

Virtuosi presents summer series at Tunxis

FARMINGTON — A summer music series presented by the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra's Summer Music Institute will be staged through Aug. 25 in the courtyard at Tunxis Community College.

In the event of rain, performances will be held indoors in Tunxis Cyber Café.

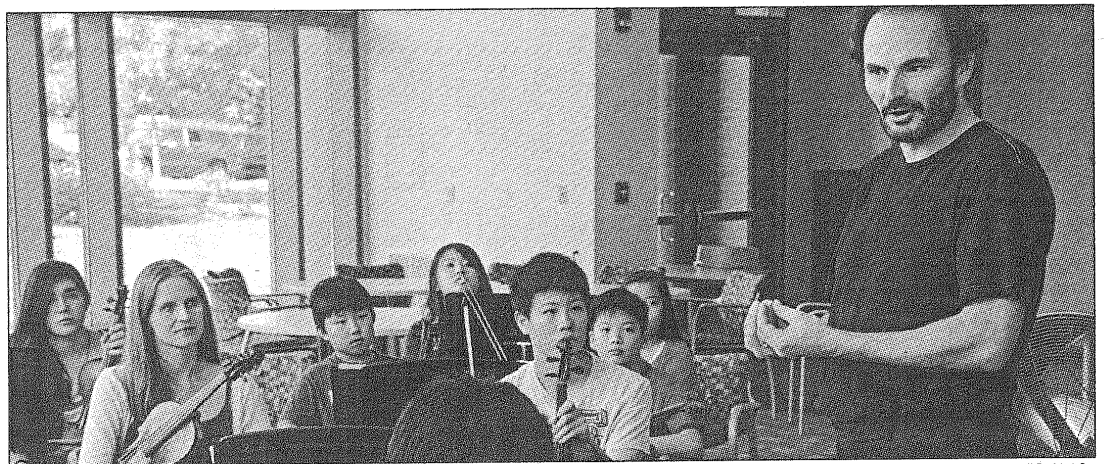
The concerts include:

■ Friday, 7 p.m. — CT Virtuosi student recital.

■ Saturday, 7 p.m. — Piano and violin performance of Beethoven and Chopin with Jolanta Reszelska, piano and Adrian Sylveen, violin.

■ Aug. 23, 7 p.m. — Choral concert with Polonia-Paderewski Chorus and the New Britain Chorale.

■ Aug. 25, 5 p.m. — Festival Finale, with performances by CT Virtuosi's Connecticut Lyric Opera and Youth Orchestra.



Annalisa Russell-Smith | Sta

Maestro Adrian Sylveen instructs students from the Virtuosi Academy at Tunxis Community College in Farmington.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Weekend

October 11, 2012

NEW BRITAIN HERALD The Bristol Press



Rising Polish opera star Alexandra Kaminska plays the title role in "Carmen" at Trinity-on-Main Sunday.

'Carmen' in New Britain

By **LIZ NEWBERG**
STAFF WRITER

NEW BRITAIN — Murder, jealousy and revenge will hit the stage at Trinity-on-Main Sunday as the Connecticut Lyric Opera

and the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra present Georges Bizet's "Carmen," the opening of the Lyric Opera's 10th season.

Carmen was the Lyric Opera's

See "CARMEN," Page 24

'Carmen' at Trinity-on-Main in New Britain Sunday

Continued from Page 21

first performance 10 years ago, so it's fitting that the organization chose a repeat performance of one of the most popular of operas, according to artistic director Adrian Sylveen.

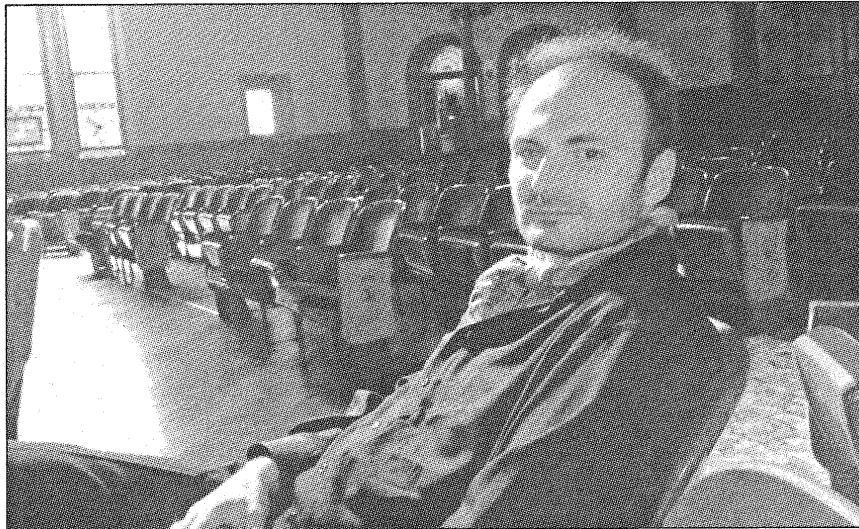
"Carmen is in the top 20 sellers in the opera world and we have to consider that from our point of view," Sylveen said.

"We have to balance all three groups of opera lovers. You have those who go only to something they know, the group, a much smaller group, who knows more about opera and is more sophisticated who would know Szymanowski's 'King Roger,' and then you have the group who is completely opposite and would go for the Three Tenors or a great singer."

Carmen is this balance. With music known for its outstanding melody, harmony, atmosphere and orchestration, Bizet's skill in using his music to reflect the passion, emotion and suffering of his characters is unparalleled.

Carmen is the ultimate role for any singing actress, according to Sylveen, and this production will showcase the rising Polish mezzo star Alexandra Kaminska as the free-spirited, strong-willed gypsy Carmen.

