

American Liszt Society

AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN LISZT SOCIETY, INC.

“Liszt in Paris”: The 2007 ALS Conference in San Francisco

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Get ready for an outstanding three days in San Francisco as we investigate and enjoy one of the most wonderful times in the nineteenth century, when Franz Liszt lived, loved, and grew in musical stature while in Paris! Conference host William Wellborn has put together a wonderful schedule of recitals, lectures, and other presentations, not to mention what will surely be a great champagne reception and the conference/festival banquet. In case you have not seen a brochure for the 2007 conference, it is available on the ALS website at americanlizstsociety.org. Here is a summary of the most recent schedule.

Nikolaus Hohmann of the San Francisco Conservatory provides an historical background with his lecture, “Ghosts of the past, spirits of the future - Paris in the 1830s.” The focus then shifts to one of the greatest influences on Liszt’s early piano writing, Niccolò Paganini. SFCM’s Ian Swensen and students from the Conservatory perform six of Paganini’s *Caprices*, followed by Sandro Russo performing Chopin’s *Souvenir de Paganini* and Michael Boyd (University of Toledo) performing the 1838 version of the *Transcendental Etudes after Paganini*. ALS Board Member Gila Goldstein of the NY/NJ Chapter ends the morning session with a beautiful program of Chopin (*Nocturne in B-Flat Minor* and *Grande Valse Brillante in E-Flat Major*, Op. 18) and Liszt (*Le cloches de Genève* - first version, and *Grande Valse di Bravura*, also known as *Le bal de Berne*).

After lunch, Rena Charnin Mueller (New York University), Editor of the *Journal of the American Liszt Society*, presents a lecture on “Liszt, the Countess, and Lammartine.” Two recitals follow: the first includes Liszt’s *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* and *Lyon*, performed by Justin Kolb, and *Three Apparitions*, performed by Victoria Neve (San Francisco State University), Machiko Kobialka (San Francisco Conservatory), and Daniel Glover. All of these works come from the year 1834. Next, a duo-piano recital featuring Marilyn Neeley (Catholic University) and Andrew Gerle will include the Moscheles *Grand Sonata* (four hands), the Lutoslawski *Variations on a Theme of Paganini*, Castelnuovo-Tedesco’s *Alt Wien*, and the Abram Chasins *Carmen Fantasy*.

The evening session includes a Gala Piano Concert entitled “A Night at the Opera,” but this will be no Marx Brothers comedy! Jay and Sandra Mauchley (University of Idaho), John Touchton (Sidwell School, Washington, DC), and conference organizer William Wellborn will team up for the Liszt-Hermann arrangement of *Introduction of the Guests from Wagner’s Tannhäuser*, followed by Stephen Spooner’s rendition of Liszt’s *Reminiscences of Meyerbeer’s Robert le Diable: Valse infernale*, and then Alexandre Dossin’s (University of Oregon) performance of Liszt’s *Miserere from Verdi’s Il Trovatore*. Host William Wellborn returns to the stage for a performance of Thalberg’s *Caprice on the Opera Le Prophète of Meyerbeer*, op. 57.

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2007 ALS Conference

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Evoking the sounds of Vienna will be Eduard Schütt's Paraphrase on *Themes from Strauss' Die Fledermaus*, performed by Edward Rath. Liszt returns as the focus of two more works: first, the Mauchleys perform a version of Mozart's *Reminiscences from Don Giovanni*. The program ends with Gimpel's *The Marine's Song from Offenbach's Geneviève et Brabant*, played by Sandro Russo. [Editor's note: In case you are wondering about the composer of this lesser-known work, Jakob Gimpel (1906 - 1989) was born in Poland during Austrian rule. He studied in Vienna with Alban Berg and was a participant in the first Chopin Competition in 1929. A very interesting biography is available at gimpelmusicarchives.com/jakobgimpel.htm.] After this marathon event, all participants - and I imagine especially the performers - will enjoy a champagne reception to end the first day's activities.

Day Two begins with "Liszt and the Song Transcriptions." Wojciech Kocyan (Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles) performs *Six Chants Polonaises*, and Howard and Frances Karp (University of Wisconsin-Madison) perform Liszt's *Great Concert Piece* based on Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words*. Following the concert, Paul Barnes (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) then offers a lecture-recital dealing with two versions of Liszt's transcriptions of Schubert's *Ave Maria* and *Die Forelle*. Continuing in the song genre, Rebecca Plack (soprano) and Marilyn Swan (piano) offer a program of "Liszt's songs on texts of Victor Hugo."

After lunch, participants will learn more about two significant pianists of the nineteenth century, Sigismund Thalberg and Henri Herz, as R. Allen Lott (Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) discusses the American tours of these two virtuosos. Segueing from this presentation is a concert featuring music of these two pianists: Jane Solose plays Herz's *La Californienne-Grand Polka Brillante*, op. 167, and *Variations Brillantes et Grande Fantasia sur des Airs Nationaux Americains*,

Op. 158, certainly appropriate titles for a conference in California! Afterward, Robert Schwartz offers Thalberg's *Casta Diva* from Bellini's *Norma*, Giulio Draghi performs the Pixis *Variations on God Save the King*, op. 101, and Mikhail Yanovitsky (Northeastern University) concludes the program with Czerny works to be announced. Many of the pianists heard earlier in the conference will be joined by San Francisco pianist Monica Lee for a performance of the *Hexameron Variations*, that stupendous collection of works by Pixis, Liszt, Chopin, Thalberg, Herz, and Czerny!

A leisurely dinner hour - actually three hours in length! - is followed by a recital by Péter Tóth, winner of the Weimar and Budapest Liszt Competitions. This concert is the American debut of Tóth, whose album *Franz Liszt: Sinistre - Late Piano Works* recently won the Grand Prix du Disque award from the Liszt Society. His program features Liszt's *Funérailles*, *Waldesrauschen*, *Sinistre-Unstern!*, *Nuages gris*, *Csárdás macabre*, *Fantasy and Fugue on B A C H*, and the Schubert *Sonata in B-Flat Major*, op. posth.

