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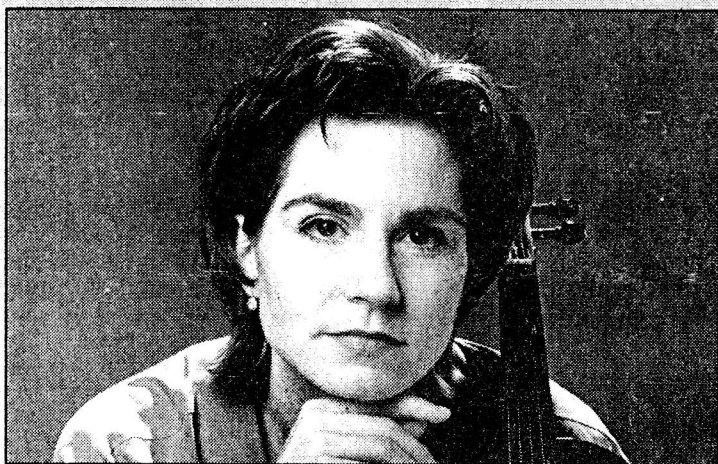
Music

RAUCOUS CELEBRATION

Norwalk violinist Sabrina Ann Berger performs a new work with the Waterbury Symphony.

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BEST • BET



Contributed photo

Old world rowdiness

Composer David Snow says “Hasana Tanz” describes “... a raucous, klezmer-inflected tune for electric violin and orchestra that evokes the joy and mayhem of an Old World wedding celebration.” “Hazana Tanz” is also the name of the Maryland composer’s newest composition, which will be performed tomorrow at the Waterbury Symphony Annual Picnic & Pops concert at The Hollow in Woodbury. Handling the electric violin duties Snow describes will be Norwalk violinist Sabrina Ann Berger, a Julliard- and Yale-trained musician who says she uses her amplified instrument to bridge the gap between the classical concert hall and young audiences used to hearing electric sounds. Admission is \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. Those under 18 will be admitted free. The Hollow is on Hollow Road in Woodbury. Call 574-4283.

— Thomas Mellana

Town Times

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July 20, 2000
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Alyce Cognetta Bertz, above, concertmaster for the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra, and electric violin soloist Sabrina A. Berger, right, will be two special guest performers at Sunday's Pops Concert at Veterans Memorial Park. Photos courtesy of WSO.

Strike up the band on Sunday for Pops!



The Connecticut southeastern coast had its tall ships last week, and Watertown will get its crack at summertime nostalgia on Sunday when the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra presents an outdoor concert at Veterans Memorial Park.

"The Great American Sound" will be the theme of the 4 p.m.

extravaganza on July 23, when conductor Leif Bjaland will put the orchestra through its paces in a special All-America tribute to the American Pops music sound.

The orchestra will be near the pavilion, while the audience will spread across the adjacent soccer pitch.

Featured musicians will be two

talented violinists from the orchestra, Sabrina Berger and Alyce Cognetta Bertz. Ms. Berger will perform David Snow's new work, "Hasana Tanz," on electric violin. Mr. Snow, a composer from Maryland, is expected to be in attendance to hear the world premiere of his newest composition at July 22's

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Strike up the band

(Continued from page 1)

WSO concert in Woodbury, and perhaps he'll stick around until Sunday too.

Joining Ms. Berger for a second selection will be Ms. Bertz, the orchestra's concertmaster. Together they will perform the first movement of Bach's Double Concerto on electric violin.

Continuing the fun with a popular and eclectic mix of music, the Waterbury Symphony will perform special All-America selections from the movies, a local composer, and other great American composers. Included in the mélange will be everything from Leroy Anderson's "Bugler's Holiday" and "Belle of the Ball," to John Philip Sousa's "Fairest of the Fair" and a "Salute to Fats Waller."

Also pencilled in on the repertoire sheet will be Rogers' "Victory at Sea," and movie music such as the flying theme from "E.T." and highlights from "Rocky."

The concert is being co-sponsored by the Watertown Foundation, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary, and the Watertown Recreation Department. There is a voluntary suggested donation of \$5 per person, with all proceeds going to the Watertown public schools' music department.

Patrons can bring lawn chairs and blankets for their comfort to enjoy the concert, and their own picnic-style foods. The Watertown Lions Club will have soft drinks and some light fare available. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the park.

