

ACMP Members In World Premiere of Cello Quintet

Games of Remembering, by Jeremy Sagala, commissioned for talented amateurs by the Wellesley Composer's Conference in its 18th annual competition, performed in two concerts open to the public.



Composer **Jeremy Sagala** rehearsing at the Wellesley (MA) Chamber Music Workshop with (from L.) **David Gordis** (Vc A, Newton, MA), **Susan O'Malley** (Vc B+, Brooklyn, NY), cellos; **Nancy Gleason** (Va B, Boston, MA), Viola; **Laura Pruyn** (Vn B+, Brewster, NY), **Joe Singer**, Violins.

At Right: Jeremy Sagala conducting the group in the World Premiere of *Games of Remembering*, Saturday, July 30, 2005.

Participants In the second session of the Chamber Music Workshop (not shown), **Martin Nass** (Vc A, New York, NY), **Linda Douglas**, violins; **Mary Watts**, viola; **Karen Romer** (Vc A-, Providence, RI), **Ellen Sklar**, (Composer's Conference Treasurer) cellos; also had daily rehearsals with Sagala and performed the second performance of the quintet at the closing concert on August 6, 2005.

What if you could rehearse Schubert's Cello Quintet with Schubert himself right at hand? What if you could ask him what sort of vibrato he wanted in the opening note of the first violin part or discuss the real meaning of the dynamics in the slow movement! At the Wellesley Composer's Conference, held concomitantly with amateur chamber music workshops each summer at Wellesley College in Wellesley, MA, two lucky groups of amateurs have such an opportunity. From the ten composers who are selected each year as participating fellows in an intense series of workshops, lectures and performances, one is commissioned to compose a work specifically for amateurs, and return the next year to rehearse and perform it with them.

This idea was the brainstorm of Conference Director, composer **Mario Davidovsky**, who formed the first selection committee in 1986. **Martin Nass** (Vc A, New York, NY), current chair of the Selection Committee, says, "**Lee Hyla** had the first commission in 1987 and wrote *Anhinga*, a nonet for string quartet and woodwind quintet." He adds, "It's really changed the relationship between the amateurs and the composers. The conference starts with a lecture on listening to contemporary music, and during the conference, the composers speak about their works. The new works are performed in the context of more traditional chamber music by the Workshop coaches, all outstanding professionals. Before we select a com-

poser for the next year, the Committee does lots of listening, lots of talking, and lots of thinking until we have all winnowed out our own top three choices, and then we finally select one. To insure variety, we also specify the instrumentation with our commission, so in 2006 we'll have a sextet for piano, violin, viola, cello, flute and clarinet by this year's choice, **Gustavo Leone**."

"It's a real treat to receive a commission with a promise of performance!" says **Jeremy Sagala**. "From the previous year I had a good idea of the performer's capabilities, and began by making a list of musical ideas that would work within our rehearsal time. I hit on the idea of drawing on memories of the great works that the players would know, and combining them in new and different ways."

"His mind and ear were more fluid than ours," says **Laura Pruyn** (Vn B+, Brewster, NY), a first week participant, "and he was able to bring us with him as he moved beyond key signatures. It was much simpler to play accidentals as they occurred rather than having to adapt to a new key signature every few bars. His innovations were interesting, but understood by the ear, so not impossible."

Karen Romer (Vc A-, Providence, RI), a second week participant, says "It was a wonderful experience. Jeremy was attentive and careful, and would even change a note once in a while. He was great at exploring what techniques would support the musical ideas or the sonority." Laura concurs, describing how, because he is an

amateur cellist himself, Jeremy could relate, and once actually sat down in the first cellist's chair saying, "I see what you mean! This is difficult! Try this!"

Board Chair, **Jack Lifszitz** (Vn B+, Newton, MA), emphasizes how the interaction between composers and amateurs contributes to an amateur's understanding of contemporary music. Also, since players can download the parts, and hear the work on the web they can "get it in their ear" as the performance draws closer.

Laura comments, "One of the benefits of the program is how much BOTH amateurs and composers learn. We see how they think, and I think they are surprised by our careful preparation and how hard

we are willing to work to improve."

Jeremy says "I've been asked numerous times if I felt limited by the technical limitations of the amateurs. But I didn't. There are always limitations in composing any work. For instance, you can't write five note chords for solo violin even if you want to. The pleasure and fun of composing comes from creating a satisfying result with the reality of any situation. It was greatly rewarding to work through the various stages of composition, and then rehearse and perform with these talented amateurs at Wellesley."

After the concert, when Laura asked Jeremy how he thought it went he replied, "Beyond my wildest dreams!"

