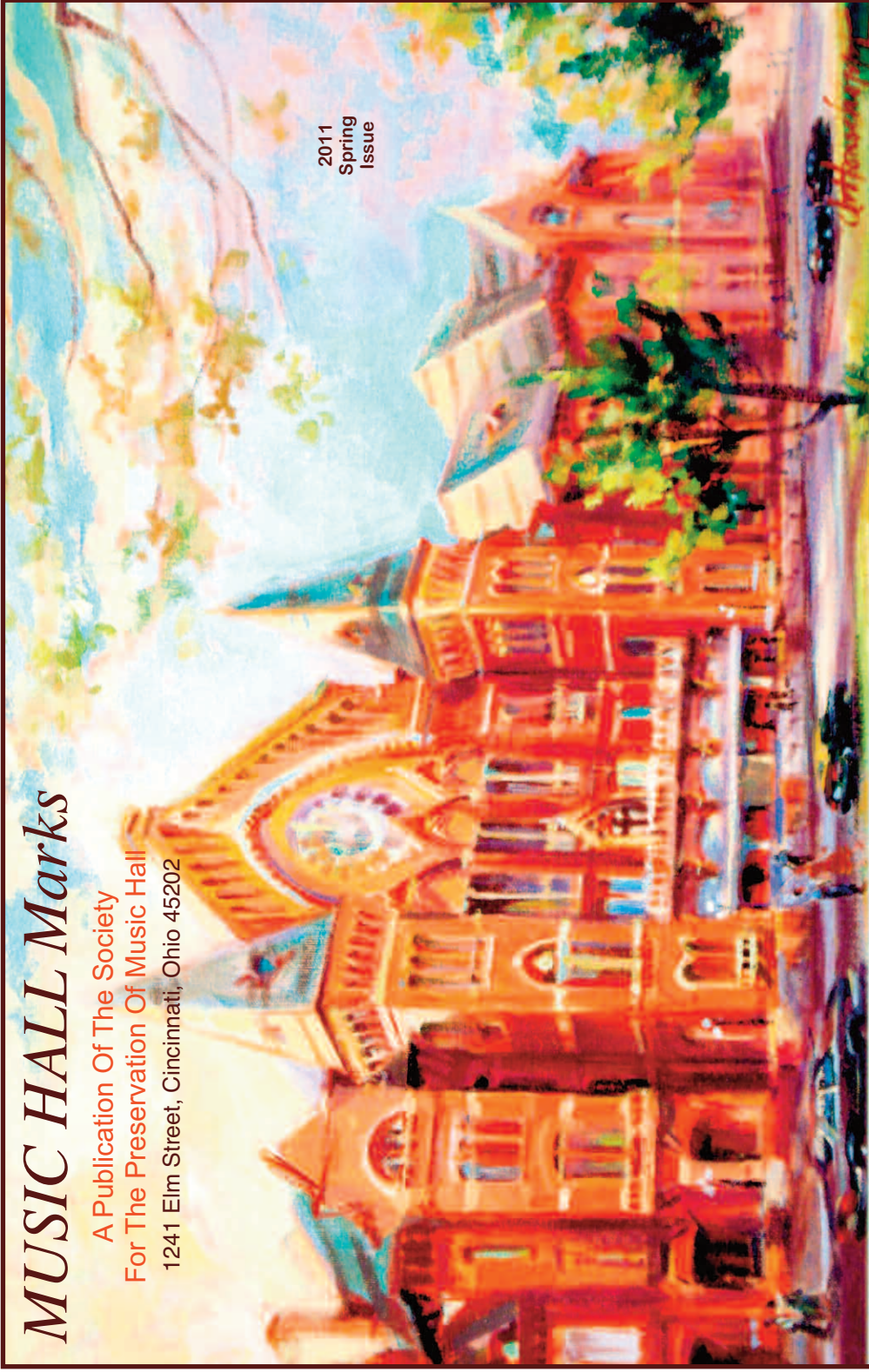


MUSIC HALL MARKS

A Publication Of The Society
For The Preservation Of Music Hall
1241 Elm Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

2011
Spring
Issue



SPMH - President's Message

Spring is here!!! Every season of the year is wonderful and beautiful, yet we most eagerly await the coming of spring. It's a time of awakening with a foretaste of what is to come -- many more sunlight hours, warmer weather, vacations, convertibles, picnics, wow! -- hard to stop the list...! Here at Music Hall, wonderful things also happen in every season of the year, and, this "eagerly awaited" spring brings even more "can't-miss" events and previews of what is to come.



Don Siekmann

First, there are just a few more opportunities to see Paavo Jarvi in his final concerts as Music Director of the CSO. Among them are a long awaited appearance by Yo-Yo Ma on May 3rd and, concluding the season on May 14th, Paavo's Farewell Finale with Mahler's epic *Symphony No.5*. Then, the May Festival "Sings-Out" with two outstanding weekends, starting with Verdi's *Requiem*, on May 20th, and ending with Mendelssohn's *Elijah* on May 28th. Finally, the Cincinnati Opera's season is just over the horizon with a mixture of classic and modern blockbusters. The excitement begins on June 16th with an all time favorite.....Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto*. Great things are happening in Music Hall this spring!

