



the adamant

Adamant Music School

The Common—Winter, 2002

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vol. 6.3

from the president

Frank Suchomel, President

Dear Members and Friends:

In early March, our 60th annual concert will take place at Weill Recital Hall.

We are featuring performers representing many decades of the School's history in the personages of Elaine Greenfield, a current member of our faculty pool; Fran Belin; Michael Preddy; Terrence Wilson; and myself, all former participants at the Adamant Music School.

The program will include readings from Alice Mary Kimball's journals, and selected works of her poetry, as well as writings of Edwine Behre with respect to School policy decisions, all of which have been nurtured now for the past sixty years. Other participants will include members of our Executive Committee, such as George McCormack and Myles Pollin, and dramatic readings by our Theater Production Coordinator, Rosann Hickey, and one of the actors who has participated in our theater productions, Tom Stevens. The Raphael Trio has participated in Adamant now for eighteen years and two members of the trio, Susan Salm and Dan Epstein, will present a piano cello piece. We believe it will be an interesting and enjoyable program and we hope you members and friends in the metropolitan New York area can take the time to come and see and listen to it.

The date is March 3, 2002. It will begin promptly at 2:30 p.m. at Weill Recital Hall in the Carnegie Hall Building on 57th Street and Seventh Avenue, where we have been having our concerts for the past fifty years

or so. This is the only concert we have a charge for and the admission fee is \$10.00. See the box below for information about buying tickets in advance. You can also buy them at the door the day of the concert. When we had our 45th annual concert, we were able to have a slide show but things have changed with Carnegie Hall Corporation. The cost for what we had hoped to do was so astonishingly high that we have had to pare back a bit on our original plans. Nonetheless, I still believe it will be an afternoon to remember and I hope very much to see as many of you as possible there.

Aloha,

Frank Suchomel

TO BUY TICKETS

To buy tickets for the March 3rd concert, you can call CarnegieCharge at 1-212-247-7800, or visit the Box Office for more information. The Box Office is open from 11 AM to 6 PM Monday through Saturday and 12 PM to 6 PM Sunday. You can also get information on Carnegie's website: www.carnegiehall.org

executive director's report

Sandra M. Rogers, Executive Director

Happy New Year! Given the events of last fall, I hope that all of you were able to celebrate the holidays with renewed peace and an eagerness to be close to family and loved ones.

Back in December, we gathered at our NYC headquarters for our first Sunday loft concert of the 2001-2002 Concert Season. Matthew Bengtson of Pennsylvania performed for an intimate gathering of friends and members.

Matthew christened the August Forster

piano that was acquired last fall. He gave an exciting rendition of Bartok's *Out of Doors* suite with which he opened the program, followed by the more intimate Brahms *Ballades, Op. 10*. Matthew's knowledge and expertise of Russian music poured out with his playing of several Szymanowski *Mazurkas* and the second Prokofiev *Sonata*. The members of our Executive Committee were unfortunately unable to join us and they were greatly missed! However, those of us who

were there enjoyed the concert and the opportunity to greet Matthew and his family. Some of the concert was recorded and we hope to be able to have this available on the website at some time in the near future.

Plans are being finalized for our next season in Adamant. In the next issue of *the adamanter*, I will highlight the faculty for our 2002 Traditional Session. ■



The Upper Dam

guest artist

Peter Basquin

Each summer we invite a special Guest Artist to join us for a few days during the Traditional Session. In recent years we have featured such notables as Nelita True of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and Ann Schein, Professor at the Peabody College of Music at Johns Hopkins University. Our Guest Artist-in-Residence for the 2002 season will be Peter Basquin, Professor of Music at Hunter College, CUNY. He performs regularly with the Aeolian Chamber Players and the American Composers Orchestra. Peter is also the Deputy Executive Officer of the CUNY Graduate School's doctoral program in music performance and co-author of *Explorations in the Arts*. We look forward to having him with us during the third week of our session. ■

new york concert season 2002



The Sunday concerts are held at 3:00 p.m. at 34 East 30th Street, 8th floor, New York City, New York. Members of Behre Piano Associates are admitted at no charge; non-members are charged a \$5.00 fee.

