

The Adamanter

THE ADAMANT MUSIC SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



From the President

Frank Suchomel

Dear Members and Friends,

The summer of 2007 is quite memorable for me in many ways. The Traditional Session more closely resembled the kind of school that Edwine Behre had when I was a participant back in the fifties. When we announced that the Traditional Session would run for only two weeks in 2007 there was some grumbling that no one would participate. Wrong! We had a good many applicants with tremendous talent and easily wound up with thirty excellent participants. Over the years we have had many requests for a two-week session, not only from potential participants but from faculty members too, who had difficulty in their busy schedules to get four weeks away from their other duties. The only difference that I could truly perceive was that the modal age was under twenty. We had some older participants who were especially grateful to have the opportunity to come, so that the average age of the participants did not appear to have changed much. Also on the plus side, since the time was short, I personally saw a lot more of good hard work at the piano and found most of the studios occupied. Another benefit was there was not time for cliques to form that sometimes results in blocking effective working together. It was a wonderful group.

We were also delighted and fortunate this year to present three master classes: Ireland's John O'Connor gave a memorable class with some spectacular talents. André Laplante from Canada also gave a wonderful master class with some truly excellent participants. I am happy to report that both of them will return next summer. Their master classes, which we are calling the "Behre Series," will take place on a schedule that will make it easier for potential participants to attend more than one and also attend the Traditional Session which will follow. Menahem Pressler gave his nineteenth master class and is planning to return in 2008 as well.



The facilities were in excellent shape due to the fine efforts of our caretaker—custodian, Eric Ryea. Everyone was extremely pleased with the renovation of our concert hall, Waterside Hall. Eric installed windows in the Fall of 2006 across the front of the building and now the hall looks bigger and has a great sound due to the improvements.

The teaching staff this year included Matthew Manwarren, Elaine Greenfield, Dmitry Rachmanov, Willard Shultz, Vai-meng Lei and Esther Wang. In the role of summer program coordinator, Franklin Larey from South Africa did a wonderful job of coordinating all the various factions and did so admirably.

Montclair State University has entered into an agreement with the Adamant Music School wherein it agrees to pay half of one of their student's tuition if accepted to the Traditional Session. This summer a student at Montclair was accepted and she seemed to enjoy the experience. We have a similar arrangement with the Phoenix Symphony Guild and had participants from Arizona in Adamant as well this year.

Our business manager, M'Lou Gillespie, did an excellent job in keeping all the varied avenues open and flowing. All in all it was a very memorable summer in my humble estimation.

With Aloha,

Frank Suchomel, President

2007 Happenings

John O'Connor's Master Class



André Laplante's Master Class



Dues Time

Participants are given free membership through the June following their session at the School. Any contribution that exceeds the dues requirement makes the contributor an official member of Behre Piano Associates, Inc. Keep in mind that we are a 501(c)(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 here:

Single member..... \$20.00
Any two members living
at the same address... \$25.00
Family membership.... \$30.00

Your dues give you the right to receive *the Adamanter* and to attend all Waterside Hall Concerts in Adamant over the course of the membership year. The dues should be sent to Behre Piano Associates, Inc. c/o M'Lou Gillespie at P.O. Box 22, Adamant, VT 05640. A membership card will be mailed to you.

Do you have a friend who would be interested in the Adamant Music School? We'd be happy to send them a complimentary copy of our newsletter.

Just call M'Lou at 802-229-9297. *Thank you!*

2008 Season Dates

Weill Recital — March 9 at 2:30 p.m.

Behre Series *with* André Laplante — July 2 - 6

Behre Series II *with* John O'Connor — July 11 - 15

Traditional Session — July 19 - August 9

Menahem Pressler Master Class — August 11 - 15

2007 Happenings



Above: Menahem Pressler's Master Class

Below: Individual Classes of the Traditional Session





Echoes of the Future: Adamant celebrates its 60th

Andrew Christiansen, Webmaster & Archivist

Part 29 2001

Following nearly a week of sunny September days, this morning is probably the most beautiful. Warm sun and clear blue skies set the backdrop for the lazy drone of cluster flies and hornets around the clapboards of the old homes along the back roads. The green-leaved trees whisper memories of music that echoed through these hills only two weeks before at the conclusion of Menahem Pressler's Master Class. The red blush on the apples and hints of color remind us that fall is coming and the unabashed joy of summer will give way to winter. The ecstasy expressed in a musical phrase, whether in the faculty concerts of Eugene Barban, Elaine Greenfield, Gwen Beamish, newcomer Deirdre O'Donohue, Mark Sullivan, and Daniel Paul Horn, or in the concerts by artist participants, are now only memories of a different moment in time.

