BENEFACTORS OF THE
2007-2008
CLASSICAL CONCERT SERIES

Hella and Heinz Berndt
Sonia and Morgan Churchman
Daniel Cosper
Marjorie and James E. DelBello
Renate and Frank Genieser
Susan J. Gerrity and Edward Taffel
Dr. Harold E. Glass
Dr. Janice and Arthur Goldmann
Fredericka L. Heinze

Gisela Hill and Joseph Perry
Majorie and Dr. F. Peter Kohler
Anita and William LaCoff
Gabriele W. Lee
Dr. Victor K. Schutz
Doris H.E. Simon
Ann and Karl H. Spaeth, Esq.
Sonja and Hanno Spranger

In Memoriam Gunda Hack

PATRONS OF THE
2007-2008
CLASSICAL CONCERT SERIES

Jane and R. Thomas Unkefer
Ingrid M. Virok
Hardy von Auenmueller
M.J. and Roger Whiteman

The
Wister Quartet
Sunday
December 9, 2007
at 3:00  p.m.

Albert and Hete Barthelmes Auditorium
611 Spring Garden Street     Philadelphia, Pa.
History of the German Society of Pennsylvania

In 1683 thirteen families from Krefeld under the leadership of Frankfurt lawyer, Franz Daniel Pastorius, founded the first German colony in America: Germantown — today part of Philadelphia. Many of these immigrants formed clubs that enabled them to preserve their cultural heritage. They also formed clubs that emphasized a specific geographic area, such as the Swabians, Bavarians, Saxons, Danube Swabians, Plattdeutsche, Tyroleans, and many others.

The German Society of Pennsylvania, founded in 1764, is the oldest German organization in the United States. It was founded to protect German immigrants from unscrupulous shipping agents and to ensure just treatment on their arrival here.

Since that time, the German Society has dedicated its efforts to preserving German heritage. This it does, for instance, by offering a full-fledged German language program as well as scholarships and prizes to students of German. In addition, the Society is a source of cultural programs, lectures, film series, and seminars. These events build bridges and strengthen relations among individuals, organizations, businesses and governments.

The fine arts program also includes presentations that feature European music and literature as well as access to the Joseph P. Horner Memorial Library for education and research. The newly restored Library, holding over 70,000 volumes, is the largest private German library outside the Federal Republic of Germany.

In serving its members and the community, the Society strives to benefit anyone in need of its resources.

Since the time of Pastorius, more than 8,000,000 Germans reached these shores. Today, 29% of the total population in the United States claims German ancestry.

It may be time to consider a membership for yourself, your family or a friend.

---

Calendar of Events at the German Society of Pennsylvania

**December**

Sun. Dec. 9  
“Wister and More!” Concert Series, The Wister Quartet, 3:00pm

Wed. Dec. 12  
Konversationsabend, Adventsfeier at the Auenmuellers, 7:00pm

**January 2008**

Sat. Jan. 5  
Women’s Auxiliary Monthly Meeting, 10:00am

Mon. Jan. 7  
Winter Language Classes Semester Begins

Fri. Jan. 11  
Friday Film Fest, “Alles auf Zucker”, 6:30pm

Sun. Jan. 20  
“Wister and More!” Concert Series, Frankfurter Kammertrio, 3:00pm

Mon. Jan. 21  
Konversationsabend, Review of Germany’s Present Political and Socio-Economic Status, with Hardy von Auenmueller, 7:00pm

**February 2008**

Fri. Feb. 8  
Friday Film Fest, “Nirgendwo in Afrika”, 6:30pm

Sun. Feb. 10  
“Wister and More!” Concert Series, The Wister Quartet, 3:00pm

Thurs. Feb. 21  
Konversationsabend, Topic TBA, 7:00pm

**March 2008**

Sun. March 9  
“Wister and More!” Concert Series, Duo Parisienne, 3:00pm

Fri. March 14  
Friday Film Fest, “Effie Briest”, 6:30pm

Sun. March 30  
“Wister and More!” Concert Series, The Wister Quartet, 3:00pm

The Library now has hours on Saturdays from 9:30am-12:30pm.

The German Society will be closed from 12/22/07—1/1/08 for the holidays, reopening on Wednesday, January 2, 2008.
The Wister Quartet

Since its formation in 1987, the Wister Quartet has earned high praise from critics and audiences alike for its superb musicianship and memorable performances, including those with guest artists Emanuel Ax, Yefim Bronfman, Alicia de Larrocha, Christoph Eschenbach, Wolfgang Sawallisch and Yo-Yo Ma. Formerly in residence at Haverford College, the Quartet performs widely in the tri-state area, including concerts at Swarthmore and Gettysburg Colleges, and Arcadia and Shippensburg University. The Quartet is featured regularly in performances at the Lenape Chamber Players Summer Festivals as well as the Chamber Series of the Philadelphia Orchestra and at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, the Glencairn Museum, and the Laurel Hill Concerts by Candlelight. The Wister Quartet is the core constituent ensemble of 1807 & Friends chamber ensemble.

Since 1993, the Wister Quartet has been presented in the Classical Concert Series of the German Society of Pennsylvania featuring some of the greatest string quartet repertoire ever written. The Quartet has recorded with DTR Recording Company, earning a Grammy nomination and critical praise for their "big vibrant sound, dramatic contrasts and brilliant effects."

Nancy Bean has been a member of The Philadelphia Orchestra since 1983 and is currently its Assistant Concertmaster. She is Artistic Director of 1807 & Friends chamber ensemble and violinist with the Barnard Trio, the Florian Trio, Duo Paganini, Duo Parisienne, Duo Malibran and the Amerita Chamber Ensemble.

