2019 BENNINGTON CHAMBER MUSIC CONFERENCE REUNION

January 2019

Dear Bennington CMC Friends:

Happy New Year to you all! Our 28th annual CMC reunion retreat will again take place on Presidents' Day weekend at Stony Point Center in Stony Point, NY.

* * * HERE ARE THE HIGHLIGHTS FOR OUR 2019 REUNION * * *

DATES: Saturday, February 16, 2:00 PM - Monday, February 18, 4:00 PM

PLACE: Stony Point Center, 17 Cricketown Road, Stony Point, NY

VENUE: Stony Point Center is located about an hour's drive northwest of Manhattan, on a lovely 26-acre campus in the scenic Hudson River Valley. It provides hospitality to a wide variety of religious and community organizations from around the New York Metro area, including overnight and day-use accommodations and meeting spaces. Stony Point offers delicious, locally-sourced food; simple, comfortable guest rooms; and a variety of spaces that we can use for playing chamber music and socializing. We will be using four buildings this year: Maple and Beech Lodges, which have most of our bedrooms and playing spaces; nearby Evergreen, which houses the dining hall and has a few more playing spaces we can use; and Gilmor Sloane, which has additional bedrooms and playing spaces, and is located within easy walking distance from the other three buildings we use. See "Accommodations / Maps / Campus Map" at www.stonypointcenter.org.

MEALS: All of our reunion meals (beginning with Saturday dinner) will be provided by Stony Point in its communal dining hall, which is located on the main level of Evergreen. Breakfast is served 8:00-9:00 AM; lunch is normally served 12:00-1:00 PM, but will be extended until 1:30 PM on Sunday and Monday for our benefit; and dinner is served 6:00-7:00 PM. All meals will include vegetarian options, and other special dietary needs (vegan, gluten-free, etc.) can be accommodated with advance notice. Meals are served buffet-style, and we can continue to sit and socialize after the food is cleared.

LODGING: Most of our overnight accommodations will be in Maple and Beech Lodges, which have a variety of bedrooms available for either double or single occupancy. There is a sink in each of these rooms, and there are several single-person bathrooms in the hallways that are shared by the guests in each wing. Alternatively, some people who will be attending the entire reunion may choose to stay in Gilmor Sloane, a renovated Victorian mansion, where each bedroom has a private bathroom. All of the lodge bedrooms are on the main level; the Gilmor Sloane bedrooms are upstairs, but there is an elevator. In each building, bedding and towels are provided for all overnight guests. We will have about 50 bedrooms available to us, so we should be able to accommodate all out-of-towners plus any locals who want The Complete Reunion Experience.

PLAYING SPACES AND PIANOS: We anticipate that most of our playing will take place in Maple Lodge, where there are three lounges on the main level and another lounge in the basement, and where unoccupied bedrooms can be "converted" to playing spaces for the duration of our stay. Nearby Beech Lodge (new to us this year, and much smaller than Maple Lodge) has another lounge, and we can also use some of the bedrooms there as playing spaces. In addition, there will be at least three playing spaces we can use on the main level of Evergreen, including TWO GRAND PIANOS, and there are a few playing spaces on the main level of Gilmor Sloane as well. When the time comes, we will provide a list of all our available playing spaces, floor plans showing their locations, and sign-up sheets for reserving these rooms. A piano schedule will be worked out beforehand, so that we can advise our reunion pianists in advance when they can count on having access to a piano. PIANISTS, please help us help you by sending in your reservation forms as early as possible!

COST: Because Stony Point offers "packages" for day-trippers as well as overnight guests, rather than single meals and overnight stays, our fee structure is of necessity a little different at Stony Point than it has been at previous venues. However, we can still offer you a COMPLETE REUNION PACKAGE (two overnights, six meals, and all the playing you want) for a total cost of \$250 per person for double occupancy in one of the lodges. Upgrades to single occupancy and/or to Gilmor Sloane are also available. Overnight packages (one night with three meals) are available for \$150 per person for double occupancy, or \$190 for single occupancy, but only in the lodges; our agreement with Stony Point limits occupancy of Gilmor Sloane to those staying at least two nights. Commuter packages range from \$55/day to \$75/day, depending on which meals you want; there is no "no-meals" option at Stony Point. For a complete list of all available packages with costs, please see the reunion reservation form.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT: As always, additional contributions towards the reunion (beyond the required fees) will be gratefully accepted. These donations enable us to "recruit" players needing financial assistance when there is an imbalance in instrumentation that will be in everyone's interests to remedy.

RESERVATIONS: You may attend any portion of the reunion, or you may come for THE WHOLE THING -- but you must reserve and pay IN ADVANCE for whichever package you choose. Reservations for most overnight stays will be accepted in order of receipt, except that priority will be given to folks from outside the NYC area if we are oversubscribed; those wishing to stay in Gilmor Sloane, however, should note the special instructions at the bottom of page 2 of the reservation form. We must provide guest counts and other information to Stony Point no later than Friday, February 8, including both overnight guests and commuters, so please be sure that your reunion reservation form and check are mailed NO LATER THAN MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, to Louise A. Lerner, 3300 Brandy Court, Falls Church, VA 22042. We cannot guarantee that late additions will be accepted by Stony Point; and, since there is no "no-meals" option available to us, you definitely should NOT plan to "drop by" without advising us in advance!