Parking will be at Bristol Babcock and Crystal Rock Water Co., both contiguous to each other on Buckingham Street. Shuttle buses will provide transportation to the park.

Lisa Carew, town recreation director, has advised concert goers "not to wait until the last minute" to try to get a shuttle ride. She said the buses will begin their runs to the park around 2:30 p.m.

In case of rain, the concert will be moved to Watertown High School, 324 French Street. In case a decision on change of venue must be made, it will be done by noon and broadcast over WATR-AM

1320; details also will be noted on the town's InfoLine at 945-5272.

Concert organizers from the Foundation are excited over the WSO coming to town, and are hopeful well over 1,000 people will turn out for the summer musical treat.

Special tribute

Mr. Snow's "Hasana Tanz" — or "The Wedding Dance" in Yiddish — was written especially for Ms. Berger, a Norwalk resident, as a work for unaccompanied violin. Mr. Snow subsequently orchestrated the work, at Ms. Berger's request, for Saturday's "Picnic and Pops" concert in Woodbury Saturday.

Mr. Snow describes "Hasana Tanz" as a "... raucous, klezmer-inflected tune for electric violin and orchestra that evokes the joy and mayhem of an Old World wedding celebration." He goes on to describe Ms. Berger as a talented violinist: "Soul and chops make a potent combination ... she has both in spades."

A regular member of the WSO, Ms. Berger has been concertizing since the age of 8. She has received many grants, fellowships, and scholarships along the way, and studied in both the pre-college and college division of the Juilliard School of Music.

After graduating, she performed under Michael Tilson-Thomas with the New World Symphony. She has received fellowships to study at the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado, Tanglewood in Lenox, Mass., and Rubin Academy in Jerusalem.

Ms. Berger was the two-year recipient of a Stradivari Society violin of G.P. Maggini (circa 1600). She has performed as a soloist and orchestral performer under the batons of Leonard Bernstein, Pinchas Zukerman, Joanne Falletta, and Lawrence Leighton Smith. Her talent — combined with her recent interest in music composed for the five-string electric violin — has brought her to the attention of several important, young composers.

As she explains: "My generation and those immediately on either side of me (i.e., 35-45, 13-30), are conditioned to dynamic acous-

tics and electrically generated sounds ... my five-string electric violin performances are bringing passionate and classical acoustic violin music to massive younger audiences accustomed to hearing electric sounds. I am drawing the population to the concert halls."

Following her rendition of "Hasana Tanz," Ms. Berger will also perform on electric violin with Ms. Bertz as they play the first movement of Bach's Double Concerto for Two Violins in D minor, BWV No. 1043.

Ms. Bertz, of Southbury, has served as concertmaster of the WSO since 1989. Her many solos with the WSO have made her popular with audiences throughout the area.

Composer Snow holds degrees in music composition from the Eastman School of Music and Yale University. He has received numerous grants and awards for his compositions, including grants from the Maryland State Arts

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July 27, 2008
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Serving Watertown and Oakville Since 1947

Can't put stops on enjoyable pops!

by S. Khrystine Keane

A crowd of more than 1,000 men, women, children and dogs of all sizes turned out to Veterans Memorial Park on Sunday to help celebrate the Watertown Foundation's 75th birthday with a Pops concert by the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra.

"What a great idea this is!" said Irene Franson of Watertown. "We

usually go to the Pops concert in Woodbury each year, but I like this much better."

Woodbury has been the site of "Pops and Picnic" for the past 13 years. This year's concert was held on Saturday.

A donation of \$5 was requested from each adult attending the Watertown event. All proceeds collected were to benefit the Watertown public schools' music program.

To celebrate the 75th birthday of the foundation, members of the organization decided to "give something back to Watertown," said foundation volunteer Patricia Kropp.

Guests at the birthday bash were treated to the sounds of a five-string electric violin, as played by Sabrina Berger of Norwalk. A violin usually has four strings: G, D, A and E (in order from lowest to highest). Ms. Berger's instrument has an additional string, a C, which is lower than the G string.

