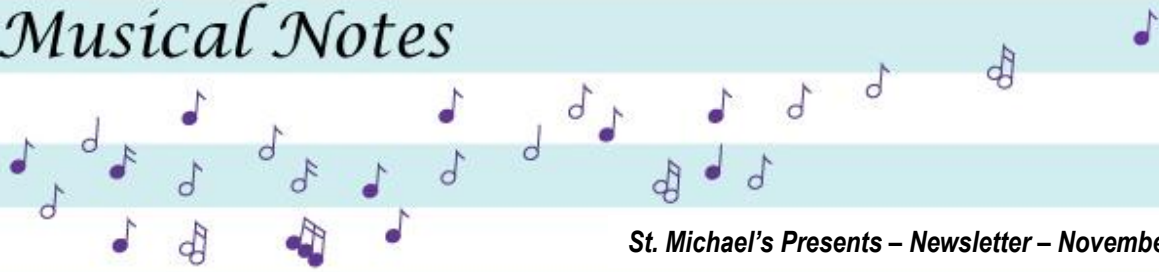




Musical Notes



St. Michael's Presents – Newsletter – November 2009

Letter from the President

Lyn Oldale

As I watch the leaves falling, I'm very much aware that we're coming to the end of another year. Perhaps it's time to look back over 2009 – a year of milestones and achievements. We finished a very successful season in June, and began an exciting new series of concerts in September.

At the end of May we celebrated five years of concerts with a wonderful Benefit at the Playbill Dining Room in the Chemainus Theatre. Local tenor Ken Lavigne, who recently sang at Carnegie Hall, very kindly offered his talents, and our Founders, Rachel Perkyns and Dwight Siemens, also performed. It was

a time to recognize our many volunteers and founding members, and a chance to begin the sale of season tickets for the fabulous 2009-2010 season. Birthday cake and punch were enjoyed by all, and a Silent Auction was successful in raising just over \$2000.

Perhaps the most significant event this year – besides the wonderful monthly concerts – was the payment of the last installment for the piano in July. Our Yamaha C1 grand piano helps us to bring artists of the highest caliber to the Cowichan Valley.

But, of course, a concert series like this cannot happen without the help of a lot of important people. The eleven members of the Board of Directors have worked as an incredible team putting in numerous hours. I am indebted to all of them for their support, hard work, and care.



The artists have supported us in many ways too. All are extremely talented, yet they come to us from far and wide at a minimal cost and have even donated CDs at times.

Also, many volunteers have put in numerous hours on placing artistic promotions, developing membership cards, and baking goodies for our delicious receptions. I cannot thank you all enough for all you have done for *St. Michael's Presents...* We hope you will continue to support us by offering some small amount of time, telling your friends about us, and sharing your excitement about our concerts.

There is not sufficient space to name all the people who contributed to this year's concerts. However, from a personal viewpoint I would like to thank Vice President Neil Burn. He stepped in as Acting President for many months this year when I was unavailable. Thank you, Neil. I always know that I can count on you to be there.

My thanks to you all. I look forward to seeing you at concerts in the near future.

We're pleased to include two new ticket outlets in our *St. Michael's Presents...* family:

Valley Vines to Wines - Mill Bay

Toad Hall Emporium - Chemainus

Toad Hall will continue to sell advance tickets until one hour before the concert.

A note of thanks to Cowichan Press in Mill Bay and Dancing Bean in Chemainus for selling our tickets in previous seasons. Thanks also to our ongoing outlets for their continued support:

Gallowglass Books - Duncan

Ocean Soul Book Caffe - Crofton

Festival Inn - Chemainus

Salamander Books - Ladysmith

Just for fun, try getting your tickets from different outlets and see what those businesses have to offer!

Cowichan Symphony Society

If you've been enjoying the *St. Michael's Presents...* concerts and you're also interested in orchestral concerts, you might want to check out the Cowichan Symphony Society, now in its 54th year! This season, the Symphony Society is offering seven wonderful concerts by the Victoria Symphony. The concerts take place in the Cowichan Theatre at the Island Savings Centre in Duncan. The next concert, a Christmas Special, is on Thursday, December 10. The following concert, on Saturday, January 9, features Avan Yu playing Chopin's *Piano Concerto No. 2* followed by Bizet's *Symphony in C*. Tickets are available at the Island Savings Centre Ticket Centre. For more information about the Cowichan Symphony Society, phone Neil at 250-246-9883.