Certainly, we here at SPMH

are "swinging into spring" as well. Our new colorful posters are turning heads throughout Music Hall, and, we recently helped fund a Music Hall Gift Shop improvement. Also, on May 5th, we will present

"On Broadway with the Mighty Wurlitzer" in the Ballroom. This follows our sold-out December debut of the series. Please plan to attend; I promise you will enjoy the evening!

Lastly, for your "save the date" list, we are planning our SPMH Annual Member Meet-

ing for September 26th in the Music Hall Ballroom. Once again we will feature an executive update of the Music Hall Revitalization Project. If you are not already an SPMH member, please become one; simply use the enclosed membership envelope and then join us in September.

On a truly sad note we have all lost our friend, and fellow board member, Bob Howes, to a terrible cancer. Bob was a dedicated, talented and passionate friend to so many. A tribute is included in this Newsletter as well as on the SPMH website.

Thanks again to all our SPMH members and supporters. We wish you a joyful spring, and, I look forward to seeing you in Music Hall!

- Don Siekmann

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Table of Contents

SPMH President's Message	page 1	What's Happening Now at Music Hall	page 13
SPMH 2011 Board	page 2	I Remember When	page 14
Bob Howes	page 3	A Music Hall Memory	page 21
SPMH Mission Statement	page 4	Music Hall Has it All	page 23
Take a Tour, Become a Guide.	page 5	May 5th "On Broadway"	page 24
High Notes!	page 6	SPMH Donors	page 26
Washington Park	page 7	Joanne Honschopp Bio	page 30
Revitalization Circa 1939	page 9	Acknowledgements	page 30
"Happy Holidays with the Mighty Wurlitzer"	page 10		

Bob Howes 1951-2011

As a Vice President of The Society for the Preservation of Music Hall, Bob's dedication to the organization was exemplary and his contributions extensive. He was Founder and Chair of the SPMH Archives Committee which he later re-named the Historical Committee. In 2003 he spearheaded the Music Hall Archives Exhibit, an ongoing display of Music Hall historical items, inside the Hall in partnership with the Cincinnati Historical Society. In his capacity as Chair, he researched and then discussed with Cincinnati City Council members official documents relating to the ownership and management of Music Hall in order to come to a common understanding of the complex territory that is Music Hall. Emphasizing the close involvement of the City in former renovations, he shared with Council members information about contracts with architects

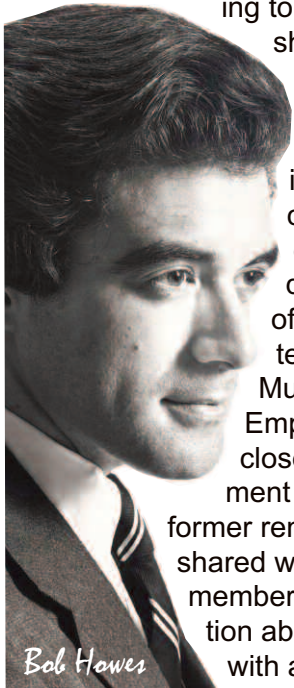


Bob Howes portraying Reuben Springer

and construction companies. In all his studies of early Music Hall documents he sought to understand Hannaford's original intent for the structure as well as to gain an understanding of all successive major work on the building. This wealth of knowledge is of importance in the current Revitalization plan of Music Hall. As a CSO musician (the longest-serving member of the viola section), and member of the Working Group, he provided invaluable insights to theatre and other consultants.

Bob was a member of the SPMH advisory committee of Music Hall experts which assisted WCET in producing the 2005 documentary *Music Hall: Cincinnati Finds its Voice*. In a section of the historical dramatization, he used his acting talents in portraying Reuben Springer.

He believed that all concert halls have a personality and that Music Hall's personality is one of inclusion. "It was built for the citizens of Cincinnati and this is what makes Music Hall what it is spiritually, it has that very friendly, open, welcoming quality" he said. Consequently his research concerning the two prosceniums of Music Hall emphasized the spirit of inclusion and his work resulted in the reposi-



Bob Howes

tioning of the Orchestra on the stage. "The goal is to get the entire orchestra into the house with the audience, allowing the audience to be more of a part of the performance so that concerts will be more a shared and intimate experience."

In all of his efforts for Music Hall and for SPMH, Bob's intense desire for knowledge, understanding and clarity is so evident. This was never more apparent to me than when he phoned one evening to discuss his work on the new wording of the SPMH Mission Statement. He was most concerned that we get the wording ex-

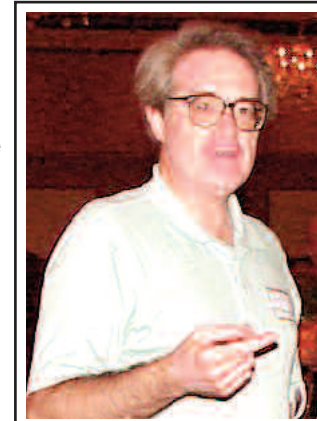
actly right, that our Mission as it relates to the Preservation of our Music Hall be clearly understood by everyone.