"She has the stage presence and the bravado and sheer musicality that is necessary to support that kind of role," said Sylveen. "She



Adrian Sylveen, creative director of the Connecticut Lyric Opera and the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, says "Carmen" is one of the "top 20 sellers in the opera world."

takes charge of the stage with a naturally good voice. She's like Pavarotti, a natural singer. It just comes out."

Kaminska took part in several international music festivals, including Greifswalder Bach Woche in Germany, and Musik in Cathedral and Musica Sacra in Poland.

In 2006 she won a scholarship at the Conservatorio di Musica di Santa Cecilia in Rome. She made a debut in Opera Theater

in Szczecin, Poland, starring in "Cavalleria Rusticana." During the Polish Song Competition in 2005, she earned an honorable mention at the Polish National Opera Theater.

She performed successfully in Poland and abroad, including Germany, Italy, Finland, Spain and Lithuania, singing both secular and religious music cantatas and oratorios.

The two men in the production enamored by her are tenor

Daniel Juarez as Don Jose and baritone Maksim Ivanov as the toreador Escamillo. Rounding out the cast is resident diva Jurate Svedaite in the role of Micaela, who actually has the most gorgeous aria in Act 3. She will alternate with Samantha Lane Phillips-Talmadge.

While "Carmen" presents a challenge to the singer, it also offers audience members a human connection to the art form that will resonate with each of them.

IF YOU GO...

The 10th season of Connecticut Lyric Opera begins with a performance of Frenchman Georges Bizet's "Carmen" Sunday at 5 p.m. at Trinity-on-Main theater in New Britain. Reservations for opening night are strongly suggested due to limited sitting capacity. Tickets are \$22, \$17 for seniors, \$5 for students, and children under 7 are free. For more information, call the Virtuosi office at (860) 325-CVCO (2826), or visit thevirtuosi.org.

"Opera in particular can express emotion to a level that is unattainable in straight theater," Sylveen said.

The drama in "Carmen" is very human, he said, and as such, the opera poses as a stingingly sharp reflection of human nature.

"Art has to reflect the people who come to experience that art," Sylveen said. "It's like going to church. People go to church because they want to make a connection. Art needs to make that human connection. Art is a mirror of who we are to a great degree and music carries that extra dimension."

Liz Newberg may be reached at (860) 225-4601, ext. 243, or lnewberg@newbritainherald.com.

CLASSICAL

Carmen

The Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra and Connecticut Lyric Opera opens its 15th season with Bizet's opera "Carmen" Oct. 14, 20, 28 and Nov. 3.

Artistic director **Adrian Sylveen** will conduct one of opera's enduring stories, set in 19th century Spain. Polish mezzo soprano **Aleksandra Kaminska** takes on the challenging title role, with tenor **Daniel Juarez** as Don Jose, baritone **Maksim Ivanov** as the toreador Escamillo, and resident soprano **Jurate Svedaite** and soprano **Samantha Lane Phillips-Talmadge** alternating in the role of Micaela.

The opera is performed in French with English super titles.

Performances are 5 p.m. Oct. 14 at Trinity-On Main Arts Center, 60 Main St., New Britain, 860-229-2072, tickets are \$22, \$17 for seniors, \$5 for students, free for children 6 and younger; 7:30 p.m., Oct. 20, at NVCC Performing Arts Center, 750 Chase



THE HARTFORD Symphony Orchestra (top) with conductor Carolyn Kuan; Nicholas McGegan (above), guest conductor at Yale; and mezzo soprano Aleksandra Kaminska.

Turnpike, Waterbury, 203-346-2000, tickets are \$20 to \$50; 3 p.m., Oct. 28, at MHS Arts Center, 200 La Rosa Lane, Middletown, 860-347-4887, tickets \$35 and \$40; 7:30 p.m., Nov. 3, Garde Arts Center, 325 State St., New London, tickets \$36 to \$64.

Information: www.thevirtuosi.org.

Castles, Firebirds, Promenades, Creatures at Welte Hall

By Editor at October 26, 2012 | 10:45 am |

Print

Like

to see what your friends like.

Images of Castles, Firebirds, Promenades and other creatures will accompany the inaugural concert of the Connecticut Virtuosi's and New Britain Symphony's Magnum Opus II series. The event, also in collaboration with the New Britain Museum of American Art, will combine visual and musical experiences into what promises to be a feast for all senses.

The concert will take place at Welte Hall at CCSU on Sunday, Nov. 4 at 3:30 p.m., with 3 p.m. pre-concert presentation from the Virtuosi Music Academy students, the art gallery display in the lobby, and a post-concert gathering at the Belvedere restaurant.

The concert program consists of jewels of Russian symphonic music: Pictures At An Exhibition by Modest Mussorgsky, Concerto for Piano No. 1 in B-flat by Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky, and The Firebird Suite Igor Stravinsky. The soloist for the evening will be young American piano prodigy Nathaniel Baker; concert will be conducted by Maestro Adrian Sylveen, visual presentation is designed by Melissa Nardiello.

Nathaniel BakerConnecticut native, Nathaniel Baker, began his formal piano training at the age of 7. His subsequent rise to musical maturity has seen the beginnings of a rich and varied career as a solo performer, chamber musician, music director, and theorist. In the spring of 2010, Nathaniel graduated from The Hartt School with majors in both Piano Performance and Music Theory. He has studied privately with Luiz de Moura-Castro, Benita Rose and Margarita Nuller and participated in master classes with Paul Badura-Skoda, Diane Andersen, Dmitry Rachmanov, Watson Morrison and Awadagin Pratt, among others.

Baker has played in venues throughout Connecticut, including the Connecticut Governor's Residence, the Mark Twain House, Eastern Connecticut State University's Shafer Auditorium and Von Der Mehden Recital Hall at the University of Connecticut. He has also performed at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, at music festivals in Spain and Portugal, and the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) in Belo Horizonte, Brazil's fourth largest city. Baker has appeared as a soloist with the Willimantic Orchestra and the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Youth Orchestra. He placed third in the 2011 Young Artist Piano Competition sponsored by the Connecticut State Music Teachers' Association.

