

# Walden Notes



Summer 2009

Newsletter of the Walden Chamber Players

Christof Huebner, Artistic Director

## From the Artistic Director



When I first began as Artistic Director of the Walden Chamber Players I was excited about tackling all that goes into growing the ensemble, all the musical know-how I would have to master and the skills I would have to acquire.

But, even more importantly, now that the ensemble is 12 years old what has stuck with me are the many unforgettable personal experiences I have had over the years in my dealings with presenters, teachers, colleagues and audience members. Many friendships have been formed over the years and we have touched many people through our concerts and outreach activities. We too, though, have taken many poignant memories with us along the way.

I will never forget playing the eighth string quartet by Shostakovich in concert, composed after the composer had spent some time in Dresden, Germany, which had suffered horrible destruction during the Second World War. At the reception after the concert an audience member approached me with a teacup in her hand which she gave to me. Her parents had brought that teacup with them from Dresden from where they had emigrated to America after the war.

Robert Traver, principal of the Mass. Academy of Math and Science in Worcester, MA, where we are the ensemble-in-residence, has been

• continued page 3

## Violinist Yehonatan Berick Joins Walden

**W**e are pleased to announce that the eminent violinist Yehonatan Berick has joined the Walden Chamber Players. We first collaborated with Yehonatan during our recording sessions for a cd of music by Augusta Read Thomas and we were thoroughly impressed with his beautiful playing and complete professionalism. Since then, “YB” as we call him, has joined us on several more occasions and has become a fast favorite of the ensemble.

On joining the group he says, “Walden Chamber Players is one of the most versatile chamber groups in existence: repertoire that spans every musical period imaginable; original and adventurous programming; an ensemble of exceptional players which allows to explore pieces with practically any instrumentation; a strong commitment to ever expand the chamber music repertoire through commissions, alongside good old tested-and-true favorites; and above all, a most positive and enthusiastic spirit of love for music and for each other. I am thrilled about our future projects, and cannot wait for our next concert.”

YB is Associate Professor of Violin at the University of Michigan. A prizewinner at the 1993 Naumburg competition and a recipient of the 1996-97 Prix Opus, Yehonatan Berick is in high demand internationally as soloist, recitalist, chamber musician (on violin as well as on viola) and pedagogue.

He has performed under

Yoav Talmi, Mendi Rodan, Kees Baakels and Keith Lockhart, with the Quebec, Winnipeg, Windsor, Grand Junction, Jerusalem and Haifa Symphonies, and the Israeli, Cincinnati, Montreal and Manitoba Chamber Orchestras, Thirteen Strings and Ensemble Appassionata, among others.

He has presented numerous recitals with such pianists as James Tocco, Louis Lortie, Stephen Prutsman and Michael Chertock, and collaborated in chamber music performances with David Soyer and Michael Tree of the Guarneri Quartet, cellists Peter Wiley, Stephen Isserlis and Yehuda Hanani, clarinetists Wolfgang Meyer and James Campbell, flutist Julius Baker and many others from a long list of internationally renowned artists.

Berick's many festival and chamber series' credits include Marlboro, Ravinia, Seattle, Vancouver, Ottawa, Jerusalem, El Paso, Maui, Domaine Forget (Canada), Great Lakes (Michigan), Close Encounters with Music (Great Barrington, MA), Leicester (U.K.), Moritzburg (Germany), Lapland (Sweden), Riihimaki (Finland), Strings in the Mountains and Alpenglow (Colorado), Four seasons (N. Carolina), Agassiz (Winnipeg), Killington (Vermont) and Bowdoin (Maine). He was co-artistic director of the revived Quebec Chamber Music Society. Touring as a chamber musician with Musicians from Marlboro,

— continued on page 4



Yehonatan Berick

“Walden is one of the most versatile chamber groups in existence. I am thrilled about our future projects, and cannot wait for our next concert.”

— Yehonatan Berick, violinist

## 2009 Young Artist Competition

### Chamber Music Workshop at Concord Academy

One would think that we have enough on our plate already, what with residencies in Texas and Worcester, MA. But we really couldn't resist when Concord Academy, situated in historic Concord, MA, asked us to be the ensemble-in-residence at the newly created Chamber Music Workshop at Concord Academy. Of course, we happily agreed.