Bob was passionate about music, about Music Hall and about SPMH. He put his best effort into every undertaking and he is and will be missed by his friends and colleagues. A Memorial Service celebrating his life was held in Music Hall on

February 27th. For a more in-depth look at Bob's life see Joanne Grueter's tribute at

www.spmhcincinnati.org

- Kathy Janson



Bob Howes

SPMH MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of The Society for the Preservation of Music Hall is to preserve, promote, improve, and provide education about Music Hall, funding special projects in addition to Music Hall management's operational and maintenance obligations, and facilitating communications among Music Hall management, owner, and tenants, in order to perpetuate Music Hall as the premier cultural center of the Region, and as a National Historic Landmark of international significance.

Give the gift of History
Purchase Music Hall:
"Cincinnati Finds its Voice"
DVD or VHS
call (513) 744-3293



Take a Tour, Become a Guide

The Society for the Preservation of Music Hall has been sponsoring tours for many years. The founders of the Society and the concert goers, who had experienced the beauty of the Hall, were motivated to pass on this love of Music Hall and its history to others.

The first guides read books and articles and interviewed Music Hall personnel to prepare a 'fact sheet' about the background and operations of the Hall. Marie Gallagher devoted years to the training of tour guides and the co-

ordination of all tours. The roster of guides has constantly changed, adding new energy to the team. When someone desires to be a guide, he "shadows" the more seasoned guides as they conduct actual tours. By taking notes during these tours and by studying available materials, including the Music Hall website www.spmhcincinnati.org, new guides quickly gain confidence and begin conducting tours on their own. Those interested in becoming guides may call SPMH at 744-3293.

Sometimes visitors are sur-

prised to learn that Music Hall consists of three separate buildings: the central Springer Auditorium, the North Hall and the South Hall.

Guides enjoy describing how each of the buildings evolved from 1878

to the present. The North Hall first exhibited Cincinnati machinery, then it became a sports arena, and today it houses the Opera offices and the paint and carpentry shops. The South Hall was originally used for horticultural exhibits, later for antique shows and automobile shows, and it now houses the offices

of the Cincinnati Symphony and the Music Hall Ballroom. The central auditorium has had several dramatic renovations from its early days to the present. At one time thirteen gas lights hung from the ceiling and today magnificent crystal chandeliers light the way.

Music Hall was built on the site of a potters' field. Consequently stories of ghosts have developed over time and children often ask "What about the ghosts?" So the guides always relate one or two of Music Hall's more colorful tales. A number of groups interested in the paranormal frequently arrange to



Mace Justice

visit Music Hall at night. They set up cameras and audio equipment in one or more locations, in order to monitor Music Hall's spirits!

Groups from schools, groups from social clubs and retirement living, as well as groups of out of

town visitors, regularly tour Music Hall. Lunches can be arranged in conjunction with tours. To schedule a tour for a group of ten or more on non-concert days, call 744-3344.

To schedule a pre-concert tour call 744-3331. - Mace Justice

High Notes!

Congratulations to Joanne Grueter for her fine work in getting the new website up and running! This fabulous tool increases the

visibility of SPMH and offers a higher level of communication. To learn more about Music Hall, past, present and future, access the



Joanne Grueter



Ron Wehmeier

beautifully presented information at www.spmhcincinnati.org.

Long overdue congratulations to Ron Wehmeier! His 8-page article "Rebirth in Cincinnati from the Albee to Music Hall", was featured in the July/August 2010 issue of *Theatre Organ, Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society*.

A full page photo of the Mighty Wurlitzer installed in the Ballroom graces the Journal's cover. Ron's excellent article details the history

of the Mighty Wurlitzer from 1927 to the present day and presents a complete organ chamber analysis. It is replete

with photos taken by Philip Groshong, Joanne Grueter and Scott Santangelo. An 8-minute recorded interview with Ron, the Journal cover and information about the Mighty Wurlitzer, can be seen at the link:

www.atos.org/tojournal/Archives/07-2010/albee.html.

"This is our purpose: to make as meaningful as possible this life that has been bestowed upon us; to live in such a way that we may be proud of ourselves; to act in such a way that some part of us lives on". - Oswald Spengler

Washington Park



Projected Renovation Rendering from Elm Street view

The expansion and renovation project of Washington Park, considered the Entrance to Music Hall, is well under way, with anticipated completion in Spring 2012. The project is a partnership between the Cincinnati Park Board and The Cincinnati Center City Development Corp. (3CDC).

Turner/Megen, an association between Turner Construction Company and Megen Construction Company, is the general contractor. The Washington Park area will be expanded by 2 acres (from 6 to 8) allowing for a large Civic Green with a Stage, a Music Hall Plaza,

Concessions, an Interactive Water Feature, a Dog Park, a Bandstand, a Play Area with Interactive Water Runnel, Restrooms and various entrances to a 450-Space Underground Garage. At a cost of \$47,368,503, Washington Park will be a destination in itself, providing entertainments and relaxation, a fitting complement to Music Hall. For weekly detailed updates, construction photographs and fascinating illustrations of the new park go to 3CDC's site at:

www.3cdc.org/follow-ourprojects/washingtonpark.

- Kathy Janson

WASHINGTON PARK RENOVATION PLANS



Revitalization Circa 1939

HELP FIX UP MUSIC HALL!

Every Cincinnati feels real pride in Music Hall, which is not only the center of the fondest traditions of the Queen City of the West but is also one of the finest auditoriums of the world. It is a civic asset in the true sense of the word, belonging to the people of Cincinnati, and administered by a Board of Trustees comprised of prominent citizens.

