

# Notes

## A STERLING SEASON

—Candace Koski Janners, President

As the Festival approaches its 25<sup>th</sup> Season, it is amazing to realize how quickly the past year has gone. It has been one of challenges and changes for PMMF.

Those of you who follow the Festival know that Joshua Major “retired” from PMMF following the 2014 Season after serving as Artistic Director for eleven years. In order to effect a smooth transition, the Festival engaged a “new” AD prior to his departure. **It is a pleasure to introduce Donald Schleicher as PMMF Artistic Director.** Donald may be familiar to many of you from his previous tenure with PMMF as Music Director and Principal Opera Conductor (1994 – 2002). He is currently Director of Orchestras and Professor of Conducting at the University of Illinois. Donald’s distinguished career includes numerous national and international conducting activities as well as faculty and mentoring experiences. His work with musicians of all ages, knowledge of repertoire, previous experience with PMMF and love of the area make him uniquely suited to guiding the Festival in fulfillment of its Mission to produce superb classical music in the Upper Peninsula.

At this time in 2014, as in the preceding two years, a Management Team consisting of the Executive Officers of the Board of Trustees was in place to administer the Festival. It is very exciting to report that, following a national search assisted by the Toronto-based company Genovese, Vanderhoof and Associates, specialists in the arts sector, PMMF has appointed an Executive Director. **Tony Sertich assumed the ED responsibilities effective January 2015.** Mr. Sertich, a Michigan native, has family ties to Ironwood and has been familiar with this area since his youth. Tony is experienced in many aspects of the music industry including management; fundraising and grant writing; production; performance; touring; and community engagement. His background encompasses knowledge of classical music, theater and contemporary music. He has worked both nationally (touring a production to the Calumet Theatre in the 1980s!) and internationally.

With a strong and experienced creative and administrative team in place, with support of an engaged Board of Trustees and hard-working staff and, especially, with **your** continued love and financial and volunteer support, PMMF is poised for decades of excellence. We hope that you enjoy experiencing this Sterling Season of superb music as much as the PMMF team enjoys creating it for you.

## 2015: THE 25<sup>TH</sup> SEASON!

—Donald Schleicher, Artistic Director

What a joy it is to return to the Pine Mountain Music Festival in its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season — this time in the role of Artistic Director — and to introduce my wife, Jieyeon, and our 6-year-old twins, David and Alice, to the wonderful people and the beauty of this amazing area, the Upper Peninsula.

You are a vital part of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration as opera returns to the PMMF with Rossini’s hilarious *The Barber of Seville*. We’re thrilled that U.P. native Miles Mykkanen will sing one of the leading roles as the Count, joined by a stellar cast of professional singers. Add the professional orchestral musicians from major symphony and opera orchestras around the country, and I recommend that you attend on opening night — because after having seen the opening night performance you will no doubt wish to attend both performances!

I’m pleased to announce that the *Honors Orchestra Program* will return to the Festival this summer. This program, in collaboration with Michigan Technological University’s Summer Youth Program, offers outstanding high school student musicians an opportunity to perform side-by-side with professional musicians. We have seen in the past how the professional musicians inspire the students to play better than they ever have before, while the students inspire the professionals with their honest and direct love of music.

This palpable sense of collaboration and mentorship will be demonstrated in three performances of Beethoven’s 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony, *Ode to Joy!* in the Dickinson, Marquette, and Keweenaw Areas. There is no better way to celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> season than with Beethoven’s and Schiller’s testament to being united through music. With choral forces drawn from throughout the Upper Peninsula and beyond, you will float out of the hall!

And this is just the beginning! The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration also includes some PMMF favorites and traditions: pianist Ralph Votapek in recital, the Bergonzi String Quartet, the cutting edge UPstarts! program with rising stars from the U.P. led by Susan Byykkonen, and organ recitals by Benjamin LaPrairie.

Together we’ll experience this great music that touches deep into our souls — whether through humor or profundity — and whether the U.P. is your home or your summer destination. It is my great personal joy to share these many experiences with you!

## 2015 SEASON EVENTS



### THE PINE MOUNTAIN MUSIC FESTIVAL SYMPHONY

Conducted by Artistic Director Donald Schleicher, the PMMF Symphony Orchestra, consisting of professional musicians and students of the Honors Orchestra Program, will perform Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op.125. Featured soloists include baritone Levi Hernandez and local vocal stars tenor Miles Mykkanen, mezzo-soprano Lara Neves, and soprano Tory Wood.

