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**Gretna Music at Elizabethtown College presents the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, with cellist Alisa Weilerstein**

**Friday, March 19, 2010**

**World's Most Renowned Chamber Orchestra**

**No Conductor? No Problem!**

**Rising Young Cello Soloist makes Central PA debut**

**"Weilersteen?" No, "Weilerstein!" And When It Comes to Talent, She's a Monster**

**Play What? Stravinsky, Tchaikovsky and Beethoven**

Elizabethtown, PA - Gretna Music presents the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, with cellist Alisa Weilerstein, in a concert of masterworks by Stravinsky, Tchaikovsky, and Beethoven, Friday, March 19 at 7:30 P.M. at Leffler Performance Center on the campus of Elizabethtown College.

**What is the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra?** The world's most renowned chamber orchestra, Orpheus has thrilled international audiences, always performing without a conductor - a feat comparable to a trapeze artist performing without a net! (no splats yet)

In its 38 year history, Orpheus has garnered critical praise, Grammy nominations and awards for its superior artistry, energy, and distinctive approach to music-making. The self-governing ensemble has its own Carnegie Hall series, and appears annually at Lincoln Center and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Orpheus regularly performs with the world's leading solo artists. Past collaborators are a who's who of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century performers: Alfred Brendel, Renee Fleming, Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, and Isaac Stern, just to name a few. (See attached full orchestra bio.)

**Who is Alisa Weilerstein?** On March 19, the young cello sensation Alisa Weilerstein adds her name to this list of luminaries when she solos with Orpheus in Tchaikovsky's *Variations on a Rococo Theme*. Ms. Weilerstein is a monster talent who has garnered raves for her style that combines natural virtuosic precision with impassioned feeling. At the tender age of 27, she is already a veteran of solo performances with the New York and Berlin Philharmonics, the Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, and numerous other world class ensembles. (See attached complete bio.)

**Play What (i.e., What's on the Program?):** In addition to Tchaikovsky, Orpheus' program explores ballet scores by seminal composers of the Romantic and Modern eras: Beethoven's delightful *Creatures of Prometheus*, ever-popular for its overture, and famous as the source of the "hero's theme" that its composer would later use in his *Eroica* Symphony; and Stravinsky's *Apollo, Leader of the Muses*, the neoclassic masterpiece that gave choreographer George Balanchine his first international triumph.

**Full program**

Igor Stravinsky - *Apollon Musagète*  
Peter Tchaikovsky - *Variations on a Rococo Theme for Cello and Orchestra, op. 33*  
*Alisa Weilerstein, cello*  
Ludwig van Beethoven - *Rondino*  
Ludwig van Beethoven - *Selections from The Creatures of Prometheus, op. 43*

A 6:30 p.m. **Classical Conversation about the evening's program**, led by classical music blogger Dick Strawser, will precede the performance.

Tickets for Gretna Music's presentation of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, with cellist Alisa Weilerstein are \$65/55/45/35/25, with discount tickets for young people ages 26 and under. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.gretnamusic.org/tickets.htm](http://www.gretnamusic.org/tickets.htm), or by phone at 717-361-1508.

*Gretna Music at Elizabethtown College* presents concerts each year at the Leffler Performance Center, located on College Avenue east of PA Route 230 in Elizabethtown.

weblinks:

[www.gretnamusic.org/etown.htm](http://www.gretnamusic.org/etown.htm)

[www.gretnamusic.org/etown.htm#orpheus](http://www.gretnamusic.org/etown.htm#orpheus)

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## More on the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra full biography

The Grammy® Award-winning Orpheus Chamber Orchestra has invigorated international audiences and critics alike with its superior artistry, energy, and distinctive approach to music-making. Orpheus is committed to illuminating both traditional orchestral repertoire as well as new works by contemporary composers in a unique and liberating manner. Throughout its history, Orpheus has built a legacy with its acclaimed recordings, performances, and collaborations with the world's most esteemed and dynamic soloists. In addition to the Orchestra's extensive national and international touring schedule, the ensemble presents an annual concert series at Carnegie Hall and appears regularly at many major New York venues, including Lincoln Center and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Orpheus was founded in 1972 by cellist Julian Fifer and a group of fellow musicians who aspired to perform diverse orchestral repertoire using chamber music ensemble techniques. One of the few self-governing ensembles playing today, Orpheus continues this philosophy, performing without a conductor and rotating musical leadership roles for each work. The Orchestra strives to empower its musicians by integrating them into virtually every facet of the organization, literally changing the way the world thinks about musicians, conductors, and orchestras.