Howard Timbrell (Howard University) opens the Saturday schedule with a presentation on "Liszt and the Paris Conservatoire." A concert of music by composers who were affiliated with the Conservatoire then begins with Sandro Russo's performance of the Saint-Saëns-Liszt-Horowitz version of *Danse Macabre*, followed by more music of Saint-Saëns played by David Witten: *Allegro appassionato*, *Étude de Rythme*, and *Étude en forme de valse*. Luiz De Moura Castro (Hartt School of Music) follows with the monumental *Prélude, Chorale, et Fugue* of César Franck. Thomas Otten (University of North Carolina) then offers three *Préludes* by Debussy, followed by Ravel's *La Valse*, presented by Mikhail Yanovitsky (Northeastern University).

An abbreviated lunch hour is followed by the first session of the afternoon, a recital

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Letter from the Editor

by Edward Rath

As I write this letter, it is a cold Sunday morning here in Champaign, the way we locals often refer to the “twin cities” of Champaign and Urbana, Illinois. With the growth of our communities, however, we will now be faced with the task of figuring out how to work in to that pet phrase the name of Savoy, a city that has enjoyed a terrific population boom in the past decade. You will likely chuckle when you hear that there has been a second mass transit district created in our part of town in order to fight annexation by the “other” district. Oh, well, it is quiet out here in the center of corn and bean country! But enough of personal musings and on to more important things.

As you will recall, the Liszt Konzerthaus opened in Raiding in October, and it was my privilege to attend the festivities at the invitation of the Liszt Society of Burgenland, the Austrian Province in which Raiding has been located since 1921. I was accompanied by my wife, Lois, and our next-door neighbors, Al and Pat Madsen, all great lovers of music, and interested in two of my other passions besides Liszt’s music - good food and good wine. We were not disappointed with any of those three items during our weeklong odyssey!

After driving for what seemed hours from Eisenstadt to Raiding, we arrived in the quaint community that nearly 200 years ago saw Liszt’s arrival into this world. From such humble beginnings, the son of an Esterházy sheepherder would become one of the most influential personalities of his century.

A river runs through Raiding, what we fondly call a “dorf” in German, a village. Just across the river, in what is best described as a town square, one could see all sorts of dignitaries from Vienna, Eisenstadt, and certainly other cities in Austria, Hungary, and other EU states. There were black Mercedes everywhere. After a touching ceremony of little children presenting flowers to the President of

Austria and Governor of Burgenland, the not-so-small crowd leisurely strolled across the little foot bridge to enter what for many is sacred ground. One sees a small white house on a well-kept green lawn, accessed through a beautiful gate (yes, this is the same view as one sees in the John Thompson Series that includes a version of the *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* - in C Minor, no less!).

Next to this charming but simple small house is a very large white “house,” modern in design, which is the Liszt Concert Hall. Much glass, beautiful wood, and very fine facilities immediately impress the audience before entering the building. My first take of the concert hall itself was that it was very plain, but the wood almost immediately gives one the feeling of warmth. Although I had only a single exposure to the acoustics on that October 15th day - and what a picture-perfect day it was, I felt that the spoken word was less well-handled than the music, especially piano music, but it is a concert hall, not a lecture room! With a crowd of many hundreds of people - it seats 600 or so, the sound of the piano was, to my hearing, excellent.

The afternoon’s program began with the showing of a wonderful video concerning the progression of dream to reality in constructing the hall. (I have been hoping to receive a copy prior to the 2007 ALS conference in SFO, so that perhaps I might share it with conference attendees.) This was followed by many speeches presented by dignitaries and a dramatic reading by the Austrian actor, Otto Schenk.

A real treat occurred with the introduction of Franz Liszt’s great-great grandson, Antoine Wagner-Pasquier, who lives in Chicago and is quite a talented filmmaker. He participated in the performance of Gerhard Krammer’s *LISZ[:T:]RAUM* for film featuring three pianists playing historic instruments in Raiding,

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American Liszt Society

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2006 Los Angeles International Liszt Competition for Piano and Voice: Another Impressive and Successful Event!

by Geraldine Keeling

The ninth biennial Los Angeles Liszt Competition for Piano and Voice, co-sponsored by the Pasadena Branch of the Music Teachers Association of California, Asuza Pacific University, and members of the American Liszt Society and the Hungarian community of greater Los Angeles, took place November 18 - 19 at Asuza Pacific University and Trinity United Methodist Church in Pomona. The competition is directed by Geraldine Keeling and Judith Pfeiffer Neslény, and they dedicated the 2006 Competition to the memory of four people who had a great influence on their dedication to Liszt: Dezső Legány, William S. Newman, Edward John Pfeiffer, and Pauline Pocknell.

The 2006 Competition was incredible! 210 contestants, ages 10-35, came from 86 studios in 13 states and 4 countries to play and sing the music of Liszt. Including honorable mentions, 114 of these contestants received recognition. In addition to cash prizes totaling \$9,050, the winners each received a plaque and an all-Liszt CD by one of the judges. Each contestant received volume one of Alan Walker's Liszt biography (\$4,091 at the Competition's discounted price!).

The Budapest Concert winner, Yevgeniy Milyavskiy (student of Daniel Pollack at the University of Southern California), will perform an all-Liszt recital at the Liszt Ferenc Memorial Museum on May 26 and at the Gyula Festival in Hungary on June 1. The New York Concert winner, vocalist Singah Lee Rose from Connecticut, will also be presented in an all-Liszt recital. Additional recitals, with many of the winners performing, are scheduled for April and May at the Nixon Library in Yorba Linda, CA and at Trinity University Methodist Church in Pomona, CA. Four winners, including Yevgeniy Milyavskiy, will also appear at the Festival of the American Liszt Society in San Francisco.

