

# Quarter Notes

## 2015 Talcott Mountain Music Festival – Where the celebration got its groove on!

If you are ever desirous of a fully sensory experience, then the cool valley setting, lush grass, splendid food, lavish table décor, blue skies, sunsets and stars, and – above all, the music of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra - would fit the bill perfectly.

For the past 20 summers, the town of Simsbury has echoed with the music of the HSO's Talcott Mountain Music Festival. This year, with record-breaking audiences of more than 26,000 patrons, it's clear that this Festival continues to be an extremely popular annual event!

This past season, our gifted musicians performed a wide range of music from Straus and Tchaikovsky to Williams, Weill, and Sousa. And we also heard the music of Earth, Wind and Fire and a Bohemian Rhapsody! Under the baton of Maestra Carolyn Kuan and guest conductors Bob Bernhardt, Eric Dudley, Michael Lankester and Martin Herman, the Talcott Mountain Music Festival continues to reach out to the Connecticut (and beyond) community during five special Friday nights in late June and July.

Celebrating 20 seasons, the original founding committee, sponsors and



HSO Board members were invited to a special gathering on July 10, to lift a glass of champagne donated by West Street Wines and Spirits. Current staff and Board members recognized the efforts, fortitude and passion of the founders and toasted them for creating a 'must do' on the list for music lovers during the summer months.

One of the Organizing Committee Co-Chairs, Dr. Charles Bleich, was unable to attend the festivities, but sent his sentiment via e-mail to his

colleagues and friends, "Twenty years ago I was asked to find a locale and the funds to provide a summer music festival. It was an exciting journey, one with very limited chance of success and involving considerable effort. My patients gained a happy vacation from drills and anesthesia for months as we pursued the goal. We virtually pleaded with local banks, businesses and music lovers to find the financial resources to proceed." They succeeded and the energetic

*(Continued on next page)*



HARTFORD  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

HSO programs are funded in part by



# 2015 Talcott Mountain Music Festival – Where the celebration got its groove on! (*continued*)

volunteers, community supporters and generous sponsors have kept the festival alive for the enjoyment of all.

TMMF is more than entertainment. The robust music program is accentuated by wonderful guest musicians, renowned conductors, patriotic fireworks, dancing, singing and clapping patrons. Young and old take advantage of the outdoor celebration, bringing elaborate picnics or enjoying the delightful food catered by Metro Bis or on-site vendors.

*Captions (Photos below): (1) TMMF Founding Committee members, who joined in on the celebration, included: (back row) Howard Stewart, Mark and Janet Keough and (front row) Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bevilaqua (2) Celebration guests included; Howard Sprout, Janet and Paul Reuter, Karen Sprout, Steve Collins and Ruth Sovronsky. (3) One of the TMMF sponsors, Global Atlantic of Simsbury, sent members of their staff to several concerts. They had a great time and we hope to see them again next year!*



Generations now have history at this magical place. Couples meet and get engaged, families draw together, strangers become friends...and the art of music captures our hearts in a way only found at the Talcott Mountain Music Festival.

Be sure to join us in 2016 for another season of musical splendor, and if you're ready to become a donor or a sponsor, get in touch with us now and we'll send information your way! Contact Joyce Hodgson, Corporate and Foundation Relations Manager, at [jhodgson@hartfordsymphony.org](mailto:jhodgson@hartfordsymphony.org).

## Education at Talcott Mountain

In the shadow of Talcott Mountain, an annual music festival comes to life with sounds from a broad generation of music, greeting a broad generation of people.

The 'little' people who attend the Talcott Mountain Music Festival can romp and play in the grassy areas and take advantage of the HSO's Instrument Zoo as well!

At the 2015 Education Tent, sponsored by the Renbrook School, the 'Zoo' provides a touch, feel and play experience for kids of all ages and, often giving a youngster that first thrill of making music.

Blowing a horn, plucking a violin, beating a drum...whatever their pleasure, the HSO Manager of Education and Community Engagement and skilled Teaching Artists are present to draw their attention and talk with them, and their parents, about the joys of music education.

An expanded and more comprehensive version of the Instrument Zoo is presented at various elementary schools around Connecticut during the school year as part of HSO's education and community outreach, which includes a variety of HSO small ensembles which bring music to K-12 classes. In the 2014-2015 school year, approximately 14,000 students and teachers from 30 schools had the opportunity to hear from our in-school ensembles and from the full orchestra at the Discovery Concerts held at the Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, sponsored by Lincoln Financial.