Recently, the Music Hall Repair Committee, headed by General P. Lincoln Mitchell, chairman, and Miss Beatrice Shillito, vice-chairman, started the work of redecorating Music Hall in time for the coming May Festival.

A sum of \$20,000.00 is necessary to defray the cost of this work and the Committee sends out an appeal to every interested Cincinnati to contribute to this fund. Any amount from \$1.00 up will be appreciated. The attached donation blank will aid you in sending in your subscription.

THE MUSIC HALL REPAIR COMMITTEE

TEAR OFF

MUSIC HALL REPAIR COMMITTEE

Gen. P. Lincoln Mitchell, Chairman
Miss Beatrice Shillito, Vice-Chairman

As a Cincinnati, anxious to contribute to the project to repair and redecorate Music Hall, I herewith send my donation of \$.....for this work.

Name.....

Address.....

Checks should be made payable to the MUSIC HALL REPAIR FUND and mailed to Fifth-Third Union Trust Co., Fourth and Walnut Streets, in care of Mr. J. J. Rowe, President.

"Happy Holidays with the Mighty Wurlitzer"



photo credit: Phil Groshong

SPMH President Don Siekmann "caught up" in the festive moment!

Concert-goers were truly "Walking in a Winter Wonderland" when they braved the first snowstorm of the season to attend the debut concert of SPMH's

Mighty Wurlitzer series. The event took place on December 16th in the Music Hall Ballroom, which was aglow with holiday décor and poinsettias. Despite the snowstorm that hit hard the night

before, the Ballroom was filled to its capacity for the evening performance. "We were thrilled with the turnout, in spite of the weather," noted



Organ virtuoso, Jelani Eddington

Don Siekmann, President of the Society for the Preservation of Music Hall, which presented the concert. "We honored tickets from the [more weather-beleaguered] morning concert, so as many patrons as possible could enjoy this unique holiday experience."

The concert featured theater organ virtuoso, Jelani Eddington, with a special guest appearance by the School for the Creative and Performing Arts Children's Choir. Mr. Eddington opened with "Sleigh Ride", a festive, frolicsome piece, which showcased the Mighty Wurlitzer in all its glory. Perfectly replicating the sounds of sleigh bells, and trotting hooves, the Wurlitzer's powers of the percussions entranced the audience -- young and old -- while evoking the wintry landscape outside Music Hall.

The program presented a selection of holiday orchestral music, in-

cluding "Ave Maria", "Parade of the Wooden Soldiers", "What Child is This" ("Green Sleeves"), and a beautiful medley of traditional English carols. The performance of the SCPA choir helped to further animate the evening event. Accompanied by piano, and led by Laurie Wyant, the 4th, 5th and 6th graders delighted the crowd with spirited classics. A spry accent to the choir's music was added by their humorous holiday headgear, which included reindeer antlers, Santa hats, elfin eyeglasses, and more. Speaking of Santa, the evening culminated when the jolly old saint, himself, bounded up onto the stage to join Mr. Eddington and the SCPA choir for a rousing, carol sing-a-long, which the audience was only too happy to join.

But the real star was the Mighty Wurlitzer, itself. Built in 1927, the Mighty Wurlitzer was the centerpiece of the old Albee Theater,

where it dutifully performed as an accompaniment to silent films. In 1969, it was donated to the Emery Theater where it entertained all before and after showings of vintage movies, until 1999 at which time it was moved to storage. Its complete restoration and installation, funded by a \$1.4 million gift from an anonymous donor, were accomplished by SPMH Board member, Ron Wehmeier. The Wurlitzer dedication concert was held in November 2009, in Music



Norma Petersen with sons David and Christopher watch attentively.

10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. in the Music Hall Ballroom. Las Vegas theatre-organist, Walt

Strony, and vocalists, Mark Hardy and Lisa Ericksen, both veterans of Broadway, are the featured artists. They will be joined by two rising stars from Northern Kentucky University's musical theater program and, together, will perform tunes from Broadway's golden age. Tickets are on sale:

513-621-2787

www.CincinnatiArts.ORG

- Lisa Allison



"... Ohhhh what fun it is to..."

Hall's Ballroom, fulfilling the donor's wish that this organ be kept in Cincinnati as a tribute to the city's rich musical heritage.

SPMH will continue its Mighty Wurlitzer concert series this spring with "On Broadway with the Mighty Wurlitzer". The concert performances will be held on May 5th at



Mike & Kathy Janson, Libby & Raleigh Sharrock, Linda, Julie & Claire Siekmann



SCPA Children's Choir

photo credit: Phil Groshong



"...and to All a good night!"

It's What's Happening In The Hall Now!

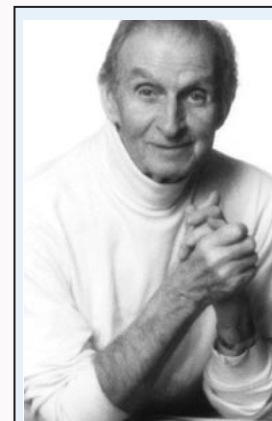


Need another reason to attend the May Festival and the last concerts of the CSO 2010-2011 Season? Here is an impressive one! The May Festival and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra have recently been invited to perform at Carnegie Hall in a new festival called Spring for Music scheduled for May 10, 2013. Competition for the honor, won by the May Festival Organization, comprised of the combined chorus and CSO, was stiff. The concert program submitted by each organization was the

principal determining factor. May Festival's winning program, not to be revealed until the concert date, was selected for its innovation and rarity of the piece to be performed. One of only six groups chosen, this will be May Festival's fifth time performing in the revered hall, its last performance there having taken place in 2001. Take the opportunities that May presents to be among those enjoying our world renowned May Festival Chorus and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in Music Hall!

