

Overtures

Virtuoso Program Newsletter

A publication of the San Domenico Music Conservatory

A Message from the Managing Director

Robin Creighton Ravazzini '90
Virtuoso Program Managing Director



The Virtuoso Program celebrated its Thirtieth Anniversary in October with a weekend of activities in San Domenico's beautiful Carol Franc Buck Hall of the Arts. It was great to see many Virtuoso Program alumnae returning to campus for the events. They enjoyed catching up with old friends, getting to know the current students and playing in the new concert hall.

The festivities began on Friday afternoon with the Vivaldi Concert Preview performance presented by the Orchestra da Camera and San Domenico Singers for the Upper School student body. This tradition allows the students to play for their classmates and serves as a dress rehearsal for Sunday's concert.

At Saturday evening's Celebration Dinner, 70 people with close ties to the Virtuoso Program gathered in the beautiful Faith Y. France Lobby for a delicious meal catered by Epicurean. Virtuoso Program alumnae, their parents, and donors to the Virtuoso Program Scholarship Fund were joined by current Virtuoso Program students, parents, faculty and administrators. Attendees enjoyed hearing reflections from many of the alumnae on how their Virtuoso Program experience touched their lives. The alums who spoke are pursuing a variety of career paths but they all shared how the program had a profound effect on their lives.

On Sunday, the students gave a wonderful performance to a sold-out audience. The orchestra was joined by thirteen Virtuoso Program alumnae who sat onstage and played Vivaldi's *Gloria* accompanying the San Domenico Singers. Following the Vivaldi, the Orchestra da Camera performed Mozart *Divertimento in D Major, KV136*, Dvorak *Cello Concerto* with Mariko Wyrick '11 as soloist, and Bloch *Concerto Grosso for String Orchestra and Piano Obligato*.

Many in attendance commented that it was the best *Vivaldi at San Domenico* concert in the program's history! To request a free CD recording of the concert, please contact the San Domenico Music Conservatory at music@sandomenico.org or (415) 258-1921.



Camille Buchanan '08, Christina Simpson '07 (viola student at the Colburn School in Los Angeles), Min Seon Kim '08, and Emilie Jones, '09

Virtuoso Program Thirtieth Anniversary Celebration Alumnae Participants

Sarah Aroner '01, Katie Bokan-Smith '04, Margaret Coote '94, Dominique Davison '91, Margot Limm Holtzman '82, Stacy Hsueh '07, Holly Creighton Kelly '88, Sarah Lee '07, Zoe Lyon MS'07, Jennifer Newhall Pont '82, Robin Creighton Ravazzini '90, Shalin Ris '07, Christina Simpson '07 and Karolinka Tekiela '07



Virtuoso Program Founder Faith France with Virtuoso Program Parent Committee Chair Catherine Simpson and donor Nancy Slenkin

From the Podium

George Thomson, Virtuoso Program Music Director



On local television there is a show called "High School Sports Focus." Every week you can see highlights of local games and profiles of top high school players and coaches. Given the emphasis our culture places on sports and athletic achievement, it should come as no surprise that talented youth are celebrated in this way.

I often wonder, however, what it would be like to live in a world where you could watch highlights of High School orchestra concerts every week—where the local paper would follow the local recital scene, giving line-ups for the next week's chamber music concerts, where famous viola players would smile at the paparazzi along the red carpet. A far-fetched fantasy, I know—especially that last part... but for a few days in February, our Virtuoso Program students and I will get to experience just a glimpse of what such a world might be like, at the 2008 National Orchestra Festival competition sponsored by the American String Teachers Association.

At the Festival, High School musicians from across the country will be gathering to perform, to listen, and to meet each other. These are students from public and private schools that have one thing in common besides their love of music. They all have the support of dedicated teachers, parents, and friends, who have worked hard to build music programs of the highest caliber. In a real world that too often treats music as mere entertainment and arts education as an "extra," these are people who see the real value it has to young people and whose effort and sheer force of will make the music happen. It is inspiring to me to meet these colleagues from around the country, as it is for the students.

Naturally, our students want to be "the best," and to come home with a trophy. What they really want is the recognition they deserve. And they will get it, thanks to the efforts of our own Virtuoso Program friends and donors, who make opportunities like this possible.



George Thomson leads a group of current students and alumnae reading through the Mendelssohn Octet at the chamber music reading party

The Virtuoso Program Heads to Albuquerque!

The Orchestra da Camera is one of twelve high school orchestras from around the country selected to compete in the 2008 National Orchestra Festival sponsored by the American String Teachers Association. When we won a Grand Champion award at the competition in 2005, the judges were generous with their praise. This year the orchestra will perform a duo of divertimenti: the *Divertimento in D Major, KV 136* by Mozart and the *Divertimento for Strings* by Bartók, and they will certainly "wow" the judges again.

Our live competition performance is open to the public! Come hear our students perform on Friday, February 29, 2008 at 1:00pm in the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque in Albuquerque, New Mexico. If you can't be there but you have friends in Albuquerque, please tell them they are invited to come and root for us!

New Poll Links Music Education to Career Success

November 12, 2007

MENC: The National Association for Music Education and Harris Interactive today released an independent poll which shows a positive association of music with lifelong educational attainment and higher income. Nearly nine in ten people (88 percent) with post graduate degrees participated in music education. Further, 83 percent of those with incomes higher than \$150,000 or more participated in music.

"Research confirms that music education at an early age greatly increases the likelihood that a child will grow up to seek higher education and ultimately earn a higher salary," said Dr. John Mahlmann, Executive Director of MENC: The National Association for Music Education.

Respondents of the Harris Poll cite skills they learned in music as helping them in their careers today. Seventy-two percent of adults with music education agree that it equips people to be better team players in their career and nearly six in ten agree that music education has influenced their creative problem solving skills. Many also agree music education provides a disciplined approach to problem solving, a sense of organization and prepares someone to manage the tasks of their job more successfully.

Source: www.menc.org

San Domenico Virtuoso Program Faculty & Staff

George W. Thomson, Music Director

Robin Creighton Ravazzini '90, Virtuoso Program Managing Director

Zaven Melikian, Violin Teacher and Chamber Music Coach

Chen Zhao, Violin Teacher and Chamber Music Coach

Sergei Riabtchenko, Cello Teacher and Chamber Music Coach

Miles Graber, piano accompanist

Rob DeNunzio, Music Conservatory Director