The American Liszt Society Award was presented to two contestants (\$250 each) for their outstanding dedication to the music of Liszt. Ovidiu Lup, student of Ninaca Osana-Pop in Romania, received recognition in three divisions, including First Place in his age division with the *Fantasy and Fugue on the Name B A C H*. Michael Schneider, a student of Paul Schenley at the Cleveland Institute of Music, entered an unprecedented four divisions. He received recognition in all four divisions and First Place in two divisions: for the concerto (*Piano Concerto No. 1*) and longer works (*Dante Sonata*).

A big thanks go out to the judges who donate their time to help promote the music of Liszt. All are members of the American Liszt Society. There were thirteen judges from nine states: Paul Barnes, Alexandre Dossin, Jay Hershberger, Ivo Kaltchev, Vladimir Leyetchkiss, Thomas Mastroianni, Thomas Otten, Rebecca Plack, Elizabeth Pridonoff, Eugene Pridonoff, Bela Siki, Steven Spooner, and William Wellborn.

The Evening Concert on November 19 was, in a word, fantastic! You may order a DVD or CD of this concert, which presented all of the First-Place Winners. The repertoire is as follows (performers ages 12-35): *La Campanella; Concert Paraphrase on Rigoletto; Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 2 and 11; Mephisto Waltz No. 1; Fantasy and Fugue on the Name B A C H; Dante Sonata; Concerto No. 1; I vidi in terra angelici costume; Mignon's Lied; and Isoldé's Liebestod*.

To order your copy of this outstanding concert, please send a check for \$20.00 US (be sure to indicate DVD or CD) made payable to Los Angeles International Liszt Competition and send it to that organization at 8260 Youngdale Road, San Gabriel, CA 91775.

Please be sure to hear some of the winners at the ALS Festival at the San

Francisco Conservatory on Saturday, March 31 at 2:15 p.m.

This competition is unique – the only all-Liszt competition in the United States, the only Liszt competition world wide to include both younger and older contestants, and the only competition to give every contestant a Liszt biography. The work of the competition committee depends on the continued support and assistance of many people.

For more information about the Competition and to find out how you might be able to assist in this worthwhile endeavor, please contact Geraldine Keeling or Judith Pfeiffer Neslény at 8260 Youngdale Road, San Gabriel, CA 91775.

[Editor's note: I want to compliment Gerry and Judith on once again making good on their commitment to advancing the cause of Franz Liszt and his music. One of the principal tenets of this event is to encourage a musically and artistically satisfying performance of Liszt's music and not just to think of technique and display. As a former judge, I can personally attest to the quality of what transpires in the LAILC every other year! You will thoroughly enjoy the recordings made available as described above.]

NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for all materials to be included in the next issue of the *American Liszt Society Newsletter* is Monday, July 2, 2007. All photos should be black and white only, e-mailed as attached .jpeg files or sent via normal mail as black and white photos - no color photos, please. Photographic materials should be addressed to Edward Rath, School of Music, University of Illinois, 1114 West Nevada Street, Urbana, IL 61801. Please send articles or news items only by e-mail text or attachment to Edward Rath, Editor, at erath@uiuc.edu. Be sure to include ALS Newsletter in the subject line. Typed, word-processed hardcopy, and photocopied materials will not be accepted - only electronic versions are acceptable. Thank you.

Member News

THOMAS PANDOLFI has just released an All-Liszt CD featuring the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra under conductor Peter Schmelzer. The CD includes *Piano Concerto No.1 in E-Flat Major*, *Liebestraum No.3 in A-Flat Major*, *Hungarian Rhapsody No.12*, *Der Müller und der Bach* (Schubert/Liszt) and *Après une Lecture du Dante (Fantasia quasi Sonata)*. Thomas is a graduate of The Juilliard School, where he received his bachelor's and master's degrees. To purchase this CD, please visit buyclassicalmusic.net

ELYSE MACH and JUSTIN KOLB have teamed up for a fascinating article for the September 2006 issue of *Clavier Magazine*. Entitled "Justin Kolb - Crusader for Music," the magazine says "In visits to schools around the country, Kolb explains the value of studying music. 'I want young people to understand how much the skills they develop will help them for the rest of their lives.'" Aside from a most interesting story, there are many great pictures of Justin - not the least of which is a full cover-page color shot.

On Tuesday, November 7, **JUSTIN KOLB** played a piano recital of American compositions on the SUNY New Paltz campus. Earlier in the day, he presented a lecture entitled "Creating a Career in Music." This "how to" lecture was intended for any individual desiring to perform as well as for those seeking a career in music education. Justin also performed a recital on February 17 in Tarpon Springs, FL. The first half of the program might have been titled "Short Pieces." Works by Dvorak, Chopin, and Liszt were performed between John Downey's electrifying *Toccata* and a samba titled *Batucada* by Victoria Bond. The unusual second half of the program consisted of three distinctly different movements of a classical piano sonata, composed within an Afro-Cubano idiom. This important 20th Century piece was

given its first North American performance by Kolb in New York City in January 2006. The composer, Alfredo Diez Nieto, was the first music teacher of popular American composer Tania Leon.

JUDITH PFEIFFER NESLÉNY was recently honored with the highest honor that a civilian can receive from the Hungarian government. The Medal of Achievement was presented in recognition of the fifty years during which she has tirelessly and constantly promoted Hungarian music (especially Liszt) as a performer, composer, teacher, and cultural organizer. The award was presented on December 3 by Ferenc Bosenbacher, the Consul General of Hungary, at a gala dinner for 150 persons at the Hungarian Cultural Center in Los Angeles. Also present was Kiara Perjesi, mayor of Gyula, Hungary, where Judith's cantata "In Memoriam of 1956," commemorating the Hungarian Revolution, was performed on October 23, 2006.

Upon hearing the news of this award, the distinguished scholar and Liszt authority Dr. Klára Hamburger wrote, "Judy Pfeiffer (Neszlény) is a very old friend of mine: we were piano classmates at the Budapest Conservatory as teenagers. We met at the Franz Liszt Music Academy, too, where she began to study the piano and I began my study of musicology. We met again, many years after her emigration, in the nineties. She was always a highly gifted pianist and musician, and an exceptionally kind-hearted person. I am glad she has at last received from our government the medal she merited. Judith helped us a lot while I was Secretary General of the Hungarian Liszt Society and gathered a rather great sum of money for us. She also took part in the last International Liszt Conference, organized by the Hungarian Liszt Society in Budapest, in 1999 ("Liszt 2000," edited by the HLS), where she gave a lecture on the LA Competitions. I was

present at the first performance in Budapest of her Hungarian Requiem, which took place in October 1994. I should like to join all those who are congratulating her!"

