

# The Harmonium Inchoirer

A Classical Choral Society

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## Spring Concert Delights All

As well as featuring student compositions, Harmonium's June Concert at Grace Church in Madison presented Brahms' *Five Songs Op. 104*, Ravel's *Trois Chansons*, and works by Tavener, Heath, Schickele and others. The grand finale was a rendition of the Ward Swingle arrangement of Lennon/McCartney's *When I'm Sixty-four* replete with hats and canes and tenor choreography by Bill Corson.

*What is it that makes presentations by the Harmonium Choral Society so satisfying?* wrote Don Martone of Classical New Jersey (6/30/99). *By this time their perfect intonation, ideal blend, and exemplary diction are almost taken for granted. The imaginative and theme-centered programming is also a matter of course...one answer may be the attention paid to that third member of the triumvirate, the audience. Keeping the audience in mind does not mean playing down to it, for as Harmonium has demonstrated, respect for the listener and immaculate presentation create memorable experiences.*

## Where on the Web?

Until recently, few could remember Harmonium's web address, because it was long and intricate. Now all that has changed. Surf over to [www.harmonium.org](http://www.harmonium.org) and take a look at our new, improved web site.

You will find an events schedule, info on how to contact us, mailing-list sign-ups (e-mail and US mail), and details on ordering tickets and recordings. The members-only section contains rehearsal schedule, weekly announcements and other matters of interest to the group.

Soon you'll even have access to our digital archives, our student composition contest page, and special features, like concert excerpts in MP3 format. So check back frequently.

Help us improve the site. Send comments and questions to [webmaster@harmonium.org](mailto:webmaster@harmonium.org).

## Students Compose & Win

June's concert "Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience" included performances of two winning student compositions of the second annual High School Student Composition Contest: Melinda Riley's *Melodies of My Childhood* (First Runner-Up) and Daniel Adamczyk's *Morning Hymn* (Grand Prize Winner).



Daniel Adamczyk, Grand Prize Winner, with Elliot Levine, contest judge.

Melinda Riley, a junior at East Brunswick High School, wrote a lighthearted work for chorus and piano which captured the poignancy of "little things" in childhood, like ice cream and cherry trees. Melinda received a \$100 cash prize and a CD of the premiere performance. Also a violist, choral singer and arranger, Melinda hopes for a musical career.

Daniel Adamczyk's composition, *Fire of Spring*, was performed in 1998's spring concert as first runner-up. Thanks in part to that honor, Daniel, a senior at Piscataway High School, has earned a large scholarship to Westminster Choir College for the fall. This year's *Morning Hymn* is an ambitious, rhythmic a capella piece which was a fun challenge for the performers. Daniel, who plays violin, trumpet, bassoon, oboe, flute, cello, bass clarinet, and organ, began studying piano at seven. He composed the winning piece on his home computer using "Encore" software. Winning the contest was an honor for him. "I felt I had achieved something

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musically, and that other people recognized my abilities," Adamczyk said. Daniel also received a \$500 cash prize and a CD of the performance.

Third place honors were shared by Madison junior Stefan Swanson (*A Love Washed Away*) and Kelly Michelle O'Neil (*A Poison Tree*), a senior at North Hunterdon Regional High School. Their pieces received a read-through at the Choral Musicianship Workshop at Grace Church in Madison on April 24. Kelly wrote:

Thank you so much...you guys sounded great and it was such a thrill to hear my piece performed by a madrigal chorus the way it was meant....My first composing experience certainly turned out well, and I intend to do lots more in the future.

Stefan Swanson also received an honorable mention for his piece *I Owe You What You Gave For Me*. Other honorable mention laurels went to Joshua Flores, a junior at High Point Regional High School in Sussex, and Mike Solomon, a sophomore at East Brunswick High School.

An important part of the contest is the detailed feedback from the judges which all the entrants receive. "We want to encourage and give *helpful* criticism," said Artistic Director Anne Matlack, one of the judges. Other judges were Mark Miller, Harmonium's Assistant Conductor and Director of Music at Drew Theological Seminary; Elliot Levine, noted New York composer and Western Wind singer; David Sampson, Composer in Residence for the Colonial Symphony and member of Solid Brass Ensemble; and Virginia Moravek, president of the New Jersey Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association and Director of Choral Music at J.P. Stevens High School in Edison.

Thanks to generous funding by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the scope of the contest was greatly expanded this year, resulting in an increase in the number of student registrants, some from as far away as Cape May. Next year's theme has been announced: "Songs of the Earth." Is your high school on our mailing list? Call 973-538-6969 or visit our web site ([www.harmonium.org](http://www.harmonium.org)) for more information.

## It's Ba-a-a-ck. . .



The Halloween concert is coming!! Look for the Harmonium Madrigal Singers, the Grace Church School Choirs (30 choristers ages 7-17), and SCARY organ music....Hear the world premiere of Neil Farrell's new version of *Monster Mash* arranged just for us! The New



Jersey premiere of Elizabeth Alexander's *Things That Go Bump in the Night* will pop up, along with songs about animals, ghosts, snakes, witches and, of course, Bach's *Toccata in d minor!*

The concert takes place at Grace Church in Madison, Saturday October 30 at 7 p.m. Admission is a can of food for the hungry (cash donations also welcome). The concert is appropriate for ages 3-300.

Babysitting is available for babies and toddlers but please call ahead (377-0106).



