

NEWS *from* FESTIVAL HILL

WE COME FROM NEAR AND FAR TO EXPERIENCE FESTIVAL HILL

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Mark Your Calendars

As we think of ways to introduce new people to the experience of Festival Hill, two large crowd pleasers are coming up – the Texas Master Chorale Holiday Concert on December 7 and “The Nutcracker” Ballet on December 14. And a perfect holiday gift for a music lover, whether they have or haven’t been to Festival Hill, would be: tickets to the James Dick performance on February 22. If you haven’t received the calendar of events for the 2013-2014 August-to-April Series, request one by sending an email to info@festivalhill.org. Let’s all get busy making these and the other excellent offerings on the calendar full-house events. The more people who know about the special community of music and arts lovers who gather to enjoy Festival Hill and its offerings, the better the lively future at Festival Hill looks.

The Young Artists

Every year the arrival of the young artists at Festival Hill brings a wave of anticipation for what’s ahead in the six weeks of the Round Top Music Festival. This year the members of the Texas Festival Orchestra came from homes in twenty-six states and eleven different countries. As one young artist put it, “We, as students, were surrounded by people—faculty and peers alike—who believed in us and encouraged us to believe in ourselves as performing artists. We were allowed to make mistakes and learn about ourselves, all while learning and performing challenging and incredibly rewarding repertoire.”



Along with a full schedule of rehearsal, class, and performance, there is festive time, too, for the young artists. A young artist is seen here sampling Blue Bell Ice Cream, unquestionably the ice cream of Festival Hill.

Another fine food moment took place at Henkel Square Marketplace, where the Massey family hosted the faculty-student-staff barbecue.

The Repertoire

Program Director Alain Déclert has just updated the archive of orchestral works performed at Festival Hill—450 different compositions to date, spanning many centuries, as well as broad geography. Here are a few of the musical treats ahead for the 2014 Round Top Music Festival: We will celebrate the work of Richard Strauss with performances of *Also Sprach Zarathustra* and tone poem *Till Eulenspiegel*. Brahms *Symphony No. 2* will be part of the repertoire. James Dick, Founder and Artistic Director of Round Top Festival Institute which produces the summer music festival every year, plans to open the 2014 season with the *Piano Concerto* by Edvard Grieg.

The Faculty

One of the special aspects of training at Festival Hill is the nurturing consistency: the young artists have the opportunity to work with faculty members daily over a period of weeks, rather than for the shorter bursts of time that is typical for many festivals. To put a spotlight on one faculty member, Marie Speziale, Professor of Trumpet and Chair of the Brass Department at the Shepherd School of

Music at Rice University, is acknowledged as the first woman trumpeter in a major symphony orchestra. We single her out here, when the light should shine on each faculty member, simply to salute the fun we had listening to the surprise fanfares she and the brass section of the orchestra staged several times during the Festival, stationing themselves on the balcony of the stage to deliver this added concert treat. While Marie’s home of Houston is just up the road from Round Top, the experience faculty and conductors bring to our small community covers much of the globe.

The Conductors

Picking out just a very small sampling of the symphony orchestras this year’s group of conductors has performed with, we find the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the London Philharmonic, the Israel Philharmonic, the Sendai Philharmonic in Japan, and the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico. When he was studying at the Sorbonne, Conductor Pascal Verrot—shown here in rehearsal—probably did not envision the future day when he would conduct on a pastoral campus in small town Texas, yet he has shared his talents with Festival Hill time and time again. Another very special aspect of training at Festival Hill is the opportunity for the young artists to work with a different guest conductor each week, exposing the orchestra members to a range of musical points of view.



The Audience

The audience travels, too, many coming from different parts of Texas and beyond. New trustee of The James Dick Foundation for the Performing Arts Richel “Rikky” Rivers and her husband Jim Shultz greet a friend from their hometown



of Wimberly with whom they had a chance encounter at an afternoon concert. The sole endeavor of the Foundation, a 501(c)(3), is Round Top Festival Institute. Wimberly is home as well to Bill and Kate Johnson, who along with Bill’s sister Burdine Johnson of Houston, were present at the Grand Finale Performance of the Festival. All of us like an opportunity to applaud them and their family foundation The Burdine Johnson Foundation for its partnership role—this year, as 43rd Season Partner.

The Texas Triangle and Beyond

A number of concert goers come from Houston, Austin, and the Round Top vicinity. Some come regularly, in fact, from San Antonio and Dallas, too. This year we welcomed participants from Houston Saengerbund, a group that shares and promotes music in the German tradition, as they traveled from their metropolis to enjoy concerts on the day of their sponsored chamber music performance which featured music by Brahms, Mozart and Hindemith. Trustee Rod Koenig and his wife Mary, members of the group, were on hand to welcome Houston Saengerbund to the reception in Log House that followed the concert. The reception honored the group's sponsorship.