[Editor's note: The ALS membership in turn joins with Dr. Hamburger in congratulating Judith on this significant and well-deserved award!]

ELYSE MACH has signed contracts with Dongmoonsun Publishers in Seoul, South Korea to publish the Korean translation of her book, *Great Contemporary Pianists Speak for Themselves*. The book, which contains interviews with 26 renowned concert pianists, has also been published in London through Robson Publishers and in a Japanese translation through Ongaku-No-Tomo-ha Corporation in Tokyo. It is currently available in the United States through Dover Publishers in New York. Since it was first published, the book has received international recognition, much of which is due to its highly favorable reviews. "Mach has produced a book of uncommon interest" (*The Washington Post*). "Mach's interviews will enhance the pleasure of any concertgoer" (*People Magazine*). "This is highly recommended reading. It exudes humanity and sincerity in great measure in an often inaccessible world" (*American Music Teacher*).

BRIDGET de MOURA CASTRO has released a new CD on the L'Art label in Brazil. Entitled *Ave Maria*, the CD was recorded by Fabio Witkowski and features Canadian soprano Claudette Leblanc. The recording was made on the Austin Organ at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Hartford, CT and on a Fazioli Piano at Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, CT. Included on the disc are Liszt's *Ave Maria* for soprano and piano, the Arcadelt/Liszt *Ave Maria*, and the Liszt *Ave Maria di Roma* for piano, plus 14 additional settings from five centuries including works by Cherubini, Verdi, Mozart, Puccini, and

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Member News

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Bach/Gounod. The recording is available by contacting demouracastro@comcast.net, lauropinto@gmail.com, or cdclassic.com.br/site/index.asp.

[Editor's note: the Lester/Roldán Duo consists of Baltimore-Washington Chapter President **NANCY ROLDÁN** and Noel Lester, Professor of Piano at Hood College in Frederick, MD.]

The Lester/Roldán Duo: A 30-Year Celebration, an anniversary recording, was reviewed recently by composer Tom Benjamin on the CDBaby website. "A superb recording of some fine two-piano repertoire. This is a remarkably fine recording, which I recommend especially to all fans of two-piano music. The four-hand and two-piano repertoire is vast (much of it just practical arrangements of ensemble pieces), and the ensemble, articulation and balance issues daunting. This is not a medium for the faint-of-heart, and the fact that the Lester/Roldán Duo play so very well is testimony to their superb musicianship and technical polish. After many years of playing together they have honed their ensemble playing to a fair-thee-well; I know of no finer duo-piano team out there today. The repertoire on this album is very well selected, with something for everyone, and played with an unerring sense of style. I especially enjoyed the charming pieces by Arensky, Fauré, Guastavino (what a fine composer!), Benjamin (no relation), and Dykstra; there is in this music a nostalgic quality to which these musicians respond with special sensitivity, expressively but without sentimentality or parody. Altogether a superb recording and one which deserves a place in the library of all music lovers."

On May 19, 2007, the Duo will inaugurate the celebration with a performance of *Carnival of the Animals* at the Gordon Center [Maryland], performing with Concert Artists of Baltimore under the direction of Maestro Edward Polochick.

NANCY ROLDÁN also played a recital in November at the College of Notre Dame in Baltimore, featuring music by Guastavino, Liszt, and Mussorgsky.

On Feb. 10, **RICHARD ZIMDARS** hosted "A Saturday in Paris with Fauré and Saint-Saëns," a daylong symposium. Guests were Fauré scholar Carlo Caballero (University of Colorado) and Saint-Saëns scholar Sabina Teller Ratner (University of Montréal). The symposium was held in conjunction with Dr. Zimdars' Spring 2007 graduate course, "French Piano Literature."

GIUSEPPE LUPIS received his DMA from the University of Georgia in May 2006. His dissertation, "The Published Music of Keith Emerson: Expanding the Solo Piano Repertoire," was positively reviewed by Professor Dominik Brueckner, University of Mannheim, on Brueckner's website. In fall 2006, Lupis gave recitals and master classes at Volyn State University, Lutsk, Ukraine and Emmanuel College in Franklin Springs, Georgia. He premiered Michael Braz's *Three Provocations*, commissioned by the Georgia Music Teachers Association, at the GMTA state convention in November at Georgia Southern University.

GILA GOLDSTEIN had a busy fall performing at the William Garrison Festival in Baltimore, on the "Piano Passions" series in New York City, at the University of Mississippi, and at Opusfest in Manila, Philippines. In February, she gave recitals in San Francisco and Santa Barbara as well as a New York recital at Yamaha, and she will be featured in a recital at the 2007 ALS Conference. Since September 2006, Gila has served as a staff pianist at the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University in NJ. Visit her website, gilagoldstein.com

DMITRY RACHMANOV will perform a recital immediately following the ALS Conference on Sunday, April 1, 2007 in San Rafael, CA, just half-an-hour from San Francisco. For more information, please see concertsgrand.com, or go to Dmitry's website at dmityrachimov.com

STEPHEN SPOONER and **ADAM GYORGY** made their New York debut in Weill Recital Hall with a two-piano recital on October 22, Liszt's birthday. Among those in attendance were NY/NJ members Gila Goldstein and David Witten, Justin and Barbara Kolb, and Richard Cross.