The March Concert at Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall, is the exception—members and non-members alike will be charged an admission fee.

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| February 10, 2002 | Vai-Meng Lei |
| March 3, 2002 | 60th Anniversary Concert at Weill Recital Hall (<i>Carnegie Hall</i>) 2:30 p.m. |
| April 14, 2002 | Adamant Music School Participants and Executive Committee Members |

the chef's table

Richard Goss, Chef, Adamant Music School

If there were one recipe that is asked for more than any other, it would be my Balsamic Vinaigrette salad dressing. I like it both alone on simple greens, and spruced up with some Parmesan, goat or blue cheese crumbles and toasted nuts.

Balsamic Vinaigrette

1 clove minced Garlic (optional)	1 t Soy Sauce
1 T Honey	2 T Balsamic Vinegar
1 T Dijon Mustard	½ t Black Pepper
1 T Lemon Juice	½ Cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Place all ingredients except oil in blender and mix on high until incorporated. Then add olive oil one tablespoon at a time, blending each in thoroughly. The vinaigrette will keep for a week or so covered and refrigerated. Enjoy!



dues time

As many of you know, our membership year runs from July 1 through the following June 30. Any participant at the School is automatically a member until the following June. Also our contributors are automatically members provided their contributions exceed the dues requirement. We keep tabs on our contributors and when their contribution has "run out" we will send a dues notice. Keep in mind that we are a 501c(3) organization and all contributions are tax-deductible.

We, of course, hope you will renew your membership. We like our members and need them. Our dues have not changed in many years and are listed below:

Single member \$15.00

Any two members living
at the same address \$20.00

Family membership \$25.00

Your dues give you the right to receive *the adamanter* and to attend all Waterside Hall concerts in Adamant as well as all

studio concerts in New York over the course of the membership year. The dues should be sent to Behre Piano Associates, Inc. c/o M'Lou Gillespie at 1241 Haggett Road, Adamant, VT 05640. She will then issue a membership card.

Do you have a friend who would be interested in the Adamant Music School? We'd be happy to send them an issue of our newsletter. Just call M'Lou at (802) 229-9297. *Thank you!*

february concert: Vai-Meng Lei

February 10, 2002 at 3:00 p.m.

born in Macau, China, Vai-Meng has earned her Master of Music degree from the University of Texas at Austin and obtained her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her principal teachers include Kenneth Drake, Ian Hobson and Ward Davenny.

As a performer Vai-Meng has given recitals in America, South East Asia and

Australia. She was the featured soloist for the debut concert of the Sydney Contemporary Orchestra in Australia and with the Philharmonische Mozart Kapel of Amsterdam. She has been on the faculty of the Baptist University in Hong Kong, the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in Australia. In her career, she has been active in chamber music and giving workshops

on different aspects of piano teaching. Vai-Meng Lei has been a member of the faculty pool at the School since 1999, and will be teaching in this summer's session.

Her program for the February concert will consist of the *Italian Concerto* of Bach, selections from Chopin's *Preludes*, *Quaderno Musicale di Annalibera* of Dallapiccola, and two *Transcendental Etudes* of Franz Liszt. ■

echoes of the future: lives of the founders

Andrew Christiansen, Webmaster & Archivist

Depression, War and Making Do Part 10: 1932-35

1932

Emma had a baby boy! His name is Herman and Emma assures us that he's the cutest little boy there ever was. Meanwhile her husband is busy with his work, attending psychoanalytic conferences and pursuing his practice. It doesn't seem possible that Emma is 29 years old now, and raising two children. Freda is 32 years old and is still taking lessons from Edwine. My, how quickly the young ones grow up.