The past few years have seen the development of another one of Nathaniel's passions: poetry. Nathaniel's unique blend of dramatic poetry recitation and music has found an audience throughout Connecticut and Massachusetts. In July 2010, this integral aspect of Nathaniel's career assumed international dimensions when he gave an extensive recitation at the Amalfi Coast Music Festival in Italy.

"Maestro and I are thrilled that after the successful initial season the two orchestras combine for the "Opus II". This is a fantastic musical program for the Greater New Britain community. We invite everyone to check us out!!" says Nancy Judd, the president of the NBSO.

This is the second season of Magnum Opus series, it is sponsored by American Savings Foundation, Community Foundation of Greater New Britain, Roberts Foundation, Farmington Bank, Webster Bank, New Britain Arts Alliance, Polish and Polish American Studies at CCSU, Andrew J. Sloper Musical Fund, Charles Parker Trust/Public Music Fund, The Marjorie Moore Charitable Foundation, and many individual donors from the community.

Weekend

December 13, 2012

NEW BRITAIN HERALD *The Bristol Press*

A multi-cultural holiday celebration

STAFF REPORT

NEW BRITAIN — Eastern Culture Arts of West Hartford will present a World Holiday Celebration Sunday at Trinity-on-Main.

This colorful show of dance and music will feature groups of many cultures, including Chinese, Hawaiian, Indian, Indonesian, Mexican, African, Spanish, Korean, Irish and Italian.

Among the performers are Lena Tan of West Hartford, Victoria Andino of Southington, Kiu Yeung and Hong-Chee Yeung of Newington, Manli Lou of Plainville, Camille Martin of Berlin, and Lisa Wei of Farmington.

Lena Tan not only sings and dances, but is one of the show's producers and, as ECA president,



Eastern Culture Arts dancers will be at Trinity-on-Main Sunday.

is the choreographer, skit writer, the show. A chemical engineer, program director and manager of Tan is employed by the state as an

IF YOU GO...

The World Holiday Celebration is Sunday, from 3 to 5 p.m., at Trinity-on-Main, 89 Main St., New Britain. A cash bar and other refreshments will be available. Tickets are \$10 for adults in advance, \$12 at the door; children (12 and younger), \$5 in advance and \$7 at the door. Families of four people will be admitted for one price, \$25. Doors will open at 2 p.m. For information about the event, call (860) 229-2072 or (860) 978-4452 for advance tickets.

environmental analyst. Her poems and short stories have been published in China.

Join Virtuosi for an 'emotional journey'

By **SCOTT WHIPPLE**
STAFF WRITER

NEW BRITAIN — Ask Adrian Sylveen, artistic director of the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, about the celebration of Christmas and he'll tell you it's about the goodness of human nature.

"And music is certainly part of that," he says. "To me, a concert is an emotional journey and we like to share the beauty that is a part of that journey."

This "emotional journey" begins this Sunday in Welte Hall at Central Connecticut State University. Music

of the classical Polish composer Mieczyslaw Karłowicz will dominate the second of the Magnum Opus II concert series. Karłowicz was the first Polish Impressionist composer of the 20th century.

Also featured will be mezzo-



See VIRTUOSI, Page 22 Aleksandra Kaminska

Virtuosi in concert at CCSU

Continued from Page 21

soprano Aleksandra Kaminska.

According to Jan Jakub Bokun, writing in the Polish Music Center, Karłowicz's "excellent techniques of orchestration derived from Strauss, Wagner and Tchaikovsky. Nevertheless, his music, which is dominated by a mood of sadness, melancholy, and resignation, has a clearly individual character."

In fact, both Bokun and Sylveen believe Karłowicz could have made an even greater mark on Polish music if he had not been killed in an avalanche at age 32.

Rising Polish star mezzo soprano Aleksandra Kaminska has performed in several International Music Festivals. In 2006 she won a scholarship to Conservatorio di Musica di Santa Cecilia in Rome. Still a student, she made her debut in Opera Theater in Szczecin

(Poland) starring in "Cavalleria Rusticana" (2002). During the Polish song competition in 2005, she earned an honorable mention at the Polish National Opera Theater.

Kaminska performed successfully in Poland and abroad (Germany, Italy, Finland, Spain, Lithuania), singing both secular and religious music.

"She was Carmen in our recent production," said Sylveen. "So, it is a pleasure to have her back."

The free concert, co-sponsored and co-presented by the Stanislaus A. Blejwas Chair in Polish and Polish American Studies at CCSU, starts at 4 p.m. in Welte Hall; there is a 3:30 p.m. pre-concert presentation from the Virtuosi Music Academy students, and a post-concert gathering at the Belvedere Café and Restaurant in New Britain.

December 21, 2012

LOCAL

New Britain Herald |

AGENT NOW WE HAVE NOTHING TO MAY HAVE MADE LOCAL AL-

Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra to take part in Sandy Hook relief concert

STAFF REPORT

NEW BRITAIN — A Sandy Hook relief concert is being held Sunday at 7 p.m. at Saint Thomas the Apostle, 872 Farmington Ave., West Hartford. The concert will benefit the Sandy Hook Elementary

School Relief Fund and will feature performances by the New Britain-based Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, Connecticut Lyric Opera, Hartford Arts Academy, Hartt School Alumni and Infini Tango.

There is no charge for the concert but donations will be accepted with all proceeds benefiting the Sandy Hook Relief Fund.

For information, visit www.the-virtuosi.org or call CVCO at (860) 325-2826.



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Connecticut Virtuosi 15th Annual Holiday Concert Open to the Public

By Joe LaRosa | Correspondent at December 7, 2012 | 9:00 am |



to see what your friends like.