We are excited about working with the highly intelligent and gifted students at the Academy and hope to provide a truly enriching experience for them. We have worked closely with the administration of the school in putting together an innovative curriculum that should make the offerings at the Academy stand out among schools of its kind.

### Help us continue our outreach efforts.

Walden makes an important contribution to the civic, educational, and social life of the communities that we perform and teach in. Your support is vital for us to be able to continue our outreach programs in schools and to bring our acclaimed performances to audiences throughout the country. Please consider making a donation.

Contributions can be sent to:  
Walden Chamber Players  
P.O. Box 382  
Arlington, MA 02476

All contributions are tax-deductible. And don't forget to check with your employer to see if they will match your gift. Thank you!

On April 11th 2009 we held our third annual Walden Chamber Players Young Artist Competition at Lasell Village in Newton, MA. For the first two years of its existence eligibility was limited to residents of Newton, MA. As of 2009 we decided to open the competition to young musicians from the Greater Boston area, thereby greatly extending its reach. This competition is unique in that it combines the standard format of a competition with an educational component – every finalist, and there are usually five, gets to rehearse with the Walden Chamber Players as part of the final round. By doing so the finalists get an opportunity to rehearse on an equal footing with professional musicians and

get to experience the workings of a professional chamber music ensemble.

"I felt so at home and overjoyed to be playing gorgeous music, surrounded by such receptive and supportive musicians," said Malinda McPherson, this year's winner. "I don't know of another competition that focuses on chamber music - measuring the compatibility of a musician within a group as well as solo ability. Chamber music has always been the strongest part of my musical identity, so I was immediately drawn by this competition! The final round was a wonderful and educational experience, and I am honored that I will be able to perform with Walden in the future!"

In this way the selection of the winner is based not solely on playing ability but also on an assessment of the participants' skills in areas such as communication, ability to translate musical suggestions into reality quickly and participate in the rehearsal process. The winner performs in a public concert with WCP and receives a \$ 500 prize.

We would like to give a special thank-you to Johnson String Instrument of Newton, our corporate sponsor, for their support of the area's young musicians.



### And the Winner is . . .



Seventeen-year-old violist Malinda McPherson is the winner the 2009 WCPYAC. Malinda is currently a junior at Belmont High School.

She began violin studies at age 8 with Marta Zurad, and currently studies viola with Patricia McCarty. Malinda is a member of the New England Conservatory's Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. Her quartets at NEC's Preparatory Division have performed in master classes with William Bolcom and Sebastian Currier, and in the 2008 NEC Preparatory School Chamber Music Gala in Jordan Hall.

As a member of the The Greenmeadow Quartet, she has won an honorable mention in the collegiate division of the International Chamber Music Ensemble Competition. Malinda also won the New York Viola Society's Rosemary Glyde Scholarship in 2008. In May 2009 she will perform as a guest artist with the Alcyon Chamber Ensemble. As a diversion from the classical repertoire, Malinda has performed with the Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players.

This coming summer will be her third at the Meadowmount School of Music. During previous summers, she has attended the Apple Hill Chamber Music Festival and the Gaelic College of Celtic Arts and Crafts, where she studied Cape Breton fiddle and step dance.

When she is not holding a textbook or viola, Malinda enjoys teaching violin, playing on her school's Ultimate Frisbee team, and arguing on her school's Mock Trial team, of which she is the captain.

She will perform the string quintet in G Major, Op. 111 with the Walden Chamber Players in a public concert on November 8, 2009. Congratulations Malinda!