An Interview with Pianist May Ling Kwok



SMP: *Why do you like playing at St. Michael's?*

May Ling Kwok: *St. Michael's Presents...* is organized by a

group of dedicated, friendly, sincere, music-loving people. Its objective, to promote and introduce music to the community and to students, is admirable. The church is just the right size ---intimate with good ambience.

SMP: *What will you be doing in the coming year?*

MLK: My work for this coming year consists of a wonderful blend of teaching, performing, adjudicating and giving master classes in Victoria, Seattle, Vancouver, and various cities in China.

SMP: *Can you share some of your teaching highlights?*

MLK: I have a wonderful class of students ranging from 10 to 25 years of age. They all love music and try their best. I enjoy working with

them. Three of them were chosen to perform with the Victoria Symphony in the Young Artists Showcase Concert. Another student won the Madeleine Till competition hosted by the BC Registered Music Teachers Association, Victoria Branch. Most of my students at the University of Victoria are in the Piano Performance program. Three of my young students have received first place honours in the Junior Piano Section of the 2009 Greater Victoria Performing Arts Festival.

SMP: *What are your other interests and activities, besides music?*

MLK: I try to balance my busy lifestyle with regular aerobics and yoga.

SMP: *What composers or works will we hear in your February concert with us?*

MLK: I will be performing works of Chopin, Schumann, Beethoven, Liszt, and Faure.

Join us February 28, 2010 for pianist May Ling Kwok's third concert with St. Michael's Presents.

Treasure Island

Neil Burn, Vice President

Over one hundred years ago, Robert Louis Stevenson published *Treasure Island*, his famous novel about buried gold. When I arrived on Vancouver Island 20 years ago, I wasn't looking for gold, but I was genuinely surprised to find treasure of a different kind: culture! There was live music to suit every taste: classical, jazz, folk, blues, and rock, as well as a bonanza of live theatre, musicals, and ballet. This was better than Stevenson's pirate gold!

Then, just about a year ago, I received an e-mail telling me about the *St. Michael's Presents...* concert series right here in downtown Chemainus. I was surprised to learn that SMP had been putting on concerts for 5 years! Included in the e-mail was an invitation to attend the next concert to check it out for myself. It took just that first concert to convince me that I needed to buy a season ticket. Following my second concert, I was convinced to become a member of the Board, a group of dedicated, hard-working individuals who make these

concerts happen. But, as with all organizations, in addition to hard-working people, we also need money!

Almost everyone is reluctant to hand out money in the current financial climate; even the provincial government has announced drastic cuts in funding to arts organizations. And so far, we haven't been able to locate any buried treasure! But over the last few months, we have been working hard to dig up some corporate sponsors for our concert series and the good news is that we have been successful! On September 28th we received word that our first corporate sponsor, CIBC, will be donating \$500 to sponsor the last concert of the current season. It is appropriate that CIBC will be sponsoring this particular concert, which our Artistic Director has entitled "The Next Generation," as it will feature up-and-coming local musicians, young people who are the future of classical music. We are proud to acknowledge CIBC as a Corporate Sponsor in all our programs for the current season.

We are always grateful to receive financial contributions from individuals, who, if they wish, can be recognized in all our programs for the season as follows: Friend (\$11 to \$99), Donor (\$100 to \$499), Sponsor (\$500 to \$999), Benefactor (\$1000 to \$4999), or Angel (\$5000 and above)! Several local individuals have already made generous financial donations to the Society and their contributions will be recognized in all our programs for the current season.

I would like to encourage you to support live classical music on the Island by making a donation to *St. Michael's Presents...*, a registered charitable society. All donations over \$10 are eligible for a tax receipt.

The Joy of Live Music - May it Live On, at *St. Michael's Presents...*!

Ann Mendenhall, Artistic Director

I will never forget the first time I heard Bach's Brandenburg Concertos performed live. This was music I had loved ever since childhood. I had heard many different recordings, including one with Pablo Casals conducting. I "knew" this music by heart – or thought I did, until the Victoria Symphony Orchestra performed it at a concert.