The music of Mieczyslaw Karlowicz will be featured in the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra's annual holiday concert Dec. 16, at 4 p.m. at CCSU's Welte Hall.

The annual concert will also include pieces performed by mezzo soprano Aleskandra Kaminska and the Polonia Paderewski Chorus of New Britain is co-sponsored by the Stanislaus A. Blejwas Chair in Polish, and CCSU's Polish American Studies program and is open to the public.

"It has become a true tradition for us," said the orchestra's artistic and executive director Adrian Sylveen Mackiewicz. "It is our 15th holiday concert. We are sponsored by the Polish Studies Department and there is a Polish flavor, but music is an international vehicle and we have taken a universal approach," he added.

The Virtuosi will open with French impressionist composer Claude Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, the perform three of Karlowicz's compositions: *Na spokojnym cichym morzu* (On a quiet calm sea); *Pamiętam Ciche Złote Jasne Dnie* (I remember Silent Light Gilded Days) and *Bianca da Molena, Symphonic Prologue Opus 6*.

"The Prelude is probably the most famous of the impressionist works of that period or at least the most famous of Debussy," said Maestro Mackiewicz. "Then we will perform the Karlowicz works," he added.

Karlowicz was the first Polish composer who forged progressive models of expression which could bear comparison with those employed by the leading representatives of the contemporary European mainstream.

"He was a brilliant composer who died tragically" Mackiewicz said. Karlowicz was 32 when he died while skiing in an avalanche in the Tatra Mountains in Poland in 1909.

In addition, the orchestra will perform Richard Strauss's *Dedication* as well as Krzysztof Niegowski's *Conversations Between Son and Father* with words written by the late Pope John Paul II).

Born in Poland, Kaminska graduated with honors from the master class of solo singing at the Academy of Music in Poznan. She won a scholarship of Conservatorio di Musica di Santa Cecilia in Rome. Still a student, she has made a debut in Opera Theater in Szczecin (Poland) starring in *Cavalleria Rusticana* (2002). During the 2005 Polish Song Competition, she earned a honorable mention at the National Opera. In 2008 she appeared in Johann Strauss's "Gipsy King" as Chipraat the Musical Theater in Poznan.

She has participated in various Internationals Festivals of Musik (Greifswalder Bach Woche in Germany, Musik in Cathedral – Poland, Musica Sacra – Poland. She performed successfully in Poland, Germany, Italy, Finland, Spain and Lithuania.

The concert will conclude with a sing-a-long also featuring Christmas carols from around the World sung by Polonia Paderewski Chorus. The 50-member chorus is based in New Britain and has performed through Connecticut as well as in New York and New Jersey.

Weekend

February 7, 2013

NEW BRITAIN HERALD The Bristol Press

Happy anni-Virtuosari

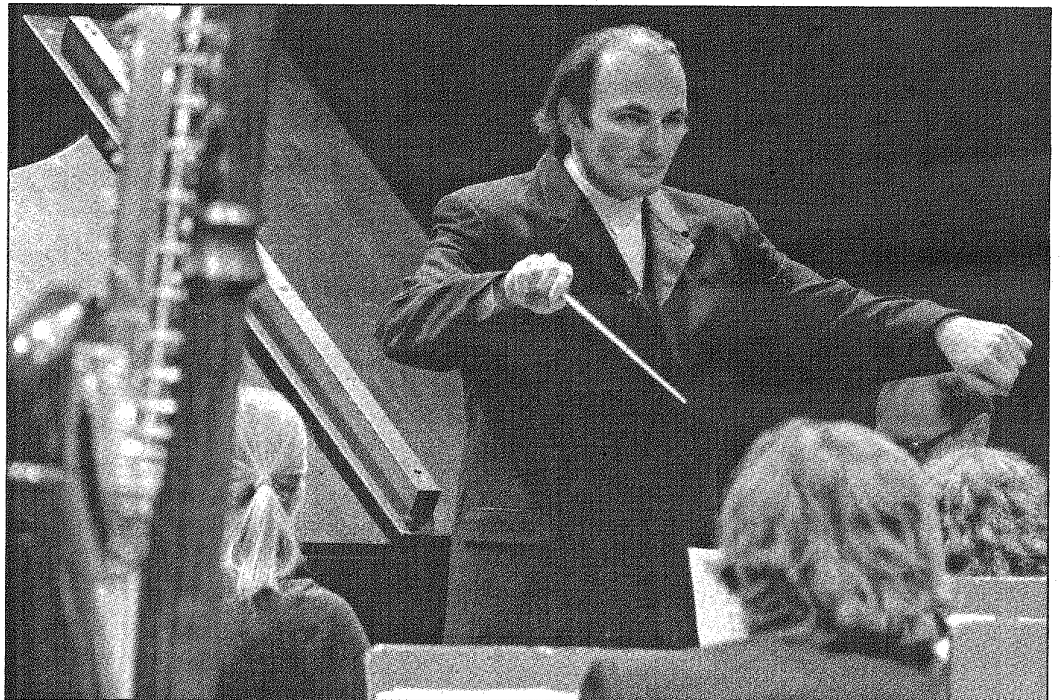
Orchestra
celebrates 15
years together

By LIZ NEWBERG
STAFF WRITER

NEW BRITAIN — They've been bringing classical music to central Connecticut for 15 years now and it's time for The Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra to celebrate.

After their initial start under the umbrella of the Polish American Foundation, Virtuosi has grown into a vibrant musical organization bringing opera, chamber music and classical music to city schools and concert halls in New Britain, New London, Mystic and Waterbury.

