The 2009 Annual Conference of the Conductors Guild was held from January 8-11 in New York City. Headquartered at the Park Central Hotel, just across the street from Carnegie Hall, this year’s conference was full of interesting seminars, panel discussions, roundtables, publisher and composer exhibits, networking, the New Music Project and, with close to 200 attendees from all over the world, some great socializing and networking with friends and colleagues, both old and new. Here are some impressions of the more memorable moments.

The conference began, appropriately, with live music. Thursday morning, all attendees were invited to an open rehearsal of the New York Philharmonic at Lincoln Center. It was fascinating to watch one of the world’s great orchestras rehearsing the music of Murail, Messiaen, Mozart, and Debussy under guest conductor Ludovic Morlot. As you’d expect in a gathering of conductors, comments and conversations during the break and after the rehearsal were varied, interesting, and passionate. But on one subject there was universal agreement: the tam-tam used in the Messiaen was ENORMOUS!

Mahler’s Eighth Symphony is not something many of us have actually witnessed in our lifetimes, so it was great to have David Hayes on hand to discuss, first hand, some of the aspects of preparing this massive work. In his role as conductor of the Philadelphia Singers, Maestro Hayes spoke candidly of the specific issues of preparing a chorus for performance: text pronunciation, working with the conductor, and so on.

(continued on page 4)
Dear Members of the Conductors Guild:

I would like to take this opportunity to greet you all in my new role as editor of Podium Notes. As a newly elected CG Board Member at our Annual Conference this past January, I was sitting quietly at my first Board meeting when our new President announced that, since Peter Martin would be moving on to edit the Journal of the Conductors Guild, there would be an opening for an editor of Podium Notes. Everyone’s head turned in surprise to see that someone had raised a hand and volunteered to step into Peter’s shoes. I looked around, too and was as surprised as everyone present to realize that the raised hand was, in fact, my own.

Actually, I wasn’t that surprised. As a faithful reader of Podium Notes since I joined the Guild in...well, let’s just say several years ago, one of the reasons I was interested in joining the CG Board was to become involved in our publications. I hoped to help make them even more timely, useful, relevant, and user-friendly to the members of the Guild. As editor of Podium Notes, I’ll be that much closer to the action as we continue to enhance both the content and distribution of our publications.

As we move forward with new ideas, goals, and strategies, one thing will remain constant – Podium Notes remains our way of speaking with each other. Podium Notes is the ongoing conversation between CG members and for it to be successful, we need to hear from you. We want to hear about your new programming ideas, how you’ve surprised and delighted your audiences, your new musical discoveries, important books you’ve read, DVDs you’ve watched, workshops you’ve attended – about music in general and conducting in particular. Do you have a pet (and/or proven) theory about performance, education, fundraising, or audience development? Tell us about it! Also, please feel free give us your ideas and opinions for changing and improving this newsletter.

In this issue of Podium Notes you’ll read, among other articles, a fascinating piece from Henry Fogel about the maturity of today’s conductors, a wrap-up of our recent (and fabulous) Annual Conference in NYC, and reviews by David Daniels on the “Guide to Aria Repertoire,” and Jonathan Sternberg on the new urtext edition of the Haydn symphonies. That’s lots of great stuff to kick off 2009 with even more to come in future issues!

We hope your season has been a good one so far and that it will continue to be successful. We look forward to hearing about it!

Best regards,
David Leibowitz, Editor
Podium Notes
podiumnotes@conductorsguild.org
It’s interesting how things work out. David Leibowitz was only elected to the Board this January. Just a couple days later, at his first Board meeting, we announced an opening for editor of Podium Notes, for which we would begin a search. David immediately said, in effect, no need to search, he would do it.

This is the kind of people that make up the Guild: incredibly busy in their professional lives (show me a conductor who isn’t overworked), but eager to take on new challenges (what, you’d like me to do Sacre tomorrow? No problem.). And that’s why I consider myself extraordinarily fortunate to have been elected president of this incredible organization. It’s a group of individuals dedicated to their art, eager to share concerns and solutions with their colleagues, and above all devoted to uniting diverse groups of musicians in the common goal of wonderful concerts.

