



BRAZOS VALLEY
Symphony Society

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BRAZOS VALLEY SYMPHONY CHILDREN'S CONCERTS— ANNUAL SYMPHONIC MUSIC EDUCATION

College Station, TX—December 9, 2008—

On Monday, December 8, 2008, Music Director and Conductor Dr. Marcelo Bussiki and the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra musicians presented the annual Children's Concerts to 3500 4th and 5th graders. Attendance at the concerts included children from both Bryan and College Station ISD's as well as from surrounding districts, such as Richards, Gause, and Huntsville.

The symphony has an educational component as part of its mission, the Children's Concerts are just one way the organization seeks to fulfill this goal. Symphony Board President Jim Kracht says, "Children love listening to and participating in music. There are many good reasons why the BVSO wants to encourage this enthusiasm . . . children who are actively involved in music may also do better in reading, learn coordination, goal-setting, concentration, and cooperation, and do better in math and science because music helps build reasoning skills and cognitive development."

A highlight of the Children's Concerts is the portion of the program where a "guest conductor" is randomly selected from the audience. One lucky student from each concert was able to stand on stage and conduct the orchestra as they played the March from *The Nutcracker*. This year, those students were Jamairrus Fox from Mitchell Elementary and Manuel Leija from Sul Ross Elementary, both Bryan schools.

New to the program this year, the orchestra performed a piece called *Playing with Style*, by Russell Peck. This piece helps explain different aspects of an orchestra to a children's audience. To demonstrate the need for a conductor, the musicians cause havoc throwing paper airplanes and displaying other unruly behavior. Needless to say, this portion of the concert got a lot of laughs from the students.

Another special feature of the Children's Concerts includes the winner of the Youth Concerto Competition. Lindsey Spiegelman performed Haydn's Cello Concerto in C Major with the orchestra. Ms. Spiegelman also appeared with the symphony this past spring at the Starlight Music Series Concert at Wolf Pen Creek Amphitheater.

Coordinated by FASO (Friends Association of the Symphony Orchestra), this project provides follow up activities for the students, including drawing and essay contests. Children's Concert Co-Chair Jane Van Valkenburg says, "After the concert, FASO volunteers send evaluation forms to all the teachers, along with instructions for the students' essay and art contests. Those entries are judged and prizes awarded, all thanks to FASO. Evaluation sheets are tabulated and adjustments are made for the following year's concert. It is FASO's goal to attend to the hundreds of details involved in bringing thousands of children to this concert so that the musicians can concentrate on making music." FASO plans to announce the winners of the art and essay contests in February 2009.

This program made possible in part by funding provided through the Arts Council of Brazos Valley and the Arts-Business Consortium, partnering business and the arts in our community. This program is also generously funded in part by generous contributions from Blue Bell Creameries and Target. This annual educational outreach would not be possible without the assistance of our own Symphony Belles, and many dedicated FASO volunteers. These concerts would not be possible without the support and assistance of these organizations and individuals and the Brazos Valley Symphony Society is most thankful and appreciative for these gifts. All photography by Chandler Arden.

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About the Brazos Valley Symphony: The Brazos Valley Symphony is a non-profit performing arts organization with the mission to maintain a symphony of high artistic standards, and to promote the musical arts for cultural and education purposes in the Brazos Valley. For more information about the Symphony's 2008-2009 Season, please visit the Brazos Valley Symphony Web site at www.bvso.org.

The Brazos Valley Symphony Society wishes to recognize and thank our programming sponsors, grant funding providers, and charitable trust contributors:

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