Chamber Music Amici News

Creating Community Through Great Music

Winter 2021

FRENCH MASTERS VIRTUAL CONCERT AIRING APRIL 26

It's 2021, and the pandemic is still with us. Recommended restrictions have tightened up. For the safety of the musicians and their families, Amici is focusing on duos and trios, to minimize indoor exposure for rehearsals and recording sessions.

Consequently, our concert timing and programming have changed. The next concert will still have a romantic flavor and include the Fauré piano trio from the Amici wish-to-play list. This will be balanced with two other romantic master works: Camille Saint-Saëns' violin sonata and Reinhold Glière's duet for violin and cello.

April 26, *French Masters* Program

Gabriel Fauré, Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 120
Reinhold Glière, Duets for Violin & Cello, Op. 39
Camille Saint-Saëns, Sonata for Violin & Piano No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 75

Access to this virtual concert is $25 and can be purchased from our website, chambermusicamici.org, or by calling our office, 541.953.9204. If you are a subscriber, or have already purchased a ticket to this concert, you can log in to your account between 7:00 PM, April 26 and midnight on May 26, to watch this concert.

ANNUAL ART CONTEST WINNERS

Ballots for the People Choice have been counted and the winners of our annual art contest have been selected.

The winners, pictured top to bottom at left, are: *In Tune with Nature*, by Kathie Lundberg; *Sympathy*, by Youngsun Cho; *Prelude for the Unexpected*, by Andréa Daly; *Cello et al,* by Jane and Kenn Poznar; *Key to Music*, by Nora Rodabaugh; and *Musical Pieces,* by Megan Haight.

The People's Choice Award goes to *Prelude for the Unexpected*, by Andréa Daly.

Congratulations and thank you for participating in our annual event. We hope to see you and your new art next season!

Chamber Music Amici

Winter 2021
Newsletter
Volume 12, No. 2,

About Amici

Staff

Eunhye Grace Choi
Artistic Director
Loi Heldt
Executive Director
Bruce Heldt
Donor Relations

Core Musicians

Eunhye Grace Choi
Jessica Lambert
Lillie Manis
Steven Pologe
Sharon Schuman

Board of Directors

Don Hirst , *President*
Tory Heldt, *Secretary*
Jessica Lambert, *VP*
Eunhye Grace Choi
Nonna Haydock
Lillie Manis
Steven Pologe
Laurel Ross
Sharon Schuman

Contact Us

174 E. 16th Avenue
Eugene, OR 97401
(541) 953-9204
info@
chambermusicamici.org

World Wide Web

chambermusicamici.org

EUNHYE GRACE CHOI, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

By Nonna Haydock

Eunhye is Korean for 'grace', so she adopted Grace as her American name when she was in a US college classroom with several other Eunhyes, also from Korea.

Grace's introduction to music was following a friend to after-school musical academies for little children. She took her first piano lessons at five, and the family bought a piano when she was seven. By the time she was in middle school Grace declared that she wanted to be a pianist. Luckily, her parents were very supportive of her decision to study music.

Following a Bachelor's in Music Composition in Korea, Grace attended Florida State University for M.M. and the University of Minnesota for D.M.A. in Collaborative Piano and Coaching. She attributes her excellent sight-reading skills to the composition studies, although she had to catch up a couple of years' worth of experience in the performance repertoire.

Grace, Tayeon, and Wonkak

Grace initially said that she just focuses on getting the best performance out of whichever piano she is playing at that moment but confessed that she does have a soft spot for 'Golden Age' pianos. Grace owns a 1926 vintage Mason & Hamlin piano with ivory keys.

She enjoys a wide range of repertoire, and some time would like to tackle performing *Café Music,* a piano trio by a favorite composer, Paul Schoenfeld. It is jazzy and fun but also very challenging, needing time to study it.

Grace and her clarinetist husband Wonkak Kim have a 4-year-old daughter, Tayeon, who enjoys listening to music and singing. They take pride in managing their schedules so that they don't need babysitters, except for Grace's mother who visits occasionally from South Korea. They support each other's careers, planning childcare around teaching and performances.

Tayeon is being brought up bilingual. For her musical future, Grace hopes she will choose something portable like the violin, which would also be handy for family trios!

In her role as Artistic Director, Grace believes in staying positive and loves sharing the music. She sees the pandemic situation as a challenge and enjoys puzzling through the problems it presents.

VIRTUAL ART RECEPTION

Chamber Music Amici, along with other arts organizations, has found ways to provide patrons and musicians with as close to a normal season as possible. The latest opportunity we had was to make our annual art reception available to you. Artistic Director Grace Choi set about learning new software, and has created an event you do not want to miss!