The pianos sit silently in their empty studios. M'Lou hasn't yet arrived at the school's office. She is in Montpelier visiting with her mother over a cup of coffee, watching the "Today" show on television. Yes, it was a good season, despite the drought that nearly emptied the Mill Pond next to the school. With careful attention, Tonio Epstein watered and nurtured the flowers that graced the walkways and buildings. No doubt, it was not a pleasant task on those hot summer days for Chef Richard Goss, assisted by sous chef Dori Phillips to prepare meals in the kitchen, but they were greatly appreciated. There were special moments too, that we remember, like the two master classes led by Nelita True, professor of piano from the Eastman School of Music. She described Adamant as "An idyllic oasis with a spirit I shall never forget." Shortly after, on the third Sunday of the session, Terrence Wilson, a 1989 alumnus who studied at Juilliard, amazed us with his spectacular performance of Liszt's Sonata in B Minor, despite temperatures nearing 100 in Waterside Hall.

It was hot then. We wore shorts and swam in Adamant Pond to cool off. Today, the morning air is cooler. Attention is suddenly directed to the television at 8:49 a.m. when a breaking news story shows pictures of smoke coming from one of

the twin towers at the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan. There had been an accident and a plane, thought to be a small one, had crashed into it. As M'Lou and her mother watch the television, shortly after 9 a.m., they are shocked to see a jetliner crash into the second tower and the thought of terrorism comes to mind.

M'Lou leaves for Adamant on what seems like an endless journey and hears the news that a plane has hit the Pentagon. In nearby East Montpelier, Andy Christiansen is working on the computer in his office at the family farm. His brother calls up the stairs to tell him that planes have hit the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. Thinking it's a joke, he turns on the television and sees smoke coming from the buildings and shocked newscasters telling of death and destruction.

Almost immediately, he is drawn away from the television by the rampage of a red squirrel that has made its way into the house and is running wild in the next room. As he tries to think of a way to catch it, he shares the same thought that M'Lou has. By whom had we been attacked and were there other hijacked planes waiting in the sky to attack other targets. The squirrel disappears into a fresh hole in the ceiling, revealing the route of infiltration as Andy imagines the horror of the passengers of the plane and the workers trapped in the buildings.



Spring Studio

In Hawaii, Frank and Michael are asleep. It is not even 4:00 yet when the phone rings. Frank answers and M'Lou almost screams at him to turn on the television because the United States is under attack. Next, she calls her sister in Philadelphia and they cry as they watch people jumping from the windows of the towers. Suddenly realizing that her kids are at school, she begins to make calls to her husband and the school.

Our eyes rest gently on the grass outside the Spring Studio where Linda Singer was practicing Beethoven's *Pastoral Sonata, Opus 28*. Her teacher, Deirdre, had told her that this music was "the heartbeat of nature." Life has many departures and this was one for it was Linda's last day at Adamant. As she practiced, two fawns quietly watched from outside and then started to dance with each other.

Overhead, F-16 fighter jets from the 158th Fighter Wing of the Vermont National Guard stationed at the Burlington International Airport, fly south to patrol the skies of New York City and Washington, D.C. Life has many departures.

With the squirrel having escaped, Andy returns to the television just as the South Tower comes down a minute before 10 a.m. A half hour later the North Tower comes down sending a plume of smoke that blots out the southern part of Manhattan and Edwina and Alice Mary's old stomping grounds in Greenwich Village. Reports come that another plane has crashed in Pennsylvania and there seems to be no end to this. Worried about old Adamanters like Lillian Schwabe and Freda Rosenblatt and all the younger ones who had just left Adamant a few days ago to return to the city, Andy goes outside to the garden. The sky is still blue and the air warm and soft. It seems like an illusion. Nearby, a Monarch butterfly, oblivious to the folly of human cruelty, flutters amongst the wildflowers, drinking nectar to prepare for its journey south to Mexico. Overhead, F-16 fighter jets from the 158th Fighter Wing of the Vermont National Guard stationed at the Burlington International Airport, fly south to patrol the skies of New York City and Washington, D.C. Life has many departures.