CANCELLATIONS: Once our guest counts have been provided, we are financially obligated to Stony Point based on these numbers. However, if it turns out that you will be unable to attend the reunion due to weather, illness, or other such issues, and if you are prompt in notifying us that you must cancel your reservation, we may be able to find someone else to purchase your package and cover all or part of the cost. In that event, a full or partial refund may be available upon request.

INVITATION LIST: This reunion is intended for all those who have attended the Chamber Music Conference, either at Bennington or at Colgate or Vassar, at any time in the past -- whether or not we are able to send you your own email invitation. You are of course welcome to bring a playing or non-playing spouse, significant other, or close friend as your guest. You are also welcome to bring along a player you are trying to "recruit" for next summer's Conference, as long as you are prepared to serve as his or her "buddy" for the reunion. The same fee schedule applies to any guests (playing or non-playing) that accompany us to the reunion.

PARTIES: Sadly, our usual party hostess, Avra Matsoukas, will be unable to attend this year's reunion. However, in her absence, Paula Washington has agreed to host our nightly reunion parties -- thank you, Paula! As always, BCMC will provide some basic party supplies; but reunion participants should also plan to bring contributions of wine, snacks, etc. to help stock these parties. Maple Lodge has a kitchenette, with a refrigerator and a microwave, that we can use for food preparation and storage.

MUSIC LIBRARY: Fan Tao and Tara Kazak will be transporting portions of BCMC's music library from Long Island to Stony Point for use at the reunion, and will also bring a few extra music stands for those people traveling by air or train. However, since we will be playing in four different buildings, we also encourage individual reunion participants traveling by car to bring along additional music, especially anything they are particularly eager to play!

WINDS: Janet Johnson is our Winds Coordinator for the reunion -- so if you are a wind player trying to decide which day to come join us, or which music to bring along with you, you may want to consult with Janet. She will have the most up-to-date info as to what the "mix" of wind instruments looks like so far at any given time, and when you are likely to be able to find the right instrumentation for the music you want to play. You can email Janet at jjoperacat@gmail.com or phone her at 917-699-5901 (cell).

TRANSPORTATION: Deb Reed will be our Rides Coordinator for the reunion, facilitating connections between those participants needing rides and those who may be able to provide them, and providing information about other transportation options. Deb will be out of the country until February 1, but will address all inquiries upon her return. Please contact Deb at deb11011@yahoo.com if you need a ride from somewhere in the NYC area to Stony Point; if you are planning to drive to the reunion and have room for one or more passengers; or if you plan to travel to the reunion via public transportation and would like to share a cab or shuttle to Stony Point. Please note that Stony Point Center provides shuttle service for a fee from various airports and train stations, but the only FREE shuttle service SPC provides is from Port Authority buses arriving at the Stony Point bus station. See "Getting Here" at www.stonypointcenter.org.

WHAT TO BRING: Your instrument(s), a music stand, a stand light if you need one (some playing rooms may not have adequate lighting), any music you particularly want to play, and a bottle of wine and/or something more creative for our evening parties. Cellists should also bring a rock-stop or a strap. Switch-hitters are encouraged to bring both instruments, if possible, so as to maximize playing opportunities.

DIRECTIONS TO STONY POINT AND ON ARRIVAL: The address to use for GPS or Mapquest purposes is 17 Cricketown Road, Stony Point, NY 10980. For general directions from various locations, see "Getting Here / Driving Directions" at www.stonypointcenter.org. Upon arrival, please proceed to the main entrance to Evergreen, which is clearly marked. All guests are expected to check in at SPC's front desk, where you will be provided with whatever is needed for access to your room and/or appropriate meals; but please note that SPC's official check-in time is 3:00, and our rooms are not guaranteed to be available earlier on Saturday. If you arrive on Saturday afternoon, you will then be directed to BCMC's own registration table, where we will have name tags (thanks to Janet Johnson), dance cards (thanks to Val Matthews), and any other information you may need. If you arrive at another time, look for Louise either in the dining hall (during meal times) or in the center lounge in Maple Lodge (our "hanging out" space).

REUNION SCHEDULE: We have crafted our reunion schedule both to accommodate Stony Point's meal times and to allow sufficient break times before, between, and after playing sessions for everyone to be able to get from one place to another. The first playing session of the day will begin at 2:30 PM on Saturday (or as soon after you arrive as you are ready to play) and at 9:30 AM on Sunday and Monday (likewise). For those wishing to plan for an arrival later in the day, please see the complete "2019 BCMC Reunion Schedule" posted on our reunion web page at www.cmceast.org/reunion.

ANY QUESTIONS? Please contact your Reunion Coordinator, Louise A. Lerner, at wag4k9s@yahoo.com or 703-992-0615 (home/preferred phone). Over reunion weekend, you can reach Louise at 703-870-9117 (cell).