Join us for a Magic Carpet Ride
By Amber Vis

The Spring Concert will take the audience on a magic carpet ride with Rimsky-Korsakov’s fantastic Scheherazade. The piece is based on the famous “One Thousand and One Nights,” the tale of the Arabian princess who weaves a story for her murderous husband. At the end of each evening, Scheherazade stops her story-telling with a cliff-hanger, leaving the Sultan wanting to hear more. By using this clever strategy, the princess saves her own life.

Scheherazade features solos for every section of the orchestra. NISO Conductor Christopher Stanichar noted that this piece is unlike any other in the repertoire: the audience can “close their eyes and imagine the events of the story going on” while hearing solos from the harp, piccolo, bassoon, and many other instruments. According to Stanichar, the music is timeless—and fun for all ages.

“I have never heard the orchestra play as well as they are now, especially on a piece of music that is extremely challenging.”
-Christopher Stanichar

Russian-Born Cellist to Appear with NISO
By Shirley Matheis

Had five-year-old Maxim Kozlov been given a choice, it is unlikely that he would have chosen to play the cello. However, today, he is the Principal Cellist with the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra in Sioux Falls. Koslov will perform Saint-Saëns’ Cello Concerto No. 1 with the Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra on April 17.

Kozlov was born in Russia in the city of Yekaterinburg. Maxim’s mother, who is not a musician herself, decided to enroll her only child in a school specializing in music. The five-year-old had a few months of basic music education and piano lessons, and then it was arbitrarily decided that he should begin to study the cello. After several years of “encouragement” from his teachers and his mother, Maxim began to win competitions and to enjoy the discipline of practice.

Kozlov earned a Master’s degree in his hometown and then went to the Moscow Conservatory, where he earned his Ph.D. and became principal cellist with Chamber Orchestra Kremlin. From 1998 to 2003, he played in more than 500 concerts with the ensemble on tours across the United States.

While performing at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maxim met the daughter of the famous Russian cellist Gregor Piatigorsky. She arranged for him to receive a two-year scholarship to the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University to study and give performances.

For the past seven years, Kozlov has been with SDSO, during which time he has also served as principal cellist with NISO on occasion. As guest soloist, he played Tchaikovsky’s Variations on a Rococo Theme with NISO in April 2008. The romantic selection Maxim will be performing this spring is one of his favorites and one of Saint-Saëns’ most well-known and audience-friendly works. Kozlov expresses great appreciation for NISO and for his opportunities to play with the orchestra.

Although he returns to Russia three or four times a year, Kozlov and his wife, a dental hygienist, are now American citizens, along with their two little girls, who were born in Sioux Falls. His mother now lives here with them. As much as he enjoys the cello today, and as grateful as he is for the persistence of his mother and instructors, Maxim has decided that he will not choose a vocation for his four-year-old daughter. He has, however, begun to show her how to play the cello!

A year ago, Kozlov won an audition to be substitute cellist for the Baltimore Symphony. At the end of this season, the family will be returning to Baltimore. He expects to give private lessons, play chamber music alone or in ensembles, make contacts, and wait to see what other opportunities unfold.

At the concert, Maxim Kozlov, principal cellist of the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra, will also join the NISO ensemble in a performance of Saint-Saëns’ Cello Concerto No. 1. In contrast to the normal three-movement concerto form, this piece is structured in one continuous movement. While Saint-Saëns exploits the extreme ranges of the instrument, he also keeps the balance between soloist and orchestra.

The concert promises to be a crowd pleaser. Stanichar noted, “I have never heard the orchestra play as well as they are now, especially on a piece of music that is extremely challenging.” Stanichar hopes that the intergenerational ensemble, which includes very talented high school students, retirees, and members at every stage of life in between, will help attract an audience of all ages.

The Spring Concert will be held in the B.J. Haan Auditorium at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa at 7:30 p.m. on April 17.
What's New with NISO?
By Shirley Matheis

Visit Our New Website

Thanks to Dordt student Graham Vriend, the NISO website has a fresh new look. Have you seen it? There’s a wealth of information. Not only can you check for details about the current season, concert times, and ticket information, but you can also check the rehearsal schedule. You can get information about the Children’s Concert. You can see what was performed at the 1986-87 NISO Fall Concert, hear delightful excerpts of some wonderful selections, and see NISYO photos. You can even…well, you’ll have to see for yourself at http://niso.dordt.edu/. A hearty thank you to Graham for work well done!

Two special links are found towards the upper right-hand of the NISO website. The first connects you to NISO on Facebook, where you can “like” us to help spread the word about upcoming concerts. The second links to recent issues of NISO Notes, and you can also subscribe to receive new issues by mail if you are not already receiving them. Do you have friends or family who may be interested in learning more about NISO? We hope that you’ll pass along our web address!

It’s Spring! Time to Get NISO Season Tickets!

Our loyal supporters can testify that NISO is equal to orchestras in much larger metropolitan areas. Please help us spread the word to those who have no idea what they are missing. Bring a new friend to the Spring Concert on April 17! Tickets will be available at the concert. Please see the NISO Webpage for details.

Free NISYO Concert

The Northwest Iowa Symphony Youth Orchestra will end their fifth season with a free public concert in the BJ Haan Auditorium on the Dordt College campus at 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 14. Come and enjoy some wonderful music performed by talented young people under the direction of Bradley Miedema. Included in the program are Bach's *Sheep May Safely Graze* from Cantata No. 208, Bela Bartok's *Romanian Folk Dances*, *Finale* from Symphony No. 8 in G Major by Dvorak, two suites for string orchestra, and a tone poem.

For more information about the NISYO calendar and spring auditions, please visit the website at http://niso.dordt.edu/nisyo.html

Notes from the President
By Norma Snyder-Jones

General Manager Position Opening

Do you have a passion for NISO? You (or someone you know) may be interested in the NISO General Manager position! The position will open July 1, and a small honorarium is offered. Some of the job responsibilities include organizing and serving on committees, working with the treasurer on finances, setting agendas, and developing goals and long range plans. Interested? Want to recommend someone? Let us know by June 1 by contacting Norma Jones via email (asjhome@nethtc.net) or phone (712-324-2700).

Celebrity Conductor Fundraiser

The Celebrity Conductor Fundraiser is now in the books. Generating over $7000, this event was one of the biggest in NISO history. Many large cities with significant orchestras use this event as well, and for some, this is their only fundraiser. We would like to try this again for NISO, and if successful, put in a three- or four-year rotation of fundraisers. The four "contestants" were instrumental in kicking off our rookie year, and we owe them a huge thank you! They set the bar very high.

NISO NOTES by Email!

We are excited to offer all of our patrons the opportunity to receive NISO NOTES electronically. Please email the NISO office at niso@dordt.edu and we will be happy to make this change for you.

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Office Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 11AM - 3PM
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