

# HARVARD BACH SOCIETY ORCHESTRA

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2005



Dear Friends of the Bach Society Orchestra,

On behalf of the orchestra's staff and membership I would like to thank those of you who joined us for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. The memories and the music we shared that weekend have reminded us to appreciate the value of our experiences with this special organization. To all alumni, I extend our gratitude for your wonderful contributions to this fine ensemble over the course of the past fifty years which have shaped for BachSoc an honorable tradition as Harvard's finest chamber orchestra.

Our recently completed 2004-05 season was filled with several outstanding musical experiences, from our open rehearsal with Maestro Leonard Slatkin to our collaboration with composer and former BachSoc conductor John Harbison '60. This newsletter will highlight these events along with the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala.

In April the orchestra proudly elected Daniel Chetel '06 to serve as Music Director for the 2005-06 Season. Daniel served as Music Director of the Dunster House Opera Society for the 2004-05 season and is currently the Senior Choir Secretary and a Choral Fellow in the Harvard University Choir. We enthusiastically anticipate Daniel's leadership this fall.

Over the past two years we have collected over 600 addresses of alumni and friends of the Bach Society Orchestra. We hope to continue sharing with you how BachSoc continues to thrive. We are grateful for your generous support in our efforts to establish an endowment fund and look forward to hearing from you in the future.

Best Wishes,

James P. Ferus '07  
General Manager

### BachSoc Tours New York City

During this past January Intersession, BachSoc journeyed to New York City for the second time in as many years, this time with a focus on music education. Members of the orchestra provided short performances before youngsters at the Park Avenue Methodist Day School and the Allen Stevenson Elementary School. While visiting these schools, BachSoc musicians joined in for music classes and orchestra practice, introducing the attentive children to each instrument and their functions in the orchestra. But BachSoc also had the opportunity to observe the talents of outstanding musicians, attending performances by the NY Philharmonic at Avery Fisher Hall and the London Symphony at Carnegie Hall. While in the Big Apple, BachSoc stayed in the Times Square area and did a fair amount of sightseeing in the grand city while bonding as an ensemble.



*General Manager Monika Schleier-Smith '05 listens to a youngster's question about her violin (foreground) while Cellist Meghan Galbreth '08 displays her instrument (background).*

*General Manager Matthew Smith '07 shows his viola to curious preschoolers at the Park Avenue Methodist Day School.*

### An Open Rehearsal with Leonard Slatkin

On Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, BachSoc had the pleasure of working with internationally renowned conductor Leonard Slatkin during an open rehearsal at Sanders Theatre sponsored by the Office for the Arts. Maestro Slatkin is currently the Music Director of the National Symphony Orchestra, the conductor laureate of the St. Louis Symphony, and a devoted music educator. During this two hour rehearsal, Maestro Slatkin helped the orchestra polish its repertoire for the upcoming March 12<sup>th</sup> concert and shared his wisdom on how to communicate music to an audience as well as how to incorporate music into one's life after college, whether as a professional or casual performer. The maestro's command of the orchestra and his innate understanding of the music were evident from the first measure he conducted. Members of the orchestra were most enthusiastic about incorporating the fresh interpretation of a guest conductor into the preparation process of our already thoroughly rehearsed concert repertoire. We look forward to future collaborations with such distinguished musicians in the future.

## Our Spring Concerts...

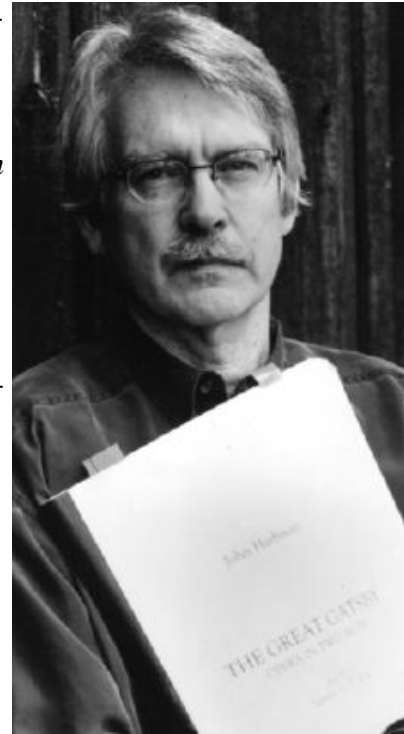
The Spring 2005 semester was one of intense but gratifying rehearsals and performances under the dedicated leadership of Music Director Alexander Brash '06.

On Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, BachSoc was joined by former conductor and distinguished composer John Harbison '60 who led the orchestra for a dynamic performance of his own *The Most Often Used Chords*. The concert also featured a highly expressive presentation of Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* and a lively playing of the *Pulcinella Suite* by Stravinsky.

On Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, a reduced-size ensemble treated the audience to outstanding young talent with an all-Mozart concert. Two of BachSoc's finest musicians, Concertmaster Kathryn Andersen '07 and Principal Violist Brendan Gillis '06 ex-

pressively performed the *Symphonia Concertante in E-flat Major*. They were followed by an outstanding 13-year-old pianist from California, Chloe Pang, who elegantly performed the *Piano Concerto No. 27 in B-flat Major*. The music of the great child prodigy composer was well served by these gifted artists on that beautiful Sunday afternoon.

*Pianist Chloe Pang*



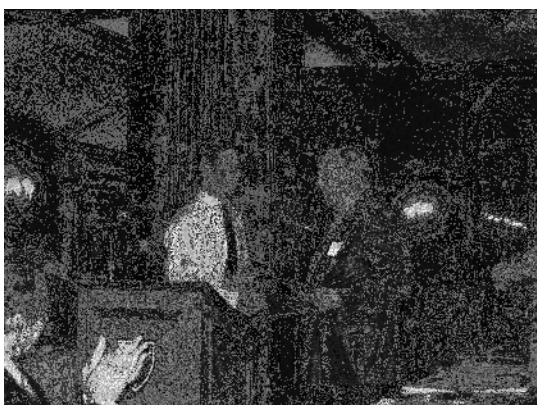
*John Harbison '60  
Photo: Katrin Talbot*

And on Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, BachSoc honored its several outgoing seniors for their accomplishments with the orchestra during their years at Harvard. And yes, such a sentimental evening was rounded off with a quality concert. Conductor-elect Daniel Chetel '06 opened the evening with an energetic rendition of Mozart's *Overture to the Magic Flute*. Concerto Competition Winner Bradley Balliett '05 followed with a rousing presentation of Mozart's *Bassoon Concerto in B-flat Major*. *Les Plusieurs Vies des Dames Nobles*, a composition by Emily Richmond '06, was exquisitely premiered by the orchestra joined by solo flutist Caitlin Van Ness '05. The evening concluded as an expanded brass section along with violinists holding their instruments like Spanish guitars thrilled the audience gathered at Paine Hall with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol*.

*Emily Richmond '06*

## Celebrating 50 Years of Musical Excellence BachSoc's 50th Anniversary Gala Weekend Friday, May 6 and Saturday, May 7, 2005

After over a year's worth of planning, the gathering we long anticipated finally came true on Friday evening as the Dunster House Dining Hall was filled with current BachSoc members, alumni, and family to celebrate a distinguished history of fifty years of music making here at Harvard. Following a delicious catered dinner, a distinguished collection of speakers reflected on the ways in which BachSoc has profoundly influenced their experiences while at Harvard, their families, and their entire careers. Those sharing the wisdom of the ages that night included founding conductor Michael Greenebaum '55, cellist Jim Bernstein '58, conductor Isaiah Jackson III '66, violinist Lynn Chang '75, flutist Sally Rubin '83, and long-time HRO conductor Dr. James Yannatos. To conclude the formal ceremonies, Michael Greenebaum was presented a



*General Manager Matthew Smith '07 presents a commemorative plaque to founding conductor Michael Greenebaum '55.*

plaque honoring him for his bold and innovative vision and efforts to add such a fine chamber orchestra as BachSoc to the music community at Harvard. It was fitting that such a memorable evening did not deserve to come to an end, as all of those gathered perused through a half-century of memorabilia while continuing to share stories of BachSoc, both past and present.