Orpheus' 2009-2010 season continues its rich tradition of collaboration with leading soloists and composers in New York, throughout the United States, and abroad. The Orchestra's annual concert series at Carnegie Hall includes performances with violinists Henning Kraggerud and Ryu Goto, oboist Albrecht Mayer, pianist Angela Hewitt, and cellist Truls Mørk. Through the generous support of the MetLife Foundation, these concerts will be broadcast live on WNYC and re-broadcast on American Public Media affiliate stations nationwide, as well as made available for free on-line streaming through the WNYC program archives. This season, two new commissions by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies and Aaron Jay Kernis will mark the last two installments of *The New Brandenburgs* commissioning project. Begun in 2006, the four year project has commissioned works by a variety of contemporary composers in the style of J.S. Bach's "Brandenburg" concerti.

Orpheus' 2008-2009 season featured collaborations with celebrated musicians including pianists Jean-Yves Thibaudet and Jonathan Biss, sitarist Anoushka Shankar, violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, and mezzo-soprano Susan Graham. The Orchestra also presented new works by Melinda Wagner, Paul Moravec, and Ned Rorem. In addition to touring domestically, Orpheus returned to Europe in February 2009 for an extensive tour with pianist Jonathan Biss, performing in world-renowned venues such as the Konzerthaus Berlin and the Musikverein.

Orpheus' recording legacy today consists of over 70 albums, including the Grammy® Award-winning *Shadow Dances: Stravinsky Miniatures*. Their extensive catalog for Deutsche Grammophon includes the Baroque classics, works by Haydn, Mozart, Dvorák, Grieg and Tchaikovsky, as well as a number of 20th-century masterpieces. Orpheus began a new relationship with EMI Classics in 2007 with their recording of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* featuring violinist Sarah Chang. A collection of Mozart piano concerti with Jonathan Biss was released in October 2008, also on EMI Classics.

In addition to performing, Orpheus is committed to providing diverse audiences with opportunities to engage in music. In 2003, Orpheus launched the *Orpheus Institute*, through which Orpheus musicians share their unique artist-centered philosophy, methodology and skills with college-aged musicians. Orpheus also provides hands-on music learning opportunities for hundreds of New York City public school students through the *Access Orpheus* programs, which include workshops, open rehearsals and concerts while also engaging audiences through the Orpheus Unwrapped pre-concert lecture series.

In March 2007, Orpheus became one of the first winners of the Worldwide Award for the Most Democratic Workplaces sponsored by WorldBlu, Inc., an Austin, Texas-based organization specializing in organizational democracy. Orpheus has maintained its presence on the WorldBlu list in all subsequent years.

The Orpheus Chamber Orchestra website,

<sup>1</sup>-[www.orpheusnyc.org](http://www.orpheusnyc.org), provides information on the ensemble, the musicians, performances, and special events. You can also find the Orchestra's blog at [blog.orpheusnyc.org](http://blog.orpheusnyc.org).

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## More on Alisa Weilerstein full biography

American cellist Alisa Weilerstein has attracted widespread attention for playing that combines a natural virtuosic command and technical precision with impassioned musicianship. At 27 years old, she is already a veteran on the classical music scene having performed with the nation's top orchestras, given recitals in music capitals throughout the U.S. and Europe, and having regularly appeared at prestigious festivals. The intensity and passion of her playing has regularly been lauded, as has the spontaneity and sensitivity of her interpretations. Following her Zankel Hall recital debut Justin Davidson of *New York Magazine* said: "Whatever she plays sounds custom-composed for her, as if she has a natural affinity with everything."

<sup>1</sup>. In November 2009, Ms. Weilerstein was one of four artists selected to perform at a White House classical music event that included student workshops hosted by the First Lady, Michelle Obama, and performing in concert for guests including President Obama. In December she performed as soloist (Dvorak Cello Concerto) in Venezuela with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra, led by Gustavo Dudamel and was immediately invited back to Venezuela in January for concerts conducted by her brother, Joshua Weilerstein. Another highlight of Ms. Weilerstein's 2009-10 season will take place on May 1st, 2010 when she performs Elgar's Cello Concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic and Daniel Barenboim in London for the orchestra's 2010 European Concert, an annual event that marks the founding of the Berlin Philharmonic. The concert will be televised live worldwide and will also be released on DVD. During the season she will also perform the Elgar concerto with the Orchestre National de Lyon, the Orchestre de Paris and the Hamburg Philharmonic.