## Mark Miller Named Composer in Residence



Mark Miller, Director of Music at Drew Theological Seminary, has resigned his duties as Harmonium's Assistant Conductor, to take on a new position as Assistant Organist and Director of the

Gospel Choir at Riverside Church, New York City. "It was fun and inspiring to work with Anne and the great people in Harmonium," said Miller, who hopes to maintain his connection with the group by helping with Outreach Chorus and organist duties on an ad hoc basis. To maintain an even stronger connection, Harmonium has named Miller its Composer in Residence, and commissioned him to write a millennium piece for the December concert. (His *Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace* was premiered at last December's concerts.)

## Carmina Burana Hailed

Harmonium performed Orff's dramatic *Carmina Burana* with the New Philharmonic orchestra and the Morris Choral Society on May 8, 1999 at the Community Theater in Morristown. As well as joining with the Morris Choral Society for the large choruses, Harmonium performed as the semi-chorus, or *coro piccolo*, and the women of Harmonium performed in Debussy's sensuous *Sirènes*. The stage was so crowded that the wonderful soloists, Carol Chickering, soprano; Dillon McCartney, tenor; and Charles Robert Stephens, bass, had to sit in the front row of the audience. Stephens actually began his "Ego" solo while running up onto the stage!

*The energetic levels, the unyielding dynamic, the verve, and the vivacity emanating from the stage...demonstrated that even the weariest of warhorses can be filled with fresh meanings,* wrote Robert Butts (Classical NJ 6/9/99).

## Heartfelt Harmonies

It was the morning after the Columbine tragedy, as Laura Wolverton and I drove through the wilds of Washington Township for an Outreach Chorus gig at Warren Hills Regional High School. I was very nervous: the Outreach Chorus hadn't performed in months; the Warren Hills choir director, Lauren Voight, had invited every sixth-grade class in the district, as well as the junior high and high school choirs — hundreds of students. But when we pulled into the parking lot, the sign outside did not say "Go football team," but merely "Welcome Harmonium Singers." What a nice feeling!

The show went very well, from the opening pavanne to the participation of junior high honor choir singers in "Siyahamba." Elliot Levine's participation piece was amazing—hundreds of kids sang the parts of the duck, pig, and cat. Laura Wolverton, our professional caliber alto, sang a mournful solo, "The Lass from the Low Country," and I spoke about music expressing all types of feelings, in the context of the week's tragic events. The students really enjoyed our performance, and I myself left the school with renewed inspiration that what my volunteer singers and I are doing is important. --Anne Matlack

## The "Advent of a New Age" Is Coming

Harmonium's December Concert will feature Randall Thompson's 25 minute double chorus cantata *The Peaceable Kingdom* — especially appropriate for taking us into the next millenium. It is filled with the prophecies of Isaiah about a coming new age, of fear, but mostly hope, ending with the gorgeous chorus "Ye Shall Have a Song...And Gladness of Heart."

The other major work is Haydn's *St. Nicholas Mass* for chorus and a chamber orchestra of strings, oboes and horns. The mass will feature many fine soloists from Harmonium.

Rounding out the "awaiting" theme are various international works: *We Wait for Thy Lovingkindness* (McKie), *Hashkiveinu* (Nowalsky), *Lift Up Your Heads* (Mathias), *Behold the Bridegroom* (Gretchaninoff), *Machet die Tor weit* (Telemann, also with orchestra), and a world premiere commission by Mark Miller. The Harmonium Madrigal Singers will perform a variety of music from Schütz to Knight's *You Are the New Day*.

The concert is scheduled for Saturday December 11 at 8 p.m. and Sunday December 12 at 3 p.m. at the Church of the Redeemer in Morristown. See the inside page of this newsletter for ticket ordering information.

## Contest Winning Work Is Published

Brian Driscoll, last year's Student Composition Contest Grand Prize Winner, has had the winning choral work, "Lord There's A Fire" published by a major national music publisher, Alfred Publishing. Brian, who was a senior at Mt. Olive High School when he won the contest, is now studying music theory and composition at Montclair State University.

An Outreach Chorus Concert at your school costs a modest \$500 for one show, \$900 back-to-back. Call us at 973-538-6969 for bookings. We are also listed in the Arts Council of the Morris Area's *Arts in Education* Booklet 1999-2000.

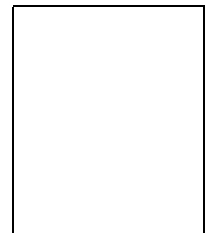
# Harmonium

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## Harmonium Reorganizes Board

**Linda Lancaster**, of Basking Ridge, president; **Darlene Wyzga** of Dover, vice president; **David Copp** of Morristown, treasurer; **Mia Kissil Hewitt** of Bernardsville, recording secretary; **Kim Rippard**, of Madison, community board member, corresponding secretary and director of development; **John Lamb** of Randolph, member-at-large; **Barbara Greene** of Summit, publicity chair. Heartfelt thanks to retiring Board Member, **Barbara Shalit**. Harmonium wants to add a community board member, preferably with marketing experience. For more information, please call us at 973-538-6969.

### JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Harmonium Choral Society Announces an opening for a **CHORUS MANAGER**, a paid, part-time position. The applicant should have some knowledge of arts administration, love of the choral arts, an understanding of marketing, and an ability to organize volunteers. The applicant will be strongly urged to audition to sing with the group, which rehearses on Sunday evenings in Mendham.

For more information and a fuller job description, call 973-538-6969.