Emma Dressler Slutsky in the early 1930's

Apart from the happy news of the baby, most of the news was not good this year. Times are tough all over the world. The year began with the massacre of over 15,000 campesinos in El Salvador. Between 1928 and 1931, coffee prices dropped 54%. Lower wages and lost jobs led to a short-lived Communist insurrection that was brutally put down by the military government. At the end of the year, a massive earthquake killed 70,000 in China. The intervening months saw the kidnapping and murder of the Lindbergh baby in March, Hoover's brutal eviction of World War I veterans from their shanties near the Capitol on July 28th, a September hunger strike by Gandhi in India, and economic depression around the world. In the United States, we now have 11 million people out of work.

On November 8th, Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected 32nd President by an overwhelming majority, carrying all but six states. He promised to restore prosperity to the country by offering a "New Deal." Alice Mary, who is now 46, hopes that he

can deliver on that promise, because she is the main breadwinner in the household, still managing to get by on the income she gets from the Girl Scouts of America. Each year she writes up the annual report and publicity brochures.

Edwine is 48 and still teaching her piano students. We talked to one of Edwine's students, Clara Wangler. Clara was 17 years old when she started studying with Edwine. She loves her as a teacher and tells us that Edwine freed up her playing, with an emphasis on playing from the shoulder and using the whole arm, rather than focusing on just the fingers.

This summer, shunning concert halls, Edwine went on an unusual "tour"—she went out into the countryside and bartered classical concerts for food and a place to stay. Coal miners, farmers, and others who had never heard of Bach or Beethoven were her audience. Instead of telling the names of each piece, she gave them numbers and asked her audience to rate them or draw pictures of what it made them think of. Sometimes, at the end of her concert, they would push the chairs back, and play their folk music for her, "scraping away" at fiddles on their knees. In this manner she traveled through Appalachia.

In September, Edwine visited her parents in New Orleans and ran into one of her old flames from Greenwich Village in 1917. Apparently the flames were rekindled, since she went to visit him in Dallas, Texas, on the weekend of October 22nd and 23rd. They walked and talked, and spent a romantic weekend.

After that weekend, Edwine received passionate letters: "You were the first real sweetheart I ever had. You were the first woman I ever loved—and now after 15 years I find I love you as deeply, as tenderly as I ever did. And with that love is a glorious feeling of sureness—of confidence that you love me too, and that you want my love and my friendship and my loyalty." While Edwine responded with a pleasant letter on Thanksgiving Day, she has many men in her life and refuses to commit herself to anyone.

In November, a young girl named Clara Solomon came to see Edwine for lessons after graduating from Juilliard in June. Clara told us that she was considering abandoning the piano for composition. She said that she felt uncomfortable at the piano and was unhappy with her playing, but she got advice from a friend. Says Clara,

"Susannah Avens, who taught in the Juilliard Junior School, said to me,

'Oh, before you go and leave the piano, you must go see this marvelous woman, Edwine Behre. She has a wonderful method.' So I went down to see her and of course I had no money, but hoped to get a scholarship... Edwine didn't like the way I played when I played for her, and she wasn't about to give me a scholarship. But Billy Owen (who lived in the house with Alice Mary and Edwine) interceded and told her about my background and radical parents. I think that intrigued Edwine. So she decided to give me a break. Now I play all the time. I never miss performing on a Sunday recital. She tries to have me work hard, but I am never that hard a worker on the piano, because I am also active in the radical movement. I am doing too many different things."

1933

The world has suddenly become a more frightening place with terror spreading in Europe. On January 30th, Adolf Hitler became the German Chancellor. The spread of his anti-Jewish policies and ideas is fast and frightening. Month by month, new abuses of Socialist and Jews in Germany are announced, and it's hard to imagine what will stop such sweeping changes.

If this were limited to Germany, perhaps it could be contained, but similar things are happening in Italy under Mussolini and Russia under Stalin. Japan is at war with China, Paraguay with Bolivia, and Iraq with Syria. There are bloody revolutions in Spain and Cuba, Nazi riots in Austria, Palestinians being killed in riots protesting Jewish immigration, and race riots and lynchings in the United States.

Fifteen million people are now unemployed in the U.S., along with millions more around the world. The only person who seems to be optimistic about the future is our new President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who told the nation at his inauguration: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself."

