

## Help Wanted!

The volunteer members of the Board of Directors of Friends of Music Concerts do a lot more than help pour the cider during intermissions at our concerts. With the assistance of our associate Board members, they handle all the duties that in most organizations are performed by paid staff. These include writing, editing and supervising the production of all our printed materials, including this newsletter; distributing publicity materials, such as our brochures and posters; managing contacts with artists and their agents; fund-raising, including grants writing; and managing subscription and single ticket sales.

Keeping Friends of Music as an all-volunteer organization is in great part what enables us to keep the costs to you of attending our concerts as low as they are. We want to keep it that way, but we need more hands-on help in order to do what we already are doing, and also to expand our efforts in fund-raising and grants writing. If you can volunteer to assist us in any of these tasks, or have a suggestion of someone who might do so, please let one of our Board members know, or contact me at 914-271-2465 or [treetops38@aol.com](mailto:treetops38@aol.com). We then could explore it further.

Oh, did I mention it's fun? It is, and rewarding as well. We're already making plans for our 60th season, which will be 2013-14. How time flies!

*Betsy Shaw Weiner, President*



## The Emerson Returns To Open Our 58th Season

The Emerson String Quartet, which stands alone in the history of string quartets with an unparalleled list of achievements during more than three decades, will make its 12th appearance on our subscription series on **Saturday, October 1st, at 8:00 pm** in the beautiful auditorium of Sleepy Hollow High School in Sleepy Hollow, NY. Their program will include Mozart's String Quartet in F Major, K. 590; Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 5; and Beethoven's String Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131.

The Quartet, comprised of the violinists Eugene Drucker and Philip Setzer, violist Lawrence Dutton, and cellist David Finckel, continues to perform with the same benchmark integrity, energy and commitment that it has demonstrated since it was formed in 1976. *The Washington Post* has commented, "The Emerson String Quartet...has the easy virtuosity, precise sense of ensemble, rhythmic vigor, and rich polished tone..." while *The New York Times* observed, "The performances were everything we have come to expect from this superb ensemble: technically resourceful, musically insightful, cohesive, full of character, and always interesting." Their more than thirty acclaimed recordings since 1987 have resulted in nine Grammy Awards (including two for Best Classical Album, an unprecedented honor for a chamber music group), and three *Gramophone* Awards. In 2004 they were the first ensemble to be awarded the coveted Avery Fisher Prize.

Last March Sony Classical announced an exclusive agreement with the Emerson. The Quartet's debut album for the label, Mozart's Prussian Quartets K. 575, K. 589, and K. 590, will be released in October to coincide with a series of concerts, including those in Wigmore Hall in London and Alice Tully Hall in New York City. This past summer they performed in numerous music festivals across the United States, including Ravinia, Interlochen, Tanglewood, Caramoor, and Aspen, as well as at Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival. The remainder of their 2011-12 season, their 35th, will take them throughout North American and Europe, and as far afield as South Korea.

## Trio con Brio Copenhagen Debuts in Westchester



Friends of Music is very pleased to present this wonderful piano trio, described by *Gramophone Magazine* as “clearly a superb, greatly gifted chamber group” and by the Louisville (KY) *Courier-Journal* as “explosively brilliant,” in the second concert of our 2011-2012 season. On **Saturday, October 22 at 8:00 pm** in the Kusel Auditorium of Sleepy Hollow High School they will perform Haydn’s Trio No. 39 in G Major; Ravel’s ravishing Piano Trio in A minor; and Tchaikovsky’s Piano Trio in A minor, Op. 50.

Founded in Vienna in 1999, Trio con Brio Copenhagen is comprised of the pianist Jens Elvekjaer, the first Steinway Artist from Denmark, and the Korean sisters Soo-Jin Hong, violin, and Soo-Kyung Hong, cello. In 2005 the Trio was the recipient of the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson International Trio Award, which carried with it appearances on twenty major concert series across the United States, including at New York City’s Carnegie Hall. Prior to that, the group had received several awards in Europe. Critics have praised the Trio for its “sparkling joie de vivre” and “magic dialogue;” a review of its Wigmore Hall recital described it as “a night of dramatic and unearthly compositions... With music and performers at this level, chamber music doesn’t get much more absorbing.”