From the Mailbox

The Electronic Directory at Work

I did indeed find a pianist in Madison, WI, using the ACMP "send a message" service. We are both retired with more time to practice and play. So we got together for our first session of piano-violin sonatas yesterday, doing two Beethoven (plus a movement), two Mozart, and winding up with Fritz Kreisler's "The Old Refrain" for good measure. Trios are up for next month. Thanks for your help!

Eric Godfrey (Vn B+), Ripon, WI

King Kong Violas

The remake of the film, King Kong, is a fantastic production (filmed in New Zealand). The scene that shows the giant primate in a theatre (before he wrecks New York) was filmed in the Civic Theatre in Auckland, with an orchestra of forty-one musicians. Michael Vidulich, president of the International Viola Association and the NZ representative of ACMP and I were in the four man viola section. The orchestra looked (and sounded) great, and in one close-up of the viola section you can see a startled Michael Vidulich looking up at the ape. I am sitting behind him.

Doug Bedggood (Va B), Hamilton, NZ

ACMP in London

This has been a year for quietly spreading the word about ACMP amongst chamber music organizations in Britain, some well-known internationally (such as the Dartington International Summer School), some well known locally (the Kingston and District Chamber Music Society in Southwest London), private gatherings (a Chamber Music House Party that takes place over the Easter weekend with about 40 players), and distributing ACMP brochures through music teachers, music shops and luthiers. The local schools here in South London are buzzing with chamber music; there are ensembles even at our 11-year-old cellist's primary school, where about three-quarters of the children play instruments. My own regular quartet, quintet and octet have enjoyed playing a great variety of repertoire together, and our street now qualifies for a Villa-Lobos award as a new cellist on our block brings the total number of cellists up to eight (four of them grown-ups).

On Saturday, March 11, some of our neighbors are organizing a Baroque String Play Day; if any of you will be in London and would like to join us, do let me know!

Josie Stein (Va A/Vn B), London, UK

ACMP in Switzerland

The Swiss connections I established thanks to your directory are proving very fruitful indeed. My musical links were strengthened by a string quartet course this summer in the La Part Dieu Abbey in Switzerland that I warmly recommend to other ACMP members. The setting was splendid; the teachers from Germany coach on a voluntary basis and were excellent; lessons were frequent; the pre-

formed participant amateur quartets were of a very high level, but the spirit of the course was not competitive and only the morning rehearsals, where we all joined as a string orchestra, were geared towards a concert. Evenings had informal playing and sight reading in mixed groups. Participant quartets took turns cooking, which created a homelike atmosphere and helped keep the price low enough to be truly accessible to all; ages ranged from 19 to 65. We all got on so well that we will have a reunion this December.

Ariane Wilson (Vc A), Brussels, BELGIUM

ACMP in Kansas City

The 2004-5 Directory for the whole state of Kansas lists 5 players, only 4 of whom remain. All of us are in the Metropolitan Kansas City area. The Missouri side of the city lists 5 players, one being present only part of the year. The entire state of Missouri shows 18 players. Looking at some other nearby "flyover states," one finds 5 players listed in Nebraska, 14 in Iowa, 5 in Arkansas and 4 in Oklahoma. In contrast, there are 46 players listed in New Hampshire and 40 in Vermont, both thinly populated states.

One of my correspondents suggested that the reason for the disparity relates to the difference between the culture in the "red states" and the "blue states." I will leave any correlations on this basis to the statisticians in ACMP. I would point out, however, that the KC Metropolitan area has 1.8 million people, supports the KC Symphony, a chamber orchestra, the KC Ballet, Lyric Opera of KC, a fine Conservatory of Music at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, 11 amateur orchestras, a youth symphony, several concert series, two amateur opera companies, and many churches with active music programs of high standard.

We have more culture than yogurt. Its lack is not the answer. There are many players; few ACMP members. What can be done to increase ACMP membership in the areas where members are sparse? I propose this as a challenge for the new Board Members and North American Advisory Council.

Dr Lester Chafetz (Vn B/VaB), Overland Park, KS

ACMP in France

Your mention of **Rachel Kobryner** in the December, 2005 issue (P. 6) reminded me of visiting her home in France and playing piano trios with her and **Ariane Wilson**. Playing with them was like traveling on a magic carpet—I held their hands and went along for a marvelous ride.

Adelaide Edelson (Pf A) Falls Church, VA

ACMP in Bucharest

My wife and I spent a few days in Romania (mainly Bucharest) during late October and were delighted by the hospitality provided by the ACMP members I had contacted prior to our visit. I hope to return the hospitality to some of them next year.