A Revised List of Recipients of the American Liszt Society Medallion

(as of December 2006)

1984 Claudio Arrau
1984 Miklos Forrai
1984 Maurice Hinson
1984 Dezső Legány
1984 Sir Sacheverell Sitwell
1984 Alan Walker
1985 Mária Eckhardt
1985 Fernando Lares
1986 Gunnar Johansen
1986 Edward Waters
1988 Jorge Bolet
1993 Leslie Howard
1994 Klára Hamburger
1994 Harold C. Schonberg
1995 Alfred Brendel
1995 Charles Suttoni
1996 Klen Janszky
1996 János Kárpáti
1996 István Lantos
1997 Lennart Rabes
1997 Adrian Williams
1998 Malcom Troup
2001 Marc-André Hamelin
2002 Michelle Campanella
2002 Egon Petri

If you consider someone worthy of recognition as a recipient of the American Liszt Society Medallion, please convey your opinion to American Liszt Society President Thomas Mastroianni at Mastroianni68@aol.com

Why Attend a Liszt Festival?

Franz Liszt was perhaps the most misunderstood musician in the history of our art. His image has been used as the model of showmanship and shallow virtuosity. In fact, one important source on the history of piano playing includes a chapter on Liszt entitled, "Thunder, Lightning, Mesmerism, and Sex"! (Harold Schonberg, *The Great Pianists*.)

One has only to read a few pages of Alan Walker's monumental biography of Franz Liszt before realizing that, in truth, Liszt was a deep thinker, and he had a profound effect on the musical minds of his day. His inspiration, genius, and generosity influenced the development of musical thought well into the twentieth century.

His was an attitude of service to his fellow musicians and to humanity. The paradox of the notoriety of his corporal existence has for over a century obscured the deep religious conviction evident in his music.

The Annual Conferences of the American Liszt Society, which take place in conjunction with Liszt Festivals hosted by various universities or other organizations throughout North America, provide an opportunity to learn more about this fascinating musician through lectures, recitals, master classes, and concerts. Often, a sumptuous banquet and informal receptions are included in the itinerary, which normally covers a three-day time span. Perhaps equally important is the camaraderie enjoyed by Festival participants and the new musical friendships that are established as an outgrowth of the event.

Each Conference/Festival has a theme that presents Liszt's music and the music of his contemporaries and successors in public venues. Some recent Liszt Festival themes have included "An Exploration of the Italian Aspect of Liszt: Spirituality, Italian Art and Poetry, and Virtuosity"; "The Works for Piano and Orchestra"; "Heaven on Earth: Exploring the Sacred in Music"; and "A Celebration of Liszt and Matthyay."

The yearly Conference/Festival and its partner event, the Great Romantics Festival,

will appeal to scholars, performers, and music lovers of all ages, from professional musicians to young students.

Hopefully, by attending these festivals, an image of Liszt will emerge for you that will contribute to a reassessment of his treasury of uplifting music, his importance on the dissemination of music throughout Europe in the nineteenth century, and his beneficence that allowed both the mighty and the meek to attain a higher spiritual and musical good. We sincerely hope it will be possible for you to join us in an unforgettable musical experience!

Corrections

Life Members List

In the last issue of the *ALS Newsletter*, the name of **MARY ROBINSON** of San Francisco was left off the list of the ALS Life Members. Apologies to Mary, who is very much a Life Member!

The American Liszt Society - the Beginnings

In the last issue of the *ALS Newsletter*, a formatting glitch interrupted the correct text of part of the article by Fernando Laires. The correct text, which should have been found in the first three sentences of the third complete paragraph on page 5, reads as follows:

"To follow Liszt's example, the ALS traveled and presented annual festivals across the United States, since 1967, and abroad in St. Petersburg, Budapest, Mexico City, and China. For us, it was deeply gratifying to find musicians who understood the philosophical objectives of the Society and who gladly waived their professional fees to perform at ALS festivals, here and abroad, with Liszt's generosity in mind. The Society not only focused on his many aspects of greatness, but also on his philosophy, and his belief in the necessity to give his musical and pianistic genius to people everywhere."

The Editor apologizes for the error.

In Memoriam

PAULINE POCKNELL, noted Liszt scholar, passed away August 11, 2006 of cancer. Pauline's magnum opus was *Franz Liszt and Agnes Street-Klindworth: A Correspondence 1854 - 886* (Pendragon Press, 2000). She also lectured and published articles on Liszt and related topics throughout Europe and North America. Her current project was a book on Liszt in France, which will be completed by Malou Haine. Much of Pauline's research material is being given to the Liszt Ferenc Memorial Museum and Research Centre in Budapest. Pauline was a dedicated Lisztian and a warm and generous person. She will be greatly missed by her friends and colleagues.

DEZSŐ LEGÁNY died recently. He was a well-known and much revered scholar concerning the music of Liszt, Bartók, and Kodály, among other subjects, and he was the recipient of the American Liszt Society Medallion in 1984, the first year of its being awarded. At press time, we were unable to obtain details concerning his death. Rena Charnin Mueller has informed the Editor that she hopes to include a full obituary in the next issue of the *Journal of the American Liszt Society*.

In the Next Issue of JALS

Rena Charnin Mueller, Editor of the *Journal of the American Liszt Society*, informs us that the next issue of JALS will include a reprint of the entire Bard Festival Program brochure from summer 2006, including concerts and the program notes. Expected publication date is soon!

Chapter News . . . and more Member News

Baltimore/Washington Chapter

NANCY ROLDÁN, President
nancyroldan@comcast.net

MEGAN AMOSS, Chapter Secretary, reports that the 2007 ALS/BW William Garrison Festival and Piano Competition will be held September 14 - 16, 2007 at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland in Baltimore. The deadline for all competitors' applications is May 25, 2007.

There has been a change from last year: the American Pianist competition has been opened to pianists of all the Americas, including North America, South America, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands. The repertoire requirements for this division have likewise been expanded to include works of composers from all the Americas. Detailed information (including further contact information) can be found at the competition's website, *garrisonpianocompetition.org*, or by writing to:

The American Liszt Society
Baltimore/Washington Chapter
Garrison Festival and Piano Competition
P.O. Box 26288
Baltimore, MD 21210

New York/New Jersey Chapter

GILA GOLDSTEIN, Founder-President
GilaGoldstein@aol.com

DAVID WITTEN, Vice-President
wittend@mail.montclair.edu

On November 2, the ALS NY/NJ chapter hosted its annual NY concert. This was the first time the concert was held at the Yamaha Artist Services on 54th Street in Manhattan. The chapter is no longer hosted by the Hungarian Consulate, following nine years of collaboration, due to cuts in the Consulate's budget.