I Remember When...

"Several years ago, I was a guest at a dinner party honoring the legendary ballet star Sir Frederic Franklin (director of the Cincinnati Ballet from 1984 to 1986 and currently Artistic Director Emeritus). Still active and witty at age 96, Sir Freddie, then a mere 88 years of age, regaled everyone in attendance with stories that, in the tradition of Las Vegas, must remain in the memories of those who were there and swore the oath of Omerta. There was one story, however, that may be told, and it speaks to the rich tradition of Music Hall and of dance in Cincinnati.



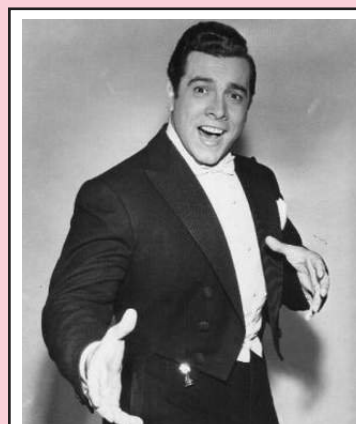
Sir Frederic Franklin



Stacey Woolley

During the early days of the Ballet Russe performing in Cincinnati, Franklin appeared frequently. On

one occasion, a performance at Music Hall was nearly cancelled because of the superstitious Russian dancers who had noticed a bat flying about in Music Hall's Springer Auditorium. An omen of bad luck not to be ignored, the dancers refused to perform. Franklin, who was easily frightened, and who was after all a leader of the troupe, prevailed upon his colleagues to forge ahead despite the winged mammal's inauspicious flight plan. Franklin carried the day and the show went on as scheduled. 'I shall never forget that Sunday in Cincinnati', said Franklin. 'It was December 7, 1941.'
- Stacey Woolley



Mario Lanza, tenor

"My favorite memory of Music Hall is when Mario Lanza sang there in 1951. Most people don't recognize his name. To me he was and always will be the greatest singer who ever lived. When I visited the Mario Lanza Institute and Museum in Philadelphia, I talked to the person working and told her that I had seen him in Cincinnati. She said I was the only person that she knew who had seen him in person."

- Betty Powers

"When I first came to work at Music Hall as Director of Operations, I undertook to identify the various pieces of art and sculpture located throughout the building. The bust of Max Rudolf, located in the well, appears to be unsigned, so I was examining it closely, looking for an artist's signature or maker's mark. The bust is hollow,



Max Rudolf Bust



Scott Santangelo

and as I leaned over and looked at the base, it seemed that something was inside. Reaching in I found a folded piece of paper with a handwritten recollection of a gentleman's story of meeting his wife at Music Hall, which had apparently been tucked away there decades earlier. I have come to understand that people form lasting bonds with Music Hall, and this was another example of how someone had created his own time capsule, waiting to be found many years later."

- Scott Santangelo



"I saw a lot of concerts at Music Hall. One that I will always remember is the Sacred Mushroom/Big Brother and The Holding Company with Janis Joplin on October 14, 1968. In the middle of the show Janis had a portable TV pointed toward the audience. We all giggled as we watched a video of The Beatles singing "All You Need is Love" on The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour show."

- Dean Reynolds

"If you want to go from the sublime to the ridiculous, among the many memorable moments I've had in that hall ... was Erich Kunzel's 'Down on the Farm' concert. I think it's an amazing versatile space, Music Hall, and it's housed so many different things of both high art and low art. It would be very hard to imagine anyone allowing pigs onstage in Symphony Hall in Boston. I think when pigs fly. So it's fun to see that a hall can be used for such purposes and still contain great music and wonderful concerts."

-Keith Lockhart, Boston Pops Conductor



"As a child our school offered the opportunity to attend the children's concerts. I remember at a very young age, sitting in the balcony listening to the CSO play Dukas' *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* with an artist drawing pictures on an easel, of multiplying brooms carrying buckets of water all accompanied some sort of narration. I was spellbound by the whole experience! Then after living in Rhode Island for a year after graduate school, I came back to Cincinnati and started subscribing to the Symphony. It was such fun to sit in seat number 6 of the box

where the Wulsin family had the other 5 seats! The din of the crowd at intermission was exciting. Max

Rudolph was the conductor then. I left town again and came back after 23 years in New York working as a

lawyer on Wall Street and enjoying the Metropolitan Opera, etc. This was the first time I subscribed to May Festival. What a treat to have such beautiful symphonic, choral and solo music performed in the gorgeous Springer Auditorium. Music Hall has always been a part of my life and I treasure it. Because of that, I am very excited that we will bring the current infrastructure up to the standards of our beautiful hall. Music Hall in and of itself will be a destination. Won't you join me?"

- Melody Sawyer Richardson



Concept of a Music Hall renovation indicates it could become a destination of itself!