Extend that to the Guild: devoted to the common goal of a strong, vibrant, and productive organization.

Let me start my first From the President column by introducing myself. I’m in my 20th year as Director of Orchestral Activities at the University of Wyoming. I’ve been a member of the Guild since the early 1980’s, and played oboe before I “gave up music for conducting.” I was a student of Charles Bruck at the Monteux school, have a DMA from Colorado University, and love my family, teaching, and skiing.

One question I’m often asked is, what are my goals as President. Beyond Primum non nocere (First, do no harm), I hope to help harness the energy of the Board and the membership in some exciting endeavors:

Next January we will offer our first European conference, in Copenhagen, Denmark. If you saw Peter Larsen’s incredible presentation on the 2010 conference last January in New York, I don’t need to say any more. If you missed it, watch for an email announcement soon. We’re also creating a web site that will have all the information about it. A few hints:

Everything will be in English.

The Guild is putting together a blockbuster of a conference, a unique and wonderful experience that you just shouldn’t miss.

We’re working very hard to keep the conference cost low, and to find great hotel bargains for you.

We’re looking to build some organized sightseeing opportunities into the event.

Working side-by-side with the Danish Conductors’ Association, we’re really trying to make this a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Another opportunity for the Guild stems from the League of American Orchestras stepping out of the conducting workshop business. Thus, there is even greater demand for our outstanding workshops. The Guild will continue to offer only the highest quality workshops, and we will offer as many as our staff and volunteers can manage well.

Many things are working very well right now, or are on their way. The mentoring committee continues to do outstanding work. Our new web site is terrific, and making life much easier. Amanda and Scott are doing incredibly good work in the office. We’re making great progress in getting our Journal back on schedule. Due to Burton Zipser’s hard work and generosity, our Conductor Opportunities Bulletin continues to be one of our most valued offerings. We hope to have more news soon about the office and some exciting developments on that front.

I have to thank the Board: a more dedicated, hard-working, and interesting group of individuals can’t be found on the planet. And finally, I’d like to thank you for the trust you showed in electing me President. I’ll do my best to live up to that trust.

Michael Griffith, President
Conductors Guild
(continued from page 1)
Composers of our own time were not neglected at the conference: Richard Danielpour and Chen Yi were on hand to speak, with passion and humor, about the experience of today’s composer. Throughout both presentations, a few themes were sounded repeatedly – dedication to craft, contact with performers, and passion for the art – important and relevant themes for all musicians.

One of the most popular events with attendees this year was Saturday afternoon’s “Round Table Discussion Groups.” Tables were set up as “subject centers” (repertoire, fundraising, programming, networking, management, etc.) with moderators and, like musical speed-dating, every ten minutes participants moved from table to table and topic to topic. It was a great way to get a taste of each and to hear what our colleagues think on a variety of relevant subjects.

Another favorite presentation was “Mahler, Bernstein, and the Philharmonic” with Leonard Bernstein’s daughter Jamie on hand to give her perspective on her father’s special relationship with Mahler’s music. It’s always fascinating to see inside the lives of the great figures, and Ms. Bernstein’s funny, poignant, and down-to-earth reminiscences were entertaining and enlightening. One can only imagine what it must have been like growing up in the Bernstein household!

Those who were willing (and able) to get up early on Sunday morning were rewarded with a delightful presentation on “George Bernard Shaw: Music Critic” led by Dr. Isidor Saslav. Many may not know that Shaw, in addition to being a great playwright, was also one of the finest writers on music of his or any other time. Dr. Saslav’s humorous and fascinating early-morning talk was the perfect way to get the final day of the conference rolling.