"It's due to the creativity of our artistic director," said Cathryn Addy, president of the Virtuosi board and president of Tunxis Community College, where the Virtuosi hold their summer instructional program for budding musicians. "The Virtuosi



Annalisa Russell-Smith | Staff

Maestro Adrian Sylveen conducts the Connecticut Virtuosi Orchestra.

had to separate from the Polish American Foundation to allow greater flexibility. Today, it has

grown into a musical organization that brings value not only to New Britain but to all of Connecticut,

promoting Eastern European music and heritage. That's a very
See VIRTUOSI, Page 19



Annalisa Russell-Smith | Staff

Adrian Sylveen instructs students from the Virtuosi Academy at Tunxis Community College in Farmington.

Virtuosi celebrates 15th anniversary

Continued from Page 17

important exponent to our operation."

Collaborations with the New Britain Symphony Orchestra, Polonia Paderewski Choir and the Polish Studies Department at Central Connecticut State University, which sponsored concerts at Welte Auditorium, has allowed the Virtuosi to reach greater audiences than ever.

Addy puts the success down to the quality of music being performed by the Virtuosi on a consistent basis. "Brunilda (Myftaraj) and Adrian (Sylveen) work as a group to bring personal responsibility to the table and the support of the Polish community in New Britain has made all the difference," she said.

The caliber of classical music being performed is on par with that of New York City performances, according to Lynn Laskowski of Bristol, board member and a Tunxis professor.

"The Virtuosi is making a huge impact with their free concerts held here at Tunxis and at area schools to expose students to quality classical music," Laskowski said.

While the opera scene in the area was close to dying out, Richard Kosinski, board member from New Britain, said thanks to the work of the Virtuosi the Connecticut Lyric Opera is rebounding and bringing the

IF YOU GO:

Connecticut Virtuosi Orchestra celebrates its 15th anniversary Sunday with a gala concert at 4 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m. at Central Connecticut State University. The program includes: "Wieniawski: Violin Concerto no. 2, in D-minor," "op. 22" with Brunilda Myftaraj on the violin; "Beethoven: Symphony No. 7," "Op. 92" and more. The concert is free and open to the public. Dinner is a suggested donation of \$70 per person. For reservations, email rspv@thevirtuosi.org or call (860) 325-2826.

beauty of opera to new generations.

It helps when one of the founding fathers so to speak of the New Britain opera scene is on the Virtuosi board lending their years of experience and knowledge. Peter Spano was with the New Britain Opera Association from 1976 until 2001 when he passed the baton to Sylveen and the Virtuosi Orchestra.

"We are different but the same," Sylveen said of Spano and the now-defunct New Britain Opera Association. "Wouldn't be what we are today if it weren't for the work Peter had done."

What does the future hold for the Virtuosi? According to Addy, that depends upon available funding, social circumstances and the talent available. "The energy of an organization depends very much on the individuals involved at the time," Addy said, referring to Sylveen and his dynamic leadership. "Our intent is not to compete with the likes of the Hartford Symphony; the Virtuosi will continue to focus on chamber music, opera and education in the future."

Sylveen is determined that whatever the organization builds will last beyond his tenure.

"We must make sure what we build together, we find a way to sustain the energy so it can continue," Sylveen said. "The most successful organizations grow beyond one person, one board, one structure. What we've built so far is a good foundation. My vision is to be Connecticut-wide, not just in New Britain. I recognize once we've done everything we can in the city we then must take it on to the rest of the state." Ultimately, the board agreed that the important thing was to have musical choices available to young people.

"That's what education is about," Addy said. "At some point you can make up your own mind what path you choose to follow but if you're not exposed to it then you don't know what you're missing."

Virtuosi reality



Annalisa Russell-Smith | Staff

Violinist Brunilda Myftaraj playing with the Connecticut Virtuosi at their 15th anniversary concert at Trinity-on-Main Wednesday conducted by maestro Adrian Sylveen. The concert had originally been planned for Sunday, and was cancelled due to the Friday's blizzard.

The life, death and afterlife of a fallen woman

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

NEW BRITAIN — “Maria de Buenos Aires,” a “tango operita,” as its composer Astor Piazzolla called it, is a surreal journey through the life, death and afterlife of a fallen woman in the underworld of Buenos Aires. This tango opera combines the music of Piazzolla, the great master of the tango, with the poet and librettist Horacio Ferrer.

The opera will be performed one time at Trinity-on-Main, Friday at 8 p.m.

It tells the story of Maria, a girl from the slums of Buenos Aires, who succumbs to the grim power of the city’s underworld. This award-winning tango opera is the tale of a girl seduced, corrupted,



“Maria de Buenos Aires” will be performed at Trinity-on-Main Friday.

surrounded by pimps, madams and thieves, doomed to wander ghost-like through the streets of Buenos Aires

According to Adrian Sylveen, maestro of Connecticut Lyric Opera, the musical performance “promises to be an electrifying and sensual theatrical experience. Maria embodies everything that is the Argentinian people — totally consumed by passion, yet fiercely maintaining her independence — as she fights for survival and freedom, never surrendering.”

Piazzolla’s tango music has been called “irresistible, incisive, electrifying, provocative and moving.” The poetry of Horacio Ferrer conjures a fantasia of sacred and profane imagery; it follows Maria’s journey as the passion of tango seduces her into a dangerous life at the dark edges of society.

This production will feature the singers and small chamber ensemble from the Connecticut Lyric Opera, with choreography by and dancers from Mystic Ballet. The choreography is by Brian Enos.

Starting as Maria and making her CLO debut is the beautiful and talented young mezzo-soprano Abigail Fisher. The New York Times has called her “magnetic” and “riveting.”

Her love, El Duende, is portrayed by the handsome Peruvian baritone Jose Sacin. The narrator is soprano Heather O’Connor, who made her CLO debut last fall as the flirtatious Frasquita in “Carmen.”

Capping a decade of experience

IF YOU GO...