David Whalley (Vc B) Northwich, Cheshire, UK

Worldwide Workshops Supported By The ACMP Foundation



Providence, RI. Community Music-Works, anchored by the Providence String Quartet, builds relationships between families and professional musicians in urban neighborhoods of the city. At Right: One of the younger students.

Photo by John Foraste



Above: **Denver, CO.** In the new "state of the art" recording studio at Colorado Public Broadcasting, Young Chamber Players, under the aegis of the Denver Young Artist Orchestra, perform and record Beethoven Trio Op. 11 for a future broadcast on Colorado Spotlight.

From Left: Coach **Nannette Shannon**, piano; **Ian Bucksan**, clarinet; **Misha Levental**, cello.



Above: **Kibutz Tzuba, Israel.** Mozart Flute and Harp Concerto.



Homer, Alaska. The Nutcracker Faire: Top; Arriving Faire participants look appreciatively at a sextet of Middle School Students from the Homer Youth String Orchestra Club in the entrance to the High School, December 5, 2005.

Bottom; The violin case in the foreground (successfully) amasses contributions to help fund the Club's upcoming field trip to visit a violin-maker and attend an Anchorage Symphony Orchestra concert in Anchorage, a five hour journey from Homer.

Below: **Mazer Society Autumn Workshop, Sweden.**
A reading of Schnittke, String Quartet #3.



Cadences

We are saddened to hear of the deaths of the following members:

Flanders, Peter (Vc B), New York, NY

Foster, Arnold Jacob (Vn A), Bronxville, NY. **Kilmer McCully** (Vn A, Winchester, MA), writes: Although Arnold was listed in the New York area, he was a very enthusiastic chamber music player for many years in the Boston area, We will miss him.

Udsan, Thea (Pf C), Copenhagen, Denmark. **Margaret Mehl** (Vn C, Copenhagen, Denmark), writes: I found Thea through the ACMP Directory, and thanks to her spent my very first day as a resident of Denmark playing at the Danish Chamber Music Society's yearly chamber music Sunday. Sadly, she passed away only weeks after we had enjoyed a pleasant afternoon of playing and chatting.

Home Coaching

Home coaching, one of ACMP's most popular and innovative programs, is funded by the ACMP Foundation, and is open to all our members at all levels.

You form your own group, choose your own repertory, your own schedule, your own coach, and your own location at your own convenience. Your foundation, the ACMP Foundation, subsidizes half of the cost.

To take advantage of this program, all you have to do is complete your application and submit it to the office. Include the names of all the members of your group, the work you will study, the prospective coach, the dates of your coaching sessions, and the amount that the coach will charge.

If you no longer have the application that was included with your recent update form, you can download one from our web site, <www.acmp.net> or telephone the office (212) 645-7424 to receive one in the mail.

After the application is approved and the sessions begin, you pay your half directly to the coach, who then submits a bill for the remainder to the Foundation.

Members may apply for one course of home coaching each year. Your group may also include non-ACMP players, but if they have enjoyed this benefit in previous years or in a previous group, we ask that they join ACMP.

ACMP Bulletin Board

WANTED

RAVEL'S MOTHER GOOSE SUITE arranged for 2 violins and piano. It DOES exist! I played it once. I'll gladly pay copying costs if you have the music. Muriel Zimmerman, PHONE: (212) 874-3387.

PARTS AND SCORE FOR MENDELSSOHN'S STRING QUARTET in E-flat from 1823. Please contact June Romeo: E-MAIL <Jromeo@medcentral.edu> or PHONE: (419) 520-2602.

STRING QUARTETS BY WOMEN COMPOSERS: Need parts and scores for works such as Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel, Quartet in E-Flat Major; Emilie Mayer, Quartet in G minor, Op. 14; also works by Priaux Rainier, Maddelena Sirman. Should be accessible to amateurs and general listening audience. Suggestions for sources appreciated. E-MAIL: <JRichey4nsq@aol.com>

AVAILABLE

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ACMP's Bulletin Board is a service to members wishing to make musical announcements. Publication of a notice in the newsletter signifies neither approval or disapproval by the ACMP Board of Directors.

Members are reminded that a copy of ACMP's last annual report may be obtained from the New York Office of Charities Registration, Department of State, Albany, NY 12231.

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Reminder to Members Has Your E-mail Address Changed?

E-mail doesn't get forwarded! Please help us to keep our records up to date. You can go to our web site (www.acmp.net) and easily change your personal information by clicking on the ACMP Member Area, so do it now.

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