An important aspect of our annual gatherings is the opportunity to recognize excellence in our colleagues – whether to encourage young talent, or to mark a lifetime of great accomplishment and service to the art of conducting. This year, special awards were given to David Daniels, Clinton Nieweg, and Jonathan Sternberg, and the Thelma A. Robinson Scholarship was awarded to Katherine Kilburn. Also, special recognition was given to José Antonio Abreu, founder and director of Venezuela’s remarkable “El Sistema.” Accepting the award for Maestro Abreu was his assistant, Ms. Bolivia Bottome.

Perhaps the most stirring moment of the conference (certainly for this writer) was the presentation of the Max Rudolf Award to Maestro Paul Vermel. Visibly moved to be receiving the award named after Maestro Rudolf, Maestro Vermel’s remarks were a vivid reminder of the deep humility that often goes with great achievement. Congratulations to all honorees!

And these were just some of the many events on offer at the conference this year. I’ve barely mentioned the publisher and composer exhibits that so wonderfully complemented the events. Also, I’ve passed over the concerts, Broadway shows, great dinners, late-night discussions in the hotel bar, and, in general, the excitement that New York City brought to the festivities. In all, it was a great conference, expertly organized by Stephen Czarkowski, Nicholas Brown, and Anthony LaGruth. Thanks to them and to all who presented, attended, and made the 2009 Conference such a great success.

It was great seeing all of you at this year’s conference and we hope to see you again next January in Copenhagen, Denmark!
Conducting Talent: Give It Time to Mature

by

Henry Fogel

I am old enough to remember a time when conductors were thought to be still growing artistically when they were in their fifties; those under 45 were considered young. At the age of 42 Herbert von Karajan was still music director of the orchestra in Aachen, Germany. Everyone considered that the New York Philharmonic took an enormous chance (certainly one that worked out) in hiring Leonard Bernstein as Music Director in 1958. His youth was talked about constantly in music circles. He was 40!

It used to be true that conductors learned their craft over many years, in small provincial orchestras and opera houses, and then when they hit the age of perhaps 50 they began the “golden age” of their careers. There was time to learn scores, time to mature artistically, time to read and learn the literature and the culture of the eras in which the great masterworks were composed. There was time to learn about life and gain wisdom.

For better or worse, three conductors really changed the landscape, though I doubt they even knew at the time that they were doing so. All three achieved superstardom in their twenties, during the 1960s and early 1970s. They were conducting virtually nothing but the biggest and most famous orchestras and opera houses in the world by the time they were 30 – that is, ten or more years younger than Leonard Bernstein when he was identified as riskily young at 40! These three conductors are James Levine, Seiji Ozawa, and Zubin Mehta.

Levine made his Metropolitan Opera debut just before his 28th birthday and was named principal conductor two years later, when he also became Music Director of the Ravinia Festival, summer home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Ozawa became music director of the San Francisco Symphony at 35, and of the Boston Symphony Orchestra at 38. Zubin Mehta, before his 30th birthday, was leading the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and was guest conducting and recording with the Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, and all of the world’s leading opera houses. None of these conductors spent years as apprentices in any place like Aachen, or Wiesbaden, or Grand Rapids.

I mean to make no judgment about the careers of Levine, Ozawa, or Mehta. Clearly each has been an enormous success, and each has made major contributions to the music world. But there can be no question that their careers, when combined with the effects of publicity and television and instant gratification that came into being in the 1960s and 70s, changed the expectations of both conductors and music administrators, as well as those of the public.

Somehow, the idea of superb conductors developing their careers in smaller orchestras, either in the U.S. or in Europe, was lost. An excellent conductor at the age of 45, but one who had not yet achieved “stardom,” came to be seen as passé. An attitude of “well, if he were any good, wouldn’t he be further along by now?” tended to stick to that conductor.

We must rethink this. Surely there will always be those who have the musical talent and personal maturity to be important music makers in their twenties; Gustavo Dudamel would seem to be that person now. But for every Dudamel, there are probably many other conductors who will reach the height of their artistry in their 40s or 50s. We do a lot of damage to our art form if we consider them “has beens” before they ever were.