Two days later, Roosevelt declared a bank holiday that closed the banks in order to pass off emergency legislation. Long lines of people were waiting to get their money out of the banks, which were devaluing deposits in order to stay solvent. We have heard that our dear friend Emma was also in a line down in Brooklyn. Apparently unaware of the banking crisis, she stood in line for ages and then startled the bank teller by handing over money

of the adamant music school 1932-1935

she intended to deposit! Poor Emma!

Times are tough for our friends on King Street too. Harry isn't pulling in much money; the Modern Piano School is nearly broke, since students don't have enough money to pay for their lessons. Alice Mary has decided it is time to act. Using their political connections with labor and the press and following their commitment to leftist activism, she has organized a lecture series to benefit the Modern Piano School and she posts the events in the *New York Times* and the *World Telegram*. On March 26th, the *New York Times* wrote, "Ella Winter, who is Mrs. Lincoln Steffens, will speak tomorrow evening at the Modern Piano School, 46 King Street, on *Women and Children in Soviet Russia*." On May 6th, the *World Telegram* wrote: "Dr. Frankwood Williams, whose recent articles in the *Survey* are being elaborated for publication in book form, will discuss 'Psychology under Communism' at the Modern Piano School, 46 King St., at 8:30 p.m."

Clara Solomon is teaching in the settlement houses. We asked her to describe Edwine, Alice Mary, and Harry's house at 46 King Street and the people who live there. She said:

"On the ground floor you have one of these huge rooms where Edwine has her concerts and teaches. The end towards the front of the studio has a piano and the rest of it goes right through the whole floor. At the very end is a separate room. It is the dining room and the kitchen and they have a black cook that cooks for them, so it is a busy place... Alice Mary works for the Girl Scouts and Harry teaches—I think—at NYU or Columbia or some place like that.

"The only other one I know is Billy Owen (a pianist and close friend of Alice Mary, Harry and Edwine). She is in love with a fiddler—he was a physician. He left a nice woman—there is some scandal—something where he did a woman wrong, you know, his wife—it isn't a good thing for his wife."

Affairs and romantic relationships are part of the pattern of life at 46 King Street. Harry, Edwine and Alice Mary are living in a *ménage à trois*, but they have relationships with others as well.

One paramour of Alice Mary's was a professor of philosophy at Columbia University. His wife used to call Alice Mary to



Edwine's parents in their garden at their New Orleans home.

remind her there were certain foods that he wasn't supposed to eat when he visited.

1934

The Nazis in Germany continue to seize power, but now there are American Nazis to worry about. Anti-semitism erupted in New York on April 8th. There was a pro-Nazi rally in Queens Stadium that attracted 9,000 people, shouting "Heil Hitler." There were 18 clashes in and around the stadium between the Nazis and 200 communists and others who oppose Hitler. There were pro-Nazi stormtroopers that attacked the opposition crowd outside with rubber clubs. On May 17th, 20,000 attended a Nazi rally in Madison Square Garden and in September, the Westchester, New York, Ku Klux Klan endorsed the Nazis.

News came recently that Edwine's parents had a wonderful golden wedding anniversary down in New Orleans on April 18th. They sent us a clipping from the *Times-Picayune*. In an article entitled "Golden Flowers Adorn Residence of Behre Couple," the "distinguished children" were highlighted,



Alice Mary at home in the early 1930s.

as well as an account of the party and the accomplishments of Edwine's parents.

"Mr. Behre is president of the New Orleans Conservatory of Music of Loyola University, President of the Institute for International Affairs, and President of the Southern Ice Manufacturers' Association. Mrs. Behre is chairman of the Louisiana League for Peace and Freedom, among other things...An ardent pacifist, Mrs. Behre said that her anniversary year would be a happy one indeed if she could only look into the future and see all nations on friendly terms.

"'World peace could be taught in the home,' she said, 'if only parents would set a good example for their children and not quarrel among themselves. Then, too, I think the sale of toy pistols and other militarist toys should be prohibited.'