To view the entire virtual event, visit our website's *Community* page.

Emerald Art Center, 500 Main St., Springfield

Miriam Jordan, Board of Directors Emerald Empire Art Association

Thanks to the Emerald Art Center which has hosted our contest and reception for 12 years and thanks to our Art Sponsors, John and Linda Van Peenen. We look forward to joining the Emerald Art Center and the City of Springfield next February for the Second Friday Art Walk in person.

You still have the opportunity to view the finalists from our contest. They will be on display at the Midtown Art Center during March and April. You are welcome to stop by and view it during regular business hours, at 174 E. 16th Avenue.

LOCAL YOUTH PERFORM AT VIRTUAL ART RECEPTION

By Lillie Manis

Student performers, at Chamber Music Amici's Virtual Art Reception, counter clockwise from top left: Eva Kovachevich, Yuwei Zhang; Tomas Furuyum, Ezra Oncken, Nicolas Oncken, Sabine Voelker, and Lillie Manis.

It was such a pleasure for students from the Willamette Violin Academy, where I co-teach with founder and director Kara Eubanks, to have their videorecorded performances included in Amici's virtual art contest reception. These violinists, ages 5 to 14, have been playing and practicing up a storm with their friends at WVA, even with all of our instruction moving entirely online! In addition to weekly music theory classes and individual and group lessons (which some students attend as frequently as 4 or 5 times a week), students have participated in online competitions and masterclasses; live Zoom recitals with audience members from thousands of miles away; and professionally produced ensemble performances, with individual videos made in their own homes layered together to create something magical. We are learning from each other -- teachers and students -- that this pandemic offers us not only pain and challenges, but also newfound gratitude. We are so glad to be able to make music together, even from far apart, and appreciate Amici's scholarship support, making us able to bring these educational opportunities to more students in need.

WHAT HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT OUR CONCERTS

Part I of the COVID-19 impacted season is nearing the end. We would like to thank all of you who joined us to watch the first half of the season virtually. Though we still have one concert that will begin airing April 26, we are thrilled that you are enjoying what we have created for you.

"...Thank you so much for preparing such an excellent program of chamber music for clarinet, piano and violin. I loved all of the pieces, especially Victor Steinhardt's Running Blue... Loved the Milhaud... I loved the playing of every musician in the performance, you all worked very well together."
Ben Farrell, Evening Circulation Coordinator, UO Library System

"The concert was wonderful! From the music selection, the colorful outfits worn by the performers, the floral backdrop…especially nice, the shots of the players!!! Amazingly well done…considering we don't get to 'move around' from our seats!"
Nancy & Peter Carlson

THE ROOSTER AND THE FOX, IN WORDS AND MUSIC, AUGUST 31 AND SEPTEMBER 1

Although Chaucer's story about the near-death experience of Chaunticleer, a courtly rooster, is centuries old, the issues of life it highlights ring true today. Sharon Schuman explains, *"It's contemporary because people have had the same problems for 600 years."*

Sharon's vision was to bring this story from Middle English into modern language complemented by chamber music. So she translated *The Nun's Priest's Tale*, the only animal fable among Geoffrey Chaucer's popular *Canterbury Tales* of the 14th century.

Amici commissioned Colin Pip Dixon to create the music.

It's not the first time Dixon, artistic director of the Elsewhere Ensemble, has taken on the challenge of intertwining literature and music. Originally from New York City, he moved to Eugene more than two years ago after working in Paris and New York for many years, composing pieces matched to stories like The Velveteen Rabbit and works of Chekhov and Oscar Wilde. The Elsewhere Ensemble performed them in locations as diverse as Paris, New York and Beirut.

For this project Dixon found inspiration in the complexity of Chaucer's writing style. "The spirit of Chaucer is humor," says Dixon. "He writes an animal fable, which sounds like it's for kids, but then he has this rooster quoting philosophers from antiquity. I thought, 'How can I translate that into the musical world?'"

That duality guided Dixon in his initial approach to the composition-- that "the music could bring a childlike sense of fun and at the same time be sophisticated."

The result is *The Rooster and the Fox*, featuring a narrator, a piano, a string quartet and a bassoon. We can hardly wait!

WRAPPING UP PART I OF AMICI'S 2020-2021 SEASON

Amici's final virtual concert of Part I of our 2020-2021 season is coming in April. The concert, *French Masters*, showcases three late Romantic chamber music compositions by Fauré, Glière, and Saint-Saëns.