The gala weekend continued Saturday evening at Sanders Theatre as the audience was greeted with the electrifying fanfare of *Short Ride in a Fast Machine*, a piece composed by former BachSoc conductor John Adams '69. Harvard Professor Robert Levin provided a masterful performance of Mozart's *Piano Concerto in F, K.459*. Following intermission, violinist Stefan Jackiw '07 brought the audience to their feet with a dazzling rendition of Sarasate's *Carmen Fantasy*. Several alumni spanning 50 years of BachSoc history joined the orchestra for a most memorable presentation of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol* to bring the outstanding concert to its conclusion. The evening was capped off by a reception that allowed for current members to celebrate the conclusion of both an outstanding anniversary season and a memorable gala weekend with alumni, friends, and family.



*Banquet guests gather near tables decked with 50 years of BachSoc memorabilia.*



*Several BachSoc members gather with soloist Robert Levin following the gala concert.*

## Celebrating 50 Years of Musical Excellence Former Conductors Share Their Thoughts...

While it is easy to recap the events of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, it is difficult to articulate what makes BachSoc such a cherished musical organization. Founding conductor Michael Greenebaum '55 and recent conductor Alexander Misono '04 have so kindly shared with us their sentiments on this topic.

“The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration was a weird, wonderful and deeply moving experience for me: weird because it is hard for me to connect the large, well-managed and brilliant orchestra of today to the little chamber orchestra I started in the fall of my senior year. (Incidentally, a picture of the first BachSoc from spring, 1955, can be found at <http://www.wgbhalumni.org/reunion/archiv46.htm>. This commemorates the first live orchestra concert broadcast by WGBH from its old studios on Mass Ave.) Wonderful because the alumni from the intervening years who attended provided a thread of continuity from then to now. Deeply moving because the orchestra has meant so much to so many for so long.

“As it has to me. I have been fortunate in my life, but BachSoc remains a matter of great pride. It was clear in the early fifties that Harvard needed a chamber orchestra, and that we would get little support from a music department mostly indifferent to student performers. It was also then that we began to get excited about early music and historically informed performance practice. (In those days that meant mainly double-dotted rhythms and terraced dynamics.) It was also then that, having served as assistant conductor of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra under two conductors, Russell Stanger and Richard Burgin, notable for missing many rehearsals, the HRO hired a conductor, Attilio Poto, who actually came to rehearsals, and I lost my podium time. BachSoc was created as a confluence of these streams.

“Of course, from the beginning BachSoc plunged into romantic and modern music as enthusiastically as it played baroque and classical repertoire, and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary concert demonstrated that the orchestra has maintained its versatility over the years. The presence of Robert Levin as soloist and James Yannatos at the banquet suggests that the Harvard musical community is closer than it was fifty years ago. And the astonishing playing of Stefan Jackiw suggests that the best is yet to be.

“I cherish so many memories of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration: the banquet and the concert, of course, but also the archive-in-progress of the works performed over the years and the historical pamphlet that reminds us of the distinguished roster of conductors BachSoc has had over the years. I try not to get maudlin at moments like this, but my heart is full. I thank the leadership and members of BachSoc for last May's unforgettable weekend.”

-Michael Greenebaum '55

## Celebrating 50 Years of Musical Excellence Former Conductors Share Their Thoughts...

“BachSoc is an orchestra. But, my favorite memories of BachSoc are not at all limited to the music-making aspect of the organization. Sure, I will always have great memories of playing



Capriccio Espagnol in Sanders during the gala after borrowing Dr. Lisa Wong's violin. I shall also always treasure having mastered the complex musicality required to perform Beethoven's Third Symphony with my colleagues in the 2003-2004 version of BachSoc. And of course, there are other moments-- Barber Violin Concerto, Schnittke Moz-Art a la Haydn, Mozart Haffner Symphony. The list goes on.

*Alex leads a rehearsal of the Eroica Symphony in February, 2004.*

“However, like I said, my most treasured memories go far beyond the simple act of performing compositions. The most memorable aspect of BachSoc has been the bonds formed between the orchestra members. In fact, although we played Haffner in Paine Hall, we also played it in New York City with Harvard BachSoc members alongside Columbia BachSoc members. Our trip to NYC forged friendships we'll treasure for a lifetime. And who can forget BachSoc at Good Time Emporium (for laser tag), BachSoc at the New England Aquarium to see Matrix Revolutions on IMAX, and BachSoc spending thousands of dollars at John Harvard's on Half-Price Appetizer Night...

