

NJRO - Report of November 7, 2010

We were 20 if my count is right. Violins 1: Jennifer Seligman, Luba Schnable, Barbara Bivin, Dan Daniels. Violins 2: Ellen Hill and yours truly, Viola: Ysa Borstel was the section. Celli: Bill Medeiros, Ruth Lepp, Sibylle Wallace, Innes Borstel. Bass: Bob Whiteley. Woodwinds: Kent Weisert was the flute section (missed you, Laura!) Oboes: Alice Marcus and Steve Lepp. Clarinets: Donna Dixon and Johathan Lautman. Horn: (yes! We were treated to a horn!) Paul Erickson. Steve Culbertson and Evan Schwartzman provided our conducting and piano foundations.

We started with George Bizet's *Carmen Fantasy*. Yes, Bizet doesn't get better than this. It's like going to the opera's dessert table, right to all the musical treats, Toreador song and all. Steve had an opportunity to shine as an operatic conductor (note to orchestra — watch him for those rubatos!)

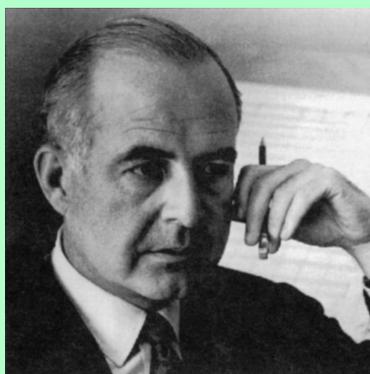
Samuel Barber's *First Fantasy for Orchestra Op. 12* provided us something new and different. Wikipedia calls it "*First Essay for Orchestra*" Op. 12 (my eyesight fails—sorry!) and it premiered in late 1938 (along with his famous "*Adagio for Strings*") under the baton of Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony. Pennsylvania-born into a musical family (his aunt Louise Homer sang at the Met and introduced Samuel to many world-class singers), Barber wrote *Antony and Cleopatra* for the opening of the new Metropolitan Opera House in 1966. He was the colleague and life-partner of his Curtis Institute fellow student Giancarlo Menotti.

Maestro Culbertson related that his appreciation of Mendelssohn has grown with age. The *Scottish Symphony* (No. 3 Op. 56) is a musical and emotional workout. Admittedly, my appreciation has grown with age too, but not my stamina! The Wikipedia account is sparse and seems to have prompted some discussion of the Scottish influence in the second movement. You can [check it out yourself](#) and while you're there, enjoy the links to the audio files of all four movements.

Alas, good photos eluded me, but hope these will do.



French soprano Emma Calvé as Carmen



Samuel Barber, 1910–1981



Entrance to Fingal's Cave,
Hebrides, Scotland



Commemorative stamp of
Mendelssohn's 200th
birthday