

NEWS from FESTIVAL HILL

THE HILL IS ALIVE!

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THE 2015 ROUND TOP MUSIC FESTIVAL

It was with great applause and gratitude we finished the 2015 Round Top Music Festival on July 12th as we said goodbye to the 92 member Texas Festival Orchestra and the faculty who enjoyed a life-changing summer in Texas. One of this year's highlighted events included a stunning opening performance with Maestro Dietrich Paredes of Venezuela conducting George Gershwin's Piano Concerto featuring James Dick and Dmitri Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony!

Throughout the festival season many concertgoers were able to meet members of the orchestra and faculty, as many came for performances week after week. As the festival went on, one noticeable difference this year was the increasing presence of a younger audience. We hope to carry this trend throughout the upcoming August-to-April series. It just goes to show that classical music is timeless at any age!

We were overjoyed that our annual Patriotic Concert was a huge success made possible by Blue Bell Creameries L.P.! With endless thanks, we want to show our appreciation to Blue Bell for supporting the music festival during a difficult period for the company. Maestro Linus Lerner led the Texas Festival Orchestra and chamber ensembles through a spectacular program.

The plans for next year's festival are already underway. We are gathering an exciting line-up of performances with star faculty and we look forward to a larger pool of applicants than ever before. For more performances like these visit our website, as we have a great series this fall.

New Concert Hall Display Honors Artisans

As a celebration of the artistic collaboration to the design of Festival Concert Hall, David Stark and Lynne Brody formed a team with Michael and David Haynes to create a display case. The idea for the exhibit grew out of the faux finishing work performed in the Concert Hall by Pat Brown and features the evolution and process of the woodworking aspects of the Hall.



Faux finishing was used in ancient Egyptian tombs and gradually became more widely practiced. During the Renaissance new techniques were developed, and the beautiful effects can still be seen in churches, palaces, and public buildings throughout Europe. Faux painting remained a popular decorative technique into the 1920s, when it fell out of fashion until a revival in the 1980's.

Artist Patricia Duncan Brown was introduced to the techniques of faux finishing in London in 1967. After graduating from the Cleveland Institute of Art as the most distinguished student in her class, she traveled to twenty different countries in Europe and Asia with her grant money from the National Endowment for the Arts and an Agnes Gund Travel Grant.

She often said that she acquired as many skills in her years of travel as she had in her years at school. After returning to her hometown of Austin, Pat worked as a professional artist and artisan as painter, illustrator, enamelist, miniaturist, and art teacher before opening Beau Faux in Austin, Texas, in 1986. Pat spent many hours on the scaffold assisted by artist Margie Crisp. She said that Round Top Festival Institute's Concert Hall was one of her two favorite jobs.

Wood craftsman Larry Birkelbach is credited for the successful completion of the interior of the Hall. Larry explained that when he began work in 1975, he was assigned to an older Czech gentleman, Arnold Prasifka. "He couldn't read or write, but he could carve anything. And I learned from him." Larry soon became the foreman of the twenty or so craftsmen who worked on the Hall over the past forty years. He says there is always something new to learn. The basic challenge is how to accomplish the desired effect.

A special thanks to David Stark, Lynne Brody, and Michael and David Haynes for undertaking this project to underscore the vision and skill demonstrated by the woodwork, the lighting, and the faux finishes which make up the beauty and sense of craftsmanship of the interior of the Concert Hall.



Larry Birkelbach (left) with David Stark and Lynne Brody

The case is now on display in Festival Concert Hall's green room.

The Gardens of Festival Hill:

A letter from Henry Flowers, Director of Grounds

Heavy rains in May and into mid-June were followed by two months of virtually no rain and now we are finally getting rain again which should set us up nicely for the fall. With all the rain in the spring has come a plethora of frogs in the garden. One is pictured here on the flower cluster of a ginger.