The group’s busy schedule has included major concert halls in the United States, Europe and Asia, among them Tivoli Concert Hall (Copenhagen), the Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall, the Mozarteum (Salzburg), the Seoul and Sejong Arts Centers (Korea), BunkaKaikan (Tokyo), and the Bergen and Trondheim Chamber Music Festivals (Norway), among many others. They have been heard on the BBC, Korean Broadcasting Systems, European Broadcasting Union, Danish Radio, Radiotelevisione Italiana, and on the major German networks.

## Charlie Albright To Perform on November 12



Charlie Albright / Photo: Tatsunori Hashimoto

This extraordinary young musician, who has been described as “a keyboard wizard” with “a level of polish pianists twice his age would envy,” is the second recipient of the Friends of Music Concerts Performance Award, made to a winner of the Young Concert Artists International Auditions in New York City. On **Saturday, November 12**, his 8:00 pm program at Sleepy

Hollow High School will include Haydn’s Sonata No. 62 in E-flat Major; Ravel’s Gaspard de la Nuit; Janacek’s Sonata 1.X.1905; and Schulz-Evler’s Concert Arabesques in Themes from On the Beautiful Blue Danube.

2009 Young Concert Artist, 2010 Gilmore Young Artist, and now an Official Steinway Artist, Charlie Albright has

been acclaimed by *The Washington Post* as “among the most gifted musicians of his generation” whose “musical shape was never sacrificed into showmanship” and “whose impressive range of differently colored sounds at the keyboard was matched by overwhelming virtuosity.” Following his official New York debut at Merkin Concert Hall last March, *The New York Times* praised his “jaw-dropping technique,” “intelligently wrought interpretation,” and “virtuosity meshed with a distinctive musicality.” Having performed duets and chamber music on multiple occasions with such artists as cellist Yo-Yo Ma (thrice) and such groups as the Silk Road Project (twice), he has performed or competed across the United States, France, Australia, Norway and Portugal.

Charlie Albright, a native of Washington State, is the first classical pianist in the Harvard/New England Conservatory of Music 5-Year B.A./M.M. Joint Program. At Harvard he is a pre-med and economics concentrator and has been named artist-in-resident at Harvard’s Leverett House for 2011-12, an honor last held by Yo-Yo Ma. He will receive his Masters of Music in Piano Performance in 2012.

## Musings on Ravel

Several times on recent Friends of Music series, our audiences have been treated to performances of Maurice Ravel's most well-known chamber work, the Quartet in F Major, an unusually mature piece written while he still was a student at the Paris Conservatoire. This fall provides us with further musical illumination into the composer, as the Trio con Brio Copenhagen performs his almost equally well known Piano Trio in A minor, and Charlie Albright gives us his Gaspard de la Nuit for solo piano. But who was the man?

Although he was born in 1875 in the Basque region of France near the Spanish border, Ravel moved to Paris with his family when he was just three months old; that city became the focus of most of his life. He began piano lessons at age seven and at age 14 entered the Paris Conservatoire, where his major composition teacher was Gabriel Fauré. After leaving the Conservatoire, he was associated with a small, loosely organized group of young Parisian artists, poets, musicians, and intellectuals who took the name Apaches, since they saw themselves as social outcasts. Indeed, his music was in those years considered revolutionary; four times he was refused the Prix de Rome, with the final refusal causing many artists and intellectuals to come to his defense in outrage, causing a scandal to break out in the press and leaving him with bitterness toward the establishment. Later, in 1920, when he was on the list for promotion to the Legion of Honour, he refused it. Érik Satie wrote "Ravel rejects the Legion d'Honneur, but all his music accepts it." However, in 1928 he did accept an honorary doctorate from Oxford University.

Despite his association with the Apaches, Ravel was quite private in nature. Although he did some private teaching and occasionally performed or conducted his own music, he really was a full-time composer, "crafting his music as

fully and meticulously as he dressed." His musical inspiration came from nature, from folk songs and from classical and oriental legends. He delighted in minute objects such as miniatures, little things that worked by clockwork and mechanical birds. Physically, he was slight and short, in very good health for the first two-thirds of his life, being an active walker and a strong swimmer. However, after his service in World War I as an army driver near Verdun, his health began to go downhill, exacerbated by grief over the death of his mother in 1917. After that, he composed no more than one work a year. A nearly four-month and very successful tour of North America in 1928 revived his spirits, but a taxi accident in 1932 was followed by illnesses of various natures and he died in 1937.