*****

Recently appointed Dean of the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University, Henry Fogel has been a Senior Advisor to the League of American Orchestras and an independent consultant to arts organizations. He was President and CEO of the League from 2003-2008 and President of the Chicago Symphony from 1985-2003.
Lukas Foss, composer, conductor, and pianist, died on February 1, 2009. He was 86.

From the start of his long and varied career, Lukas Foss occupied an important place in American music, both as a composer and performer.

Born in Berlin in 1922, Foss began his musical studies there and continued them in Paris before moving, with his family, to the United States in 1937. He continued at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia and spent several summers at the newly founded Berkshire Music Center (now the Tanglewood Music Center), studying conducting with Serge Koussevitzky. In addition, he studied composition at Yale with Paul Hindemith.

A recipient of many composition prizes, Lukas Foss won the New York Critic’s Award for his cantata “Prairie” at the age of 22. He was also the youngest composer ever to receive a Guggenheim Fellowship. In addition, he was a Fellow at the American Academy in Rome and a recipient of a Fulbright scholarship. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and was composer-in-residence at the Tanglewood Music Center.

Eclectic from the start, Foss’s compositions move easily from neo-classic to avant-garde and back again, as the mood took him. He used compositional procedures gathered from the entire history of western music. For all the differences in outward appearance, however, his music is always characterized by a mastery of technique, brilliant use of instruments, and clear and idiomatic writing, whether it employs controlled improvisation, chance operations, or strict contrapuntal writing.

In 1953, Foss succeeded Arnold Schoenberg as professor of music at the University of California at Los Angeles where he taught composition and conducting. A decade later, he began his seventeen-year tenure as Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic. He was named conductor of the Brooklyn Philharmonic in 1971, and he was named Conductor-Laureate of that organization in 1990. From 1981-1986, he was the conductor of the Milwaukee Symphony. As a guest conductor, he traveled widely, performing throughout North America and Europe. In addition, for much of his life, he was active as a teacher of conducting and composition.
As I observed the recent Conductors Guild Frederick Fennell Memorial Masterclass at the University of Maryland, I was very impressed with the faculty’s ability to reach each participant in a way relevant to his or her personality. Donald Hunsberger, Mark Scatterday, and Michael Votta Jr. worked seamlessly together throughout the four-day masterclass. Whether someone was told to conduct with just their face, or asked to try sitting in a chair to achieve a more intimate atmosphere while conducting a septet, it was apparent just how different and unique each conductor’s personality really is and how clearly that comes across from the podium. At the end of one session, the conductors and musicians were addressed by the faculty and their words are still ringing in my ears:

“I find so many times, especially with guest conducting, I’ll work with some people and I’ll think, this conductor is really shy and I’m not really able to ask her personality to come out because that’s the way she is. Then I’ll see her out with her friends after rehearsal and she’s living it up and talking and saying this and that and I’m thinking, ‘Wow, why didn’t she bring that to the podium?’ You’ve got to let people in right away, otherwise they don’t have a chance. An audience has one time to hear you. They want to meet you, get to know you in an hour, maybe sooner. The ensemble needs to get to know you in the first thirty seconds - everything about you. Try to do that and let that come out. We all have such great personalities and that’s the one thing I’ve always said that you have going for you that nobody else does – that you’re you and nobody else is.” – Mark Scatterday

“At the end of the day it’s about a relationship. You want to have a relationship with the group. Some people are more extroverted and operate well in large groups. You have three very different personalities between Don, Mark and me. I can sympathize with the introverts because that is my personality. I’m much more comfortable, one on one than with a group. But you find a way with whatever personality you have to be yourself and still function leading an ensemble. So it doesn’t mean that there is one kind of personality that a conductor needs to have. It just means that you find a way with who you are to function well and do the job. If you are going to stand here, you need to lead.” – Michael Votta Jr.

