

THE PIERRE MONTEUX SCHOOL

for Conductors and Orchestra Musicians

NEWSLETTER • SPRING 2011



Monteux Conductors Make Their Mark

Over the past year we received exciting news from and about a number of Monteux School conductors. We are pleased to share the good news with you.

Reuben Blundell ('05-'06) joined the faculty of Hunter College in the fall of 2009 as director of the Hunter Symphony and completed his doctorate from the Eastman School of Music in early 2010. Blundell grew up in Australia, where he performed as a violinist with the Melbourne, Queensland, Sydney and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras. At Tanglewood in 2002, he won a first violin position for a BSO concert and a fellowship in the New World Symphony (NWS), America's Orchestral Academy, the following year. While a NWS fellow, Reuben was encouraged in his conducting by Michael Tilson Thomas, and became music director of the Young Musicians' Orchestra in Coral Gables (FL), which he led until moving to Rochester. Reuben has participated in conducting workshops of the Conductors Guild, the League of American Orchestras, the Bakersfield (CA) Symphony, Eastman, the Naples Philharmonic, and Symphony Australia.



Photo: Rosalee O'Connor

Mei-Ann Chen ('07) recently completed her first season as Music Director of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. In June, she will also assume the music directorship of

the Chicago Sinfonietta, only the second person to hold the position. During the 2011-2012 season she will debut with the symphonies of Jacksonville, Naples, Nashville, Pasadena, and Sarasota, as well as the National Symphony of Mexico and the Netherlands Philharmonic at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. Born in Taiwan, Ms. Chen has lived in the United States

since 1989. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in conducting from the University of Michigan, where she was a student of Kenneth Kiesler. Prior to that, she was the first student in New England's Conservatory's history to receive master's degrees, simultaneously, in both violin and conducting. Ms. Chen also participated in the National Conducting Institute in Washington, D.C. and the American Academy of Conducting in Aspen.

This past March **Will Curry** ('09) conducted performances of the US National Touring Company's 25th anniversary production of *Les Misérables* in Detroit. The production had its official opening in Philadelphia's Academy of Music in January. Curry has been the company's violist since the tour began. (see also *Give My Regards ... on p. 5*)

Thomas Heuser '06)

After a two-year national search, the Idaho Falls Symphony announced the appointment of Thomas Heuser as its next Music Director. Mr. Heuser was initially selected as one of six finalists from more than 130 applicants. "It really came down to that one person who has the talent, education and passion for our orchestra," said Anne Voilleque, Chair of the Search Committee. "He will bring our community a wealth of experience with the masterworks and new contemporary music." During the past year, Heuser has lived in Germany as a Fulbright Scholar under the auspices of the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München, where he served as resident conductor of the Hochschule Sym-



phonie Orchester and mentored with renowned German conductor Bruno Weil. Prior to that, Mr. Heuser served as the 2009-2010 Conducting Fellow with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and cover conductor for the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Vassar College, earned a Master's of Music in instrumental conducting from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music and is a candidate for a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in orchestral conducting from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music.

This past March **Sara Jobin** ('92-'96) conducted the world premiere of Michael Dellaira's "The Secret Agent" with the Center for Contemporary Opera at Hunter College of CUNY. In 2004 she made history as the first woman to conduct mainstage subscription performances at the San Francisco Opera. Grammy-nominated last year for her first full recording, the comic American opera *Volpone* by John Musto, Jobin has conducted the San Francisco Opera in performances of *Tosca*, *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Norma*, the world premiere of Philip Glass' *Appomattox*, and Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince*. Other credits include the Philip Glass world premiere, *The Bacchae*, with the New York Shakespeare Festival; *Carmen* with Anchorage Opera; *Volpone* with Wolf Trap Opera; several performances with Tacoma Opera; *Der fliegende Holländer* with Arizona Opera, and a fire opera version of *The Seven Deadly Sins* at the Crucible School for Fire Arts in Oakland. Orchestral debuts have included Symphony Silicon Valley and the Dayton Philharmonic. Last year Ms. Jobin had a successful European debut season conducting the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players at the MANCA Festival in Nice, France and the Bochumer Symphoniker in Germany.