# Walden Chamber Players 2009/10 Season Preview

## AUGUST

August 6, 2009  
Summer Music Associates  
New London, NH

## SEPTEMBER

September 24-27, 2009  
Nantucket, MA

## SEPTEMBER/NOVEMBER

Nyack High School Chamber  
Music Institute  
Nyack, NY

## OCTOBER

October 4, 2009  
Howland Chamber Music Circle, Bacon, NY

October 5, 2009  
deBlasiis Series, Glens Falls, NY

October 24, 2009  
Coastal Concerts, Lewes, Delaware

## NOVEMBER

November 1, 2009  
Arts Complex, Duxbury, MA

November 8, 2009  
Young Artist Competition Winner  
First Unitarian Society, Newton, MA

November 19-22, 2009  
Trinity University, San Antonio, TX

## 2010

January 2010 – April 2010  
Chamber Music Workshop  
Concord Academy, Concord, MA

## MARCH

March 7, 2010  
Boston, MA

March 29, 2010  
Concord Academy, Concord, MA

March 2010  
Simon's Rock College, Great Barrington, MA

## APRIL

April 15-19, 2010  
Trinity University, San Antonio, TX

For updated concert details, visit our website, [www.waldenchamberplayers.org](http://www.waldenchamberplayers.org).

## Report from San Antonio, Texas

Twice a year we don our ten-gallon hats and freshly shined cowboy boots and make our way to San Antonio, TX, where we are the visiting-ensemble-in-residence at Trinity University. We can't say enough about the fabulous hospitality provided by Carl Leafstedt, chair of the department of music at Trinity, who has become a great personal friend of the Walden Chamber Players. He is a wonderful collaborator and truly a kindred spirit in his shared interest in providing exciting and meaningful learning opportunities for young musicians.

The campus of Trinity University is just beautiful and the students are eager to work with us. As part of our activities we perform outreach in the local high schools, and give master-classes and coach student chamber ensembles at the University. During our most recent visit to the University we also initiated an informal "brown bag" concert which was held in the courtyard of the music building at midday and which featured two students of the University performing a movement of Mozart's string quintet in B flat Major, KV174. Many faculty members and staff of the University attended the concert and loved it! We were so taken with the young musicians that we invited them to perform the Mozart again with us – in the "official" and public concert the next evening. We hope this experience will stay with these two budding musicians for a long time to come!



From left to right: Walden violinist Annie Rabbat, artistic director Christof Huebner, Trinity students Lauren Nichols and Lauren Spaulding, and Walden cellist Ashima Scripp.

## The Walden Quiz

Here is our new quiz question: Johannes Brahms was a rather private person and not prone to reveal much about his feelings, whether they were of a personal or professional nature. Only once did he put his name to a public declaration which he soon came to regret. Perhaps his youth might serve to excuse his laps of judgement. What sort of public statement are we referring to and what was the purpose of it?

Email the correct answer to [info@waldenchamberplayers.org](mailto:info@waldenchamberplayers.org) and you will win two tickets to our concert in Newton, MA, on November 8th, 2009! (The answer will be in our next newsletter.)

Last issue's question was: "Throughout his life Johannes Brahms had a rather conflicted attitude toward women. Most famous, of course, is his friendship with Clara Schumann, wife of the composer Robert Schumann who was a close friend of Brahms. But there was also another woman that Brahms got very close to only to suddenly withdraw. Perhaps out of guilt he later paid tribute to this woman in one of his most famous chamber music works. Which work is it and exactly how did he do it?" The answer: Brahms's string sextet in G Major op. 36. The woman's name he paid tribute to in this piece was Agathe von Siebold. He did so by translating the letters of her first name into musical notes - the letter "A" became the note a, the letter "G" became the note g, etc, etc. The letter "H" in the German language denotes the note b natural. The only letter he could not translate into music was the letter "T" and so he left it out. Therefore her name, as quoted in the string sextet is A-G-A-H-E.

## Artistic Director continued —

a true friend of Walden for many years. A gifted pianist, he gets a big kick out of our visits to the Academy and we are always impressed by the incredibly smart students at the school. We had presented concerts at the school for several years but had never been able to perform any repertoire with piano since there was none at the Academy – until one day a few years ago when we walked back into the Academy for one of our residencies and literally tripped over a big, black grand piano! Robert had fulfilled his dream and raised the money to acquire a beautiful piano. You should see the smile on his face when we now perform music that features "his" piano!

Little did we know what our concert and residency visit to Trinity University in San Antonio, TX, a few years ago would turn into. After a day or two at the University it was clear that there existed some real "chemistry" and so I walked into the office of Carl Leafstedt, chair of the music department, and said "Carl, I think we've got something really special here!" He looked at me and said "I know". As they say - the rest is history . . . .