If you have already subscribed to the full season, or just to Part I, you can login to your online account anytime after 7:00 PM, April 26. If you are not a subscriber, tickets ($25) can be purchased form our website or by phone at 541.953.9204

PART II: AT THE WHITE OAK PAVILLION AT MT. PISGAH ARBORETUM

Part II of our season, our final two concerts, will be performed at the White Oak Pavilion at Mt. Pisgah Arboretum in June and August. While experimenting with small outdoor concerts last fall, Amici discovered a wonderful site for outdoor concerts at Mt. Pisgah Arboretum. Our musicians played there, listened to the acoustics, and were enthralled by the outdoor setting. We reserved it as a backup response to uncertain pandemic restrictions, and will be trying it out as a venue for a potential new summer series of concerts.
The first concert of Part II, in June, consists of chamber music with voice. Guest artists include soprano Erika Rauer, Tyler Abbott on bass, and Amici founding member, Pilar Bradshaw.

The second concert will premiere Colin Pip Dixon's musical setting of Chaucer's *The Rooster and The Fox*, a sextet for bassoon, piano, string quartet, and narrator. This work was commissioned by Chamber Music Amici and the story is based on one of Geoffrey Chaucer's tales. Also, on the program is Dohnanyi's second piano quintet in E-flat Minor.

If you have already subscribed to our whole season, you will be contacted for choice of performance dates. Since we do not know what outdoor venue restrictions may be in place for these summer concerts, we do not know how many tickets ($35) will be available so we are starting a wait list. You can sign up for this wait list on our website or by phone.

Chamber Voices

June 22 or 24

Guillaume Lekeu, Pleinte d'Andromeda
Ernest Chausson, Chanson Perpetuelle, Op. 37
Virgil Thomson, Stabat Mater
John Corigliano, Snapshot, Circa 1909
Ildebrando Pizzetti, Tre Canzone

Amici

Eunhye Grace Choi, ***piano***
Lillie Manis, ***viola***
Steven Pologe, ***cello***
Sharon Schuman, ***violin***

Guests

Tyler Abbott, ***bass***
Pilar Bradshaw, ***violin***
Erika Rauer, ***soprano***

Art: above: *Of One Voice* by Kris Stewart;
far right, *The Rooster and the Fox,* by Liesel Benda

Once Upon A Time

August 31 or September 1

Colin Pip Dixon
Chaucer's The Rooster and the Fox
Sextet for Bassoon, Piano, String Quartet & Narrator

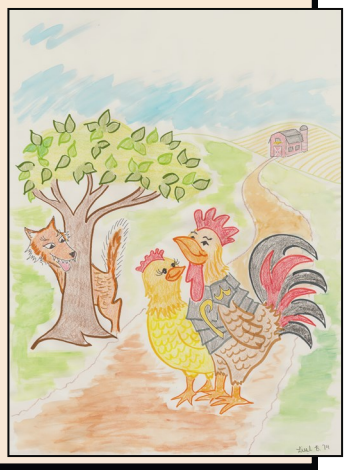
Ernst von Dohnanyi
Piano Quintet No. 2 in E-flat Minor, Op. 26

Amici

Steven Pologe, ***cello***
Sharon Schuman, ***violin***

Guests

MacIntyre Dixon, ***narrator***
Nathalie Fortin, ***piano***
Arnaud Ghillebaert, **viola**
Hal Grossman, **violin**
Steve Vacchi, **bassoon**



PANDEMIC PROTOCOLS, OR:
HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE VIRTUAL MUSIC PERFORMANCES

by Bruce Heldt

I prefer music that's performed by a small number of musicians. I like the clarity of sound and musical ideas that's more difficult to attain once the number of voices exceeds three or four at a time. This bias makes my fondness for Chamber Music Amici easy to understand.

I also enjoy the improvisation and rhythmic vitality of a good jazz group, ideally also with just three or four members - maybe five or six if they don't spend too much time all playing at once.

This bias has made it easy for me to learn to love certain kinds of virtual music performances. The smaller the group, the easier it is to produce high quality virtual music following the appropriate pandemic protocols.

As might be expected, Amici's high quality recorded virtual performances provided my first lesson in learning to love virtual music, namely, don't fret over what you can't control. So I don't get hung up on the fact that the musicians aren't actually in the same room with me and creating that wonderful music right NOW. And I don't worry about the effect on the musicians of playing in front to an empty hall rather than feeding on the energy of an audience.

Instead, I learned to appreciate the advantages that virtual performances can present. For example, I can schedule the concert for a time of my choosing, when I'm optimally ready to appreciate the music. I get to sit in the best seat in the house, literally! I can enjoy a sip of wine at just the right time. No rain or cold or traffic to fight getting to the concert. And I can pause or replay the performance anytime I choose.

DVD's of Chamber Music Amici's first two virtual concerts are available to rent for $25. Contact Loi at 541-953-9204 for details.