Today we are left with Ravel's small but unique body of music, including some immensely popular orchestral works (such as Bolero and La Valse). His "delightful and unusual house," La Belvedere in Montfort l'Amaury just southwest of Paris, now is the Musée Ravel.

### Crotchety Critics

"Who can unravel Ravel? We confess that we are puzzled..."  
– Louis Elson, *Boston Daily Advertiser*, December 27, 1913

"To hear a whole program of Ravel's works is like watching some midget or pygmy doing clever, but very small, things within a limited scope." – *London Times*, April 28, 1924

"Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, like the first pancake, is a flop." – *Nicolai Soloviev, Novoye Vremya, St. Petersburg*, November 13, 1875

"When one is Beethoven, it is possible to do anything, but still two and two must make four. Put two scorpions and a pigeon in the signature if that is your whim, but do not put there what is not in the measure..." – *W. de Lenz on Sonata, Op. 111, in Beethoven et ses trois styles, Paris*, 1955

## Heads Up!

Applications to become a 2011-12 Partner in Education with Friends of Music Concerts will be in the mail to all public school districts in Westchester shortly after Labor Day. The sought-after Partnership, which is intended to supplement the music education program already part of the chosen school district's curriculum, makes possible one or two-day residencies by a young professional ensemble that will perform and give master classes at no cost to the district. The applications must be returned by Friday, November 18, 2011.

## Special Opportunity for Students on November 12

Seeing and hearing **Charlie Albright**, the excellent young pianist who will be performing on November 12 at Sleepy Hollow High School, can be an inspirational experience for any student, whether or not they are studying an instrument themselves. We therefore invite them to attend that concert free of charge, and then to meet Mr. Albright after the concert. Students who wish to take advantage of this opportunity should let us know in advance. Names and schools can be e-mailed to us at [tickets@friendsofmusicconcerts.org](mailto:tickets@friendsofmusicconcerts.org), or left in a message at 914-861-5080. We will hold the tickets at the door.

P.O. Box 675  
Millwood, NY 10546  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## Fall 2011 Concerts At Sleepy Hollow High School

**The Emerson String Quartet**  
Saturday, October 1, 2011

**Trio con Brio Copenhagen**  
Saturday, October 22, 2011

**Charlie Albright, piano**  
Saturday, November 12, 2011

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #6260  
White Plains, NY  
10610

## Still Time to Subscribe

Subscription sales for 2011-12 have been rolling in all summer, and since September 1 we have been accepting orders for tickets to individual concerts. But it's not too late to subscribe for the entire season.

Remember, adult subscribers paying \$120 and students paying \$60 are getting six concerts for the price of four at the single ticket prices of \$30 for adults and \$15 for students. Send your orders now to Friends of Music Concerts, P.O. Box 675, Millwood, NY 10546. If you are pressed for time, you can call us at 914-861-5080 and leave a message with your name and the number of subscriptions you need. We will reserve tickets for you and you can give us cash or your check at the door when you come on October 1 to hear the Emerson String Quartet. All seats remain general admission only.

As you write your check, don't forget that those subscription and ticket costs are as reasonable as they are because of tax-deductible gifts from our subscribers and other friends of Friends of Music Concerts. Individuals making such contributions (more than 70 percent of our subscribers in past years) are listed on the back page of each concert program throughout the year.

As in past seasons, if you subscribe and then find that you or a friend cannot use tickets to a particular concert, please let us know. It will provide more seating opportunities for those seeking individual tickets and, if you wish, you can receive credit for an additional tax-deductible contribution.

Friends of Music *Notes* is a publication of Friends of Music Concerts, Inc., P.O. Box 675, Millwood, NY 10546, an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. For more information about us and our upcoming concerts, please visit our web site: [www.friendsofmusicconcerts.org](http://www.friendsofmusicconcerts.org).

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State of the Arts



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