"It was at the 100th anniversary of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in April 1995 that on the stage were four international conductors, Jesus-Lopez-Cobos, Michael Gielen, Erich Kunzel and Keith Lockhart, and three international performers, Itzhak Perlman, Mstislav Rostropovich and Richard Stoltzman. It was at this time that Cleveland was opening up the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame with a lot of publicity and fanfare. I thought to myself, is there a Hall of Fame for classical music? This began my quest to

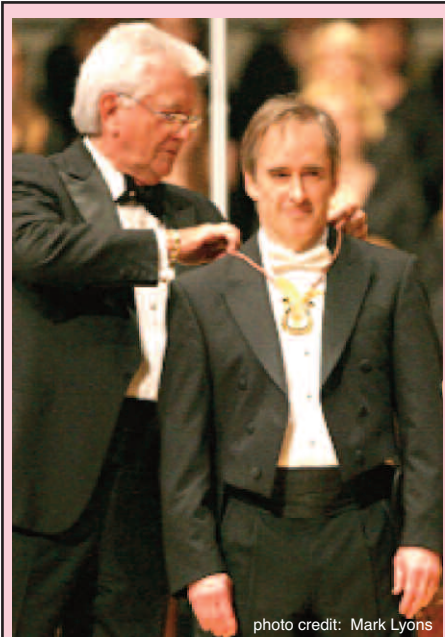


photo credit: Mark Lyons
David Klingshirn presents James Conlon with medal from the American Classical Music Hall of Fame

begin the American Classical Hall of Fame. Everyone I interviewed said, 'If there is not a hall of fame for classical music, there should be'. Now 16 years later, the American Classical Hall of Fame has become a major force in classical music nationally and internationally. Without the Cincinnati Music Hall experience, none of this would have happened. I often say to people, 'Cincinnati is major league baseball and football, but more importantly, Cincinnati is major league music.'"

-David A. Klingshirn



Richard Stoltzman

"Like many Cincinnati high school seniors graduating in 1960, I will always remember the grandeur of Commencement at Music Hall. The ambiance made us all feel we had attained the summit. Now, many years later, when I return to perform concerti with the great Cincinnati Symphony, the memories of that glorious moment of having arrived at the pinnacle of purpose rush through me again."

- Richard Stoltzman,
Grammy-winning Clarinetist

"When the American Symphony Orchestra League held its annual meeting in Cincinnati in June 1996, one of the activities involved was a performance by pianist Michael Chertock in Music Hall. The audience became quiet, Michael sat down, and as he began to play *Rhapsody in Blue*, it was apparent to all that something was terribly wrong with the piano. Michael stopped playing and in a split second, Sally Krefting Phillips, of Krefting Pianos, flew down the aisle onto the stage in her evening attire. Like a baseball player sliding into a base, Sally executed a perfect slide in long dress,



Michael Chertock

to position herself under the piano, performed her technical magic, got up with great finesse, and in an instant was gone from the stage.

There was applause! The performance resumed and was spectacular! Both my wife Kathy and I, as well as others in the crowd, enjoyed this extra bit of 'entertainment' by friend and fellow volunteer, Sally."

- Mike Janson



Kathy and Mike Janson

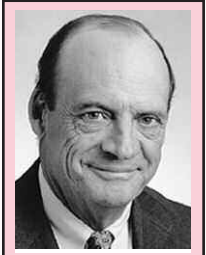
"I was doing Beethoven's Fifth, and a musician who is helping people in the Drop-Inn Center asked me, would it be OK to bring a group of people to Music Hall for the dress rehearsal? They told me about how much the music invigorated them and gave them hope. I've had so many memorable ex-



Paavo Jarvi, CSO Music Director

periences - not to mention my announcement and opening concert. But helping a human being by playing Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5* was the most touching, and probably the most moving, experience that I've had."

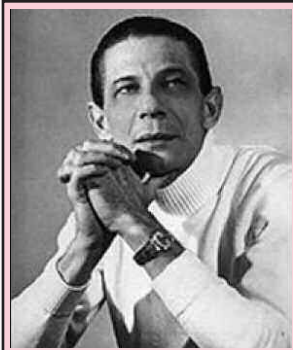
- Paavo Jarvi,
CSO Music Director



Dudley Taft

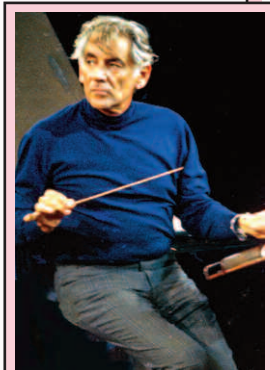
"Two Music Hall events stick out in my mind. The first was the reopening of the Hall after the renovation of the early seventies when the Opera presented *Mefistofele* with Norman Treagle and the other was an event I chaired when I was on the Opera Board. We brought in Dame Joan Sutherland from Australia."

- Dudley Taft



Norman Treagle

"I enjoy seeing these two photos side-by-side. Lenny Bernstein, whose music will live forever, is sitting at the Music Director's desk backstage when he came to Music Hall in 1973 to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the May Festival. He conducted the Beethoven 'Missa Solemnis'. Quite rightly so, he was always the center of attention, whether in New York, Vienna, here in Cincinnati, or at Irma Lazarus' ski lodge in Vail. And there is Tommy Schippers, whose moments on the podium will live forever in the memories of all of us who were lucky enough to witness them. Because he had a habit of showing up for performances only a



Lenny Bernstein



(back) Carmon DeLeone (front) Tommy Schippers

few minutes before the downbeat, I'm pretty certain that Maestro Schippers caused quite a bit of my black hair to turn gray. The tall, handsome man would come flying into his office, long scarf and coat flowing, with just enough time to put out his cigarette, adjust his tie and head for the stage. Yours truly, his young assistant, would breathe a sigh of relief and head out into the house to join the audience for another evening of pure magic."