“Maria de Buenos Aires” is Friday at 8 p.m. Preferred tickets are \$35; \$22 for adults; \$17 for seniors; \$5 for students.



This tango opera is being presented by the Connecticut Lyric Opera and the Connecticut Virtuosi Orchestra. For tickets, visit www.trinityonmain.org or call the box office at (860) 229-2072.

at the helm of Connecticut Lyric Opera, Sylveen leads an ensemble comprised of Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra members.

Giuseppe Verdi Messa da Requiem

By Editor at March 15, 2013 | 9:30 am |

 Print

 Like  to see what your friends like.

10th Anniversary of the Connecticut Lyric Opera Gala Concert

Featuring The New Britain Chorale, Polonia – Paderewski Choir, CT Lyric Opera Chorus and members of the Cappella Cantorum on Saturday, March 23 at 6 p.m.

Holy Cross Church, 31 Biruta St. on Sunday, March 24, 4 p.m. Garde Arts Center, New London, CT, 25 State Street)

Soloists:

Radiant Lithuanian soprano, Jurate Svedaite, has performed throughout Europe and the United States. Quickly establishing herself as a stage performer of remarkable artistry and sensitivity capable of “transfixing audiences with moments of opera magic,” in 2009/2010 Ms. Svedaite will add two contrating Verismo roles to her repertoire – Nedda in Pagliacci and Lauretta in Gianni Schicchi – as well as reprising Adina in l’Elisir d’Amore. Her previous roles include Violetta in La Traviata, Mimi in La Bohème, Contessa in Le Nozze di Figaro, Donna Anna in Don Giovanni, Marguerite in Faust, the title role in Floyd’s Susannah, Micaela in Carmen, Rosina in Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Adina in l’Elisir d’Amore, Tatyana in Eugene Onegin, Mother in Amahl and the Night Visitors and Valencienne in The Merry Widow. An active performer of sacred works and oratorios as well, her credits include Monteverde’s and Vivaldi’s Magnificats; Handel’s Messiah, Bach’s Christmas Oratorio, Coffe and Peasant Cantatas as well as numerous sacred cantatas; Mozart’s Requiem, Exsultate Jubilate and Missa Brevis; Pergolesi’s Stabat Mater; and Faure’s Requiem. The granddaughter of one of Lithuania’s most revered composers and arrangers of traditional music, Jonas Svedas, she began performing at an early age and made her recording debut at the tender age of twelve; also at that time, she hosted several programs for children on national television. Ms. Svedaite later attended the Lithuanian Music Academy where she earned Bachelors and Masters and Degrees in Opera and Vocal Instruction. She now resides in SE Connecticut where she is on the faculty of Connecticut College and Thames Valley Music School.

American contralto, Heather Petrie performs and records frequently with choral ensembles in Manhattan, including Musica Sacra, Voices of Ascension, and Sacred Music in a Sacred Space. In addition to Etherea’s debut CD, Ceremony of Carols, Heather’s discography includes Joyfull!, a gospel/jazz interpretation of the Psalms by Pete Malinvern, and Sure On This Shining Night, an album of Morten Lauridsen’s choral pieces recorded with Voce at the request of the composer. On the opera stage, Heather has portrayed the Witch in Hansel and Gretel, Marcellina in Le nozze di Figaro, Flora in La Traviata, Larina in Eugene Onegin, Miss Todd in The Old Maid and the Thief, Baba in The Medium, and Arnalta in L’incoronazione di Poppea. She has also toured South Korea extensively with her husband, guitarist and producer David Veslocki. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Voice from Bard College and a Master of Music in Opera Performance from SUNY Purchase Conservatory.

Tenor Christopher Lucier was featured as Il Duca in Rigoletto, Azael in L’Enfant Prodigue and Don Basilio in Le Nozze di Figaro which Opera News declared was “consistently amusing.” Chris also portrayed Roger Doremus in Lee Hoiby’s Summer and Smoke, a performance that the New York Times hailed as a “standout.” The Albany Records recording of the performance was named by Opera News as one of the 10 best Opera Recordings of 2011. As a young artist at the Chautauqua Music Festival Chris has sung Sam Polk in Carlyle Floyd’s Susannah and most recently Judge Danforth in The Crucible by Robert Ward as well as feature roles in operas by Monteverdi, Ravel, Offenbach and Mozart. The opera-blog Parterre Box, run by New York Post critic James Jorden, says of Chris’s voice, “What you hear from him is wonderful, he has a large and beautiful lyric voice, perfectly suited for bel canto roles.” Christopher Lucier is a graduate of Manhattan School of Music’s Opera Program.

Extraordinary young vocal prodigy Ryan Foley has a wide breadth of musical experience. He won regional awards for his performance in musical theater, sang in the CMEA All-State Chorus, and performed at Carnegie Hall under the direction of Dr. Kirby Shaw. Now, at Connecticut College, he is the musical director of his a-cappella group, Co Co Beaux, is a section leader at St. James’ Episcopal Church Choir, studies voice with Jurate Svedaite-Waller, and is a frequent soloist with the college’s chamber choir. Previous opera appearances include Tosca (Sciarrone), L’Heure Espagnole (Don Inigo Gomez), and The Magic Flute.

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NEW BRITAIN HERALD

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ENTERTAINMENT

New Britain Chorale to present spring concert

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Wednesday, March 20, 2013 10:44 PM EDT

NEW BRITAIN — The New Britain Chorale will offer its annual spring concert Saturday and Sunday.

This year, the performance will present Verdi's "Requiem" accompanied by the Paderewski-Polonia Chorus of New Britain and singers from the Connecticut Lyric Opera.

Saturday's performance will be at 6 p.m. at Holy Cross Church on Farmington Avenue and Sunday's will be 4 p.m. at the Garde Arts Center in New London.

Admission to both performances will be for free-will donations.