The concert featured pianist Nancy Roldán and violinist Jose Cueto, who played a wonderful recital of music by Hungarian and Belgian composers: Bartók, Ysaÿe, Franck, Liszt, and Hubay. There is a connecting thread between all of these composers, which added to the uniqueness

of the program. It included chamber works, as well as one sonata for solo violin by Ysaÿe and several piano solo works by Liszt. The Roldán/Cueto collaboration is excellent; each of them is a fine, sensitive artist, and the audience received both their solo and chamber offerings with great enthusiasm.

The Chapter's 2007 concerts will include Artis Wodehouse's recital at Montclair State University in NJ on March 22 at 8pm (McEachern Recital Hall at the John J. Cali School of Music, 1 Normal Avenue, Montclair, NJ (973) 655-4379). The program will feature works for piano as well as for harmonium. She will also perform Liszt's *Via Crucis* with a small chorus and baritone soloist. In November 2007 (exact date to be determined), pianist Sandro Russo will be the performer for the chapter's concert in New York, again at Yamaha.

MADELEINE FORTE, ALS member, and Allen Forte, Yale University Battell Professor of the Theory of Music (Emeritus), are performing programs of duets in Connecticut as "The Hamden Duo." Composers include Brahms, Dvorak, Mahler, Schoenberg, Fauré, and Debussy. This program was presented earlier in the French medieval castle Chateau de Goulaine in 2004 and at the Leopoldskron Schloss in Salzburg in 2005.

Madeleine's recordings with pianist Del Parkinson are available from Romeo records, nos. 7252, 7253, and 7254, and may be purchased from *amazon.com*.

In writing about Madeleine's and Del's recordings, Colin Clarke says, "This is a tremendous trio of discs - life-affirming, virtuoso, exploratory performances of often-great music. The pairing of Madeleine Forte . . . and Del Parkinson is a formidable one A good idea, too, to have a disc each for music from Spain, France, and Russia. The Forte/Parkinson partnership adjusts to each with chameleon-like ease. Spain is unbuttoned, but of bright sunshine [In] *Rapsodia espanola*, Forte and Parkinson capture the misty opening just as

surely as they do the later open-air exhilaration. The coda is accurate yet exciting. (In) Liszt's *Rhapsodie espagnole* . . . Forte and Parkinson revel in the extended lyrical passages Ravel's is the most excitingly performed, from the shimmering "Prelude a la nuit" through the middle two dances to the heady, intoxicating "Feria." . . . the *Carmen Fantasy* is the ideal close to the program proper, a potpourri of delight. . . . Debussy's *En blanc et noir* . . . The "Lent" is marvelously atmospheric, the final "Scherzando" elusive as well as playful Poulenc's cleaner language (in his *Concerto for Two Pianos*) comes as something of a palette-cleanser (delicious articulation from both players here) Rachmaninov . . . Virtuosity is at its height here, but Forte and Parkinson marry this to a lyric impulse that equates the work firmly with the contemporaneous *Second Concerto* The *First Suite* . . . clearly inspires the players here. Forte and Parkinson project the twilight world of the gondolier perfectly in the opening "Barcarole"; "A night for love," the second movement, is even more tender and sensual. There is a real Russian sadness to "Tears." . . . This is an important set, intelligently planned and programmed and with real repertoire interest."

Jonathan Bellman, Professor of Music at the University Northern Colorado, writes ". . . There are a variety of infrequently heard pieces on the three-disc set, and the live performances (1988 - 1992) are sparkling and vibrant. . . . The treatment here is delightful; Saint-Saëns glories in a variety of textural possibilities, and the balances are clear and transparent throughout Both in the little-known works and the masterpieces (Debussy's *En blanc et noir*, Ravel's *La valse*), the pianism is a joy, and the recording an attractive package of much music that is not as well known as it ought to be."

The Bel-Etre Ensemble, consisting of Pedro Pinyol, violin, and Madeleine Forte, piano, recently performed a concert of music by Jewish composers Achron, Wieniawski, Mendelssohn, Kreisler, Gershwin, Bloch, and Castelnuovo-Tedesco.

Upcoming Competitions and Festivals

(arranged by deadline date)

Amalfi Coast Music Festival and Institute Piano Program takes place July 2 - 14. The deadline for the Young Artist Concert Series was March 5. For more information, please see musicalstudies.com/programs/piano.htm. [Editor's note: faculty for this event include many members of the ALS!]

II. International Piano Competition in Memory of Liszt Ferenc takes place in Pécs from June 17 - 30. Deadline is March 10. For more information, please see art.pte.hu/pianocompetition/english/index.php.

Piano Texas consists of three components. The **Young Artists** section takes place June 7 - July 1, with a deadline of March 12 for Performers and May 14 for Observers. The **Amateurs** section takes place June 22 - July 1, with a deadline of March 19 for Performers and May 14 for Observers. The **Teachers** section takes place June 7 - 17, with a deadline of April 9 for Performers and May 14 for Observers. For more information, please see pianotexas.org.

Chautauqua Music Festival has two piano components. The **Summer Piano Program** takes place June 23 - August 8 and has a deadline of March 15. For more information, please see music.ciweb.org/piano.html. The **Seminar for Piano Teachers** takes place July 31 - August 3. For more information, please see music.ciweb.org/piano_seminar.html.

19th Annual New Orleans International Piano Competition will take place July 22 - 29. Deadline for applications is March 19. For more information, please see masno.websitesource.net/noipc.html.

The International Institute for Young Musicians International Piano Competition will take place July 1 - 2 at the Lied Center of Kansas, on the campus of the University of Kansas in Lawrence. Deadline is April 1. For more information, please see iiym.com/home_IPC.php.