Using the electric violin, the orchestra and Ms. Berger performed

a new piece, "Hasana Tanz," written by David Snow. Sunday's concert was the second time the piece

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Sabrina Berger performs on the electric violin. — Times Photo, Keane

Can't put stops

(Continued from page 1)

had been publicly performed. Mr. Snow's opus was written specifically for Ms. Berger and the electric violin.

Playing a selection usually performed by conventional violins, Ms. Berger and concertmaster Alyce Cognetta-Bertz, accompanied by the orchestra, played the first movement of Bach's Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor, using their electric violins.

Seventy-fifth anniversary committee Chairman Henry L. Long Jr. said he had heard "a lot of good comments about the concert. People called me up to say we should do it again."

He said the foundation has no plans to repeat the concert, but they were considering joining with "other groups in town to do this on a regular basis."

Waterbury Symphony Orchestra conductor Leif Bjaland introduced every selection, giving a little of its history. Included among the highlights of the program were "Over the Rainbow" (from the "Wizard of Oz"), "Flying Music from E.T.," "The Star Spangled Banner," music from "Victory at Sea," and "America the Beautiful."

The Watertown Foundation assists Watertown residents with scholarships and educational items, and also local agencies and non-profit organizations that offer services or respond to the needs of the community.

For more information about the Watertown Foundation, call Bobbe Mahoney at 274-4299.

RURAL ROUTE PATRON

Voices

— THE WEEKEND NEWSPAPER

SUNDAY



The Weekly
STAR

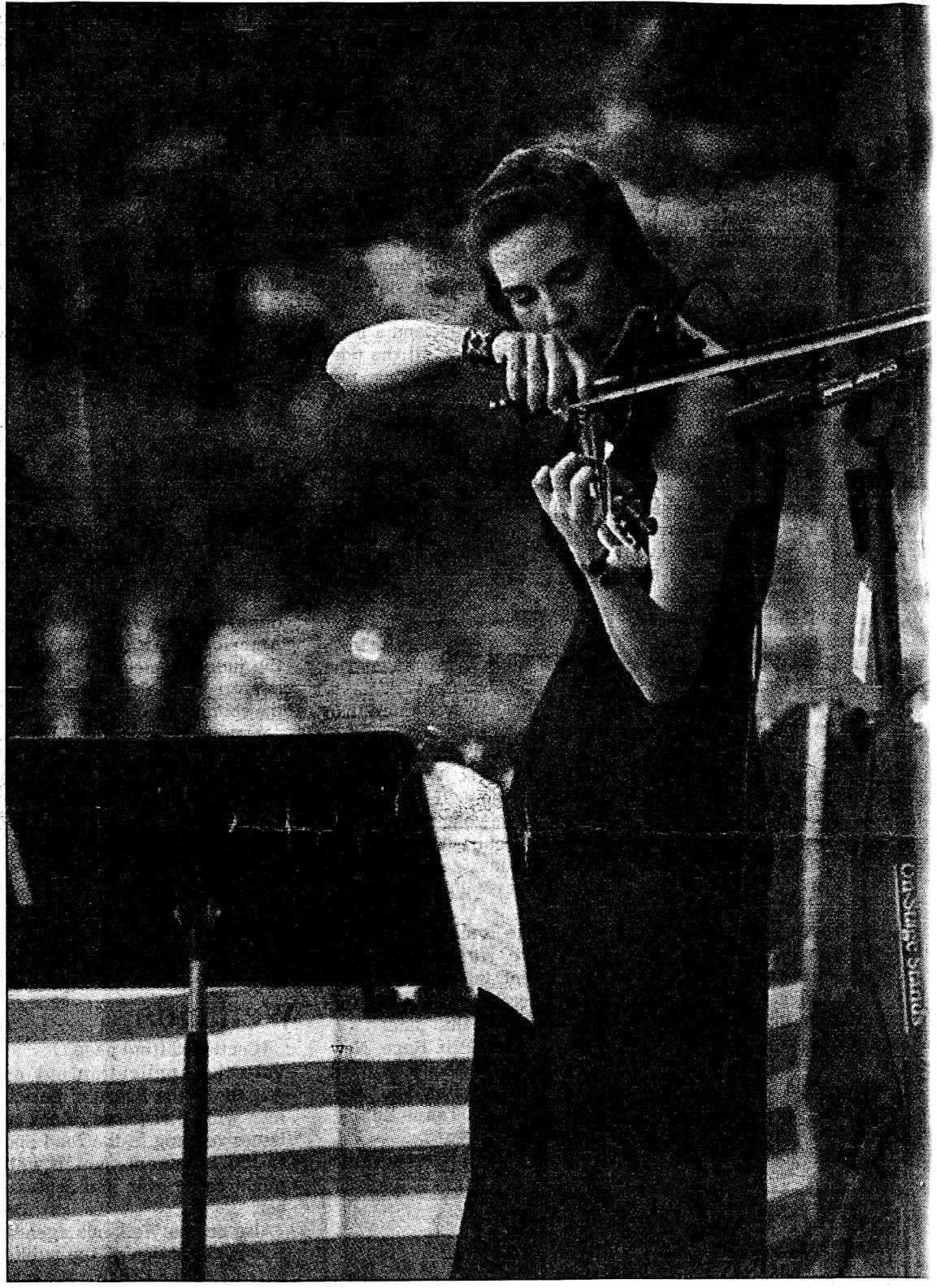
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July 30, 2000