Another newspaper article told of the importance of music in the Behre home:

"Mr. Behre still plays to Mrs. Behre every evening. They have a notable library, fine paintings and a famous collection of ivories, each piece a reminder of some trip they took together. They unselfishly allow the public to enjoy their ivories by lending them periodically to Delgado museum. The beautiful garden of their home, 2800 Jefferson Avenue, is a constant pleasure to them both."

Edwine continues to get love letters from her old flame in Houston, but there are letters from other men as well. One wrote that summer, "I hope you think of me sometimes, dear. I don't want to be selfish but I would like to think that all your kisses were being saved for me. It makes me jealous to think of any other man sharing them, but I remember you told me you didn't think you could be true to one man!"

Edwine traveled south in the fall and gave a concert in Marquette Hall at Loyola University on October 14th. The *New Orleans Item-Tribune* ran a review on October 21st:

"Fluent technique, musical understanding and a touch worthy of a Paderewski was shown by Miss Edwine Behre at her first piano recital in the city...Miss Behre played for more than two hours.

"Haydn's Andante with Variations in

echoes of the future: continued

F Minor was the noted pianist's first selection. It was received by the assemblage with thunderous applause.

"Miss Behre's second selection was Bach's Italian Concerto, the only concerto ever composed for a single instrument. She interpreted Bach's Concerto as perfectly as a piano might, critics present agreed."

December began on a happy note as Alice Mary was profiled in the Greenwich Village newspaper called *The Villager* on December 6th. From the article: *"Miss Kimball is an ardent sightseer, touring the country with Mr. Godfrey in their Ford, whenever they have a few spare days. Miss Kimball's personal hobby is housekeeping and the kitchen. She has a summer home near the city, and in the fall of each year she busies herself with canning fruits and vegetables from her garden."* Alice Mary is also included in the *Who's Who in America*.

Edwine played an all-Beethoven program, which she performed at the Westchester Woman's Club on December 10th and then again on December 14th at Steinway Hall. Reviews of the concert the next day were all full of praise, except for one paper.



Edwine's picture as it appeared in the *New York Times* on December 9, 1934

The *New York Sun* had this to say: *"While there was no lack of substance in this formidable procession, Miss Behre encountered difficulties even in its least imposing facets...On the whole, an all-Beethoven program seemed hardly the ideal background for a display of the pianist's ability."*

However, other papers were quite enthusiastic. The *New York Times* wrote: *"To the special scholarship involved in a lifetime span of one composer, the interpreter brought a mature style and refined taste in performance, which her audience followed with interest and applause."*

1935

Times are getting worse for our friends on King Street. Alice Mary's garden out in Amawalk is proving to be more than a hobby—it's a godsend. It seems like the world is falling apart. Dangerous signs of war emerged from Europe in March as Hitler renounced the Versailles Treaty and reinstated military conscription. Mussolini expanded Italy's conscription laws so that one million men are in its armed forces and are now massing troops to attack Ethiopia.

Alice Mary continues the lecture series. On April 9th, she and Harry wrote to invite Emmet Crozier, who led the strike at the Newark Ledger, to give a lecture:

"I wonder if you would feel like coming around to our house some Sunday evening and making a little talk to a group of musicians and other artists and professional people who very much admire the fight the newspaper men put up in Newark, and who want to know all the highlights you might care to tell us?"

"The list of names on this letterhead will give you some idea of the composition of the group. We are associated to do what we can for the Modern Piano School, a cooperative group of piano artists, teachers, students and public players who are doing exceptional work. As individuals they are not only devoted musicians but are keenly alive to social movements."

"The talk would be for the benefit of the scholarship fund. Unfortunately, we cannot offer a fee. The school has carried every one of its pupils through the depression whether they could pay for lessons or not, and the deficit has been taken care of in part by the proceeds of informal studio lectures."

"And how are you, and everything? I don't need to say what a kick we got out of the Newark performance. Anyone who can go through with a thing like that has got what it takes! Best of all, if the news writers are getting their eyes opened there's hope for the world!"