## MUSICIAN SPOTLIGHT

# Martha Kayser, Violin



### **Tell us how you came to be a musician with the Hartford Symphony.**

I joined the HSO in 1985. My first three auditions were for one-year positions (which I won each time) but my fourth addition, which I also won, was for my current permanent job. When Maestro (Michael) Lankester said he'd "miss me" at the next round of auditions, I didn't realize he was telling me I'd won the job! It was the best audition of my life.

### **Can you tell us a little something about your early life and musical influences?**

Although born in Willimantic, CT, I grew up in Columbus, OH. I started piano lessons at age 5. My favorite aunt played violin and my third grade teacher brought her

violin to play for our class – I was mesmerized and started violin at age 10. My high school orchestra director, Leslie Susi, was funny and charming, with very high musical standards. Praise from him really meant something and he loved what he did. I blew an important competition in my senior year (embarrassing as I was then concertmaster), but Mr. Susi consoled me saying "Martha, the sun is still gonna come up tomorrow." It put things into perspective. I knew I wanted to be a musician, and always knew I wanted to play in an orchestra because I fell in love with the amazing sound that only an orchestra can create.

### **Where did you go for formal music training and what shaped your experiences?**

I received my Bachelor of Music from Ohio University studying with Howard Beebe, a Galamian-trained violinist. I spent the first two years of college reworking my technique in both hands. It was a daunting task but worth it. My first college orchestra concert featured Holst's *Planets* – the beauty and power of the piece is memorable; and it was my first encounter with a 5/4 time signature! My first professional experience was subbing with the Charleston (WV) Symphony while still in college.

### **How did you wind up in Hartford?**

We moved to Hartford in 1984 when I enrolled in the Master of Music program at the Hartt School. My husband commuted to the Manhattan School of Music for his doctorate.

### **Tell us about your family!**

My husband is a trombonist (we married two weeks after college graduation.) Our daughter is a third-year medical student at the UConn School of Medicine and our son is a double major in math and physics at NYU.

### **What role does music play in your life?**

Music is the constant in my life; it grounds me when times are rough. My husband and I are both cancer survivors and he survived a heart attack this past summer as well. I can't imagine how I would have gotten through those things without music. I played my violin at each of my parent's funerals. People have asked me "how could you do that?" and my answer is "how could I not?" when they were always my biggest fans. My smile from the stage is ALWAYS genuine and I feel so lucky to have been blessed with musical talent.

### **What types of music do you enjoy?**

ALL types! Of course classical, but I also enjoy electric guitar, Led Zeppelin, Emerson Lake and Palmer and Metallica. My kids introduced me to more recent popular music (Muse and Linkin Park) and a lot of really crazy electronic stuff.

### **Besides playing music, what do you do for fun?**

We like to relax at home with our spoiled, bratty (but lovable!), tortoise-shell cat named Amber. As a newfound "empty-nester" I would like to learn calligraphy, Italian, and become a seasoned birdwatcher. Maybe the cat can give me some tips on that last one!

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

# Howard and Karen Sprout

## Newest Members of HSO's Encore Society

What began as a love of music for Karen and Howard Sprout grew into a deep emotional bond to the musicians and to the Hartford Symphony. Until 2010, when Karen was asked to join the HSO board, she hadn't thought much about the symphony. Certainly, music was always part of her life: Howard, a graduate of Hartt, worked as a professional singer and Karen's father was a trumpeter. But serve on a symphony board? It didn't take Howard and Karen long to reach a "yes" decision. Given their profound belief in the importance of music, their decision was emotional and personal: "It was our turn to give more than lip service and moral support. We'd figure out the money thing later." Both say it was one of the most important decisions they made, emotionally and financially.

Karen and Howard quickly felt embraced by the HSO family, a sensation invariably echoed by other HSO donors. In that first year, Karen's

father passed away, leaving behind his five trumpets. "These were more than instruments; they held his soul," Karen explains. Taking a chance, she sought help from Scott McIntosh, HSO's principal trumpet, who responded immediately. "On a hot summer afternoon, before a Talcott rehearsal, Scott went out of his way to meet with me and my mom. For two hours, he played my dad's trumpets, and listened to my dad's recordings, complimenting his playing," Karen recalls. "He made my mom's day."

This year, Karen's near-death experience cemented the emotional bond with the symphony. As important as the doctors that saved her life, Karen credits "the healing energy coming through many cards from HSO Board, staff and musicians, filled with loving and caring messages." When Karen was finally well enough to attend a dress rehearsal, musicians stepped down from the stage to welcome her home. "We cannot



begin to express what that meant to both of us," Howard confided.