The small size of the ensembles astonished me: all that glorious sound, coming from so few instruments? How different the groupings, and how varied in size and structure, from what I had imagined! After hearing and seeing the themes as they passed back and forth among the musicians, what a different understanding I could now bring to this music.

I experience a unique version of this amazement and joy, enlightenment and inspiration, every time I attend a live concert. Much as I appreciate the fine, state-of-the-art recordings that are currently available, and great as it is to watch music performed on TV, I am even happier to be present in a concert hall. The current of excitement and wonder when music is brought to life in the "here and now" is, for me, unmatched in any other experience.

At *St. Michael's Presents...* concerts, the joy is tangible between performer and audience. The small venue creates a family atmosphere in which every seat feels as if it were front-row. Artists, sensing deep involvement and appreciation in their listeners, are inspired to deliver very personal, meaningful - even transcendent - accounts of the music they have so long loved, and so carefully prepared. Topping off this wonderful experience is a delicious reception, in which the audience members and artists have an opportunity to get to know one another.

St. Michael's November 22 concert will feature The Continuum Consort: Elizabeth MacIsaac, soprano; Emily Nagelbach, flute; Douglas Hensley, guitar; and Molly Janz, viola. Their concert, *Musik in Wien*, or *Music from Vienna*, will feature works by Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Haydn, Diabelli, and more. We are grateful that Continuum Consort was willing and able to substitute for the Saturna Trio, who were unable to perform as originally scheduled. The performers have changed, but the quality of performance has not!

On December 13, former Chemainus resident Sheila Johnson will bring her renowned Concerti Singers, as well as the Cowichan Valley Youth Choir, to share the music of Christmas with us...the perfect way to be inspired with the true Christmas Spirit.

And the spring line-up? Six more wonderful and varied concerts you will not want to miss. Join the St. Michael's family - and help to keep LIVE music ALIVE!



Lyn Oldale, assisted by Hilary Findlay, thanks Ken Lavigne, Dwight Siemens, and Rachel Perkyns, while Ann Hyggen presides over punch at the SMP Benefit & Auction held May 2009.

Volunteer Opportunities

Board Membership

St. Michael's Presents... is in its sixth year of operation, a remarkable accomplishment for a small group of people who share a love for classical music.

As a non-profit society, SMP is legally required to have a board of directors, chosen by members of the St. Michael's Presents Society to make decisions on behalf of the members. The SMP Board is a working board, in which each member performs specific tasks to prepare for upcoming concerts.

Responsibilities include setting short term and long term goals to fulfill the society's mission of providing classical music to the Cowichan Valley; setting priorities for spending SMP money; representing SMP in the community; evaluating and monitoring SMP's performance; managing the budget and raising funds if necessary; working on special projects as required; and attending meetings when they are called. Board members serve a term of one year.

We hope you will consider donating your talents and time to ensure that this wonderful concert series will continue for another year.

Please contact Lyn Oldale at 250-246-2522 or Neil Burn at 250-246-9883 for more information.

Reception

Our receptions are very well received, not only by our audience members, but also by the

artists, who always appreciate the opportunity to enjoy a few goodies and a cup of tea-----and to meet people and get their feedback. It is a good chance to carry some of the ambience of the concert further.

I would like to appeal to our members to bring some baked or bought goodies (coffee, milk, cheese, pickles, chocolate, and so on). We are working on a rather tight budget, and this would help tremendously to keep our costs down.

If you would like to help with setting up or cleaning up, please contact Ann Hyggen at 250-324-3299.

See you at the next concert, probably from the kitchen!

Posters

Please visit the Green Table and take a few posters for the next concert to post in areas you frequent: clubs, exercise classes, hairdressers, barbers, coffee shops, bookshops, travel agents, plant nurseries, churches, etc.

We also need "poster planters," people who would be willing to put up posters in Shawnigan Lake and Cobble Hill every month.

If you can help in any way, please leave your name and number at the Green Table or phone Pauline Truesdale at 250-748-5099.

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St. Michael's Presents Society

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