The next lesson I learned was that small jazz groups are finding venues from which they can present high quality improvised virtual music performances. Jazz Pianist Randy Porter has a recording studio in Lake Oswego, from which he has been providing live virtual performances by small jazz groups each Sunday night. Group members perform from different rooms in the studio, all visible to each other via windows. The sound and music quality is what you would expect from a CD, and the video cuts between musicians capture the real time interplay between the band members that is possible because of the studio arrangement. (see www.RandyPorter.com)

Woodstock Wine & Deli (www.facebook.com/WoodstockWineDeli/) in Portland has also been presenting a series of virtual concerts live from their store, after hours.

The "advantages" of virtual music performances which I described above apply to virtual jazz performances as well. I'm hoping that these kinds of high-quality virtual performances don't disappear when the pandemic does. They can be wonderful supplements to (but not replacements for) live performances.

A surprise discovery from these virtual jazz performances was getting to hear Joe Manis, the husband of Amici violist Lillie Manis, perform. He plays sax in the Dave Friesen Circle 3 Trio.

"We were able to watch the concert even though we're in Palm Springs. There are advantages to virtual performances! We enjoyed it immensely even though we do miss the live performances at the Wildish."

Ginny and Roger Reich

AMICI IS MATURING AS AN ARTS ORGANIZATION

By Bruce Heldt

Last season Chamber Music Amici applied for and received a grant to partially fund the creation of an Operations Manual. After ten seasons of successfully developing and perfecting its operating model with few changes in personnel and fewer changes in its operating model, Amici recognized that having an Operations Manual would provide needed guidance for inevitable future changes in personnel or operations.

At the time of applying for the grant, Jessica was in the fourth year of her five year term as Artistic Director, and David Meredith had given Amici notice that it would be his last season as Amici's Development Director, so imminent staff changes were expected. What was not expected was the even greater change that Amici's operations would soon be undergoing thanks to COVID-19!

The first draft of our Operations Manual has been completed and we will now spend the next year or so reviewing the Manual, cleaning it up, and updating it for changes forced or inspired by the pandemic. This process will also provide an opportunity to review Amici's operations with an eye to improvements and efficiencies.

With David's retirement, Amici also decided it was a good time to convert our patron and donor database from the generic *Access* database program that Amici had been using to a more powerful and widely supported program: *CiviCRM*. This powerful constituent relationship management system will let us more easily and efficiently track, communicate with, and engage our patrons and donors.

WE HAVE MOVED!

Chamber Music Amici can now be found at 174 E. 16th Avenue; we moved into our new offices on Monday, February 8.

Loi is enjoying a little more space, less pitter-pitter-pound of little feet and voices, and looking forward to working closer to Grace when the time comes.

The residential portion of the new Midtown Art Center is not complete though office space has been certified to occupy. Loi and Grace now share a hall way with Lane Arts Council and Pacific International Choral Festivals—PICFEST. Also moving over to 174 E. 16th and sharing the hallway to the west is Eugene Concert Choir and Eugene Opera.

With COVID safety protocols in place you are welcome to stop by for a visit—please call ahead—we would love to see you!

Image courtesy Dustrud Architecture

Chamber Music Amici
PO Box 50824
Eugene, Oregon 97405
www.chambermusicamici.org
541.953.9204

Non-Profit
US Postage **PAID**
Eugene, OR
Permit No. 325

WILDISH COMMUNITY THEATER
RAINBOW VALLEY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
Cascade MANOR
CLASSIC PIANOS A PASSION FOR PIANOS
ISLER CPA CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS & BUSINESS ADVISORS
Melinda Handy CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

Season Supporters

Season-long recognition goes to firms that sign on as Season Supporter. When you visit them, please let them know you appreciate their support of Chamber Music Amici!

Creating Community Through Great Music

2020-2021 Season
Part I, Final virtual concert

Recorded at the Wildish Theater

Online access available

April 26 to May 26

French Masters

Gabriel Fauré, Reinhold Glière, Camille Saint-Saëns

(**$25 for those who have not already subscribed to Part I of our season.
Tickets: chambermusicamici.org, or 541-953-9204
If you have already subscribed, login to your account on our website to watch.)

2020-2021 Season
Part II, Outdoor Concerts

White Oak Pavilion at
Mt. Pisgah Arboretum

June 22 & 24

Chamber Voices

Guests: **Tyler Abbott, Pilar Bradshaw, Erika Rauer**

August 31 & September 1

Once Upon A Time

premier work *The Rooster and the Fox* by Colin Pip Dixon based on a tale by Chaucer

Ticket & wait-list information inside.)