



The Taylor Times



The Newsletter with "Schmaltz"

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WORLD FAILS TO END!

Doomsday Partiers Wake Up to Epoch-ending Hangovers

MUSIC MARCHES ON!

Another year has passed with music being the longest sentence, punctuated only by travel phrases and sanity clauses. Every new year seems to bring a greater immersion in music accompanied by more significant experiences (and larger SCUBA tanks).

There have been more premieres of my music in the last twelve months than ever before and at least as much music written as in any previous year, if not more. As mentioned in last year's news, things started last December when Brass Band Northwest performed the version of Suite Holidays arranged for that ensemble. In February the last movement of the String Symphony was completed though it is still being marketed for a first performance. In April the Eastside Symphony presented In Memoriam 9/11, which I had written in 2001, but only orchestrated in 2011. It seems to have been a fitting contribution to the ten-year memorial of the 9/11 attacks. In May, members of the Highline Band played the Prairie Winds Fanfare, written early in the season at the request of the director of that group, and specifically for brass and percussion. The final coup-de-grace before summer break was again a Brass Band Northwest concert in which was performed Washington Statements, a 35-minute musical travelogue through the state's regions and landmarks. It was accompanied by a photo presentation of the places described by the music and was enthusiastically enjoyed by the unfortunately sparse audience on hand.

With the summer finally under way, late June and early July saw the writing of the first movement of the Symphony No. 1. (While I do consider the String Symphony

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TRAVEL TIME

It's difficult to find time during the non-summer months for any kind of travel, but after the Brass Band Festival at the end of January there is usually a brief lull that can allow us to take a little time. So the first full week of February Donna and I packed up the car and headed south



for Worldmark locations in San Francisco and Lake Tahoe. The SF facility is a converted and renovated old hotel just a few blocks from the cable car line on one side, Chinatown on the other, and walking distance to the Embarcadero. It is a charming, rustic place, small but quite comfortable. The walks were exhilarating and the food all around town was typical San Francisco delicious. After a few enjoyable days in the city we headed into the Sierras to round out our week at Lake Tahoe's South Shore. This Worldmark unit was

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to be a legitimate representation of that genre, it is not for full orchestra and so did not seem worthy of a number.) I'd had the opportunity just a couple months earlier to play with the Northwest Symphony in the premiere of Samuel Jones' A Christmas Memory Suite and was able to chat with Sam and establish some musical contact. Later, when my Symphony movement was complete I was privileged to be able to sit down with him, discuss it, and get some sage advice for future works. Sam is well-known around the world for his compositions, conducting, and teaching. It was a distinct honor for me and is my hope to be able to tap his knowledge and experience again in the future.

At the end of the Eastside Symphony season, music director Alexei Girsh had asked me if I would consider writing something to commemorate the city of Redmond's 100th anniversary. (Redmond is ESO's home base with their primary concert venue at the Redmond Performing Arts Center.) His request was essentially for something short and sweet, but for me any more, that's a tough boundary to observe. So immediately after my meeting with Sam I set to work on the Redmond Overture, ultimately a ten-minute piece, and had completed the basic music by mid-August. Finalizing the orchestration, then producing the parts, rehearsing, and tweaking kept me busy almost up to concert time on December 2. (In fact [anecdote alert!], the day before the concert I had needed to make last minute edits to both the tuba and bass trombone parts. I grabbed all my music and took it into my office to make the changes, then printed the two parts and stuck them in my case for the next day. As I unpacked at the concert venue I suddenly realized that I had ONLY those parts and not the rest of my music, which included a version of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker that was not frequently played. In a panic I asked our librarian if she happened to have any extra parts. She did not, but suggested maybe we could find a school official that could log onto one of their computers and at least print out the Nutcracker, the only piece that was in our online library, but by far the most important. That failed, but the

bass trombonist made the wild suggestion that we use her I-phone to log onto the library site, download the PDF to the phone, and at least have a minimalist view of the part. So on my stand as we began the Nutcracker, a copy of the bass trombone part on the left for reference, cues, and occasional playing, and on the right her tiny I-phone zoomed into a few of the more important tuba licks in the piece. While it was not 100% successful, it was nonetheless a true demonstration of the usefulness of modern technology and even has me thinking about getting an I-Pad, which would have been ideal under the circumstances. Who would need paper music anymore!?)

As soon as the Eastside concert was behind us I started working on a new piece to submit to the Humbolt Competition for Brass Ensembles, due by February 1. After picking at it off and on for a couple of weeks and partially finishing the first of four movements, I sat down in earnest for a couple days and completed the work for brass septet, with only a little more tweaking needed. It is to be submitted anonymously so I cannot provide the title here, but watch for it in May once the contest awards have been presented. I'm also anxious to hear how the String Symphony does at the ASCAP Rudolf Nissim competition. With some 250-300 submittals it's a bit of a longshot, but who knows...

