



Moonlit In The Sun's Music Notes

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A bimonthly newsletter about music and performances

www.moonlitinthesun.com

Phone: 571.223.5321 Email: newsletter@moonlitinthesun.com

July/August 2008

WELCOME!

Moonlit In The Sun would like to welcome our new cellist, Valerie Wride. Valerie was the principal cellist of the Mormon Orchestra in Washington DC (principal cellist) and has been a member of the Loudoun Symphony since 1997. We're very happy to have her with us. You can see us perform as a string trio on July 17th at the Restaurant at Patowmack Farm from 6:30-9:00 and at the Royal Green in Leesburg this summer (date TBA). We are very much looking forward to performing a public concert as a piano quartet (piano, violin, viola, and cello) soon – we'll keep you posted on that as it develops!

Did you know?

Last issue we said we'd explain why the piano is a percussion instrument. Here's the reason: The piano has many hammers inside which hit the piano strings. Because of this hitting action, it is considered a percussion instrument.

One of the most famous composers for the piano is Sergei Rachmaninoff. His Prelude in c# minor, an early piece written in 1892, made him famous throughout the world, and he soon began writing piano concertos. Rachmaninoff's Symphony no. 1 premiered in 1897. Rumor had it that the conductor, another famous Russian composer, Alexander Glazunov, may have been drunk during the performance. Whatever the reason, the symphony completely bombed, and the reviews in the paper were terrible. It is said that Rachmaninoff was so horrified he fled the concert hall during the performance.

Apparently, this had a major impact on our beloved composer. He didn't write another piece for about two to three years, and fell into an extreme depression. Eventually, he was asked by the Philharmonic Society to perform one of his own compositions. He felt very strongly that he should compose something for them, but was unable to do so because of his mental state. So, he did what anyone would have done, he went to a hypnotist. **Yes, Rocky-baby was hypnotized in the turn of the 20th century** by Dr. Nikolai Dahl, a prominent psychologist at the time. Apparently, the hypnotic suggestion he received went something like this: 'You will begin to write your concertoYou will work with great facilityThe concerto will be of excellent quality' Some of you might know that the Second Piano Concerto was dedicated to "Dr. Dahl." Rachmaninoff began writing this as he was attending sessions with Dr. Dahl. It seems we owe the composition of perhaps one of the greatest pieces of music ever written to hypnosis... Wow! Now I want to be hypnotized!! :o)

He must have hit on something because Rachmaninoff's music has been used in Hollywood (for example, *The Seven Year Itch*) and in our popular music (for example, *All By Myself*, written by Eric Carmen in 1975).

Reader's Corner

This section is dedicated to answer questions of our readers. If you have a question, email us at newsletter@moonlitinthesun.com!

How do violinists know where to put their fingers for the notes? ~Euhwa Tran, Austin, TX

Great question. If you've ever looked at a guitar, you've probably seen frets, little bars that run across the fingerboard. These frets let the guitarist know where each note is on their instrument. Violinists, violists, cellists, and bassists don't have that luxury. Traditionally, when students learn to play these instruments, their teacher places tapes on the fingerboard – one tape for each of the most common notes used on the violin. These tapes help students memorize where to put their fingers. After about 6 months to a year, these tapes come off and, as she reads the music, the student's fingers automatically know where to go. Here's a website that shows how we do it: <http://www.violinonline.com/fingerplacement.htm>

Remember, violinists, violists, cellists, and bassists DON'T FRET! :o)

Learning music

As we mentioned in the March 2008 issue of *Music Notes*, in addition to the treble clef, we also have a bass clef. The bass clef is used by our cellist, Valerie, and our pianist, Nancy.

A bass clef looks a little like a backwards C with a colon, and is also called an **F clef**. The second line of the staff from the top goes between each of the dots in the colon. The note "F" is on that line. You can count up or down from there to find the other notes.

Looking for a violin and viola teacher? Contact Moonlit in the Sun at 571.223.5321

Make your own

Have you ever played the kazoo? Here's how to make a simple one with a comb and some waxed paper. First, use the comb to measure off a piece of waxed paper. It should be the same length as the comb and be able to cover both sides of the comb. Hold the comb so the teeth point away from you. Fold the waxed paper over the comb so that it covers both sides and the edges are lined up with the edge of the teeth. Make sure your lips are dry. Now, hold the comb to your mouth so that the paper and teeth are against your lips. As you do this, hold the waxed paper firmly against the sides of the comb, but loosely enough so that the paper will be able to vibrate freely. Hum into the comb! It sometimes takes a little bit of practice to get it just right -- you can adjust the volume by humming louder or softer! As the waxed paper vibrates it makes a buzzing sound with a pitch similar to the sound you are making. The vibration might tickle your lip, so be ready for it! Try different kinds of paper and let us know if you find any that work better or as good as waxed paper.

Upcoming **Moonlit In The Sun** Performances

- **July 17 from 6:30-9:00pm** – Join **Moonlit In The Sun's** *STRING TRIO* for a romantic evening overlooking the Potomac River at the Restaurant at Patowmack Farm. We will be there for one night only!! The Restaurant at Patowmack Farm is located in Lovettsville, VA. Reservations are required. Call 540.822.9017 to make reservations and tell them **Moonlit In The Sun** sent you.
- **Summer 2008** – Special performance at the Royal Green. Join our *STRING TRIO* as we perform Beethoven, Bach, and other classical favorites. Date TBA.
- **September 5 from 6:30-9:00** – Leesburg's First Friday. Come hear us at the Royal Green on the corner of King and Royal streets in Old Town Leesburg, behind the Pink House. Come by to hear a song, stay and enjoy a concert! For more information, visit the [First Friday website!](#)
- Visit our website for updates to our schedule!



Moonlit in the Sun is available for receptions, weddings, private parties, and corporate events! Give us a call to arrange for us to play at your next event! Call us at 571.223.5321 or email us at info@moonlitinthesun.com Visit our website at: www.moonlitinthesun.com

Upcoming concerts of interest:

Concerts at Shenandoah Conservatory

- **Saturday, July 5 at 8pm and July 6 at 3pm, 2008** The Shenandoah Conservatory Festival Orchestra will be performing **BEETHOVEN'S 9TH SYMPHONY** in its entirety! Armstrong Hall, Shenandoah University campus in Winchester, VA. FREE

Questions?

Send us your questions about music or ideas for articles! Also, send us any articles you've written that you think we might be interested in using in our next newsletter. Email us at newsletter@moonlitinthesun.com

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Previous Issues of *Music Notes* (click on each one to access the newsletter on our website)

- [May/June edition](#)
- [March/April edition](#)