QuarryWorks Theater departed from its usual format and putting the scripts aside,

anniversary providing a refuge from terror while Freda departs this life

staged its first fully costumed productions of *Guys and Dolls*, *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which was also our first Shakespeare. We also got our first review and first experience of overflow crowds.



Willard Schultz's concert, July 17, 2002

It's strange how distant is the memory of that now. It was another era that we listened to the concert that Rorianne Schrade performed at the loft seven months before on February 11 in this same city, or the 59th Anniversary Concert at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall just a half year before on March 11 or even the conclusion of the Traditional Session a month before on August 11 when people left for home the day after the last Friday concert. The momentary shadows of bodies falling from the sky, like the shadows of Monarchs flitting over asters force us to say farewell to the past and embrace the present on this 11th day of September. Life is full of many departures and the destinations may be their unforeseen warmth metamorphose us for a return to a springtime of which we are unaware. Perhaps in the woods of Adamant, there will be two deer that remember, like a fleeting shadow, the music of Beethoven.

2002

Predictably, within a month of the 9/11 attacks, the United States went to war. Even as the Taliban were being overthrown in Afghanistan for not turning over Osama Bin Laden, plans were being made for war against what President George W. Bush calls the Axis of Evil: Iraq, North Korea, and Iran. What was not expected was an anthrax attack on Democratic Senate Leaders Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy or the rise in tensions between Pakistan and India. As the year begins, there is a fear that a nuclear war between these two countries is quite possible. This comes at the same time that Bush announced that the United States was withdrawing from the 1972 ABM (Anti-ballistic Missile)

Treaty. In Pakistan, Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl was murdered by terrorists and in Antarctica, a 1,254 square mile chunk of the Larsen Ice Shelf disintegrated over a 35 day period.

With war and global warming on everyone's minds, it was a relief on February 10 to hear Vai-meng Lei play in the Sunday Loft Series, followed by the 60th Anniversary Concert at Weill Recital Hall on March 3, and on April 14 participants from the Adamant Music School and members of the executive committee. The Weill Recital Hall concert was a little different this year. As Frank explains, "This year's concert was dedicated to the memory of our founders, Edwine Behre, Alice Mary Kimball and Harry Godfrey. George McCormack, (the Vice President of the board) introduced Rosann Hickey and Tom Stevens, who participated by reading letters and diary entries from our founders and, at the end, did a wonderful presentation of a section of Alice Mary's poem, "The Devil is a Woman." Michael John Suchomel wrote the script and directed it with great élan."



Hiroshige Print

Life continues, but the fear of terrorism has sparked support for an abridgement of civil liberties. As if to highlight the tension, even the hills of Vermont were shaking on April 20 as an early morning earthquake that extended from New York City to Canada roused folks from their beds.

When summer came along, there was a sneak preview of the session on June 15 at the Wood Art Gallery in Montpelier. A concert by Joan Michel, Linda Singer, Laurence Lambert-Chan, and Justin Sorrell opened an exhibit of the Hiroshige prints that Edwine had once used to cover stains on the wall and for gift wrapping paper. Also shown were memorabilia and the Edward Hopper print dedicated to Edwine Behre.



Andy Christiansen introducing Sen. Bill Doyle at the opening concert in 2002

The Traditional Session began with the July 14 concert of Golda Vainberg-Tatz and Vai-meng Lei at Waterside Hall. In remarks after the intermission, Andy Christiansen spoke briefly about the 60th anniversary of the school and how it was founded specifically to confront the terror of that time. He said, "It was 60 years ago this month that German terrorists were discovered living in New York City, after having been dropped off by U-boats in the midnight fog off Long Island and Florida. They were planning to blow up buildings, transportation terminals, and bridges when they were caught.

