



Fyodor Cherniavsky  
*Music Director & Conductor*

March, 2010

## Avondale Resident Amy Leventhal to be Viola Soloist for *Harold in Italy* by Hector Berlioz



Dear friends and supporters  
of the DSO,

The orchestra's next performance on Tuesday, March 23 will feature violist Amy Leventhal performing *Harold in Italy* by Hector Berlioz. The program will open with *Egmont*, one of Beethoven's best-loved overtures.

In 1809 Beethoven was commissioned by the Burgtheater of Vienna to write music for a revival of Goethe's 1787 play *Egmont*. He composed a set of incidental music that consists of an overture and nine separate pieces for soprano and orchestra interspersed between scenes from the original drama. The music illustrates the history surrounding the heroic Count of Egmont, a Flemish patriot, who was condemned to death in 1568 after taking a strong stand against political oppression and tyranny - a theme that appealed to the composer's own humanitarian ideals of freedom and justice. Beethoven's complete work is rarely performed but the powerful overture has taken its place as a standard in the orchestral repertoire.

Also on the program will be the enchanting *Matinées Musicales* by British composer Benjamin Britten. Early in his career, Britten arranged two suites; *Soirées Musicales* (1936) and *Matinées Musicales* (1941) based on a collection of miscellaneous pieces composed by Gioachino Rossini. The American Ballet Company

commissioned *Matinées Musicales* and together with the earlier arrangement it became the ballet *Divertimento* choreographed by Balanchine. After Rossini's tremendous success as an operatic composer, he retired from composing major works and was content to write occasional songs or short pieces for musical evenings held at his house. These light and amusing salon works were coined *Sins of Old Age* by Rossini himself. Later, composers such as Liszt, Wagner, and Respighi tried their hand in making arrangements of these small pieces. Britten's own arrangement is a brilliant and entertaining sequence of short dance movements.

*Harold in Italy*, composed by Hector Berlioz for solo viola and orchestra is an unconventional and dramatic symphonic work inspired by the narrative poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* by Lord Byron. Berlioz wrote, "My intention was to write a series of orchestral scenes, in which the solo viola would be involved as a more or less active participant while retaining its own character. By placing it among the poetic memories formed from my wanderings in the Abruzzi, I wanted to make the viola a kind of melancholy dreamer in the manner of Byron's *Childe Harold*." It is this fascinating piece that inspired Ms. Leventhal to take up the viola as her instrument of choice. The orchestra is also performing it with her at Young Harris College in North Georgia on March 18.

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If you would like to hear more about this original work and the other pieces on the program, plan to attend the free pre-concert conversation given at 7 PM by DSO keyboardist Susan J. McEwen in room CF1190, accessed from the right side of the lobby area at the Marvin Cole Auditorium.

We look forward to seeing you on Tuesday, March 23 for an evening of wonderful music.

Fyodor

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## AVONDALE PIZZA CAFE BENEFIT NIGHT



**Please consider joining your Avondale Estates neighbors and other DSO supporters at about 5:30 pm on March 23rd at the Avondale Pizza Cafe, 2823 E. College Ave., for a dinner filled with plenty of classic pre-concert conversation. Avondale Pizza Cafe has generously pledged 10 percent of the evening's proceeds to this fine orchestra. The evening's concert features Avondale Estates resident Amy Leventhal, formerly of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, as guest soloist on the viola. We hope to see you at the Avondale Pizza Cafe and the concert, too!**

**A Note from the Orchestra Manager--**

### **We Still Need Your Help**

I would like to thank **Cornerstone Bank** for becoming a sponsor of our June 29, Decatur Family Concert at the First Baptist Church of Decatur. We are still looking for additional sponsorship for this concert and several others throughout the season.

Sponsorship benefits vary by level of donation and can include: your logo in all publicity for the concert, recognition from stage, complimentary tickets for a DSO concert, and many others.

If your business or professional practice could consider sponsoring a concert, we would love to hear from you. We need additional support to enable us to continue our free Family Concert every June in Decatur and our low-cost Annual Children's Concert in January.

Please give Orchestra Manager Richard Rogers a call at your earliest convenience!  
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Our guest artist, **Amy Leventhal**, is a performer, composer and educator. Ms. Leventhal performed William Walton's *Viola Concerto* as guest soloist with the DeKalb Symphony Orchestra in 2004.

She received her Bachelor of Music degree in viola performance from Oberlin Conservatory and a Masters of Music degree in viola performance from Indiana University. She studied with Michael Tree, Abraham Skernick, Penny Anderson Brill and Josef Gingold. Ms. Leventhal was a member of the music faculty at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa and a member of the New Cadek Piano Quartet from 1980 to 1983. She was Principal Violist with the Atlanta Ballet Orchestra from 1985 to 1989 and was Assistant Principal Violist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra from September 1990 until her retirement in March of 2009.

Ms. Leventhal took a sabbatical from the Atlanta Symphony during the 2007-2008 season to focus on composing several chamber works which were performed by the Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra and The Chamber Players of the South at Berry College. She also composed a song cycle for solo voice and orchestra. During 2009 and 2010, Ms. Leventhal will be composing several chamber works, her first symphony and completing her song cycle: "*Songs for David*." She dedicates these performances to David Thompson, her best friend and husband.

In addition to many years of giving private instruction in viola, Ms. Leventhal is participating in a pilot program through the Woodruff Arts Center which trains Artists to become resident teachers in the Atlanta City and Fulton County schools. She has just completed her first one-week Artist's Residency at Garden Hills Elementary School.



## **Pre-concert Conversations**

**with Susan McEwen**

**GPC Music Coordinator and DSO pianist**

**7:00 PM on Tuesday, March 23**

**in room CF -1190**

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