Davyd Booth has been a violinist and keyboard player in The Philadelphia Orchestra since 1973 and was named its harpsichordist in 1999. He was a member of the Philarte Quartet for 14 years and is Co-Director and harpsichordist for the Amerita Chamber Ensemble. He is a member of 1807 & Friends, the Barnard Trio and Duo Malibrán.

Pamela Fay is a substitute member of The Philadelphia Orchestra. She has been a member of the Vancouver and Toronto Symphonies and was Assistant Principal Viola of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa. She is the violist of 1807 & Friends chamber ensemble.

Lloyd Smith has been a member of The Philadelphia Orchestra since 1967 and was its Assistant Principal cellist since 1988. In 2002 he was its Acting Associate Principal cellist and retired in 2003 to devote himself to chamber music and composing. He is cellist with 1807 & Friends, the Barnard Trío, the Florian Trío and the Amerita Chamber Ensemble.

“War and Peace”

PROGRAM

SERGEY RACHMANINOV
String Quartet in G Minor
Andante espressivo
Allegro

DMITRY SHOSTAKOVICH
String Quartet No. 2, Op. 68
Moderato con moto
Recitative and Romance: Adagio
Waltz: Allegro
Theme with Variations:
Adagio - Moderato con moto

INTERMISSION

ALEXANDRE BORODIN
String Quartet No. 2 in D Major
Allegro moderato
Scherzo: Allegro
Nocturne: Andante
Finale: Andante - Vivace

The will be no reception in the Ratskeller following the concert due to the construction work in that area.
Program Notes

by Lloyd Smith

Sergey Rachmaninov (1872-1943)
String Quartet in G Minor

One of the finest pianists of his day, Rachmaninov as a composer represents the last of the Russian late Romantics. He began his formal studies at the age of 9 at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, but family upheavals made studying difficult and he was sent to the Moscow Conservatory, where he was trained rigorously. He and two other students lived with his teacher, Nikolay Zverev, a strict disciplinarian. All three students generally practiced at the same time in the same house, a cacophonic arrangement surprisingly common throughout musical history in Europe and Russia.

The noise made it nearly impossible for Rachmaninov to compose music. Indeed, he was not encouraged to do so, and was taught theory and counterpoint only for the purposes of undergirding his piano studies. But it was under these difficult conditions that his earliest works came into the world, and perhaps accounts for the completion and survival of only the second and third movements of this quartet.

Dmitry Shostakovich (1906-1975)
String Quartet No. 2, Op. 68

Best known as the greatest symphonist of the 20th century, Dmitry Shostakovich’s chamber works also deserve recognition. While it is generally agreed that his eighth string quartet is the best of the 15 he composed, his second quartet also stands as a powerful, slightly naïve, but very personal work.

He wrote it in 1944 in Leningrad, a city much besieged in the second World War. Shostakovich had already poured out his heart over Leningrad in his seventh symphony, written as the city came under attack in 1941, so this quartet does not focus entirely on the war but on the strength of the people during this horrendous time.

He opens with a strong statement couched in a simple folk idiom. The use of the open “E” string in the first violin underscores this idea of strength and, perhaps, naïveté. The movement remains boisterous for the most part but is tempered by two sections, one depressed, the other sweet.

The second movement, a heart-wrenching recitative from the first violin, envelopes a very injured and withdrawn Romance. The composer seems to be saying that his spirit still tries to go on loving but it is almost too beaten down to endure through the tragedy which surrounds him.

The third movement is a fast-moving Waltz, but a very bitter one. The melody lies mostly with the cello in its low register, as if the music has had to go underground to survive.

After a short introduction filled with defiance, the Finale gets under way with a philosophically upbeat little tune. The turmoil overcomes it now and then, but the optimism returns, usually fragmented but still unbeaten, and does serious battle until a hesitant little “victory tune” emerges to carry the music towards the return of the defiant opening: great courage in the face of unthinkable horror.

Alexandre Borodin (1834-1887)
String Quartet No. 2 in D Major

Alexander Borodin was one of a group of Russian composers of the mid-1800s who sought to represent an aural picture of their native country (it became known as “Nationalistic music”). Along with Cui, Rimsky-Korsakov, Moussorgsky and Glinka, the spirit and fantasy that was Russia at this time was vividly portrayed through folk elements, vital rhythms and scenic depiction in sound.

Borodin was by profession a chemist, and a very noted one at that. Indeed, during his life, his musical contributions received scant notice, and even his obituary contained only the briefest mention of his work in the field of music. Composing, studying music, and playing cello were all done in the spare moments of a busy scientific career — one that involved teaching, active research, and much publishing of complex and far-reaching papers.

Now, of course, the reverse is true — Borodin’s greatest reputation lies in the wonderful music he created: symphonies, quartets, songs, and — perhaps above all — his operas. Indeed, his great gift of melodic invention was so wonderful that even after his death he had a long run on Broadway in the form of the hit musical “Kismet”, which used music from this string quartet for the songs “Baubles, Bangles and Beads” from the first movement and “And This is My Beloved” from the Nocturne.

Every movement of the second quartet is nearly overflowing with glorious melodies and lush harmonic settings. Highlights, drama, sweep — these are all in abundance, but never more so than in the third movement, the Nocturne, one of the most beautiful and popular creations of all time. For this work alone, it is easy to understand the great appeal of Borodin and to appreciate his genius.