*Alex (center) at the banquet with violinists Albert Kao '07 (left) and Francis Kim '07 (right).*

“BachSoc, more than any musical organization I have had the pleasure of being a part of, is about the people, the friendships formed, and the beautiful music that is created, often heightened because of this camaraderie. And with that, I say, Thank you BachSoc!”

-Alexander Misono '04

### Write to BachSoc...

To Our Alumni:

We would like to hear from as many of you as possible, whether with updates on your careers or reflections on your years with BachSoc. We will gladly publish them in future newsletters.

To Our Supporters:

We would like to hear from you as well, particularly with any fond memories of performances you have attended.

## *Introducing Our New Music Director*

Daniel Chetel, originally from Newton, Massachusetts, is a senior music concentrator currently living in Leverett House. While at Harvard Daniel has performed with the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, Cambridge Early Music Project, Harvard University Choir, Dunster House Opera, and the Dunster House Messiah Sing. Currently he is a Choral Fellow and Choir Secretary with the Harvard University Choir and served as Music Director for the Dunster House Opera Society for the 2004-2005 season during which he conducted a production of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*. Before coming to Harvard, Daniel performed with such ensembles as the Greater Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras and Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble and spent two summers at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. He has studied conducting with James Yannatos of Harvard University, Fred Harris of MIT, and participated in a master class with Frank Battisti of the New England Conservatory. He currently studies conducting with Jeffery Rink of the Longy School of Music. Daniel is very excited to have the opportunity to be a part of such a vibrant group as the Bach Society Orchestra. Daniel previews the fall semester concerts below:



“I am very excited to begin my tenure as Music Director for the Bach Society Orchestra. Hopefully this season will continue many of the great traditions to which the ensemble has become accustomed as well as many new and exciting ideas and experiences. In constructing programs, I tried to focus both on forming challenging and varied programs as well as choosing repertoire that’s appropriate for an orchestra of our size. I think that the season has a nice mix of larger well-known works and smaller, less frequently performed pieces of music.

“Our first concert focuses on folk-inspired music from the British Isles and eastern Europe with some selections that I predict very few people in the orchestra will have performed before. In addition, I am very excited to announce that we will be performing the Hummel Trumpet Concerto with Dennis Alves who, in addition to performing with The Boston Pops, now serves as their Director of Artistic Planning.

“Our second concert features two Russian masterpieces, Stravinsky’s *Dances Concertantes* and Prokofiev’s *Peter and the Wolf*. As a special treat, the Reverend Professor Peter J. Gomes will narrate *Peter and the Wolf* with his famous oratorical style that can be heard each Sunday in The Memorial Church.

“I am greatly looking forward to when September comes around and the orchestra can begin to make wonderful music together. I sincerely hope that through attending concerts, purchasing recordings, or simply reading this newsletter, as many of you as possible can join us here in Cambridge in enjoying another exciting season of the Bach Society Orchestra.”

## *An Update on BachSoc's Endowment Campaign...*

The Bach Society Orchestra is growing in many exciting ways! We were fortunate to have many of you join us for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration last season, which included the orchestra's return to Sanders Theatre. The orchestra is sounding great and over the past few years has become one of the premier ensembles on campus. We are looking forward to another exciting season under the baton of our newly-elected music director Daniel Chetel.

We are growing financially as well. Since announcing our endowment campaign last summer, we have come half-way toward our initial goal of raising \$25,000. Once we reach this threshold set by the University, the funds will be transferred to the oversight of the Harvard Management Corporation – the same institution responsible for the outstanding returns of the University's endowment. Establishing the orchestra's own endowment is essential to the future fiscal stability of our organization, therefore reaching this \$25,000 goal is one of our highest priorities. The Bach Society currently receives no funds directly from Harvard, and we instead must rely on grants and alumni donations to cover the difference between our operating expenses and revenue from concert events. The endowment will provide a stable, professionally-managed financial foundation upon which the orchestra can continue to grow and prosper for years to come. We ask for your continued support in ensuring a bright future for the Bach Society Orchestra. To make a tax-deductible donation to our endowment fund and help secure the orchestra's preeminence for years to come, please make out a check to "Harvard University" with "Bach Society Orchestra" in the memo and send it to:

Bach Society Orchestra  
Music Building  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, MA 02138

Thank you for your support and generosity!

### ***Contact Us!***

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Website: [www.bachsoc.org](http://www.bachsoc.org)

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