

# Symphonic Treasures

## NISO NOTES



March 8, 2018

Volume 9, Issue 3- Spring



### Guest Concert “Concert Gems”

Allison Wordes – Staff Writer

On Tuesday, March 20, members of the Camerata RCO (Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra) from Amsterdam will perform their first concert of this year’s tour of the United States.

Camerata RCO regularly performs in the Netherlands and abroad, but has their residency in Spaarndam and Dordrecht. They have played in New York, Minsk, Tokyo, Seoul, Vienna, Rome, and Madrid. They received notable recognition in the *New York Times* for their 2014 performance in New York, which “combined elements of a downtown basement music club with those of a traditional 120-seat recital hall.” From hip city basements to the concert hall, the group has experience playing for a variety of audiences.

According to NISO general manager Dr. Karen DeMol, Camerata RCO is the first international guest artist group to perform with NISO. The ensemble enjoys playing with large orchestras, as well as in their own ensemble of six members.

“We like to be in close contact with our audience,” they say on their official website *camerata-rco.com*. Most of all, they enjoy chamber music, where they can choose their repertoire and create the intimate feeling that comes from that genre of music. The group focuses on classical and romantic repertoire for winds and strings.

Camerata RCO often plays in Dordrecht, the Netherlands, frequently pulling up to the concert hall in a grass-green Volkswagen bus with their instruments piled on the roof. This time their travels lead them to Dutchland-away-from-home, Dordt College.

The ensemble has performed in several TV and radio broadcasts, and has recorded several CDs, the latest released in 2014.

Pieces by Brahms, Schumann, and others will be crystals in the treasure chest that is this Spring’s collection of concert gems. Come and dig up a variety of musical treasures on March 20 at 7:30 p.m. in Dordt College’s B.J. Haan Auditorium. Tickets may be purchased at the door the evening of the concert. For more NISO information, visit [niso.dordt.edu](http://niso.dordt.edu).

**Camerata RCO**  
**March 20**

### A Mighty Performance

Allison Wordes—Staff Writer

Guest artist Richard Steinbach wraps up the 2017-18 NISO season by contributing his excellent piano playing in a grand finale concert. On Tuesday, April 10, NISO’s spring concert will combine the season of Easter with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in Russian style.

The grandeur of Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Russian Easter Overture* and Shostakovich’s *Piano Concerto No. 2* will set the atmosphere for the evening.

Mendelssohn’s *Reformation Symphony* builds on the “Mighty Fortress” theme with its fourth movement containing themes from the familiar

hymn tune. While Mendelssohn wrote this piece for the 300th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession, it was never

performed because he did not finish it in time. Published 21 years after his death, the piece celebrates the Reformed tradition.

Piano soloist Dr. Richard Steinbach is a professor of music at Briar Cliff University, where he has been teaching since 1980. He earned his D.M.A from the University of Iowa and holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the University of Colorado. He has also done post-doctoral work in Paris, France.

In June 2013, at the invitation of the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Steinbach took his passion to Latin America as part of the FUSION project, which tries to fill cultural gaps with music. Since then, he has performed in concerts throughout the United States, Canada, France, Italy, Great Britain, South America (Peru, Ecuador, Columbia, Argentina, Brazil), Honduras, Mexico, Cuba, Australia, Malaysia, (cont.)

**Spring Concert**  
**April 10**



## Dordt Students

Allison Wordes—Staff Writer

NISO's orchestra includes two talented Dordt students who hold unique seats. Harpists Maggie Burgsma and Anna Blauw have been strong contributors to the ensemble and share an excitement about music and performing.

A surprising amount of orchestral music calls for harp. In the recent Winter Pops Concert, the NISO harps had a prominent role—although, in the spring NISO concert the harpists will play only one piece.



Anna Blauw

Anna Blauw has played the harp since she was 11 years old. Growing up near the MacPhail Center of Music in Minneapolis, she took advantage of a variety of musical experiences and began studying harp after taking piano lessons for several years. Her family is very musical – all play the piano, and her mother graduated from Dordt with a music education major. When it came time to choose a second instrument, Blauw wanted to try something different. She says the harp isn't the most common instrument and often gets lost in a sea of other, more well-known instruments, but she's come to love it.

"I didn't know when I started if I would stay with it," said Blauw. MacPhail offered group classes for harp, where about 30 students could meet a couple of times a month and learn from each other. At the end of the semester students performed a recital. She found herself getting more involved in music each year. Blauw is now a secondary choral music education major with a minor in harp performance.

"I do like being a part of an ensemble," said Blauw, who previously had some experience with orchestras. As a scholarship holder, she joined NISO and now shares the section with fellow harpist Burgsma.

"It's a good way to express myself," said Blauw. Rather than drawing, or dancing, she expresses her creative side by playing harp.



Maggie Burgsma

Maggie Burgsma and her sister played for many weddings as a young harpists. She began playing 10 years ago and since then has joined her sister in several ensembles. Both started on a Celtic harp, which is smaller and doesn't have foot pedals.

Burgsma took lessons in London, Ontario, driving an hour and a half for her weekly lessons. She has played with orchestras and often played in nursing homes, especially during the Christmas season. Her whole family is musical and enjoys playing together on two harps, two violins, and a piano. The music they play ranges from Celtic to classical in style. Learning piano first gave her a solid foundation for taking on the harp, she says.

"Since I had a lot of music background, the harp wasn't hard," said Burgsma. Although it was different from piano technically, moving through the Canadian Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) program prepared her well for the complexity of her new instrument. During her senior year she taught harp lessons from her home, and she knew she wanted to bring her skills to a professional level at Dordt. NISO has been a good way for her to grow her abilities.

"It's challenged and expanded my repertoire," said Burgsma. After working with the orchestra for a semester, she's come to appreciate and enjoy the variety of music that NISO plays. She continues to take lessons as a second-year student.

"I want harp to be a big part of my future," said Burgsma. She wants to bless others with her talents and will continue to let the harp be a strong part of who she is.

(cont. "A Mighty Performance")

New Zealand, Jamaica, South Korea, Japan and The People's Republic of China. In June 2015, Steinbach performed his solo debut at Carnegie Hall in New York.

Come and celebrate the Reformation with music on April 10 at 7:30 p.m. in Dordt College's B.J. Haan Auditorium. Tickets may be purchased at the door the evening of the concert. For more NISO information, visit [niso.dordt.edu](http://niso.dordt.edu), or call the office at 712-722-6230.



**Selling  
Pre-Season  
Tickets for  
2018-2019**

## NISO Scholarship Recipients 2017-2018



Marissa Beaty  
MOC-Floyd Valley HS



Hannah Hulstein  
MOC-Floyd Valley MS



Lexie Merley  
Sheldon HS



Janna Vanden Brink  
Unity Christian HS

## THANK YOU

to EVERYONE who contributed to this year's NISO Celebrity Conductor Contest!

**And the winner is...Nathan Frens!**

A special thanks to all of the 2018 Celebrity Conductor Candidates:  
Leanne Bonnecroy, Sid Bulthuis,  
and John Vander Haag.

These celebrities raised over \$16,000 for NISO!



Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra  
498 4<sup>th</sup> Ave NE - Sioux Center, IA 51250  
712.722.6230 - [niso@dordt.edu](mailto:niso@dordt.edu) - <http://niso.dordt.edu>