

FRIENDS OF MUSIC AT YALE
Minutes of the Spring Meeting of the Council held on May 7th, 2009

Present: Suhnne Ahn, Kathryn Alexander, Myrna Baskin, Robert Blocker, Thomas Dixon, Jeffrey Douma, Daniel Harrison (Recording), Linette Norbeau, Leon Plantinga, Anne Schenck, Richard Warren, Sarah Weiss, Elizabeth Yen. (Barbara Shailor, Richard Lalli, Wendy Sharp, pursuant to written proxy)

The meeting was called to order at 12:35 p.m.

1. Minutes

A copy of the minutes of the November 14th, 2008 Council meeting approved by the Executive Committee earlier in the week, was not available for the Council to review. The approval of minutes was thus tabled to the next Council meeting.

2. Financial Report

Elizabeth Yen reported that the Friends are “doing OK” this year, considering the economic situation. There is a lag in the processing of gifts by the Development Office, so that the total gift balance reported to the Council did not yet reflect some recent gifts. We are also expecting a bequest from the estate of Alison Henning, pending completion of probate. Elizabeth also voiced concern about the upcoming year’s fundraising, which will likely be lower than the current year’s.

Because of the University’s policy of reducing expenditures in units by 7.5% in 2009-10, the Executive Committee decided to fund at 95% of requested support—in effect, giving a 5% “haircut” to most requested allocations. Some discussion ensued about the appropriateness of this move with respect to donors’ gift intentions, but in the end it was seen as the correct course of action, since Friends’ funds are managed and distributed by the University. Elizabeth noted that the Friends have generally received between \$27-28,000 yearly in gifts, looking at a recent multi-year average.

Robert Blocker moved that the allocation budget as presented to the Council be approved, and that the Executive Committee be empowered to make additional disbursements based on availability of funds. After the motion was seconded, it was passed unanimously.

Leon Plantinga asked about the funds designated for support of music lessons for financially needy undergraduate students, which currently stands at about \$12,000. Leon noted that considerably more money would be needed to support the program as it had previously been offered through the Department. An extensive discussion about the history and structure of private lessons and their support followed. We agreed that we would need help from the Development Office to reach the sums needed to support the lesson scholarship fund as we would like.

3. Yale Baroque Opera Project

Ellen Rosand gave a brief report on this year’s recent production of Cavalli’s *Giasone*, which was a tremendous success. This year there was also a conference of Cavalli specialists during the weekend of the production. Ellen then voiced her hope for a continuation of the project beyond next year, when her Mellon grant runs out. She outlined plans for next year’s productions, which would involve a Handel opera in the fall, and a 17th-Century parody of the Orpheus story in the spring, which would then also be repeated in the summer session at Norfolk.

4. Friends of Music Recital Competition

Richard Warren reported on this year's Friends recital, passing around pictures of the event at which Justin Jee (CC '10) and a piano quartet consisting of Jessica Chang (BR '09), Lee Dionne (ES '11), Christopher Gibson (SY '10), and Matthew Mouradian (MC '09) performed. He reported receiving a thank-you note from Justin, who said it was one of the highlights of his Yale undergraduate experience.

Daniel Harrison reported that Mary-Jo Warren had retired as coordinator/producer after this year's recital. He recounted Mary-Jo's expert and gracious managing of this event. Next year, Robert Blocker and Daniel Harrison agreed to take on the Recital Competition, perhaps working with some of the other University music-competition events, such as Yale Symphony Orchestra's William Waite Concerto Competition, to smooth operations and increase visibility of the Friends of Music event.

5. The Department of Music

Daniel Harrison reported on the activities of the Department of Music, which were focused this year on moving from 143 Elm to the newly renovated Stoeckel Hall in January. He also reported on the use of Friends funds in undergraduate instruction, especially in supporting performers and guest artists in classes. In response to a question about undergraduate majors, Kathryn Alexander reported that the Department is holding steady at about 55-65 majors, and several hundred students a term were registering for music classes. Robert Blocker mentioned that 250-300 students are taking music lessons at the School.

6. Fenno Heath passing

Jeffrey Douma reported on the various events and concerts that had taken place in honor of Fenno Heath, which included an internet site (fenoheath.blogspot.com). A well-attended memorial service at Battell Chapel on March 28 included performances by the Glee Club, The Yale Alumni Chorus, The Whiffenpoofs, and The University Glee Club of New Haven.

7. New Business: School of Music

Robert Blocker reported that renovation of Hendrie Hall was one of the projects that was deferred under the new budget situation at the University, and that construction could not begin until the project—currently estimated at \$42.5M—was fully funded. At present, there is \$12M in hand.

About the Collection, Robert related that William Purvis had been asked to continue as interim director for the next year, during which he could complete the assessment of all instruments that is currently in process. He mentioned the importance of Robert Mealy's appointment in both the School and Department, and how he was the nucleus of a growing Baroque ensemble that could eventually involve the Collection and the Collegium.

Two new faculty appointments were announced: Emanuel Ax in piano, and Masaaki Suzuki in choral music (joint with the Institute of Sacred Music). A search for a viola teacher was nearing completion.

A meeting date in November is not yet set, but will be coordinated with fall meeting of the Collection of Musical Instruments' advisory board.

The meeting adjourned at 1:33 p.m.