“Think how unique and fortunate you are because of what you’re able to do. That you can sit here and get this reward back from all your hard work and the millions of people who are not able to share that kind of thing - who can’t play something or who can’t sing. Unfortunately many have never been introduced to it. Enjoy what you do, enjoy every note. Every time you play a note, that is the last time that note will ever be sounded so never throw one away. Every note counts - all the time.” – Donald Hunsberger

I hope you will really dig deep into who you are and embrace your own personality in new ways on and off the podium. When you stay true to yourself, your ensembles respond, audiences connect and music comes alive.
Participants’ Remarks:

“The workshop provided a positive and constructive atmosphere. Fantastic facilities, musicians, and great instructors! The insight into Frederick Fennell was fantastic. The variety of ensembles provided continuously new challenges for the performers/conductors. This seemed to keep a nice flow of learning experiences.” – Joseph Eck

“The ensembles were very well prepared and the clinicians were extremely professional and helpful.” – Chris Westover

“Excellent [repertoire] choices. I appreciated that it was both chamber and full ensemble and music we may have never studied before.” – Stephen Meyer

“The faculty was dead on the money, they saw many of our weaknesses and proceeded to minimize them and make the most of our inner, and outer, strengths. Since [the conducting sessions] involved full ensembles, it gave the conductors the chance to really get into the scores and intimately work with the musicians.” – Kevin Scott

“I learned a great deal and felt a wonderful energy the entire time. I feel lucky to have been a part and in the presence of fantastic teachers. Sessions were comfortable and managed well, giving extra time when appropriate for the moment.” – Will Pattie
The publication of an “authentic” performing edition of Haydn’s music is an event of major significance for all conductors. Bärenreiter, the most important of German music publishers, is still in the process of printing the performing materials from the urtext of the Joseph Haydn Complete Edition. Based on research by scholars of the Haydn Institute in Cologne, this musicological work has been published by G. Henle Verlag of Munich and eventually all the scores and performing parts will be available from Bärenreiter.

A great number of scholars, editors, and other experts from around the world have come together to complete this valuable work.

There are four indexes: aria titles, opera titles, language, and historical period (i.e., the period during which the work was composed).

These indexes are tricky to use, largely because of a bizarre numbering system by which the individual arias are identified: each fach has its own set of numbers beginning with 1, so you have to know the voice type and fach of an aria before you can find its main listing. Maddeningly, the voice type is not listed in the index, but the fach is, so an aria may be labeled “spinto,” but is it soprano, tenor, or what? If you don’t already know, you simply have to look under the fach in each voice type.

Another anomaly: the aria titles observe the definite and indefinite articles for alphabetization purposes, but the opera titles do not. Thus “La calumnia” is alphabetized under L; “Un ballo in maschera” under B. But these are minor complaints, which could easily be fixed in a subsequent edition. The book itself is a great tool, and I recommend it highly.

Basle and the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Sets of parts by Haydn’s own copyists, with the composer’s corrections – particularly dynamic details, were consulted as a secondary source. These parts were used at the Esterhazy premieres and come from Haydn’s personal library, now at the National Library in Budapest.

It is interesting to note as well that the first editions of the symphonies often contained numerous (and unfounded alterations). Thus the extraordinary efforts of the editors to gather and organize the sources are particularly commendable.

In addition to the symphonies, Bärenreiter has included the seldom played and beautiful Sinfonia Concertante for oboe, bassoon, violin, cello and orchestra. All materials are exceptionally well printed on high quality paper. This new edition is well worth looking into.
**UPCOMING GUILD ACTIVITIES**

**July 8-9, 2009**
Conductor Training Workshop  
WASBE International Conference  
Cincinnati, OH  
Faculty: Peter Ettrup Larsen and James Setapen

**July 31-August 5, 2009**
Conductor Training Workshop  
Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music  
Santa Cruz, CA  
Faculty: Marin Alsop, Gustav Meier  
Composition Faculty: Avner Dorman

**October 12-13, 2009**
Conductor Training Workshop  
Buffalo Philharmonic  
Buffalo, NY  
Faculty: JoAnn Falletta, Jorge Mester