The Chinese-American International Piano Institute takes place May 20 - 30 at the Sichuan Conservatory in Chengdu, China. The deadline for application has been extended until April 1. For more information, please see CAIpianoinstitute.org

The 8th Annual International Russian Music Piano Competition will be held in San Jose from June 8 - 17. Applications are due April 1. For more information, please see russianmusiccompetition.com/?pg=home.

International Keyboard Institute & Festival takes place July 15 - 29 at the Mannes College of Music in New York City. The deadline for online applications is April 15. For more information, please see ikif.org/StartPage.aspx.

The Franz Liszt Summer Piano Academy and Festival will take place July 20 - August 5. Deadline for Performer's applications is April 16. For more information, please see williamwellborn.com/academy.html. [Editor's note: ALS Board Member and 2007 Conference Host, William Wellborn, organizes this event.]

Oberlin Piano Competition and Festival takes place July 21 - 29 and July 25 - 29, respectively. The application deadline for the Piano Competition is May 1. For more information, please see oberlin.edu/conl/summer/piano/.

Piano Summer at New Paltz takes place July 14 - August 3. Deadline for applications is May 1. For more information, please see newpaltz.edu/piano/.

Goldansky Institute Summer Symposium at Princeton and International Piano Festival take place July 14 - 22 and July 15 - 22, respectively. Deadline for master class performers is May 14. For more information, please see goldanskyinstitute.org/festivalmain.html.

University of Illinois Piano Festival takes place June 11 - 15, with a deadline for performer applications of May 15. For more information, see music.uiuc.edu/2007pianofestival.pdf

2007 ALS/BW William Garrison Festival and Piano Competition will be held September 14 - 16 at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland in Baltimore. The deadline for all competitor applications is May 25. For more information, please see garrisonpianocompetition.org.

The 2nd International Beethoven Competition for Piano in Bonn takes place December 3 - 13. Deadline for applications is May 31. For more information, please see beethoven-competition-bonn.de/2007/en.

8th International Franz Liszt Piano Competition of Utrecht, Netherlands takes place March 30 - April 12, 2008. Auditions will take place in New York on October 3 - 4, 2007 (there are earlier auditions in Utrecht and Shanghai). Deadline for applications is June 15, 2007. For more information, please see liszt.nl.

Chetham Seventh International Summer School and Festival for Pianists takes place August 18 - 25. Deadline for applications is July 1. For more information, please see piano-festival.co.uk/pdf/2007.pdf.

Eastman Summer Piano Festival and Competition takes place July 14 - 23. For more information, please see esm.rochester.edu/news/?id=152.

First Vienna Piano Festival takes place August 2 - 5. For more information, please see nethotels.com/release20/eventdetail_new.asp?EventID=48323&Group=7&ridlng=2057

37th International Festival and Institute at Round Top takes place June 9 - July 14. For more information, please see festivalhill.org/index.php.

ALS BOARD MEMBERS PETITION ON BEHALF OF THE LOH-ORCHESTER SONDERSHAUSEN

Dr. Alan Walker has been in touch with the ALS *Newsletter* to inform the readership of a troubling development in musical life in Germany. "Dr. Horst Foerster was the guest conductor at this year's Great Romantics Festival in Hamilton, Ontario. During the final banquet, we honoured him with a lifetime membership in the ALS, and in his speech of thanks, he alerted the audience to the threat of closure facing one of Germany's oldest orchestras - the Loh Orchestra Sondershausen. The State of Thuringia has cut its regular subsidy to a level at which the orchestra cannot sustain itself. Dr. Foerster told the audience of the ensemble's historical significance for Thuringia. He pointed out that it had intimate ties to Franz Liszt, and invited the ALS Board to express its concern by writing directly to the Minister/President of the Freistaat Thuringen. All the members of the ALS Board who were present did so in the form of a letter, and Dr. Foerster took that letter back to Germany with him. It has meanwhile been delivered to Herr Dieter Althaus, the Minister responsible."

We are taking this opportunity - and the liberty to act on behalf of the ALS membership, to address Herr Althaus in the form of an open letter that repeats the text of the earlier missive referenced above. (The original letter was signed by at least eight board members present.) As of the publication of this issue, Dr. Walker reported that, while the original letter had been delivered to the Minister as planned, the orchestra had not yet heard anything.

Keep watching the ALS website (americanlisztsociety.org) for updates on this situation!

AN OPEN LETTER:

*To Ministerpräsident des
Freistaats Thüringen
Dieter Althaus
Thüringer Staatskanzlei*

Most respected Mr. President!

It is with great concern that hundreds of members of the American Liszt Society, based in Washington, DC, have heard about the threat to the future existence of the Loh-Orchester Sondershausen because of the reduction of its state subsidy.

As one of the oldest German orchestras, the Loh-Orchestra had an important role in the musical life of the 19th and 20th century. Johann Simon Hermstedt, Louis Spohr, Max Bruch, Hugo Riemann, Max Reger, Hans von Bülow, and others cultivated very close contacts with the city of Sondershausen and its orchestra

"It's a great wonder, locked up in a small city," Franz Liszt wrote to Baron Thüna after visiting the Loh-Orchestra.

For us it is unimaginable that your Free State of Thuringia, the country in which Johann Sebastian Bach and Heinrich Schütz were born, in which Goethe and Schiller, Herder, Wieland, and Liszt himself worked, could sacrifice this unique tradition because of short-lived economic forces. You would be giving up a good piece of your identity as one of Europe's superb cultural landscape, a lodestar and point of attraction for lovers of art and tourists from all over the world.

Therefore we are appealing to you to protect this magnificent cultural legacy and to protect the existence of the Loh-Orchestra for future generations.

