festival. You are as important a part of the festival as the orchestra, the performers and the tent. Without you there would be no volunteers, no picnics on the headlands, no friendly greetings among old and new friends, no enthusiastic applause and standing ovations, and no encouragement – verbal, emotional, financial – to stay the course.

Now, more than ever, we need your continuing and valuable support. I hope you will consider making a generous donation to the Mendocino Music Festival to help us in our pursuit of excellent programming, improved sound, musical opportunities for youth and a stable site. Please open your hearts to us and we promise to continue to bring you nourishment for your ears, your eyes, your mind and your spirits.

Introducing Children to Musical Instruments

An event that is growing in popularity each year, the "Petting Zoo" which follows the Children's Matinee gives the young ones a chance to meet the musicians and touch and play the musical instruments. Here are some scenes from the 2006 Petting Zoo:

(Photos by Art Mielke)



Who is the Mendocino Music Festival?

*Name: Mona Lisa Perez
Mendocino Coast Resident for nine years
Part time Physical Therapist
Coordinator for Symphony of the
Redwoods OPUS Chamber Music Series
Volunteer at MMF concession tent*

"I always look forward each year to the Mendocino Music Festival. I am really grateful to live in an area that has such a high caliber of diverse and captivating music. It

makes living on the Mendocino Coast exciting and worthwhile. By volunteering, I get to meet old and new friends and listen to new music. I enjoy dressing up and meeting many of the musicians. Being a part of the Mendocino Music Festival and helping in my own little way, whether it's selling cookies, programs and CDs or coming as a patron, gives me a sense of ownership in helping make the Music Festival a success."

A New Site in the Music Festival's Future?

Local representatives of California State Parks have decided that the Mendocino Music Festival should move from the site that it has occupied, one month a year, for the last 20 years. The broad reason given by State Parks is that it wants to "reduce impacts on its interpretive and cultural resource values." The specific reason is a shell midden with possible archaeological interest is under part of the site and State Parks wants to protect that midden.

Two former State Parks district superintendents said that the site could hold limited historical value because the activity of the large gopher population has moved shell fragments from one layer or level to another indiscriminately for an unknown number of years. Human activity has also impacted the midden; part of the town of Mendocino was once located on the site, including a street, a train track, hotel, homes, a butcher shop, logging activity and more.

We have known about the midden for approximately ten years and have cooperated with State Parks to protect it. One of the agreements the festival has with State Parks

is to place the performance and concession tents in the same spots each season. All stake holes are marked with plastic sleeves, nails and magnets so they can be found and used again. We protect the ground under the tents with tarps, astro-turf and wood. A month after the festival, it's difficult to tell we were ever there. We strive to be sensitive, responsible and respectful tenants.

Representatives of State Parks first approached us about moving just the concession tent in January of this year. On April 21 we were told that we would need to be off the site for the 2008 festival. On April 27 we were told that we would need to be off the site by the 2007 festival. We have not specifically been told by States Parks what we are doing to alter the site negatively; we have just been told that we need to move. The impact on the festival will be enormous. We will keep you informed about future developments.

Would you like to get involved? Please contact the festival office.

Subscribe to the Music Festival's Free Email Service

A new development for the Mendocino Music Festival to help it reach its audience is the institution of a "list server". What is a List Server? It is similar to a paper-based bulletin board, a magazine subscription, or a daily newspaper. Messages are delivered electronically via email instead of on paper. It is an opt-in subscription, meaning you need to sign up in order to receive the email posts.

The list server for the Mendocino Music Festival, supplied by the Mendocino Community Network, will be used to notify the subscribers of special events such as fund raisers and benefits, information about

upcoming festival programs, and changes to the festival web site, among other things. To become a part of this online service, you must add your email address by subscribing to it, and you may unsubscribe from the list at any time.

To activate your MMF list server subscription please send an e-mail to: mendocinomusicfestival-on@lists.mcn.org. Your information will only be used to distribute Mendocino Music Festival information to you, and will not be shared with any other entities. Take advantage of this new way to keep informed about the Mendocino Music Festival.

Young Musicians Scholarship Program: The Future of Music

The Young Musicians Scholarship Program (YMSP) is still one of the best-kept secrets of the Mendocino Music Festival, but we want to change that and let everyone know about this inspiring and worthwhile program. The YMSP is for serious musicians between the ages of 16 and 26. Acceptance is through an audition process, and standards for admittance are high. The curriculum includes an intensive chamber music course as well as participation in the Festival Orchestra. In 2006 we offered full scholarships to ten string players and two pianists.

Karl Goldstein and Julie Feldman direct the program. Karl has been teaching piano and performing in the Bay Area for more than 30 years. A graduate of the Juilliard School, he has performed in Europe and the US and currently teaches in Berkeley. Cellist Julie Feldman performs with Symphony Silicon Valley (formerly the San Jose Symphony), freelances with many Bay Area ensembles, directs the chamber music program at the Marin Academy, and has an active teaching studio in Berkeley. Both Karl and Julie enjoy working with young musicians and bring energy, enthusiasm and expertise to their work. Once the YMs are chosen, Karl and Julie select challenging chamber music ensembles – trios, quartets, quintets, etc. – by an array of composers for the participants to rehearse and perform. In addition to the directors' coaching, this season guest coaches included violinist Christina Mok, cellist Jill Rachuy Brindel and bassist Michel Taddei.

