By Shirley Matheis

Steinway artist Ksenia Nosikova will perform Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* in the first NISO concert of the season. She has performed as a solo pianist and chamber musician in many other venues, including Carnegie Hall in New York City, City Hall Theatre in Hong Kong, and Palacio da Artes in Brazil. She has played at major academic institutions in Singapore, San Paolo, and Glasgow. Nosikova has been involved in the guest artist series in more than 70 American universities, and she has also played in music festivals in Italy, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Serbia, as well as the Aspen and Sarasota Music Festivals in the United States. *(continued on page 2)*

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By Amber Vis

At the Fall NISO concert, the audience will enjoy selections from some of America’s greatest composers, including Gershwin, Gould, and Copland. The concert will also feature a piece written by Principal Conductor Christopher Stanichar, whose *Independence Overture* incorporates elements from many of his favorite composers. The piece is rich with brass and percussion highlights.

One of the best-known pieces on the program is Gershwin’s sophisticated *Rhapsody in Blue*—the piece Stanichar referred to as the “fireworks piece of the program.”

“I love Gershwin,” said Stanichar. “He has a very romantic soul, and I think the title says it all.” Stanichar also noted that if the audience claps a little extra at the end, there might just be a surprise! NISO is honored to be joined in the performance of Gershwin’s popular number by talented pianist Ksenia Nosikova, faculty member from the University of Iowa.

Local students will also have an opportunity to enjoy the all-American repertoire. For the afternoon Children’s Concert, NISO will play excerpts from each piece. Stanichar will explain the music and the different forms to the children. He hopes that this “gets children on fire” for music.

Music lovers of all ages are welcome to attend the Fall Concert to be held in the B.J. Haan Auditorium at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa at 7:30 p.m. on November 6.
Behind the Scenes:  
Friends of the Symphony  
By Amber Vis

Do you ever wonder what happens behind the scenes to ensure that the NISO orchestra runs smoothly? A big part of this undertaking can be attributed to the Friends of the Symphony who work hard to support the orchestra. As Beth Vanden Berg explained, “The mission of the Friends of the Symphony is to promote and encourage the Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra by doing a variety of volunteer duties and by providing scholarships for qualifying student players.”

Friends of the Symphony sell and take tickets at concerts, hand out programs, provide refreshments for orchestra rehearsals, and sell coffee and truffles during concert intermissions. The group also raises money for scholarships for high school students who play in NISO. One important Friends of the Symphony fundraiser that supports the symphony is the June Garden Tour.

Vanden Berg and her husband, Stan, are “thankful to have this quality music so close to home.” Some of their children have had the privilege of playing with the orchestra. “NISO is an excellent asset for both the listeners and players in northwest Iowa,” she said.

President of the Friends Dianne Bierma said, “I have enjoyed my work with the Friends for quite a while, just knowing we are helping the orchestra in a variety of ways.” She pointed out that providing scholarships for the students makes everything the Friends do worthwhile.

If you are interested in becoming a Friends member, you can sign up at the table in the lobby at concerts, call the NISO office at 712-722-6230, or simply talk to any Friends member. They would love to have your help!

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Supporting the Arts

By Norma Snyder Jones, NISO Board Chair

As our opening 2012-13 concert is fast approaching, I want to take a few moments of your time to express my concerns, as well as my thanks for your support of NISO.

I am sure many of you are aware of the financial problems of major orchestral ensembles across the U.S. The closest and probably the most familiar are the Minnesota Orchestra and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Some organizations have come to an agreement on fiscal issues, but these two have not. These and other orchestras have faced budget challenges and anticipate possible reductions in orchestra size.

By way of contrast, I look over our $60,000 to $100,000 budget and feel so optimistic about the health and future of NISO. Growing membership numbers and the generous contributions of people, organizations, and businesses have put us in a sound frame. Your support will continue to shape the landscape of the Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra!

Thank you for that!