GREAT AMERICAN SOUND — “The Great American Sound” was the theme of the 11th annual Picnic and Pops concert that graced the bandstand at Hollow Park in Woodbury Saturday, July 22. Guest artist Sandra Berger, who performs contemporary and traditional music on the electric violin, performed the Hasana Tanz, a piece by composer David Snow. Ms. Berger performs regularly with the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra. (Nelson photo)



Craig Ambrosio / Republican-American

Guest artist Sabrina Berger plays the violin Sunday with the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra during the Watertown Foundation's 75th anniversary pops concert in Veterans Memorial Park in Watertown on Sunday.

People in Watertown turn out for a Sunday afternoon of music

By Dawn Caminiti
© 2000 Republican-American

WATERTOWN — The soothing music of the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra's rendition of "Over the Rainbow" drifted over a sea of people who had spread out blankets and lawn chairs to enjoy Sunday's beautiful weather in Veterans' Memorial Park.

The mass of people — complete with baskets and coolers full of picnic goodies — were there to help the Watertown Foundation celebrate its 75th anniversary.

Leif Bjaland conducted the orchestra as it played nearly 20 songs in a tribute to American pop sounds. The event, "The Great American Sound," was sponsored by the Watertown Foundation, the Watertown Recreation Department and the Waterbury Region Convention and Visitors Bureau. It was free, but people were asked to give a voluntary donation toward the Water-

town public school music department. Henry Long was chairman of the event.

The foundation, a nonprofit, philanthropic organization that provides grants and scholarships to Watertown and Oakville students, chose to sponsor the musical event as a way of giving back to the community and to overcome negative news in town by offering something positive to the community, according to Bobbe Mahoney, the foundation's administrator.

"The community has supported us, so we decided to turn around and support them," Mahoney said. "We figured it was a way for people to just come together and just have fun."

What she referred to as a "party for Watertown" started at 4 p.m., but people started to show up at the park as early as 1 p.m. By 5 p.m., an estimated 900 people had made their way

Please turn to 2B, CONCERT

Continued from 1B

into the park, and more were still arriving. Starting at 2 p.m., yellow buses shuttled people between the park and Bristol Babcock and Crystal Rock Water Co., where residents were asked to park.

This is the first time an event like this has been held in town.

"It would be wonderful if we could have a community event such as this," Mahoney said.

The Watertown Lions Club gave the foundation a donation and helped organize the parking and a food booth that offered hot dogs and hamburgers.

Steve Bormolini, president of the

Lions Club, said he was impressed with the turnout. He said he'd like to see the concert become an annual event, sponsored by town civic organizations. It would give residents something to look forward to each year, he said.

Residents also said they would like to see it become a yearly event. Rita Ronalter joined her friends, George and Dorothy Gibeault and Joan Hoethke, for the festivities. They said the event was excellent.

"I love music; I could just sit and listen to music all day long," Ronalter said.

She said she, too, was impressed with the turnout. "I never expected to see this many people," she said.