- Carmon DeLeone, Cincinnati Ballet Music Director

"I have many wonderful memories of moments in that glorious building called Music Hall. As a little girl, my parents took me to view boxing matches and roller derbies. My grade school went for a concert. I think I was more interested in the candy than what was on stage. We were sitting in the balcony so the crackle of candy wrappers did not disturb the Orchestra. Then there was high school and a prom in the Music Hall Ballroom.

I served as president of the Women's Committee of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and in that capacity I had the privilege of presenting watches to Orchestra members who celebrated their 25th

anniversaries. But the moment I will never forget was opening night, August 2, 1978 when I walked on

Music Hall stage as the Grand Duchess of Anastasia in Sigmund Romberg's opera *Student Prince*. My opening line was 'What does this mean-how dare you keep me waiting,' but for one second I went blank. That awful and horrendous moment seemed like hours and those so-called butterflies flew out of my stomach in droves.

The line did come out of my mouth and the opera was a success. The Hall represents so much of Cincinnati's history and its culture and we can be so proud she has stood for 133 years. - Sylvia Benjamin



Sylvia Benjamin

"Many years ago, I heard Sir Rudolph Bing, the general manager of the New York Metropolitan Opera from 1950 to 1972, lecture at Chataqua Institution's huge amphitheater. After the lecture, he answered questions from the audience. One of the questions was, 'If you had to choose the world's finest orchestra, conductor, music hall, which would you choose?' After a long

pause he answered, 'The world's finest orchestra? Maybe I could

narrow it down to three. The world's finest conductor? It's impossible to choose just one. The world's finest music hall? That's easy, without a doubt, it's Music Hall in Cincinnati.' Later I moved to Cincinnati and couldn't wait to visit Music Hall. I agree with Sir Rudolph Bing."

- Ruth Levinson



Sir Rudolph Bing

A Music Hall Memory

Imagine having your 6th birthday party incorporated into a Music Hall event headlined by “Captain Kangaroo”! It was 1962.

My mother and father were associated with the Symphony, the Opera and the Ballet among other community arts organizations. If there was an opportunity for me to be involved with any of these, my mom could “make it happen”.

I remember being back stage with all the kids that were invited to my birthday party. At that age, the stage was enormous! My friends and I were coached on how to walk across the music hall stage dressed in large trench coats. We were to stop in the middle of the stage and “curtsey” or “bow” before proceeding off.

As we walked we were pursued by the infamous Captain Kangaroo; following our footsteps with a giant magnifying glass in hand. It was a “walk on”. We were part of a much

larger story that my friends and I had no inkling of. All I could think about was that my hero, Captain Kangaroo, was going to stop by my backstage birthday party and give us each an autographed picture of him. The party took place after the show somewhere in the bowels of the great Hall. How awesome was that? It is almost 50yrs. later and I can still remember



Karen Schulman-Bear

the “walk”, the “curtsey”, the audience laughing, and the party backstage with cake, ice cream, party hats, and a visit by the “Captain” himself.



Captain Kangaroo

My memories of Music Hall began with that party and they continue today. I have been performing with the Cincinnati May Festival Chorus since 1987. I now live 70 miles away in Central KY and I can't give it up. I have logged more than 125,000 miles over the last 10 yrs. just traveling to and from the Hall for this commitment. When I am in Music Hall for rehearsals or performing on stage I

feel a part of its past and its present. I am a part of its red velvet seats and gold trim. I partied there as a child. I auditioned in Music Hall's Green Room for the May Festival Chorus. I have rehearsed in a room upstairs that one must take small, musty steps to get to. I have walked in on soloists warming up in dressing rooms I thought were marked for the chorus. I took a coaching lesson from the great soprano Benita Valenté in one of its practice rooms. I have stood on the proscenium of the stage, in the flood of a single spotlight and began our Carolfest performance singing the opening verse of “Once in Royal David's City” as a soloist; a chorus member's dream.

During our breaks I have been known to sneak onto the stage and let loose with an operatic high B-flat or twirl in pirouettes across the empty stage to an audience of no one. A dim, single, bare bulb left on



Music Hall's May Festival Chorus

the stage in the darkened hall reminds me that only in the dark might I be the star, live the fantasy... Those moments fill me up. They are my secret, my privilege, the taking advantage of the Hall when it is resting.

When I walk into the second floor foyer I see the history of the hall laid out on its walls. I am a small part of that history... as a performer and an audience member. I remember so many of the faces, the directors, artists, and sponsors. As a child of parents who were on the boards of the CSO, Opera, Ballet, and The Society for the Preservation of Music Hall, it has become a second home for me. Music Hall has brought me tremendous joy both on stage and off. It has always been there... breathing life into me, into the city, and is still creating memories for us all.