Finally I want to mention a colleague who has done more to shape the course of Walden over the last few years than anybody. Our cellist, Ashima Scripp, has been a transformative force ever since she joined the ensemble a few years ago. She has tirelessly worked on improving our outreach programs, such as our Young Artist Competition, and she deserves a huge credit for facilitating our new residency at Concord Academy (see article on page 2). Add to that her savvy in using Facebook and YouTube in spreading news about WCP and enhancing our web-presence. Ashima is a big reason why WCP is as successful as it is and we cannot thank her enough!

*Christof Huebner*

## Help us go green!

Walden is trying to reduce the amount of printed material we produce.

If you would prefer to receive your newsletter via email contact us at [info@waldenchamberplayers.org](mailto:info@waldenchamberplayers.org). Other than our annual season brochure we will contact you only electronically.

## Contact Us!

For more information about the Walden Chamber Players, contact us at 617/744-0452 or visit us at [www.waldenchamberplayers.org](http://www.waldenchamberplayers.org).

The Walden Chamber Players is the Ensemble-in-Residence at the Massachusetts Academy of Math & Science, Worcester, MA, and the visiting ensemble-in-residence at Trinity University in San Antonio, TX.



Johnson String Instrument is a sponsor of Walden's Young Artist Competition.

*Walden*  
Chamber Players

P.O. Box 382  
Arlington, MA 02476

*Music . . . the human experience  
translated into sound™*



YB—continued

The Lortie-Berick-Lysy Piano Trio, the Huberman String Quartet, Concertante Chamber Players and other chamber ensembles. He has been featured in the world's most important music centers: in Europe (London's Wigmore Hall, Paris's Musee du Louvre, Milan's Sala Verdi), the US (New York's Carnegie Hall and Metropolitan Museum, Washington's Kennedy Center, Freer Gallery and the Phillips Collection) and Canada (Toronto's Glenn Gould Studio and St. Lawrence Centre, North York's Ford Centre and Quebec City's Palais Montcalm).

On CD, Berick has recorded for the Centaur, Summit, Gasparo, Acoma, JMC and Helicon labels. Many of his concerts are broadcast on radio and TV in Canada, Europe and Israel.

Prior to his appointment as Professor of Violin at the University of Michigan, Yehonatan Berick was on the faculties of McGill University and the Eastman School of Music. He has been invited as teacher and artist-

in-residence at Bowdoin Music Festival, Killington Music Festival, Keshet Eilon Mastercourse (Israel), Domaine Forget (Canada), The Beethoven Seminar (New York), and the JMC Young Players' Unit (Israel).

Yehonatan Berick started his musical education at the age of six. Having graduated from high school at 16, he entered the Tel Aviv University's Music Academy, and completed his studies at the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, earning a full tuition and a Summa cum Lauda. His principal violin teachers were Ilona Feher, Henry Meyer, Kurt Sassmanshauss, and Dorothy Delay. He had theory teachings with composer Sergiu Natra, and attended masterclasses with such artists as Isaac Stern, Henryk Szeryng, Max Rostal and Josef Gingold. One of the brightest talents of Israel, Berick won several Clairemont Awards, and received yearly stipends from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation.

## We oughta' be in pictures . . .

In April, Walden held a photo shoot at one of Boston's newest hot spots, "Drink" on the waterfront (thank you to manager John Gertsen for his help). We think that these new photos capture the dynamic, exciting style of the group's playing. See what you think. Watch for them on our new website this summer!

## The Walden Chamber Players

Tatiana Dimitriades - violin  
Alexander Velinzon - violin  
Yehonatan Berick - violin  
Irina Muresanu - violin  
Christof Huebner - viola  
Ashima Scripp - cello  
Donald Palma - bass  
Marianne Gedigian - flute  
Laura Ahlbeck - oboe  
Thomas Martin - clarinet  
Richard Ranti - bassoon  
Jonathan Bass - piano

## The Walden Chamber Players Board of Artistic Advisors

Imogen Cooper  
Federico Cortese  
Branford Marsalis  
Stephen Paulus  
Paul Polivnick  
Jutta Schedl  
Augusta Read Thomas

Presorted Standard  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Boston, MA  
Permit No. 405