

NEWS RELEASE

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Santa Rosa Symphony's Young People's Chamber Orchestra Welcomes Two Acting Directors

The SRS Young People's Chamber Orchestra (YPCO) interview panel met so many talented and accomplished musicians that *two people* were selected as finalists for the YPCO Director position. During the year, YPCO musicians will have the opportunity to work with both candidates—**Aaron Westman**, who is conducting the YPCO Fall Session, and **Dawn Dover**, who will be conducting the YPCO Spring Session beginning in March 2011. This process will allow the acting directors to work with the organization and the young musicians to determine who might be best suited to carry the YPCO forward.

Interim Director George Thomson

After two years as interim director of the SRS Young People's Chamber Orchestra, George Thomson is on his way to a new position as the Director of Orchestras for the McNary High School in Keizer, Oregon. Thomson, a great music educator, inspired and taught the young musicians to strive for excellence, master their instruments and bring heart to the music.

Former Director and YPCO Founder Linda Ghidossi-DeLuca

Before George, there was Linda—Linda Ghidossi-DeLuca, that is. She founded the Young People's Chamber Orchestra in 1998, modeling it after the New Century Chamber Orchestra where she was principal violist. She served as YPCO musical director from its beginning through the 2007-08 season. She was principal violist for the Santa Rosa and Vallejo symphonies as well as a teacher, ensemble performer and recording musician. Following her two-year leave of

absence from the Santa Rosa Symphony orchestra, Ghidossi-DeLuca submitted her letter of resignation in June, citing personal and professional reasons.

She wrote: *This decision is bittersweet. I want to thank Maestro Ferrandis and the musicians and staff of the Santa Rosa Symphony for a most amazing musical adventure. I will never forget the many wonderful musical opportunities given to me as principal violist for so many years.*

Background on the new YPCO Acting Directors

Aaron Westman has performed as a soloist with the American Bach Soloists and Seicento String Band, is a principal player with Bach Collegium San Diego, Jubilate Orchestra, Sonoma and San Francisco Bach Choirs, and performs regularly as a member of Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Musica Angelica, the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Ensemble Mirabile, and El Mundo. His chamber ensemble Agave Baroque won the 2009 Early Music America/APAP competition, and was recently commissioned by the Museum of Jurassic Technology to collaborate on a forthcoming album/art film of 17th Century English music. *Cold Genius* was one of the first projects to be recorded in the Green Music Center. He has recorded live and in the studio with the above groups, as well as for Hollywood, Magnatune, ORF, National Public Radio's "Performance Today," and on the NCA and Dorian/Sono Luminus labels.

Westman holds a Master of Music from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music with a double-major in viola performance and early music. For three years, he taught at California Institute of the Arts, near Los Angeles. In 2009, Westman returned to his hometown of Santa Rosa, where he is a graduate of the Santa Rosa and San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra programs.

"I'm delighted to have the opportunity to work with a new generation of talented young string players in Sonoma County," Aaron says, "and to follow in the footsteps of two very inspirational YPCO directors."

Being selected as part of the prestigious Young Artist String Quartet program while in college was a pivotal experience that cultivated **Dawn Dover**'s passion and love for chamber music. Since receiving her BA degree from the University of California at Santa Barbara, she has performed professionally (chamber music and orchestral) throughout Europe, the USA and Japan. She was first violinist of the Carmel Bach Festival Quartet for five seasons. She is an original member of the New Century Chamber Orchestra, was a member of the San Diego Symphony and San Diego Chamber Orchestra, the Santa Barbara Symphony and was concertmaster/soloist of the Santa Barbara and Sonora Chamber Orchestras. She has performed with the San Francisco Symphony for over 12 years. As a soloist, concertmaster and section player, she has played recording engagements for PBS documentaries, IMAX films, video games, motion pictures, television, and radio. She performs regularly with the Skywalker Symphony. Dover has also served as concertmaster for many Broadway productions, including *Phantom of the Opera*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Titanic*, and *The Sound of Music*, and for singers such as Josh Groban, Natalie Cole, Bruce Hornsby, Johnny Mathis, Tony Bennett, and Smokey Robinson.

Dover maintains a private violin studio in Windsor, has taught at SRJC and coached or taught at several music programs in Marin, including the Marin Youth Orchestra, the Marin Academy, San Domenico and the Marin Waldorf School. In her spare time she studies Quantum Touch and Acupressure, and performs bodywork on people and animals.

"Chamber music has always been my first love as a player, and teaching these skills to youth is a privilege," Dover says. "I'm excited to have an opportunity to share what I learned during my own incredible journey."

-- Photo of Aaron Westman available upon request --

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