Recently, Karen and Howard happily communicated their decision to join HSO's Encore Society by including the HSO in their estate plans. Involved in distributing her aunt's estate, Karen witnessed the remarkable impact of an estate gift on a nonprofit organization. The joy, fulfillment and enduring legacy created by even a modest sum made an impression on Karen: "None of us know what will be left when we die – but you can make a huge difference for an organization you love and treasure."

Karen and Howard, thank you. And the feeling is mutual.

---

## What is HSO's Encore Society?

Simply stated, the Encore Society ensures that the gift of music keeps giving for generations to come. At the symphony, we believe music is the foundation on which every great community is built. For more than 70 years, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra has been a leading arts organization in Hartford, employing more than 200 musicians and bringing live music to more than 120,000 audience participants, community

members and school children each year. The Encore Society recognizes those who have made a legacy – or planned – gift, to preserve the successful future of the HSO.

Membership in the Encore Society include multiple benefits such as:

- Invitations for two to all Maestra Society and Concertmaster's Club events (such as invited dress rehearsals, first rehearsals, guest artist receptions and more);
- Listing in the HSO's program book and website;
- New member announcement in *Quarter Notes*, the HSO's donor newsletter;

- Invitations to other HSO special events, such as this past summer's unique trip to Glimmerglass to enjoy *The Magic Flute*, conducted by our very own Music Director, Carolyn Kuan.

To learn about ways to participate in the Encore Society, contact Ruth Sovronsky, Development Director, at **860-760-7321** or email **rsovrnsky@hartfordsymphony.org**.





## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

# Paine's Recycling and Rubbish Removal

Mike Paine knows exactly when Paine's became an HSO sponsor: it was twenty years ago when he happily stepped forward to help create the Talcott Mountain Music Festival in Simsbury Meadows. For twenty continuous years since that first summer in 1996, Mike answers "yes, absolutely" each time the HSO asks him to return as a sponsor. With a huge grin, Mike admits minimal knowledge of symphonic music, but today, enjoys everything "from Brahms to the Beach Boys" because of the HSO.

Mike is the third generation in the business begun by his grandfather, Albert Paine, in 1929. Recognizing an opportunity to use local resources, Albert began collecting food waste from Simsbury's private schools to feed pigs on the family farm. At a time when most residents burned their own refuse in a drum, Albert had the innovative idea of a trash pick-up and recycling business that grew steadily, ultimately eclipsing any profit generated by the farm. In the late 1960's, as agriculture became more expensive while the collection business became more lucrative, Mike's dad, Don, made a

choice, realizing the future needs of a developing town: the farm was sold and the collection business expanded. By the 1970's, the company (Paine's Recycling and Rubbish Removal) was operating throughout the Farmington Valley. The company has continued to expand and evolve, keeping pace with the industry's return to recycling ideas that began in 1929.

Today, Mike, his brother Russ (recently retired), and other family members work in the business. Mike's niece, Julie, currently Vice President and the 4th generation of the family-owned enterprise, doesn't remember a time when she wasn't "hanging around" the office. They credit the company's longevity and success to an old-fashioned philosophy that matches the core principles of the Hartford Symphony: carefully foster personal relationships and listen to the needs of the community.

When asked why he opted to be an HSO sponsor, Mike's answer reflects his own beliefs: "You must always seize chances to stretch yourself, to look at things differently, and to find

new experiences to enjoy." He is delighted by the orchestra's constant experimentation under Music Director Carolyn Kuan, which results in new ways to make music engaging, fun and available to the community. He applauds the symphony's determination to create new programming to reach new audiences: "If you are not changing, you are not moving forward. To thrive, the HSO must keep looking ahead to what comes next." Driving the point home, Mike and Julie observe that Paine's success is rooted in the belief that every company must be willing to change to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Julie's smile matches her uncle's: she loves that Paine's invests in its community. She happily observes that her children now enjoy the symphony music, in a beautiful setting that invites and encourages audience participation. "It's a party," she exclaims with delight, and watching her children dance, sing and enjoy the music confirms that Paine's – and the HSO – is doing the right thing.



Having fun while learning at  
HSO's Instrument Petting Zoo

# HSO's Education & Community Engagement

With autumn upon us, the HSO's Education & Community Engagement department is looking forward to kicking off the season with *Presto, Mambo!*, a school-day concert for Grades 1-5 from our Lincoln Financial Discovery Series. This innovative musical buffet from Platypus Theatre takes young audiences on a magical adventure through Latin American soundscapes, where rhythm reigns and dance dominates.