Following her debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in June 2009, John von Rhein at the *Chicago Tribune* said of Ms. Weilerstein's performance of the Dvorak Cello Concerto: "The 27-year-old cellist spanned the full emotional range from poignancy to ebullience, bringing out an abundance of sentiment while avoiding sentimentality." During the 2009-10 season she will perform this concerto with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Peter Oundjian, the Cleveland Orchestra and Jonathan Nott, the Slovenia Symphony Orchestra and Giordano Bellicampi, the Hallé Orchestra and Okko Kamu and the Israel Philharmonic and Pietari Inkinen.

Other highlights of Ms. Weilerstein's 2009-10 season include the Canadian premiere of Osvaldo Golijov's *Azul* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and her debuts with the BBC Scottish Symphony, the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and at the Cartagena International Music Festival. In 2008 Ms. Weilerstein and composer/pianist Lera Auerbach performed the world premiere of Ms. Auerbach's 24 Preludes for Cello and Piano at the Caramoor International Music Festival and subsequently performed this work at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival in Germany and the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. They will come together again to perform this work in a program that also includes Shostakovich's 24 Preludes, making 48 preludes in total, in San Francisco

and Vancouver. Ms. Weilerstein will also join pianist Inon Barnatan for recitals in Washington D.C., Baltimore, Denver, Omaha, Ann Arbor and the Virgin Islands.

Ms. Weilerstein has been continually engaged by orchestras across the U.S. and has performed as soloist with the Baltimore Symphony, Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Saint Louis Symphony, the Seattle Symphony and the Orchestra of St. Luke's, among others. In Europe she has performed with the Barcelona Symphony, Bournemouth Symphony, Gulbenkian Orchestra Lisbon, Hallé Orchestra, Leipziger Bachkollegium, NDR Hamburg, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre National de Lyon, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich.

Conductors Ms. Weilerstein has performed with include Marin Alsop, Sir Andrew Davis, Gustavo Dudamel, Sir Mark Elder, Christoph Eschenbach, Lawrence Foster, Hans Graf, Manfred Honeck, Paavo Jarvi, Jeffrey Kahane, Louis Langrée, Andrew Litton, Jesus Lopez-Cobos, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Ludovic Morlot, Peter Oundjian, Itzhak Perlman, Kirill Petrenko and David Robertson.

In addition to her performances as a soloist, Ms. Weilerstein performs regularly as a chamber musician. She is part of a core group of musicians that performs at the Spoleto Festival USA each year and she also performs with her parents, Donald and Vivian Hornik Weilerstein, as the Weilerstein Trio, which is the Trio-in-Residence at the New England Conservatory in Boston.

In 2008 Alisa Weilerstein was awarded Lincoln Center's Martin E. Segal prize for exceptional achievement and she was named the winner of the 2006 Leonard Bernstein Award. She received an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2000 and was selected for two prestigious young artists programs in 2000-01; the ECHO (European Concert Hall Organization) "Rising Stars" recital series and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Chamber Music Society Two. Ms. Weilerstein also recorded a CD for EMI Classics' "Debut" series in 2000.

Alisa Weilerstein began playing the cello at four years old after her grandmother assembled a makeshift instrument out of cereal boxes for her to play with while she was sick with the chicken pox. After convincing her parents to buy her a real cello, she showed a natural affinity for the instrument and performed her first public concert six months later. Her Cleveland Orchestra debut was in October 1995, at age 13, playing the Tchaikovsky "Rococo" Variations. She made her Carnegie Hall debut with the New York Youth Symphony in March 1997. Ms. Weilerstein is a graduate of the Young Artist Program at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where she studied with Richard Weiss, and she has been appointed artist-in-residence at the Institute beginning August 2009 which will see her visit the campus to work with cello students. In May 2004, she graduated from Columbia University in New York with a degree in Russian History.

In November 2008 Ms. Weilerstein, who was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when she

was nine, was made a Celebrity Advocate for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. She meets with members of the local chapters of JDRF when she tours with the aim of demonstrating to young people that living with and managing diabetes does not stop you from doing anything you want to do. For more information on Ms. Weilerstein, please visit [www.alisaweilerstein.com](http://www.alisaweilerstein.com).

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