- Karen Schulman-Bear

Thanks to all who contributed these memories! Special thanks to Janelle Gelfand for permission to reprint selections from her Enquirer tribute to Music Hall's 125th anniversary and to Scott Santangelo for his collection! - Kathy Janson

Music Hall Has It All! 'Classical Roots'

Do your musical tastes tend toward classical, pops, R&B, jazz, etc.? Music Hall has something for everyone! On March 11th the Hall resonated with powerful voices when a collaboration of the CSO, May Festival and members from 24 African-American Churches produced "Classical Roots: Lift E'ry Voice". The 11th year for the event and the first held in Music Hall, the sold-out program featured performances by internationally acclaimed artists, soprano Angela Brown, tenor Rodrick Dixon and conductor Michael Morgan. Vocalist Ingrid Woode, of Cincinnati, debuted her composition "When This Life is Over." Other offerings ranged from compositions by Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Wagner to Spirituals and foot tapping, hand clapping, Gospel Music. The audience needed little encouragement to join in the

singing when "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" opened the evening with the 156-member choir comprised of members from various area churches. A fitting ending to the celebratory evening was a lively rendition of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus!"



(l) Vocalist Ingrid Woode, (r) tenor Rodrick Dixon and soprano Angela Brown (above) the 156-member choir

On Broadway!! May 5th Presented by SPMH

No need to catch a New York flight to get a taste of the 'Great White Way'! Be dazzled by the sounds and sight of the Mighty Wurlitzer 'On Broadway'! About the artists:

Walt Strony

One of America's premier concert organists, having the reputation of being one of America's most original and interesting sounding concert organists, Walt has performed from coast to coast in the U.S. as well as in Japan, Australia, England and Canada. He is the only living organist to have been twice voted "Organist of the Year" by the American Theatre Organ Society. As a recording artist, he has over 30 albums to his name. His book "The Secrets of Theatre Organ Registration" is the standard reference book on this subject. Walt's talent as a pipe organ consultant of both theatre and classical instruments has taken him to instruments around the world. Mr. Strony has lived and performed in Las Vegas since 1999.

Mark Hardy One of Greater Cincinnati's most prolific professional theatre artists, Mark has ap-

peared on Broadway in *Les Miserables*, *Titanic* and *Children and Art*, and in several off-Broadway productions. He has toured with the



Organist Walt Strony

first national companies of *Sunset Boulevard* and *Les Miserables* among others. Roles at Denver Center Theatre, Houston Grand Opera and Flat Rock Playhouse are a few of those

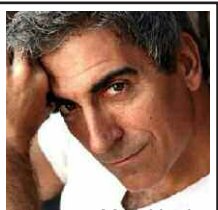
included among his regional credits. Mark has sung the music of classic Broadway composers as a guest artist with numerous symphonies. He has won many awards for directing including an Acclaim Award for his direction of *The Women* at NKU. Mark most recently directed the Carnegie Production of *Carousel* with The Cincinnati Ballet and Carmon DeLeone. He currently teaches acting and musical theatre performance at Northern Kentucky University.

Lisa Ericksen Having begun her extensive career as a classical singer, Lisa has performed leading operatic and concert roles with such groups as the Baltimore Opera, Concert Opera of Philadelphia, Lincoln Center, Piccola LaS-

cala, Tel Aviv Symphony Orchestra, the National Bulgarian Radio Orchestra and the Cincinnati Ballet. She has sung major roles in



Soprano Lisa Ericksen and Tenor Mark Hardy



Rigoletto, *Don Giovanni* and *The Magic Flute*. As a crossover artist, Lisa has performed the parts of Carlotta in *Phantom of the Opera*, Charlotte in *A Little Night Music*

and Woman 2 in *Side by Side* by *Sondheim*. Lisa teaches Voice at Northern Kentucky University in the Department of

Theatre and Dance.

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Joanne Honschopp- 'Music Hall Panorama'

The original painting 'Music Hall Panorama' is available for purchase, as are prints, through the artist at her Pendleton studio (513-241-9860) www.jhonschopp.com.

Other paintings and prints of Music Hall can also be seen there. Opening June 10th at The 5th Street Gallery (5th and Race) is Joanne's show of Cincinnati landmarks and skylines titled "Tribute".

A native of Cincinnati, Ohio and a painter as profession for 30 years, Ms. Honschopp was graduated with honors from the Art Academy of Cincinnati, and is considered the favorite in south western Ohio for her paintings of Cincinnati. Married to Jazz bassist Lou Lausche, music has long influenced her life and work. Joanne's work was honored at the Evansville Art Museum's "Realism in Art" Exhibition and she has been invited to exhibit in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, California and Florida.



Joanne Honschopp

An impressive collection of awards adorns her studio door, including the 2010 BEST OF SHOW at Northern Kentucky Heritage League's juried show. Ms. Honschopp's work is included in 29 Corporate and innumerable private collections. A master of diverse talents, she can stretch the imagination to include an array of subjects and approaches and much of her work is commissioned. She is currently represented by Gal-lerie Veronique in Montgomery, Ohio, Art on the Levee in Newport, KY, Liz-Beth Gallery, Knoxville, TN and over 20 Independent Agents and Art Consultants across the country.

Joanne paints daily in her studio, on the 8th floor of the Pendleton Art Center. The studio is open each month to the public on "Final Friday" and on follow-up "Second Look Saturday". Information on the open house is available at

www.pendletonartcenter.com.

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