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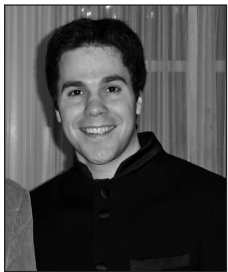
Work is scheduled to begin at
the end of our 2011 season.

Monteux Associates Seek Volunteers

The Monteux Associates is a group of volunteers whose mission is to enhance the lives of Monteux students during their intense six weeks in Hancock, Maine. This spring and summer our efforts will include sprucing up (painting, cleaning, equipping) the campus residences, facilities and gardens; organizing and hosting a welcome supper for the students in the Forest Studio on Monday night, June 20; hosting section dinners in our homes during the first week of the session; encouraging ongoing similar dinners or gatherings of students in local homes throughout the session; and providing information about, and opportunities to explore, nearby places of interest such as Acadia National Park and the Ellsworth laundromat.

If you are interested in a volunteer opportunity that will bring you closer to this unique institution and its extraordinary young musicians, please contact the Monteux Associates through co-chairs Allan Benson and Nancy Hill (963-2623, ben-hill@ecentral.com) or George and Charlotte Draper (422-3130, cgdraper@roadrunner.com) for more information. Our meetings are infrequent and never dull. We warmly welcome new volunteers and your level of involvement can be whatever is right for you. **Join us!**

Ludovic Morlot ('92-'97) begins his tenure this coming fall as Music Director of the Seattle Symphony, with an initial appointment of six years. From 2004-2007 he served as Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony with James Levine and has conducted the orchestra many times both in Boston and at Tanglewood. Highlights of his 2010-11 season included debuts with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Czech Philharmonic, *Opéra National de Lyon*, *Opéra Comique*, the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, and the Rotterdam Philharmonic and the *Ensemble Intercontemporain* in Paris, both of which he conducts regularly. Other notable appearances include the Cleveland Orchestra, the Dresden Staatskapelle, the Tonhalle Orchestra in Zurich, the Budapest Festival Orchestra, *l'Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal*, the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and the Tokyo Philharmonic, among others. He has collaborated with many distinguished soloists including Christian Tetzlaff, Gil Shaham, Lynn Harrell, Emanuel Ax, and Jessye Norman. Born in Lyon and trained as a violinist, Morlot has also studied conducting at the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Royal College of Music. In 2007 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in recognition of his significant contribution to music.



Sean Newhouse

('01) Last October, at the invitation of Music Director James Levine, Sean became the first U.S.-born conductor in fifteen years to be appointed Assistant Conductor

of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Sean made his BSO debut only four months later when, with two hours notice and less than a full rehearsal, he stepped in for an ailing Levine to conduct Mahler's 9th Symphony. In the *Boston Globe* Jeremy Eichner praised his ability to meet such a difficult challenge even while acknowledging "it would not be fair to hold Newhouse to the standards of what a veteran Mahler conductor should bring to a performance of the Ninth." He also noted that Newhouse received "a warm ovation." Long-time Monteux School friends and supporters who attended the performance the next day wrote to us to observe, "From the delicate opening bars of the famous first movement through the extended, moving coda of the fourth, [he] conducted with extraordinary poise, energy, precision, and passion. He was clearly

in synch with the orchestra, which responded by playing with unusual and visible emotion. The audience's response was more than 'warm'; it was a prolonged, three-curtain-call standing ovation. We have seen many BSO debuts over the years, including Seiji Ozawa's, and Sean's was equal to any of them." Executive Director Ron Schwizer attended Sean's final performance of the work the following week and went backstage to congratulate him on behalf of the School. Schwizer said, "Sean's presence on the podium was spellbinding. It was one of the most thrilling symphony performances I have ever attended." Newhouse is also scheduled to conduct the BSO at Tanglewood on August 6. The program includes Jalbert's *Music of air and fire*, Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 2, and Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*, with Sarah Chang, soloist.