Here are some links for this year. The video of the Redmond Overture can be found at http://youtu.be/DTkJDj_Op5g. (The live-concert audio-only MP3 is at <http://www.artsnsounds.com/music/RedmondOverture.MP3>.) A video of the first movement of Washington Statements (with the synthesized soundtrack) is at <http://youtu.be/B8giroUTg08>. (More movements will follow as time permits.) At my music website, <http://www.artsnsounds.com/jt-music.htm>, are other updates as well, including the complete String Symphony and partial Symphony No. 1. Also on the home page (www.artsnsounds.com) you can find links to a couple of news articles. Look for the "Press" menu on the list of links. Also go to my Facebook page from there.



Oakland Bay Bridge from the Embarcadero

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huge, especially compared to the SF hotel, and very convenient to the area's amenities. We walked to the beach at Tahoe, had dinner at the Italian restaurant across the street, and spent some time in the ma-



A freebie picture from Lake Tahoe

gor casinos just down the road. I also had my skis along and despite the unusually low depth of snow had one great ski day at Heavenly. Unfortunately, the trip was not uneventful. On our way home, at a rest area about an hour south of Mt. Shasta City, Donna was playing with a dog in the parking lot and lost her balance. She fell back and hit her head on the pavement. As we drove on, she developed a pretty severe headache and I thought it best that we have it checked out. There happened to be an absolutely wonderful hospital (if one can apply that phrase to hospitals) in Shasta City. Happily, Donna's injury did not indicate anything serious and we were told to just keep an eye on things and seek

further treatment if anything changed. An overnight in Medford helped keep things under control, but it was still a long road home.

Sufficient time had passed before our next road trip that memories from that earlier trek had pretty well faded. It wasn't until the last weekend in October that we set out for another Worldmark stay, this time at Seaside, Oregon. Of course, this was the NW coast in October and we got to experience the stormy weather (4" of rain fell while we were there), but still were able to see what the town had to offer, including the aquarium during feeding time for the sea lions, and by far the largest selection of salt water taffy at the outlet store that we'd ever seen in our lives. And I always get a kick out of driving the Astoria bridge.



Wreck of the Peter Iredale near Seaside, Oregon

Our final trip was to Paradise village in Puerto Vallarta, scene of numerous previous vacations. This time we took advantage of (were taken advantage by?) another time-share presentation, but this one was quite different. At Garza Blanca

we found a place that had a similar perpetual ownership to Worldmark, despite Mexico's coastal legal limitations, an opportunity to rid ourselves of another vacation club for a reasonable offer, and a location that was totally unique. Typically the resorts are located on the beach with a swimming pool and lots of restaurants nearby. This one did have the beach, albeit a small one, but the pool was the infinity variety and behind the first beachfront units, the newest buildings were being built on a mountaintop across the road. The appointments and views were both impeccable and the grounds are actually a wildlife preserve with several maintained trails into the jungle, but 5 miles to the nearest decent restaurant. And somehow we worked things out so that we were effectively paid to get rid of Paradise Vil-



Donna couldn't resist making a snow angel after a rare snowfall in January

lage, but never actually had to do it, so the wonderful, long, open beaches and incredible restaurants of Riviera Nayarit are still available to us as well, at least for a couple more visits.

WHAT ELSE IN THE NEWS?

Brad came out to the Northwest in early August. Weather-wise he couldn't have picked a better time with warm, dry days to see the Washington and Oregon coasts, Mt. Rainier, and Crater Lake. He spent one day in Seattle, which I wish could have been longer, but it was still a great visit and I'm so glad he got here.

Donna worked on overcoming her fear of water by going tandem with me down the alligator water slide at Paradise Village. When we hit the water I pushed her as quickly as I could up and out of the water then scrambled up to catch her. She climbed out of the pool, shaken and in uncontrollable tears, then promptly said she wanted to do it again.

Donna's volunteer work has contin-

ued, something she really enjoys. But we also hope that the contacts she makes and the work she does might ultimately lead to a job in a field that would comfortably suit her.

Office work for me was quite busy for most of the year, but as one of our clients decided to stop paying for our services, E3 was forced to cut back our hours. The last half of November and at least through the end of the year we are all rolled back to 24-hour weeks. Fortunately the Work Share unemployment program has been implemented and we are getting paid for at least a portion of the off days we are having. And for me, I'm loving having the extra time to write more music. It really could be a blessing in disguise.

DILBERT