Yours faithfully,
Members of the American Liszt Society

A NEW BOOK OF INTEREST TO PIANISTS AND LOVERS OF PIANO MUSIC

Dr. Kenneth Hamilton, author of *Liszt: Sonata in B Minor* and *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt*, among other publications, is the author of a new book entitled, *The Piano*. This is part of the Yale Musical Instrument Series and is published by Yale University Press. The first edition of this hardcover volume in English will be available March 11, 2007. The ISBN-10 number is 030011866X, and the ISBN-13 number is 978-0300118667. In addition to other sales venues, the publication is available online at amazon.com

Save the Date:

2007 Great Romantics Festival

The 13th Great Romantics Festival will take place Thursday, October 4 - Saturday, October 6, 2007. The Festival will again be located in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, which co-sponsors the event with the American Liszt Society and the School of the Arts at McMaster University. Host for the Festival will be Dr. Alan Walker, world-renowned Liszt scholar and ALS Board Member. Details of the schedule are not yet available, but please check the ALS website at americanlisztsociety.org after April 1, 2007 for a link to the festival website and/or an electronic brochure

Letter from the Editor

(continued from page 3)

Luxembourg, and in the Liszt “death house” at Bayreuth, plus three players on vibraphone and marimba actually on the stage in the hall. This was a real “trip,” in every sense of the word, taking one through Liszt’s life as though driving with him in an auto. The anagram title was most fascinating, and I came away from the performance very excited in thinking that Liszt, with his progressive views of the future of music and what was for him “modernity” at the time, would have approved of what was a 21st-century approach to Liszt.

We then heard a short recital played by Leslie Howard, whom you know as the performer of the complete music of Liszt on some 90 CDs available through Hyperion. The *Un sospiro* was beautifully played in an alternate version to that which I normally use, and Leslie followed this with a stirring performance of the *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 13*, the first rhapsody I learned. Audience response demanded an encore, and *St. Francis Walking on the Waves* was the choice - a tremendously powerful, full-bodied rendition that was truly inspiring.

Following a blessing of the hall by Bishop Paul Iby, the audience was treated to a scrumptious buffet of local cuisine that still lingers on my taste buds. A powerful, full-bodied red wine matched the earlier performance by Leslie, and we two had quite a nice chat over a glass or two of - you guessed it, Franz Liszt wine. (You will remember I told you some time ago that middle Burgenland reds are among the best in the world - it is still true!) I also had the opportunity to reacquaint myself with many personalities who figured prominently in my life in Austria from 1983 - 1998, including Alois Schwarz, the former mayor of Eisenstadt; Bishop Iby (himself a native of Raiding and a great Liszt fan - *Heilige Elizabeth* is among his favorites); head of the Burgenland Liszt Society Dr. Gerhard Winkler; and former Cultural Department Chief Dr. Dr. Josef Tiefenbach. Our one regret was that we could not spend any time

with Walter and Heidi Reicher, two very talented and lovely people who have been good friends for many years.

Certainly all of us must thank Walter Reicher, who was impossibly busy for many weeks leading up to the hall’s opening, and all his colleagues for having provided the leadership and momentum to make this new concert facility a reality.

You can take a rather nice virtual tour of the birthplace by going to 195.230.172.167/cms_liszt/front_content.php?idcat=154. And if you go to 195.230.172.167/cms_liszt/front_content.php?idcatart=756&lang=33&client=27 and look at the sixth picture on the right hand side of the screen, you will see yours truly standing with Dr. Walter Reicher, Intendant of the Burgenland Liszt Society (as well as the Haydn Festival in Schloss Esterházy, Eisenstadt); Leslie Howard, Liszt specialist par excellence; the Steinway representative from Hamburg; and other officials.

We were able to spend a few days in Budapest, where there was a wonderful exhibit commemorating the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. I can recall this event taking place when I was about 12, not knowing the importance of this struggle in the lives of many people who were later to become influential in my own musical growth.

As well, a pilgrimage to the Liszt Museum proved to be quite memorable, with its special exhibit on Liszt and Schumann. It was a privilege to speak with Dr. Mária Eckhardt, who does such a tremendous job of making the museum the very best possible, in spite of a severe lack of funding. I came away from my talk with her thinking that the ALS should start thinking now about how to help with a project on behalf of the Liszt Museum as we approach 2011 and the Liszt Bicentennial. I have spoken with President Mastroianni about this matter and hope one or both of us can report to you favorably in the next issue of the *Newsletter*.

Best greetings to you all, Edward Rath

2007 ALS Conference

(continued from page two)

of Liszt’s music played by students from the Conservatory and also winners of the most recent Los Angeles International Liszt Competition, of which the ALS is a major sponsor. (See more about the Competition earlier in this issue.) David Cannata (Temple University), who with Rena Mueller did such a marvelous production of the most recent issue of the *Journal of the American Liszt Society*, then presents a lecture on “Liszt’s later years in Paris and the *Gran Mass* fiasco.” (In case you are not familiar with the work referenced in the lecture title, it is not “Grand,” rather it was originally written in 1863 as a “Missa Solemnis” for the consecration of the Basilica in Gran, Hungary.) The final session of the afternoon is turned over to Yoshikazu Nagai (a new faculty member at SFCM), who will play a mixed program of Scarlatti (*Three Sonatas*), the Ravel *Jeux d’eau*, Liszt’s *Les jeux d’eau à la villa d’Este*, his transcription of Schubert’s *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, and ending with the *Mephisto Waltz No. 1*. The conference concludes with the traditional Festival Banquet, where diners will have their choice of chicken, duck, or a vegetarian entrée.

Finally, in addition to this wealth of performance and scholarship, participants will have the opportunity to tour the fabulous new facilities of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. This institution has long been associated with the very highest quality of musical instruction. For nearly 20 years, the SFCM (sfc.edu) has been ably guided by its former Dean and now President, Colin Murdoch. The recent addition of Dr. Mary Ellen Poole as Dean has brought fresh perspectives to this venerable institution.

So, we will see you in San Francisco in less than a month!

[Editor’s Note: If your plans change and you find yourself able to attend the 2007 Conference after all, please contact Dr. William Wellborn at pianoleg@aol.com. Preferred rates for housing, etc., may no longer be available, but it might be possible for you to lodge close to other attendees - and you’ll be glad to made the trip!!]

*American
Liszt Society*

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Fleischmanns, NY 12430

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