New York-based **Eric Ochsner** ('92-'96) had his St. Louis Symphony debut in April, conducting performances of the *Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Rings: Live to Projection* to Howard Shore's Academy Award®-winning score, synchronized to film. Chuck Lavazzi of KDHX.org wrote, "Under the baton of guest conductor Erik Ochsner... the symphony sounded like the finely tuned instrument it has become over the years. Even the more rhythmically tricky and aggressively "modern" parts of the score – the whole Durin/Moria sequence, for example – sounded flawless." Ochsner wrote, "I grew up listening to recordings of the famous St. Louis Symphony, so this is like a dream come true to work with this truly world class orchestra and chorus. The amazing music and fantastic drama have moved me since day one: it is always thrilling and moving. If I don't get goose bumps and tears – how will the audience be moved.?" He subsequently performed the work in Tampere, Finland. Ochsner continued, "Since I grew up in a half-Finnish house, to be invited to conduct in Finland [it was] an honor and a personal and emotional experience for me and my family." Eric is the Music Director and founder of SONOS Chamber Orchestra, winner of the 2003 American Scandinavian Society's Cultural Advocacy Award. Tan Dun personally invited Ochsner to conduct members of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic orchestra in the Composer's *Secret Land for 12 Celli* and *Concerto for Six*. He also conducted the Chinese premiere of Schoenberg's *Pierre lunaire* at the Beijing Festival of Contemporary Music in 2007.



John Morris Russell ('86-'87, '89) Following a yearlong national search, the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra selected Cleveland-born John Morris Russell as Conductor, effective September 1. Mr. Russell succeeds the late Erich Kunzel, protégé of Pierre Monteux. "I'm absolutely thrilled to be returning home to lead the incomparable Cincinnati Pops, and deeply honored to continue a leading role in the world of orchestral entertainment as established by my friend and colleague, Erich Kunzel," said Mr. Russell. As a guest conductor, he has led many of North America's most distinguished ensembles, including the orchestras of Toronto, Windsor, Detroit, Dallas, Orchestra London, Miami's New World Symphony, the Minnesota Orchestra, New York Pops, New York Philharmonic and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, to name a few. He received a M.M. degree in conducting from USC and a B.A. degree in music from Williams College. He also studied at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the Cleveland Institute of Music, and the Aspen Music Festival.

Wesley Schulz ('07-'08), Assistant Conductor of the Britt Classical Festival, was recently appointed Music Director and Conductor of both the Bainbridge Symphony Orchestra and the Everett Youth Symphony Orchestras in Washington. Schulz was most recently Assistant Conductor of the Austin Symphony Orchestra and a Teaching Assistant at the University of Texas-Austin. At UT Schulz conducted Mozart's *Bastien und Bastienne* with the Butler Opera Center, premiered new student compositions with the New Music Ensemble, and served as Music Director of the University Orchestra. Under his direction the University Orchestra grew from thirty-eight musicians to over eighty while improving its artistic quality and musicianship. Schulz also founded the Texas Chamber Group, presenting concert events to the Austin community. One such program, the Rite of Spring Project, drew a standing room only crowd in witness of a discussion panel, dancers and pianists as well as a full orchestra performance of the ballet score. This performance of Rite of Spring earned Schulz and the ensemble the 2010 American Prize in Orchestral Performance. One judge commented "astonishingly good and...extremely impressive in almost every detail." Schulz graduated magna cum laude with B.A. degrees in Percussion Performance and Music Education from Ball State University and Doctoral and Masters degrees in Orchestral Conducting from UT-Austin.



Matthew Thomas Troy ('07), Assistant Conductor of the Winston-Salem Symphony, was named last fall to serve as Education Conductor for the Discovery Family Series and Youth Educational

Concert Series of the Oklahoma City Philharmonic. He also serves as Music Director of the Winston-Salem's Youth Symphony. Troy is a passionate advocate for orchestral music and music education and is a professor of viola/violin at the Music Academy of North Carolina, where he has received many awards for teaching excellence. Troy is a frequent conductor/clinician and has led numerous high school and middle school All-State and All-County clinics throughout North Carolina. Troy earned a bachelor's degree in music at UNC, Greensboro, where he also completed his master's degree in orchestral conducting as a student of Maestro Robert Gutter.

