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# Choruspondence

## Memphis Symphony Chorus

October 2010

Martha Wesson, editor

## Welcome back, everyone!

It's an exciting year for all returning chorus members and the largest group of talented new singers in any one season. Welcome all.

Our season begins with our performances in the "Home for the Holiday" pops concerts, with an additional concert in Forest City, AR. In the spring, the women of the chorus will perform in the third movement of Debussy's NOCTURNES with a concert at the Cannon Center and the GPAC on Sunday afternoon. In the final Masterworks Concert the men of the chorus will be in the spotlight, performing Brahms' ALTO RHAPSODY. The finale of the concert will be the Beethoven 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony, known as the choral symphony. Our new Maestro, Mei-Ann Chen, brings excitement and a sense of adventure to this year's concert season. Here's to a great musical feast this season.

## Welcome New Singers!

### Sopranos

Jennifer Lancaster  
Micah Taylor  
Leslie Goldberg  
Margaret Duncan  
Katie Smith  
Darla Bongiovanni  
Elizabeth Rodgers  
Aimee Concienne  
Jamie Yaich

### Altos

Ashley Rieves  
Sarah Baum  
Charissa Shiver  
Shaunna Moore  
Stephony Robinson  
Jamie Walker  
Wanda Caldwell

### Tenors

Daniel Moore  
Chris Marchall  
Sandy Schaeffer



## MSC Women To Sing in World Premier Performance

A select group of women chorus members will be on the stage with the MSO at Saturday Night's Masterworks Concert. The Memphis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maestro Chen was able to secure the world premier performance of "Sidereus" a newly commissioned work by the Argentine composer Osvaldo Golijov.

Our congratulations to these women who auditioned and have been rehearsing after our regular Monday night rehearsals. We encourage all MSC members to attend and support both our chorus members and the MSO. Good luck ladies.

Great opportunity to use our special chorus member discounts.



## 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fruit Sale!

As the leaves are beginning to turn color and drift to the ground it is time for our annual **FRUIT SALE**. The kickoff for this year's very important fundraiser will be at our October 18 rehearsal. All the details and sales information will be provided at that time.

A really fun part of the fruit sale each year are the exciting incentive prizes to be won by those who really get excited and generate a lot of sales.



The more you sell the better the rewards. Here are some of the fabulous incentives this year: picture frames with the MSC logo, travel coffee mugs with MSC logo, backpacks with MSC logo, and an umbrella. Top prizes still to be determined - but we have one gift certificate to Folks Folly so far...

## Why Sell Fruit??

An attempt at answering by your friendly neighborhood Chorus Treasurer, Matt Lott

Over the years, most of us have found ourselves involved in the gargantuan undertaking known as the Fruit Sale! Whether it's hitting the streets for fruit orders, or the truly "fun" tasks of feeling, counting, throwing, and occasionally eating the fruit, we know the amount of work that goes into every facet. However, you may not know exactly why we have a Fruit Sale fundraiser. Hopefully I can shed some light on the subject.

The Chorus is a valued member of the larger Memphis Symphony family. However, the Chorus is financially autonomous from the MSO. This means that we must take care of our own operations expenses, equipment purchases, out-reach projects, and (most importantly) our entertainment expenses!

Here is a simplified breakdown of our expenditures for the 2009-10 season:

|                         |                                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Operations expenses:    | \$1,100.00                            |
| Equipment purchases:    | \$339.95 (new wireless mic for Larry) |
| Honoraria/Memorials     | \$1,900.00                            |
| Entertainment expenses: | \$3,100.00                            |



For the 2009-10 season, the Fruit Sale made a net profit of \$6,800!! What an incredible testament to how successful this fundraiser has become! Let's continue this success by **SELLING THAT FRUIT!!**





# Reflections...

By Barbara Frederick



A long, long time ago in a galaxy far away, I went to see a new movie called Star Wars. I didn't really want to go because I figured it would be violent, full of blood and guts, and include vast scenes of injury and devastation. I was so wrong!

From those first few notes of the theme song by John Williams, I-like the rest of America-was transformed. This wasn't just any war movie! I was transfixed by the beautiful artwork on the screen and the incredibly appropriate soundtrack. Never for me before had the music been so integral to the story line, so powerful and so memorable.

Then imagine thirty-two years later - 32 YEARS LATER - I'm sitting on a gigantic stage with a gigantic orchestra in a gigantic music hall (for the evening), singing the choral parts of this beautiful music with my excellent Memphis Symphony Chorus and University of Memphis buddies! I had googled the event and found that the music had been performed all over Europe and parts of Asia. I was now a part of one of the biggest music and video events EVER! Not only did I get to sing, but I was allowed to be in the actual room sharing oxygen with 3CPO! Talk about your lights, cameras and action! And lasers!!!

The symphony chorus has never failed to make me a part of something much larger than I could ever produce alone. This one event was definitely a musical highlight of my life. In fact, the ID sticker I was given to make sure everyone knew I was a STAR WARS PERFORMER will forever be pasted inside my choral music folder.

God bless the rebel alliance!!!!

[www.starwarsinconcert.com](http://www.starwarsinconcert.com)

## Growing the Memphis Symphony

We have all done it all our lives in our business or our personal experiences. We have moved someone to join an organization, a church, or a singing group. We need to step up our personal efforts to promote the Memphis Symphony. We need to insist that our friends and associates begin with a single concert that can motivate them to buy a season series. If past is prelude, there will be some good season discounts available.

Members of the Symphony are presently making a major effort to provide outreach all over Memphis, in groups large and small. We need to support them any way we can. We can begin with enthusiasm that overcomes hard times.





## Early Praise for Maestro Chen:

### Excerpts from the Commercial Appeal's review of The Russian Masters, written by Jon W. Sparks:

The weekend's Memphis Symphony Orchestra concerts had been eagerly anticipated as a turning point.

The performances were not only the first in the Masterworks series of the season, but also the first with Mei-Ann Chen as music director. The previous week's chamber music concert led by Chen was an appetizer; this weekend brought the full orchestral complement to The Cannon Center for the Performing Arts on Saturday night and the Germantown Performing Arts Centre on Sunday afternoon.



The anticipation came because the organization set its sights high. Chen is the catalyst for the MSO's drive to become an exemplar for community outreach as well as to boost its musical reputation.

"This orchestra is going to go places," Chen said from the podium.

...

The all-Russian program that followed was a passion fest, with lots of grand statements and showy passages designed to show what the MSO can do.

Opening the evening's program was Shostakovich's "Festive Overture," a rousing crowd-pleaser that has survived considerably better than the glorious Soviet socialist revolution it celebrates.

It was a brisk warm-up for the next number, Tchaikovsky's "Piano Concerto No. 1," with guest soloist Markus Groh hammering the keyboard in this popular work.

...

[After intermission,] The Rimsky-Korsakov "Scheherazade Symphonic Suite" after "The Thousands and One Nights" was a glorious triumph for Maestro Chen and the MSO.

You can mark this work as the beginning of the new orchestra, a performance in which it sounded more truly symphonic and unified than ever before.

...

It was a fascinating evening, an indication that there is much yet to be done but also a glimpse into what could be an astounding future for an orchestra willing to take the lead.