**January 5-8, 2010**
Conductor Training Workshop  
Royal Danish Academy of Music  
Copenhagen, Denmark  
Faculty: Giancarlo Andretta, Jorma Panula

**January 6-9, 2010**
Annual Conference for Conductors - “Conductors Bridging People”  
Royal Danish Academy of Music  
Copenhagen, Denmark

**January 26-28, 2010**
Conductor Training Workshop  
Richmond Symphony  
Richmond, VA  
Faculty: Erin R. Freeman, Victor Yampolsky  
Composition Faculty: Jennifer Higdon

**March 14-17, 2010**
Conductor Training Workshop  
Cleveland Institute of Music, Cleveland, OH  
Faculty: Joel Smirnoff, Carl Topilow
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(8/1/08 - 3/25/09)

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Last May the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra moved into its new outdoor home, a 12,000-seat amphitheatre north of the state capitol. The new Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre took 11 months to build.

The Boise Philharmonic Orchestra announced the appointment of Robert Franz as Music Director, effective last July.

The Capistrano Valley (CA) Symphony Orchestra has appointed David Matthews Music Director and Conductor.

Teresa Cheung is the new Music Director of the Altoona (PA) Symphony Society.

Jacob Chi has been named Principal Conductor of the Marquette (MI) Symphony Orchestra.

Joel Cohen, Music Director of the Boston Camerata for 40 years, retired from that position at the end of the 2008 season.

Beverly Everett is now the Artistic Director of the Bismarck-Mandan Symphony Orchestra.

Leading the Firelands (OH) Symphony Orchestra will be Music Director Carl Topilow.

The Flagstaff (AZ) Symphony Orchestra named Elizabeth Schulze to the position of Artistic Director and Principal Conductor.

Appointed as Music Director of the Fort Bend (TX) Symphony Orchestra was Hector Aguero, Jr.

Principal Pops Conductor of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra is Ron Spiegelman.

David Gilbert was appointed Artistic Director for the Lake Placid (NY) Sinfonietta in 2008.

David Hattner has been named Conductor and Music Director of the Portland (OR) Youth Philharmonic.

William Intriligator was appointed Music Director and Conductor of the (WY) Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra, beginning last July.

David Itkin has been named Director of Orchestras at the University of North Texas.

The Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University has appointed Arthur Fagen as professor of Instrumental Conducting.

Neeme Jarvi will step down as Music Director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra at the end of the 2008-09 season.

Jonathan McPhee began his tenure as Music Director and Conductor of the Nashua (NH) Symphony Association last July.

The Mobile (AL) Symphony Youth Orchestra has appointed Obert Seebacher Music Director.

The Mormon Tabernacle Choir has named composer Mack Wilberg interim director following the surprising resignation of long-time director Craig Jessop, who has left in order to spend more time with his family and pursue other musical activities, including teaching.

Riccardo Muti will become the 10th Music Director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra when he commences his tenure in 2010.

Alan Neilson retired as Music Director of the Durham (NC) Symphony Orchestra early this year.
Melinda O'Neal has extended her contract as Artistic Director and Conductor of the Handel Choir of Baltimore through the spring of 2011, while continuing as Professor of Music at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire.

Scott O'Neil has been named Music Director of the Denver (CO) Young Artists Orchestra.

The New World Symphony, now 20 years old, will acquire its own home in 2010 to be built as part of a Miami Beach major redevelopment project. The architect is Frank Gehry, the designer of the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

James Orent is the new Music Director of the Newton (MA) Symphony Orchestra.

Chung Park will serve as Music Director and Conductor of the Idaho State Civic Symphony.

The Quad City Symphony Orchestra (Iowa) announced the appointment of Mark Russell Smith as Music Director beginning with the current season.

The San Francisco-based New Century Chamber Orchestra has appointed violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg as its Music Director.

Stefan Sanders in the new Music Director of the Kingsville (TX) Symphony Orchestra.

Ward Starer has been appointed Resident Conductor of the St. Louis (MO) Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Gerald Steichen is the new Music Director of the Ridgefield (CT) Symphony Orchestra.