Republican-American

GREATER WATERBURY

Monday,
July 24, 2000

'Picnic and Pops' always a high note in Woodbury

By James V. Ruocco
©2000 Republican-American

WOODBURY — It was under the wooded pavilion in the center of the Woodbury Hollow that the Waterbury Symphony orchestra did something different Saturday afternoon. For the first time in the 11-year history of "Picnic and Pops," the concert included a world premiere performance, that of "Hasana Tanz," a new composition composed by David Snow. It was superbly performed on the electric violin by guest artist Sabrina A. Berger.

Berger, who performs traditional and contemporary classical music on the electric violin regularly with the WSO, stood before the excited crowd lost in the moment of what she was doing. Her love of music was obvious by her stance, the way she played her instrument and the way she smiled when she knew everything was going right after weeks of rehearsal. Behind her, music conductor Leif Bjaland and the versatile symphony accompanied her solo much to the delight of everyone who sat there transfixed by this lively, hypnotic klezmer-infected tune.

"We were very excited to include this piece in this year's concert celebrating the 'Great American Sound,'" Bjaland explained during intermission. "We think it's fantastic and in this setting it worked quite remarkably."

Fantastic best describes the two-hour event.

The selections — 19 in all — included the theme from the sprawling movie western "The Big Country," "Over the Rainbow" from "The Wizard of Oz," the flying music from "E.T.," and musical highlights from "Rocky" which Bjaland prefaced with a plug for the Rocky Balboa statue and the American cinema success story of the underdog.



Craig Ambrosio / Republican-American

A large crowd gathers for the 11th annual Waterbury Symphony Orchestra Picnic & Pops Concert at The Hollow in Woodbury Saturday.

Elsewhere, music ran the gamut from Bach's "1st Movement Double Concerto" and John Philip Sousa's "King Cotton" to Leroy Anderson's "Buglers Holiday" and the patriotic "Star Spangled Banner," "America the Beautiful" and "Stars and Stripes Forever."

Those who had front row seats facing Bjaland and the symphony orchestra caught a first hand glimpse of the maestro at work, smiling, raising his baton and moving back and forth to the beat of the music.

Additional fun came from seeing how the different musical instruments were brought in and out of a specific piece with the split second timing the WSO is famous for.

The "Picnic and Pops" concert was started 11 years ago by Woodbury resident Leonore Templeton to bring parents and their children outside for an afternoon of music in a relaxed setting of lawn chairs, blankets and picnic baskets.

"When we first started doing this, we had only about 800 people," she said. "But today, just look around. There are well over 1,000 people here enjoying this wonderful music in a wonderful setting. For me, the joy comes from seeing so many young children in the crowd. Seeing them enjoy the concert and having fun makes it so worthwhile."

Much later, Templeton received a hearty round of applause from Bjaland and the audience halfway through the second part of the concert. Bjaland, standing on a small platform in the center of the stage invited her on stage just prior to dedicating and playing two pieces — Leroy Anderson's "Belle of the Ball" and John Philip Sousa's "Fairest of the Fair" — in her honor.

Throughout the concert, there was an ever-present smell of hamburgers and hot dogs cooking on the grill of the concession stand, which always seemed to be lined with people.

CONCERT: Waterbury Symphony will be electric

Continued from 2D

her sister — who Berger said “will avoid classical music at all costs” — along to New York City.

As she tried out various instruments, she chose a heavy metal sound effect and played a Bach solo sonata on the violin she eventually bought.

“She freaked out, she loved it,” Berger recalled. “If classical music sounded like that, I’d listen to it,” she said her sister told her.

Berger said she hopes more classical musicians will follow their jazz counterparts and take a chance on electric violin.

“Why not?” she said. “They’ve created a new instrument to work in this new millennium. Take hold of it. Use it.”

If you go

What: Waterbury Symphony Orchestra’s Picnic and Pops concert

When: 4 p.m. Saturday

Where: The Hollow, Hollow Road, Woodbury

Tickets: \$10 in advance, \$15 day of concert; \$50 patron tickets include reserved tent seating. Kids under 18, free.

Available at Final Touch Antiques in Middlebury; Westbury Music in Watertown; Canfield Corner Pharmacy and Woodbury Drug Store in Woodbury; and Koenig Art Emporium and Down on Main Street in Southbury

Phone: (203) 574-4283

STORMY WEATHER

The concert’s rain location is Pomperaug High School, located at 234 Judd Road in Southbury. If the venue must be changed because of weather, an announcement will be made on WATR (1320 AM) early Saturday afternoon.