William C. White

('04-'06) who will serve his third consecutive season as our Conducting Associate this summer, was recently chosen to serve as Assistant Conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.



A graduate of the University of Chicago, Mr. White was subsequently hired to join his alma mater's conducting staff as Music Director of its Chamber Orchestra. He served concurrently as Music Director of the Hyde Park Youth Symphony (on Chicago's South Side), and held a variety of church and choral music positions in and around Chicago. White holds a Master's degree in Orchestral Conducting from Indiana University, Bloomington, where he studied under David Effron and Arthur Fagen. He completed a B.A. in Music at the University of Chicago in 2005, studying Composition under Easley Blackwood. Still an active composer, he conducted the premiere of his large-scale oratorio "Thy King Cometh" in February of 2008, and continues to collaborate with a variety of performers throughout the U.S. April 2009 saw the first release of one of his compositions on a professional record label, an a cappella choral piece, *Nunc Dimittis*, released by Chicago's Cedille Records.



Christopher Zimmerman

('79), former Head of the Orchestral Conducting Program at the Hartt School of Music, recently completed his second season

as Music Director of the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra, having been chosen from a field of 249 applicants. Of his professional debut, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, The Daily Telegraph of London wrote, "Contact with the orchestra seemed immediate, the result was a reading in which the playing responded keenly to gestures which themselves were expressive both of the symphony's fiery vigor and of its finer nuances. Christopher

Zimmerman revealed a sharp interpretative profile and control of orchestral timbre ... a most auspicious London debut." Critics have continued to sing Zimmerman's praises, most recently for his performances as Music Director of the Bangor Symphony Orchestra "-- a crisp baton technique, sure cues and strong body language - all mercifully without mannerisms or artifice -- he drew shimmering pianissimi or volcanic utterance from the orchestra in all the works --" and in guest engagements in Europe and the Americas, with recent appearances in Venezuela, Finland, Prague and Mexico, as well as closer to home in the U.S. Born in England, Zimmerman has degrees from Yale University and the University of Michigan and has also held music directorships at the City of London Chamber Orchestra, the Cincinnati Concert Orchestra and the Symphony of Southeast Texas.



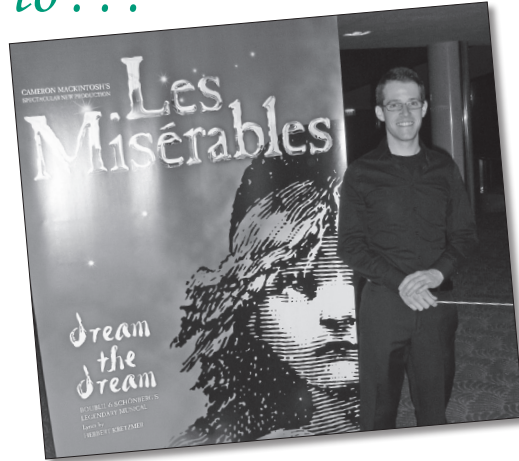
Read about us online in the current issue of *Symphony* magazine at www.americanorchestras.org/symphony_magazine/symphony_magazine.html

Both Sides by Judith Kogan NOW

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"Give My Regards to . . ."

Upon learning of Will Curry's scheduled conducting debut of the US National Touring Company's production of *Les Miserable* in Detroit, Executive Director, Ron Schwizer flew there to attend one of the performances. Schwizer said "It was a great thrill to be present to experience the joy of having one of our students achieve such a significant lifetime goal so early in his career." Following the performance he and Curry sat down to talk about the experience. The following are excerpts from that conversation.



As a musician, what has it been like performing the same show for such a long run? Being a theatre musician is so much fun and to play this show every night, it's just a dream come true. I thought that playing the same show day after day would get old. For a perfectionist like me, however, it is wonderful. I don't dwell on little mistakes because I can always fix them the next night. The show is very tiring physically; so that's the greatest challenge. But whenever it gets hard to play, I remember that there is always someone in the audience who is seeing the show for the first time. I remember my first time seeing *Les Mis* and I want to do my part in making that person's experience as magical as mine was.