Maximiano Valdes has been appointed Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra.

Filling joint positions with the Midland (MI) Symphony Orchestra as Artistic Director and Conductor, and at Central Michigan University as Director of Orchestral Studies is Antonia Joy Wilson.

Hugh Wolff has been named Director of Orchestras at the New England Conservatory with the objective of revitalizing the school's orchestra program.

The Wyoming Symphony Orchestra has appointed Mathew Savery Music Director and Conductor.

The Young Musicians Foundation of Los Angeles has named Case Scaglione Music Director and Conductor of its Debut Orchestra.
Boosey & Hawkes, the classical music publisher, has been sold to Imagem Music, which is backed by the Dutch pension fund ABP. The rights to the Boosey catalogue will now be merged with popular music acquired from the sale of Universal Music Group last February.

Dennis Russell Davies is the new Chief Conductor of the Basel Symphony Orchestra in Switzerland.

Martin Fischer-Dieskau (son of the noted German baritone Dietrich) was appointed music director-designate of Taiwan's Taipei Symphony Orchestra.

The Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) is revamping its classical music programming and will shut down the Vancouver-based Canadian Radio Orchestra (its last supported ensemble) in November.

The Festival of Two Worlds and the Spoleto Festival USA will re-establish ties discontinued in 1993, beginning with the 2009 season, with both groups sharing opera and theater productions.

A reaction to the downloading of digital music is being observed in Germany where more than a dozen new concert venues have been built, renovated, or planned. This trend is seen as a desire for live performance resulting from access to digital recordings. German artists, composers, musicians and authors are demanding that the government pay as much attention to the protection of German cultural works as it pays to the problem of intellectual piracy occurring in China.

Vernon Handley, an English conductor noted for his interpretation of the music of Edward Elgar, received a lifetime achievement award from the Elgar Society last May.

Forty stations of the London Underground (subway) system have begun to pipe in classical music in an effort to reduce anti-social behavior, noting that the music “made people feel happy, less stressed and more relaxed”.

Milan's Teatro alla Scala allowed a woman on the conductor's podium for the first time last April 6 when Marin Alsop (Baltimore Symphony Orchestra) conducted a concert of Liszt, Bartok and Dvorak.

Oxford University researchers have completed a study suggesting that the oft-targeted upper-class “cultural elite” does not exist and never did. The study (entitled “Social Stratification of Cultural Consumption”) showed that education, not social class, is the most important factor in creating “cultural omnivores”. Musically speaking, 30 percent of music buffs are omnivorous in their tastes while most of the other 70 percent choose exclusively pop music.

The Park Avenue Armory in New York City was used for concert performances as early as 1881, and was turned over to the state of New York for artistic shows. On its 220 foot long stage last July, Bernd Alois Zimmermann's opera “Die Soldaten” was performed. The acoustical properties of the hall were compared to a gigantic high-ceilinged cathedral but with a two-second reverberation delay.

Sinfonia Varsova, a Polish chamber orchestra, has appointed French conductor Marc Minkowski, a specialist in historical performances, to succeed present Music Director Krzysztof Penderecki.

Jeffrey Tate will add the post of Chief Conductor of the Hamburg (Germany) Symphony Orchestra in 2009.

In Spain, almost 700 musicians (70 percent from Europe and the U.S.A.) turned up to audition for six vacancies in the Orquestra de Valencia, impressing the staff and Music Director Lorin Maazel.
Franz Welser-Most (Cleveland Orchestra) withdrew from the last two performances of “Die Fledermaus” at the Zurich Opera because he was unhappy with the staging of fellow Austrian Michael Sturminger who had added vampires and Dracula's castle to the original bourgeois country-house love story.

Lady Evelyn Barbirolli, widow of Sir John Barbirolli and president of the Barbirolli International Oboe Festival, died this year. She was 97.

Alun Hoddinott, Welsh composer and cultural contributor has died, aged 78.

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