On July 11 federal agents arrested 158 German aliens in New York City, including 30 women. It was also in New York that some of Edwine Behre's piano students were being harrassed and attacked on the streets for being Jewish. It was for these reasons, that Edwine and Alice Mary thought it was important to start a music school in a place like Adamant, where war and terror may have seemed a bit more distant, neighbors helped each other in a close-knit community, and tolerance was a long-standing Vermont tradition." Andy concluded by introducing state senator Bill Doyle, who presented a resolution from the Vermont legislature honoring

continued on page 5



My Fair Lady - 2002

Echoes of the Future: continued

continued from page 4

the Adamant Music School. Outside in the Meditation Garden this year's art display consists of an exhibit of 21 stone sculptures by 14 Vermont artists. Inside, photographs and commentary covering the history of the school lined the walls

While democracy might be threatened



Princess and the Pea – 2002

by the onslaughts of the Bush administration, it became stronger in the theater when QuarryWorks presented *My Fair Lady* and allowed the audience, in the words of director Michael Suchomel, "to vote whether Eliza should 'end up' with Higgins or her ardent suitor Freddy. Audience members stood up for their favorite and the cast was ready to present whichever ending was voted on. If you live in Vermont, you would say it was like town meeting day where everyone had a chance to stand up and be counted." The theater closed its season with *The Princess and the Pea*.

On July 29 special guest and alumnus, Ian Parker, gave an informal talk about his experiences at Adamant and about his career. A couple of days later Peter Basquin, artist in residence, led master classes until August 4. August 9th marked



Camelot – 2003

the final Friday night concert and the Menahem Pressler master classes followed on August 18-22.

As the year comes to a close, the Bush administration is pushing for a war against Iraq, calling for regime change and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Other voices in the world, especially France, are calling for more time for the UN weapons inspectors to do their work.

2003

New Year's Day and we just learned that Freda Rosenblatt died last night. She was the last surviving teacher of the older generation and was 102. We will miss her. The January issue of *The Adamanter* is full of eulogies and memories of her, as we remember all the good times we shared and life changing lessons she gave us.

The New Year also marks the unveiling of a new Web site for the school, replacing the one that had been up for 6 years. It can be viewed at <http://web.archive.org/web/20030202143621/http://www.adamant.org> and tells about all the upcoming events such as the February 9 Loft concert of Richard Shirk, the March 9 annual Concert at Weill Recital Hall honoring Freda, and the April 13 concert of Adamant participants and executive committee members.

Later... The Weill Recital Hall concert was ten days ago and now we are involved in another war, this time with Iraq. Bombing of Baghdad started this evening and ground troops are ready to be deployed in the morning... The course of the war goes quickly. Baghdad had fallen to U.S. forces by April 9 and on May 1 President Bush, dressed in a flight suit, landed in a jet on the aircraft carrier, USS *Abraham Lincoln*, just off the coast of California. Standing in front of a sign that said "Mission Accomplished," he announced that this was the end of major combat operations in Iraq, saying "In the Battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed."

Unfortunately, the fighting continues and more are killed every day. In Vermont, the drought has been replaced by torrential downpours that threaten floods in Adamant this summer. It is a good thing that Eric Ryea, the caretaker-custodian, built a top over the new raised



Twelfth Night – 2003

addition for extra seating he built to the back of Waterside Hall, for it rained lightly during the first concert of the season by Golda Wainberg-Tatz and Mark Sullivan. It was this same day, July 13, that our friend and fellow Adamanter, Joan Michel, passed away from breast cancer. Dmitry Rachmanov and Willard Schultz played on Wednesday night and Elaine Greenfield and Jan Meyer Thompson played the following Sunday. The concerts played by the students were also excellent and so were the treats at Barney Hall afterwards. After the Friday night concert on July 25, Steve Morse brought his chocolate-peanut butter cookies and Chef Richard Goss made wonderful cream puffs that were dipped in chocolate sauce. We congratulate Richard on his recent marriage, but after tasting those cream puffs, we wish that he wasn't moving to Indiana.

Exciting things happened in the theater too. Performances of *Camelot* and *Alice in Wonderland* preceded the memorable opening night on August 7 of *Twelfth Night* which ended with Feste the jester singing "Wee Small Hours of the Morning." Suddenly, the power went out and the stage plunged into darkness, as well as the surrounding countryside when a blue heron got tangled up in a substation, bringing the show to an end.