How did the opportunity come about to conduct the show? I was originally hired as the violist/cover conductor. I got the job through a recommendation from the orchestrator, with whom I worked last summer. In fact, I was his copyist, so I spent many hours with him as he finished orchestrations. We would talk about conductors and conducting for hours, and it was these conversations that led him to recommend me as both violist and cover conductor. As for the specific dates, the company chose Detroit because it was convenient and it was the earliest chance they could get me on the podium.

How much prep and rehearsal time did you have? Hardly any at all! I was given the scores in December, so I wasn't pressed for study time. However, I only had one four-hour rehearsal with the cast. But this rehearsal did not include the principals - it was an understudy run-through - so I didn't get to work with any of the actual people who would be singing the

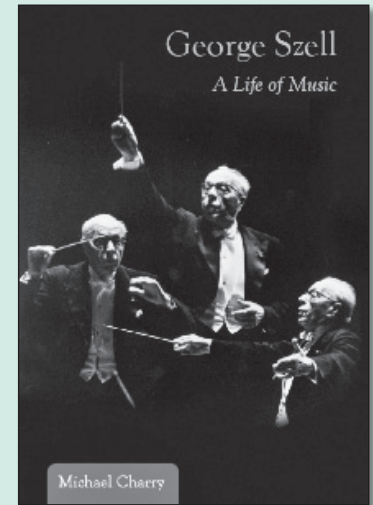
roles when I conducted. And that rehearsal was piano only. I had NO time with the orchestra at all. And to add to the stress, our normal touring orchestra was not with us (union rules), so we had a local orchestra in Detroit that had only known the show for a week.

How would you describe the experience? I told my cast-mates that I first heard *Les Mis* when I was 16 and used to conduct along to the 1988 symphonic cast recording in my bedroom. At one point I actually thought about conducting the show for real, but decided that if I was lucky it might happen when I got to be about 50. So, conducting this incredible piece of musical theatre with a professional company so early in my career was an incredible experience. The cast and orchestra were wonderfully supportive. While the entire show is incredible, moments like *I Dreamed a Dream* or *On My Own*, when there is such an intimate connection with the performer, are truly breathtaking as a conductor. And nothing beats the end of Act I when the entire company is downstage center belting out the final notes of *One Day More* in your face.

Although the show is three hours long, if you, as the conductor, allow yourself to get lost in the music, the time flies by and you feel simultaneously invigorated and exhausted when it's over. The experience was unlike any I have had thus far, and I can't wait for it to happen again!

How long will the production be on tour? The tour does not have a set end date at this point. We have bookings scheduled through the end of 2012, but rumors say the tour could last as long as 8 years.

Monteux-Era Alumnus Authors Biography of George Szell



We are pleased to announce the release of "George Szell: A Life of Music," the first full-length biography of one of the greatest orchestra and opera conductors of the twentieth century. This significant work is authored by Michael Charry, who studied with Pierre Monteux in Hancock in the 1950s, and is published by Illinois University Press. Charry, a conductor who worked with Szell and interviewed him, his family, and his associates over several decades, draws on this first-hand material and correspondence, recordings, reviews, and other archival sources to construct a lively and balanced portrait of Szell's life and work from his birth in 1897 in Budapest to his death in 1970 in Cleveland.

Outside Back

Doris and Pierre Monteux outside the original Forest Studio during a concert intermission, circa 1950.

Pierre Monteux School

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Change Service Requested

2011 Season

Symphonic Concerts

Sundays - at 5PM

June 26, July 3

July 10: Guest Artist – Cecilia Dunoyer
Ravel's Piano Concerto in G major

July 17

July 24 (Memorial Concert)

Maestro Michael Jinbo, conducting

July 31 (POPS Concert)

Chamber Concerts

Wednesdays at 7:30 PM

June 29; July 6, 13, 20, 27

Childrens' Concert, FREE

Monday, July 11 at 10:00 AM

2011 Ticket Information Enclosed

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