This year the Young Musicians arrived on Friday, July 7 and rehearsed chamber music all day Saturday and Sunday. Karl, Julie and Christina supervised and coached. Throughout the entire festival, the group used the facilities at the Mendocino Presbyterian Church, Walter and Polly Green's music studio, and Holm and Ruth Kappler's music room.



Photo: Nancy Harris

On Monday, July 10, orchestra rehearsals began. Karl continued to coach the pianists, and the chamber music rehearsals continued on free mornings and afternoons. After the third orchestra concert was performed the YMs had the last Thursday and Friday of the festival to rehearse all day in their ensembles and receive intensive coaching. In addition the YMs and their directors went on hikes and bike rides, made campfires at the beach, gathered together for potlucks and spent time with one another, host families, and friends.

The YMs presented two chamber music performances. The first was a recital, free to the public, on Sunday, July 16 at 5 PM at Preston Hall in Mendocino. The second performance was a concert at the tent on the last day of the festival, Saturday, July 22 at 2 PM. Both performances were displays of skill, focus, musicality and maturity. Members of the audience at both performances were amazed at the abilities, finesse and musicianship of the YMs. The directors were proud and delighted with the students, their level of commitment and passion for music, and their depth of motivation and understanding. This season, in addition to the 12 participants, two local pianists participated in coaching with Karl and performed in the recital and the concert.

Karl Goldstein writes: "Every year the program gets more gratifying as we iron out the kinks and attract better students. This year, starting two days early made an enormous difference in the pace of the

program. Because of this the students had a much more fulfilling and satisfying experience than in previous years. Next year we'll continue to focus on providing unique and innovative music for the students since the results have been great: the kids have loved playing this music and the audiences have been very enthusiastic. We also hope to raise more money to be able to pay guest coaches who have been so generous with their time and so helpful to the program. It's great for these kids to be exposed to some of the best musicians around."

The YMSP is important to the festival because in these young musicians we see the future of music, especially classical music. It is our pleasure and privilege to offer them opportunities to learn, grow in skill and musical awareness, play chamber music and perform in the Festival Orchestra in the company of esteemed professional musicians.

Participants: Jennifer Diaz, Daniel Jang, Linnea Powell, Nicholas Weis, *violin & viola*; Joseph Galamba, Lisa Kim, Stephanie Lee, Ken Lin, *violin*; Hans Hoffer, Cole Tutino, *cello*; Kristian Jacinth, Unju Jung, and (local students) Emeline Oliphant, Heather Pinkham, *piano*

To read more about the Young Musicians go to our web site at mendocinomusic.com

We welcome your comments, questions, or suggestions. Contact us:

Mendocino Music Festival

P. O. Box 1808

Mendocino, CA 95460

Phone: (707) 937-4041

Fax: (707) 937-1045

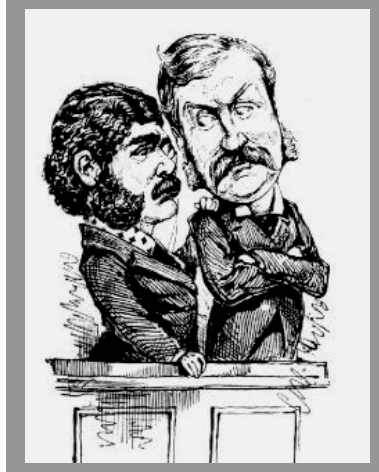
E-mail: music@mendocinomusic.com

Web site: mendocinomusic.com

A Charming Afternoon with Gilbert and Sullivan

On Sunday, October 29 at 3 PM at Rick's Lounge at the Hill House, Sacramento's Ad Hoc Opera will perform its unique interpretation of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial by Jury*. This operetta is an 1875 British spoof of judges and attorneys that strikes a few familiar chords 130 years later.

Tailored for an intimate performance space, this one-act, 45-minute operetta is presented concert style, with appropriate costuming, dramatic posturing and piano accompaniment. The plot, in true Gilbert and Sullivan fashion, would seem to be preposterous. When Edwin falls in love with another, his sweetheart, Angelina, hauls him into court for "breach of promise." Faced with the



fair plaintiff, the judge and all male jury struggle to give the defendant a fair hearing. The denouement, which shall be disclosed in due time, has only recently been echoed in a British court of law.

Tickets to this delightful operetta are \$25 per person and are available at the festival office. Call 707 937-2044 or come by the office, located on the corner of Main and Kasten Streets, above Out of This World, to reserve your seats. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres will be served and a no host bar available. Spend an amusing and enjoyable musical Sunday afternoon with your friends while supporting the Mendocino Music Festival. Come one, come all!

Another *Porgy and Bess*

Trente Morant (left), who sang the role of Sportin' Life and Joseph Wright (right, with Rachelle Perry), who sang the role of Crown in the MMF production of *Porgy and Bess* this season, will appear in the Oakland East Bay Symphony concert version of the Gershwin's masterpiece. The concert, under the baton of music director and conductor Michael Morgan, will be performed on Friday, May 18, 2007 at 8 PM at the Paramount Theatre, in Oakland. For more information, go to www.oeps.org.

(Photos by Art Mielke)



Mendocino Music Festival
PO Box 1808
Mendocino, CA 95460

NON-PROFIT
PRSR-STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 34
MENDOCINO, CA 95460

Address Service Requested

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our first edition of Noteworthy. We are excited about sharing information with you by this new means. We hope that you will take the time to explore all of the articles. Our goal is to keep you, our supporters, aware of what goes on at the festival "the rest of the year"! Enjoy.

*Joan Eich
President, Board of Directors*

Photo: Jim Tracy