The HSO's new Education Coordinator, Miriam Engel, is looking forward to seeing Greater Hartford's young people fill the Bushnell this season with their enthusiastic clapping and dancing. Last year's students loved the interactive nature of these concerts, which are fondly nicknamed "Disco" by HSO staff.

Some favorite memories, as shared by the kids:

*"The conductor [was my favorite] because he was moving his hands very very fast." (Jonathan, 5th grade)*

*"My favorite part was Superman. I liked that part because we would throw our hands up when it was his name." (Trae, 5th grade)*

*"[Seeing the] violin [was my favorite] because it's my family tradition." (Tahaira, 4th grade)*

*"They didn't use a radio to make the beat!" (Kenneth, 4th grade)*

*"[My favorite part was] when the woman played the French horn because the French horn sounds awesome and she played it. And was brave." (Julitza, 5th grade)*

*Presto, Mambo!* will be presented in Mortensen Hall on Wednesday, October 28.

The Discovery Series continues this spring with *Exploring Emotions* (March 23), where students will hear music that provokes happiness and sadness, hope and fear; and *The Composer is Dead* (April 20), a whodunit musical play in which a special inspector investigates the demise of a composer by interrogating the orchestra. The season finishes up with *The Orchestra Moves* (May 3), a curriculum-based concert about motion in music from Carnegie Hall's "Link Up" inter-orchestra educational partnership.



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

# Jillian Baker, HSO's Annual Fund Manager

Jillian Baker joined the HSO on June 22, 2015, and came to us from the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Theater Center in Waterford, CT. The week of her arrival, Jillian plunged headfirst into our first concert at Talcott and she's been running at full steam ever since. But we caught up with her to ask a few questions, and hope that when you see her in the halls, you will welcome her warmly!

**What interested you in the HSO?** I grew up in a family that fully supported and encouraged my love of the arts. I still remember going to see my mother and father perform in community theater. In fact my father is still active in local productions. They supported my interest in playing the French Horn for six years – even drove me to school when the instrument case would not fit on a school bus! I've loved live music my entire life and when this opportunity came up to work for such an influential and historic orchestra, I jumped at the chance. I am so excited to see this season's concerts!

### How has it been to work with staff from both the HSO and Bushnell?

I have been absolutely blown away by not only the sheer intelligence of the collective staff in both organizations, but the passion that drives each of them. Every single person has gone out of their way to make me feel welcome and have been ready to assist with anything that comes up. I've never worked with better people!

### What do you do at the HSO and why do you think it is important?

I am the Annual Fund Manager. I work directly as part of the HSO Development Team with Joyce (Corporate and Foundation Relations Manager) and Ruth (Development Director) plus many other dedicated staff and board members. Together we work to ensure that our donors know just how vital their support is to the Orchestra. We know that it's important for people to stay connected with the organizations and causes that are close to their hearts. I love having the opportunity to speak with our



incredible donors, learn more about them, and explore ways in which the Orchestra can better serve them, their passions and our entire community.

### What is your impression of Hartford?

I spent most of my life in upstate New York, and attended college in Buffalo, NY. I moved to Connecticut in 2010, but had spent limited time in Hartford because I lived in New London. After accepting the position with the HSO, many friends, former colleagues, and acquaintances expressed their excitement that I would have the chance to experience all the culture, entertainment and opportunities Hartford has to offer. I've just moved here in the last two weeks (so I no longer have to commute from Waterford!) and now understand what everyone was talking about. I'm excited by the chance to get involved in this vibrant community and take advantage of all this great city has to offer.

## HSO Updates:

Thank you all for the positive response to the new name, *Quarter Notes*. We love hearing from each of you, whether it's to ask a question, let us know of an error, or just give a word of encouragement, your calls and e-mails are given top priority *and we quickly respond, too!*