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NEWS from FESTIVAL HILL *(continued)*

Speaking of gingers – the Festival Hill gardens contain a wide variety of these useful plants. We of course grow the common culinary ginger as it is one of the most useful herbs in culinary creations and for medicinal purposes. Another



ginger that is equally useful and which has been mentioned much lately in news regarding medicinal herbs is turmeric. We have a wonderful patch of it in the Madalene Hill Pharmacy Garden's India bed. It has large foliage somewhat like a canna lily and amazing flowers hidden in the foliage, but its greatest prize is its vivid orange rhizomes normally kept secretly underground until harvested.

Some other more exotic culinary/medicinal gingers that we grow are greater galangal, lesser galangal, zedoary, black turmeric, cinnamon ginger, shampoo ginger, and the mioga ginger from Japan, which is prized mainly for its edible leaves. We also have some strictly ornamental gingers, but it is the useful ones that we prize most in our gardens.

There is almost always something interesting to see in the Festival Hill gardens and I hope that next time you visit you will take some time to stroll around and see what is going on.

Austin Worship Leaders Record Album in Chapel

On August 18th, REV1211 filmed and recorded the songs and stories that came from their *Love Where You Live* songwriting worship retreat earlier this summer. These were the songs that 24 Austin worship leaders came together and wrote for their community.

REV1211's mission is to gather like-minded artists and visionaries to create life-changing Gospel experiences. This



includes performance, visual arts, recording, live-scoring films, assembling unique collaborations, producing multimedia projects, and more—all part of “overcoming by the power of story.”

For more information on facility rentals for retreats and recordings, please visit our website.

Welcoming the New Marketing Director

This fall, Round Top Festival Institute welcomes Sergio Lozano as the new Director of Marketing and Communications.

Originally from San Antonio, Sergio first came to us as a young artist in the 2010 Round Top Music Festival as a student of the University of Texas at Austin's Butler School of Music. Since then, he has worked in media and music marketing, as well as performed in ensembles throughout the state. For the last five years, Sergio has dedicated his professional ambition into marketing classical music to develop newer audiences.

Sergio's focus on business and music have taken him around the world performing and networking with leaders in the industry, but with a point to always come home to Texas. He credits James Dick and the Summer Music Festival for the lasting impression made on him, one that has served as a model to promote this great cultural gem.



James Dick with new Marketing Director Sergio Lozano

A violist and violinist, Sergio enjoys learning languages, cooking, opera, UT Football, and the outdoors. The energy and passion he brings to the Institute is a true festive spirit!

The Art of Creating Flower Arrangements

Ever wonder what the flower arrangements at Festival Hill are made of? Where do the different plants come from? How do they always have color? How they seem so perfectly arranged? Many of the flower arrangements that adorn the buildings on Festival Hill are the creative work of Mary Reeves, a Round Top Festival Institute volunteer since 1979.

Mary's works of art can be seen gracing Festival Concert Hall during concerts and other events. To create these living exhibitions, Mary combines the indigenous flora from the fields with plants from the gardens for color and foliage, a ritual she has practiced all these years. The plants Mary harvests from are the result of over 30 years of planning, planting and conservation practices on the 210-acre campus. A host of volunteers and plant enthusiasts, joined by Henry Flowers, Director of Grounds, in 2000, has cultivated a plethora of botanical specimens which serve to provide the color and diversity in her arrangements.

In times of drought or when an abundance of blooms is needed, friends, docents and neighbors provide flowers to fill the need. When the 4th of July comes around, friends let us cut generous amounts of bluebells on their properties for the annual Patriotic Concert, sponsored by Blue Bell Creameries.

“I still walk the fields just to check favorite spots and plants,” Mary states as she speaks of harvesting for what will make up her next arrangement. “When harvesting for a particular event I plan for the placement of the design. What, where, when and why. The length of stem cut is for the good of the plant. Once cut you cannot add height so take away length carefully as you work.”



“Harvesting for plants takes time to find the patterns and the colors,” says Mary. She often can be seen walking the fields and roadsides, searching for blooms and vegetation to provide contrast and dimension to her arrangements. When the season is right, she hikes the wooded area east of Highway 237 to where she knows she will find the spot where the Cherokee roses grow to see if she can reach them. Even with the drought it can climb to 20 or more feet! All to make that perfect arrangement.

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