For more information, contact Nancy Gentry at (860) 229-2927 or Carol Dorbuck at (860) 827-9169.

Saturday's local concert will be followed by a dinner celebrating the CT Virtuosi's 15th anniversary.

The dinner, which was postponed by the Feb. 8-9 blizzard, will be at 8:15 p.m. in the Connecticut Room at Central Connecticut State University.

Tickets for the dinner are \$70 per person. For details, call (860) 325-CVCO (2826) or visit rsvp@thevirtuosi.org.

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THOMPSON VOLLONO

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MAINEvent

A glimpse behind the scenes



At left, Adrian Sylveen leads the Connecticut Virtuosi Orchestra and an 85-voice mixed chorus in rehearsal for the performance of the Verdi Requiem.

Connecticut Lyric Opera, 4 p.m.
Sunday, Garde Arts Center, 325 State St., New London; Verdi's Requiem; \$35-\$50; (860) 444-7373, gardearts.org.

SUNDAY

Celebrating a decade

Connecticut Lyric Opera presents anniversary show

By KRISTINA DORSEY
Day Arts Editor

Connecticut Lyric Opera celebrates a decade since it began by performing a grand, dramatic piece about life and death: Verdi's Requiem.

Saturday's concert at the Garde Arts Center — which the group also presents Saturday in New Britain — features: Adrian Sylveen conducting the Connecticut Virtuosi Orchestra; soloists soprano Jurate Svedaite-Waller, contralto Heather Petrie, tenor Christopher Lucier, and bass Ryan Foley; and an 85-voice chorus with singers from Connecticut Lyric Opera, New Britain Chorale, Polonia-Paderewski Choir, and Capella Cantorum.

Sylveen selected the Verdi Requiem in part because this is the 200th anniversary of the composer's birth and in part

because it's such a dramatic piece that he has long been fascinated with.

The Requiem also connects, he says, "to deeper hopes that we as people, as humanity, have. And that hope is that we don't vanish."

The work deals, in a dramatically effective fashion, with the day of judgment, a plea for mercy, eternal peace. Verdi wrote the piece in honor of novelist and Italian liberation activist Alessandro Manzoni.

"Verdi's operas have great emotional depth, but the Requiem matches them in expressivity," a CLO release says. "In fact, the Mass for the Dead gave the composer some of the most dramatic texts he ever set. Some consider it his 29th opera."

CLO was founded by Sylveen and his wife, mezzo-soprano Monika Krajewska,

along with soprano Jurate Svedaite and her husband, John Waller.

Sylveen also founded the New Britain-based Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra. In addition, he performs in America and Europe, serving frequently as a guest conductor with major orchestras in his native Poland. He is a violin soloist, too, and graduated with distinction from the Paderewski Music Academy in Poznan, Poland, and with master and post-master degrees from the Yale University School of Music.

CLO's debut, which was a production of "Carmen," was staged at the First Congregational Church in New London and at the Trinity-on-Main Performance Hall in New Britain.

The group has expanded its reach so that it now performs in four cities —

Middletown, Waterbury, New Britain and New London.

"I think the biggest accomplishment is the growth of the company and the very natural extension into communities that perhaps were missing that element of cultural experience that we provide," he says.

He says that CLO doesn't have a huge budget but has big talent.

"There's this continued effort to build and to make it better and make it more successful — but in an artistic sense. We never looked at the sense of, 'Let's take over the world,'" he says.

Sylveen believes in a strong arts community and in the social aspect of the arts.

"I want to be able to say we are part of this bigger collage of artistic experiences, which ultimately make people so much richer," he says.

Weekend

April 11, 2013

NEW BRITAIN HERALD The Bristol Press

Virtuosi to feature piano prodigy Guo

Magnum Opus II series finale Sunday at Welte Hall

STAFF REPORT

NEW BRITAIN — Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra and The New Britain Symphony will present the last concert of the 2012/13 Magnum Opus II series Sunday at 4 p.m. in Welte Hall, Central Connecticut State University.

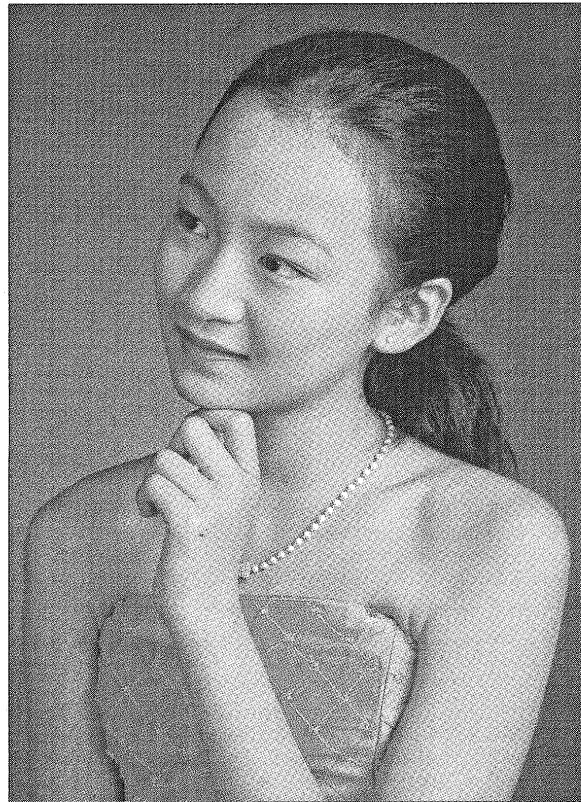
The soloist for the evening will be Connecticut native and young piano prodigy Ziyao Chelsea Guo. Chelsea has studied piano with Svitlana Fiorito since the age of 5. At age 8, she was invited to perform at the U.S. State Department after winning first place at the 24th annual International Young Artist Piano Competition in Washington, D.C. The recording of her performance was featured on WQXR's "Young Artists Showcase" hosted by Robert Sherman.