Emmet responded on April 12, 1935:

"Thanks for the invitation. One of the penalties for being mixed up in a fracas like the Newark Ledger strike is, I suppose, to be dragged from obscurity and compelled to interpret its significance to interested bystanders. As strike-leader who went through four and a half months of hell, I

should like nothing better now than to forget it all for a time and to go to the movies or read a good book.

"However, the old friendships are strong and I'm sure listening to music at 46 King Street will help me recuperate. So put me down in your date book for any Sunday evening, preferably early in May. I look forward to seeing both you and Harry again."

President Roosevelt continues his work to create jobs and provide funds to keep the country functioning. Besides the WPA and the REA (Rural Electrification Administration), it was announced that 18,000 musicians would get jobs in the federal arts relief program. On July 5th, he signed the National Labor Relations Act, which requires businesses to recognize unions. On Aug. 14th, FDR signed the Social Security Act, over the stiff opposition of conservative Republicans who say it will "threaten the integrity of our institutions." Alice Mary welcomes all of these initiatives and supports Roosevelt's policies.

This fall, Edwine didn't supply the most excitement down in Louisiana as Senator Huey Long, known as the dictator of Louisiana, was shot and killed in Baton Rouge on September 10th by Dr. Carl Weiss, who was then killed by Long's bodyguards. Hitler continues to deprive Jews in Germany of basic rights, and on Oct. 2nd, Italy invaded Ethiopia. In this country, the Nazis seem to be growing in strength and on November 12th, a mob of 700 Texans lynched two Negroes accused of murder.

December is upon us again. With all the troubles in this world, Americans seem to be escaping into the fantasy of motion pictures and Edwine's brother-in-law Kenneth MacGowan seems to be in the middle of it. He works at the 20th Century-Fox Film Studio and in the last couple of years he has produced several movies, including "Little Women," and "La Cucaracha" and is currently working on "To Mary—With Love."

But Alice Mary is angry about one movie. Director Josef von Sternberg cast Marlene Dietrich as the star of a popular movie called "The Devil is a Woman," directly stealing the name of Alice Mary's popular book. After all the work she put into her book, with money so scarce, it is galling to see Hollywood making all the money from her title. To defend her work and get just compensation, Alice Mary is considering getting a lawyer. Perhaps she can get compensated next year. We'll be eager to see. ■

phillips experimental theater

Rosann Hickey, Production Coordinator

With all that's happening in the world right now, how can you bother with something so trivial as theater?" My friend's question took me by surprise. This was no cultural Philistine, carping about my lack of pragmatism, but an intelligent, thoughtful person who, like so many of us these days, was questioning himself and others about what someone chooses to do with their life. The obvious implication seemed to be that, if I have so much spare time, I should be doing something meaningful.

My response (here amplified now that I've had time to think about it) is that I believe that the arts, including theater, are intensely meaningful for all of us—especially in difficult times. I believe that one of the danger signals we should have paid more attention to in Afghanistan was the Taliban's destruction of visual art and banning of music in that country. Any regime that feels threatened by statuary and the singing of lullabies, much less live performances, cannot be a healthy one.

Like all art, theater helps us to perceive the world and our relationship to it in new ways. Theater is supposed to hold a mirror up to reality, to help us to examine ourselves and then laugh or cry (or both) as needed. Far from being "trivial," theater may actually be considered dangerously important. Monarchies and dictatorships have long been known to censor or suppress theatrical performances, which they feared might lead to



Scenes from the 2001 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

revolution. They knew, and know, that a group of people gathered in a special place for a live performance may be profoundly moved by that experience.

Will we be fomenting revolution at Adamant next summer? No. But we will be putting our hearts and souls into providing another wonderful season. We will enter the worlds of ladies and princesses and lovers. We will laugh and cry and sing together. And, if that makes this world an even slightly better place to live, it will not seem trivial at all to us. ■

The 2002 Season

My Fair Lady

The Princess and the Pea

Romeo and Juliet