William Westney conducted three workshops from July 31 to August 2 and Deirdre O'Donohue managed the Master Class of Menahem Pressler on August 16-20, while the art exhibit in Waterside Hall featured oil and watercolor paintings by Joe and Julie Mueller of Stowe.

Now that Christmas is approaching and a new year is within sight, we hear the wonderful news that Saddam Hussein has just been captured. Perhaps, with the objective of removing him from power being met and finding that there never were any weapons of mass destruction we can now look forward to the end of this war. ■



Phillips Experimental Theater



Julie Mueller, Theater Coordinator

Our summer season at QuarryWorks was an unqualified success. We opened with the musical *Oliver!* followed by *Long Day's Journey Into Night* and ended with *Charlotte's Web*. The work of George Cruikshank, the



illustrator for the serial publications of *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens, was the stepping off place for the sets. Large sepia colored drawings on the wall were interspersed with pieces of brick wall on a black background. The main part of the set was a series of platforms, short sets of stairs going nowhere and a doorway to nowhere inspired by the work of E.C.Escher, representing the continuous circular lives of the people in *Oliver Twist*. Pieces of different scenes were left on the stage for the entire show. Michael Suchomel, the director of *Oliver!*, had the large cast on stage for most of the scenes and it was a great cast! Good voices; wonderful characters; great action. We even had a real dog, a lovely Shiloh Shepherd named Mr. Bones who played the part of Bill Sikes' dog. Sadly, Mr. Bones died shortly after the end of the run of *Oliver!* We were all saddened at his passing. He was a wonderful dog and made friends with all of the cast and crew and even the audience members who stopped to give him a scratch or pat. Carol Van Tuinen's costumes reflected

the somber times and message of this play and many characters had 3-4 costume changes as they played the various characters in Dickens' story.

At the end of *Oliver!* the stage changed from Victorian London to a summer house in Connecticut, the setting for Eugene O'Neill's autobiographical *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. Set in O'Neill's childhood home, the play chronicles the family of mother and father and two sons in the course of one pivotal day in their lives. On this day the youngest son (O'Neill) admits to suffering from tuberculosis and the decision is made that he must go to a sanatorium to be cured. Each family member has his or her own drama and each is acted out during this day. Jeanne Beckwith directed this epic work whose cast of five rehearsed long and did an admirable job of playing out the family's pathos and drama. O'Neill wrote this play for himself as a window into his life and family. He never intended it to be performed. It is not a play that is often performed and the audience members who came were appreciative that QuarryWorks chose to present it. The work of American artist Edward Hopper was the inspiration for the set. Both O'Neill and Hopper were friends of the founders of the Adamant Music School, Edwine Behre, Alice Mary Kimball and Harry Godfrey.



into the barn where the action took place. Carol Van Tuinen's delightful and imaginative costumes brought the barnyard right into the audience's lap! A black and red spider, green rat, purple pig, blue sheep and various other characters strutted, danced, crawled and wove an enchanting tale ably narrated by Colin MacCaffrey. Audience singing topped this great production to the delight of all. Charlotte wove her compassion for Wilbur into her web and enthralled the audiences of young and old alike.



We tried something new with the drama and children's productions this year. People were able to make reservations for each performance. This seemed to work well. Well enough that Frank and Michael Suchomel decided to extend the policy to the musical next season. People with reservations will not need to come 2 hours early to be guaranteed a seat. We missed the picnickers and hope play-goers will still come to picnic and enjoy the beautiful setting of the Phillips Experimental Theater.

We welcome the newcomers and hope many of them will be back for other productions in years to come. ■

Charlotte's Web brought our season to a close and also brought many children and newcomers to QuarryWorks. Natalie Mitchell's wonderful cartoon animals decorated the outside of the theater and welcomed play-goers



Vol. 12.1
October, 2007

The Adamanter

THE ADAMANT MUSIC SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



2008 Dates to Remember

- Weill Recital — March 9 at 2:30 p.m.
- Behre Series with André Laplante — July 2-6
- Behre Series II with John O'Connor — July 11-15
- Traditional Session — July 19-August 9
- Menahem Pressler Master Class — August 11-15



Adamant Music School
On Adamant Green
P.O. BOX 22
1241 HAGGETT RD.
ADAMANT, VT 05640