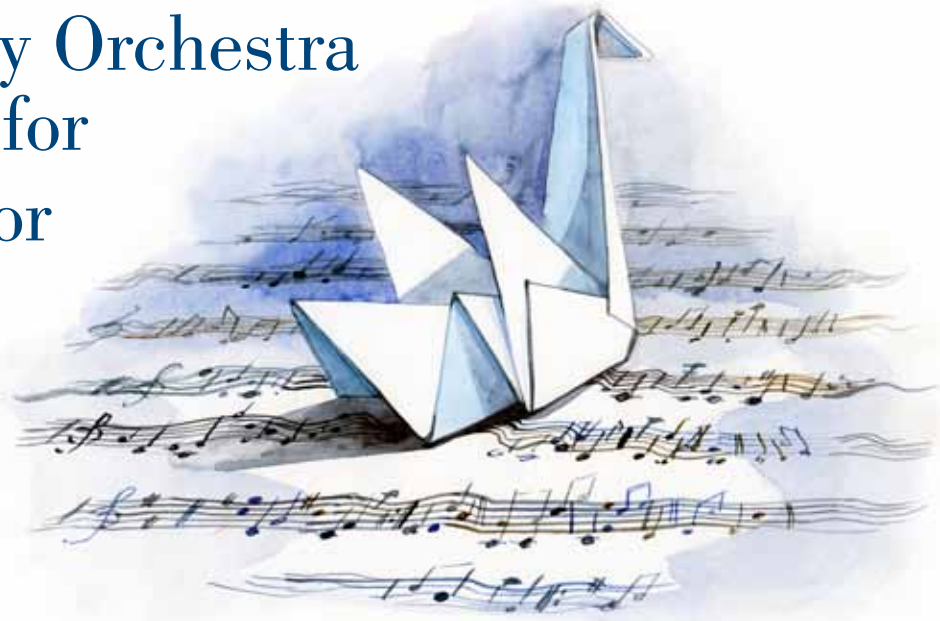
By now, you have received HSO's new pre-concert guide entitled *Prelude*. We thank all for your many title suggestions for our new e-guide, and **special thanks to Christine Martyn**, who we credit (and thank) for the excellent title for our new electronic publication.

Didn't receive *Prelude* yet? Send your updated e-mail address to **Ruth Sovronsky** at [rsovronsky@hartfordsymphony.org](mailto:rsovronsky@hartfordsymphony.org) or

call **860-760-7321**. We will immediately add you to the list, and send you the first issue of *Prelude*, devoted to our opening Masterworks concert.

We also remind our Concertmaster donors and higher that Stephanie Wilson, our Development Assistant, is at the **Patron Desk**, ready to answer questions or handle ticketing issues and exchanges. Her phone number is: **860-760-7326**.

# Hartford Symphony Orchestra announces search for Assistant Conductor



The deadline of September 1st has come and gone and more than 80 candidates submitted their resumes for the position of Assistant Conductor for The Hartford Symphony Orchestra.

The HSO is establishing the position of Assistant Conductor to expand its reach in the Greater Hartford community, provide additional resources for concert programming, support development of education programs, and assist in strengthening stakeholder relationships. This is an integral position for the growth of the Orchestra as the HSO implements a new Strategic Framework, the proposed Institute for Digital Performance Art, collaborations with The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts and other community partnerships critical to the vitality of the HSO.

As with any new position, there might be concerns regarding the financial support for such a role. As Steve Collins, HSO Director of Artistic Operations and Administration explains, "The position will be expense neutral, in that we take what would normally be spent on a variety of guest conductors and use that for the Assistant Conductor's compensation. Additional benefits include liberating Carolyn (Kuan) to work more extensively on strengthening donor relationships and the development of new programming to reach new audiences."

Collins further explains that through a "Scope of Services" the successful candidate will collaborate with the Music Director, Director of Artistic Operations & Administration, Education Coordinator and other staff to support artistic planning, concert programming and education program development, conduct rehearsals and performances for HSO Discovery, POPS!, Talcott Mountain Music Festival and other concerts, and assist in providing cover conductor services as needed. He or she will also join in the production and presentation of the Masterworks Series pre-concert discussions and serve as a spokesperson and community liaison for the HSO in marketing campaigns, donor, sponsor, and audience development.

No doubt, with Maestra Carolyn Kuan now well-established and celebrated in the HSO community, the chosen candidate will have their work cut out for them. Communication skills and passion for the arts will be as much

a part of the selection as their artistic and musical talents.

Applicants provided extensive resumes and video samples featuring the applicant conducting an orchestra or similar ensemble in at least two contrasting styles of music. Following review of initial applications by a panel consisting of the HSO Music Director, artistic staff and musicians, six semi-finalists were selected and will be required to conduct HSO musicians in a rehearsal format in November.

After completion of the semi-final round, three finalists will be selected and will conduct rehearsals and four Masterworks concert performances entitled "Battle of the Batons", January 21-24, 2016, during which patrons will be able to weigh in on their favorite conductor. The chosen candidate will be notified in February, and the rest, as they say, will be HSO history!



If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please contact Colleen Coelho. Call 860-987-6086 or e-mail [Colleen\\_Coelho@bushnell.org](mailto:Colleen_Coelho@bushnell.org) and provide your e-mail address.