**THE BARBER OF SEVILLE** First performed in 1816, Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, is an opera buffa in two acts which has become one of the most beloved works in the operatic repertory. Determined to win the affection of the beautiful Rosina with charm and wit, rather than money, Count Almaviva recruits the help of Figaro, the barber of Seville, to steal her away from her guardian, Dr. Bartolo. With soprano Chrystal E. Williams as Rosina, baritone Levi Hernandez as Figaro and local tenor Miles Mykkanen portraying Count Almaviva, the production will be directed by Debra Dickinson and conducted by AD Donald Schleicher.



### THE BERGONZI STRING QUARTET

This Festival favorite continues to thrill audiences with its virtuosity and supremely expressive playing. Ross Harbaugh, Glenn Basham, Scott Flavin and Pamela McConnell perform in their 21<sup>st</sup> year with the Festival.



### RALPH VOTAPEK PIANO RECITAL

Mr. Votapek also provides Festival continuity during the 25<sup>th</sup> Season. The first Van Cliburn International Competition gold medalist, he is a familiar favorite of Festival audiences whose playing "embodies all that is best in 20<sup>th</sup> century piano traditions, combining the fire, poetry and tonal warmth of the grand-manner prewar era with the modern-day virtues of fastidious clarity and electrifying rhythmic flair."

### BENJAMIN LAPRAIRIE ORGAN RECITAL

In his Festival debut, Benjamin LaPrairie, organist and Associate Director of Music at the Basilica of the National Shrine, Washington, D.C., will help celebrate PMMF's 25<sup>th</sup> Season. Solo recitals performed on the area's world-class historic instruments will feature Ben's remarkable talent in a wide repertoire of works.



### UPSTARTS!

The UPstarts! concert series will once again feature emerging young artists native to the Upper Peninsula. Under the expert guidance of program Coordinator and local professional pianist Susan Byykkonen, the talented musicians will complete a whirlwind tour of numerous and varied venues in the U.P.

### HONORS ORCHESTRA CHAMBER RECITAL

The outstanding high-school aged musicians of the Honors Orchestra Program will have an opportunity to showcase their talent, performing in individual chamber groups.



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pine Mountain Music Festival, A Sterling Season. A time to celebrate and to look back on all that has been accomplished. All that you have accomplished.

Also, a crossroads for the PMMF. Arts organizations like the PMMF are constantly reinventing, reorganizing and planning for the future. We borrow from what is best from our past and use that as a platform on which to build our future. Never losing sight of our core values and beliefs.

And what are our core values and beliefs? Providing a high quality music experience is at the top of the list. A belief in local ownership of the Festival is another. People believe the PMMF is important to the region. They love the Festival (as do I) not only for its beautiful performances, but also for its contributions to the quality of life and economic vitality of the area, and what it does for all the individuals who experience personal growth through the Festival. *Article continued on page 4.*





# Notes

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE *(cont'd from page 2)*

Our belief in giving back to the communities in which we perform by providing educational opportunities through youth programs is at the center of our core values and beliefs. Programs such as the Honors Orchestra Program, OPERation Imagination, UPstarts!, and the Resident Opera Artist and Resident Chamber Musician programs have all provided educational opportunities developed with direct input from the communities served.

So, here we stand at the crossroads. What will we look like 25 years down the road at our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, our Golden Season?

I suspect there will be cosmetic changes. Technology will lead to changes we cannot yet imagine. However, I know the core values and beliefs of the PMMF will remain unchanged. They will remain rock solid. Our core values and beliefs to provide beautiful musical experiences that contribute to the regional vitality and provide opportunities for personal growth to both adults and young adults will never diminish with time.

Also, the impulse for people to gather together and listen to music and the human voice goes far back into human history. This thirst to experience beauty in a communal setting is ingrained into our DNA. That will also remain the same.

Happy Anniversary, Pine Mountain Music Festival!!! I am proud to be here at this pivotal and sterling moment in our history.

## MCACA GRANT AWARD

With sincere appreciation to the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs (MCACA), the Pine Mountain Music Festival announces the award of a \$20,000 grant from the Council. The National Endowment for the Arts provided partial funding of the grant. Awarded through the MCACA peer review process, PMMF was one of over 400 applicants competing for fiscal year 2015 funding.

The Festival expresses appreciation to the MCACA and to the state legislators who approved the MCACA's budget. The grant supports PMMF's 25<sup>th</sup> Season.

Serving communities throughout the Upper Peninsula, PMMF receives significant financial support from individuals in addition to corporate and foundation support.