Admission to Sunday's concert is by suggested donation of \$15, payable at the door.

At age 9, Chelsea debuted in Tianjin, China, performing Mozart's "Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major" with the Tianjin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ding Cao, chief conductor of Shanghai Opera House. She has also performed in prestigious concert halls like Carnegie Hall (2010, 2011, 2012) and Historique du Bon Pasteur (2010, Montreal, Canada).

In June 2012, Chelsea participated as a semi-finalist in the Gina Bachauer International Junior Competition (2012), one of the most prestigious venues for young pianists in the world, in Salt Lake City. Her most recent awards were the first prize and the Hazel Ghzarian Skaggs Young Artist Award at the Piano Teachers' Congress of New York 2012 Competition, and first prize at the 2011 American Protégé

See PIANO, Page 19



Ziyao Chelsea Guo has performed at such venues as Carnegie Hall.

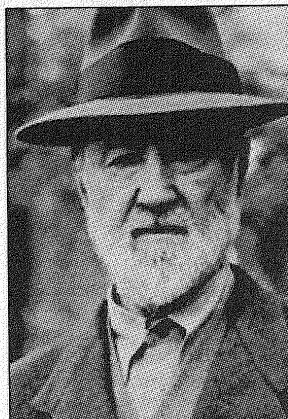
Piano prodigy Guo in Magnum Opus finale

Continued from Page 17
Piano Competition.

The concert will be conducted by Maestro Adrian Sylveen.

This is the second season of the Magnum Opus series. It is sponsored by the American Savings Foundation, Community Foundation of Greater New Britain, Roberts Foundation, Farmington Bank, Webster Bank, New Britain Arts Alliance, Polish and Polish American Studies at CCSU, Andrew J. Sloper Musical Fund, Charles Parker Trust/Public Music Fund, The Marjorie Moore Charitable Foundation and many individual donors from the community.

Beethoven was the first composer to express a universal desire for freedom and self-determination. His piano concerti, written



Charles Ives

originally for himself, serves as

a medium for the most expressive and powerful statements of his desires, hidden in a rich and dynamic pallet of innovative and creative musical elements. The second concerto, finished in 1789 is charming and yet profound, classical and reserved in form, and yet most romantic in its expressions and lines.

Dvorak's Symphony "From the New World" is a tribute to young America. A native Czech, Dvorak wrote the work on commission from the New York Philharmonic

in 1893 while living in America and serving as a director of the National Conservatory of Music of America.

"Three Places in New England," by Charles Ives, serves as an example of American Avant-Garde Primitivism style.

"Three Places in New England" by Charles Ives serves as an example of American Avant-Garde Primitivism

style. The three places described in the music are The "St. Gaudens" in Boston Common, Putnam's Camp in Redding, Conn., and The Housatonic River at Stockbridge. The piece, composed in 1914, closes the concert with a portrayal of American life.

Virtuosi presents 'Don Giovanni' at Trinity-on-Main

STAFF REPORT

NEW BRITAIN — The Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra will close its 15th anniversary season with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "perfect" opera, "Don Giovanni."

The opera will be presented in collaboration with the Connecticut Lyric Opera Friday at Trinity-on-Main.

Expertly weaving humor, melodrama and supernatural elements into a powerful musical masterpiece, this fully staged production will also be performed in New London May 10, Middletown May 11 and Waterbury May 18.

Mozart's brilliant score paired with Lorenzo da Ponte's witty libretto recounts the adventures of a callous libertine nobleman as reflected in the lives of the people he impacts — from the loyal,

wise-cracking servant, to a jilted obsessed former lover, to the violated woman on a quest to identify and punish the murderer of her father. And, in one of the most terrifying finales in all of opera, he refuses even in the face of death to repent for his many wrongdoings. Maestro Adrian Sylveen calls

the opera "the perfect blend of comedy and drama, cherished arias and ensembles with stirring orchestral music that has been thrilling audiences for more than 225 years."

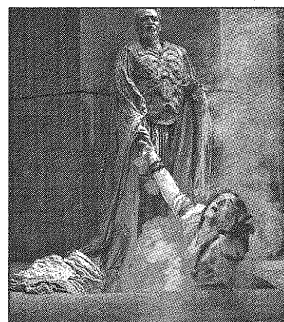
Sylveen conducts the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra and leads this production that is fully staged with



Jurate Svedaite

chorus and English supertitle translations. The starring roles include baritone Luke Scott as the devil-may-care Don. He starred recently as Guglielmo in "Cosi fan Tutte" and Scarpia in "Tosca." The three ladies left in his wake are prima donna sopra-

no Jurate Svedaite as Donna Anna, soprano Heather O'Connor who recently triumphed in "Maria de Bueno Aires" as Donna Elivra and soprano Emily Hughes making her CLO debut as Zerlina. Rounding out the cast are CLO veterans bass baritone Nathan Resika as the Don's manservant Leporello, tenor Chris Lucier as



A scene from "Don Giovanni"

the nobleman Don Ottavio and bass Stephen Fredericks as the Commendatore. Also making their CLO debuts are baritone Ryan Burns as Masetto and the talented young stage director, Chris Browner.

IF YOU GO

"Don Giovanni" will be premiered at Trinity-on-Main Arts Center, New Britain, Friday at 8 p.m. and repeated on May 10 at 7:30 p.m. at the Garde Arts Center, New London, May 11 at 7:30 p.m. at Middletown High School Arts Center and May 18 at 8 p.m. at Naugatuck Valley Community College Arts Center in Waterbury. For ticket information, visit thevirtuosi.org. Tickets at Trinity-on-Main are \$5 for students; \$17 for seniors; \$22 for adults; and \$35 for preferred up-front seating and a glass of wine.