Austin-based Craig Hester has a tradition of opening the chamber concert series for the Round Top Music Festival with underwriting support, this year from his firm Luther King Capital Management. Well done and much appreciated!

Ed and Dolly Golden have been traveling along Highway 290 from our state capital to enjoy the festival since the first days of Festival Hill. We were pleased that a family group was able to join the Golden's the afternoon of the chamber concert featuring works by Poulenc that they co-sponsored with Advisory Director W. James Murdaugh, Jr. of Houston.

Stretching the Texas triangle boundary to Galveston, Betsy and Bert Clardy traveled from that seaside spot where Betsy is a VP of The University of Texas Medical Branch for concerts on June 29, including the chamber music concert they helped to sponsor. First involved with music through the San Angelo Symphony, Betsy brings her love of music to Festival Hill as a new trustee. She also introduced her San Angelo friends Ellen and Dale MacDonald to Festival Hill on the 29th. Joan and David Hilgers, not long home from India, made the trip from Austin to Festival Hill to hear Homage to W.A. Mozart, which they generously underwrote.

Darlene and John McNabb, who generously made five scholarships available this year to young artists, were on hand for the opening concert of the Festival before heading to North Carolina. Crossing paths with them were Peter and Marlene Dallo who live in North Carolina and serve on the Founder's Council sharing their arts marketing expertise with us. The Dallos were with us to celebrate the Festival Grand Finale Performance.

A Musical Group

Many of the people drawn to Festival Hill have themselves participated at one point in the life of a musical group, band, or orchestra. Rikky Rivers plays the flute. Ann and Jim Lindemann of Industry both played in the brass section, as did Rama Menn. The Menns and Lindemanns are pictured here at Log House with violinist Jonathan Swartz and with conductor Michael Stern whose appearance was generously underwritten by Industry State Bank, Fayetteville Bank, and First National Bank of Bellville.



Rose VanArsdel of Bryan plays the piano and sings in her church choir. She generously underwrote the appearance of conductor Perry So. Gary Martin, a fellow Foundation trustee with Rose, marched in the Aggie Band in college. Jim Roy, along with Rex Watson are loyal fans and supporters making the trip from Houston on Festival Concert days, and Jim was part of his school band percussion section. Dick Smith of LaGrange plays the piano. Mark your calendars now for his Valentine's Concert at Festival Hill on February 8th. Two more Festival concert goers, Nancy Creamer of San Antonio studied piano with Dalies Frantz as did James Dick, and Sandra Kirk of Austin studied voice at James Dick's alma mater the University of Texas.

A Seat for Everyone

Your newsletter editor loves knowing some of the audience's musical history. An understanding emerges about individual favorite seats in a concert hall where all seats are good, as the knowledge that different ones of us have particular relationships with certain instruments – our pathway into the music.

Experienced Ears and Developing Ears

It's not only interesting to think of the listening perspective the vantage point of a particular instrument brings. There's a wonderful shared excitement, too, for loved musical adventures by some that are newly being experienced by others, such as the Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* and this editor's first opportunity to hear 15 movements, rather than hearing just several of the more famous ones. Tod Schenck of Houston and La Grange brought this point alive for me. She and Paul are part of the spirit exemplified at Festival Hill – people who love this special place and know their music. And as for those of us who are learning to love hearing and seeing music performed, what a place to learn!

The Festival Hill Experience

The Opening and Closing Concerts are bookend highlights to the Festival Season. Longtime trustee Mandy Dealey was at the opening concert with Jamie Anderson, chair of the Creekmore and Adele Fath Charitable Foundation which provided an important boost to the 2013 season. First the Fath Foundation helped with substantial scholarship support for the young artists, who all receive full scholarships, since music education is very expensive and attendance at Festival Hill is selective and merit based. They also underwrote the opening concert. Bravo, we say! Concert underwriting is hugely important to the ongoing success of the Festival, and in 2014 we long to see as many orchestral concerts as possible underwritten. Ray Cochran, in memory of Hildegard "Tiny" Dippel/Berry and Gene Harvey Dippel, underwrote the closing concert. To any potential concert sponsors who may be reading this, know that it is our delight to make your sponsored concert time very special for you, as you make a significant difference for the development of young talent by giving them the opportunity to perform on stage at Festival Concert Hall.

We can point to the fun we have preparing what we call the Blue Bell box the day of the Patriotic Concert, which Blue Bell so generously underwrites. For information about how we can specialize the concert sponsorship experience for you, contact our office at (979) 249-3129. Two upcoming underwriting opportunities that we'd love to see sponsored by someone with a strong interest in the multi-county area surrounding Round Top are "The Nutcracker" Ballet and the Round Top Music Festival's Young Persons' Concert.



Pass it on

Thank you, readers, for your part in making Festival Hill remarkable by adding to the culture of enrichment and fun that the engaging and expanding community of friends who gather here have together.

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