

Yvonne Herring, President

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Linda Coney, Editor

January 2010

**Houston Symphony League Bay Area General Meeting  
January 13, 2010 10:00 AM**

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 18220 Upper Bay Road, Nassau Bay

FOUR HANDS ON ONE PIANO  
Ruth Tomfohrde and Dr. Chris Childers

Ruth Tomfohrde, Professor Emeritus, Moores School of Music, retired in May, 2008. She earned a Bachelor's degree and an Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School of Music, studying with Ernest Hutcheson. She studied with Ruth Burr in Houston and with Robert Casadesus in Fontainebleau, France. She has taught at Western Washington University, Bellingham; Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, and at the Moores School of Music University of Houston. In her 32 years in Houston, she has received many awards from the University of Houston and from music teachers' associations. Ruth Tomfohrde has performed as a solo recitalist and soloist with orchestras in the United States. She has played in ensembles with singers, Instrumentalists and pianists, for chamber music recitals at Alice Tully Hall and Weiss Hall in New York City and Wigmore Hall in London.

Dr. Christopher Childers received his doctorate in piano performance at the University of Houston Moores School of Music in 2003. He studied with Ruth Tomfohrde for his Masters and part of his Doctoral work. His other teachers were Timothy Hester and Abbey Simon. He also studied with celebrated pianists in France at the Conservatoire d'Americain, as well as in Germany and Romania. His doctoral recitals included performances with several acclaimed Moores School faculty-artists, including Laszlo Varga, the former principal cellist of the New York Philharmonic; Grammy nominee mezzo-soprano, Katherine Ciesinski, and violinist Andrzej Grabiec.

Childers was the first prize winner atop a field of 50 pianists, instrumentalists, and vocalists world-wide in the 1994-1995 International Sorantin Young Artist Competition. The prize included solo performances with the San Angelo and Big Spring Symphony Orchestras. He has also performed twice as soloist with the Lubbock Youth Symphony Orchestra and has had several piano and organ performances broadcast on television, radio and internet. He was the second prize recipient of the 1990 Texas Music Teacher's' Association organ competition and first prize winner in the same organizations' piano concerto competition in 1992.

Currently, Dr. Childers teaches piano with his wife out of their home in Pearland, Texas. His students have received highest scores in the Gold Cup Festival and State Competition, and in the National Guild Auditions. He has been recognized in two editions of Who's Who Among America's Teachers. In addition to teaching piano, he has served as a church organist since he was 12 at various churches in Lubbock, Germany, and Houston. Childers currently serves as organist for Seventh Church of Christ, Scientist, Houston.

## ***PRESIDENT'S NOTES***



As I write this note the Christmas lights are twinkling on the tree and carols are playing in the background. By the time you read this, the decorations and lights will be packed away for another year and we will be looking forward to 2010. Along with all of my new resolutions and hopes for the new year I look forward to the musical performances at our HSLBA monthly meetings and preparation for our March Home Tour.

This fall our Board received a request from Bay Area Youth Symphony for financial support to their organization. HSLBA's mission is to support quality music education and enrichment programs for area students and promote music appreciation in the Bay Area. The request met the requirements of our mission statement and, at the November 16 meeting the Board approved a \$1000 grant to the Bay Area Youth Symphony.

Our next meeting is on January 13 at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. It will begin with a social at 10:00 AM and the meeting will start at 10:30 AM. We will have a wonderful program, "Four Hands – One Piano", performed by Professor Ruth Tomfohrde and Dr. Chris Childers. I look forward to seeing you there.

The Concerto Competition was held on January 9 at the University of Houston, Moore Opera House. Polly Hanley and Doris Humbach were in charge of hospitality for the event and we appreciate their hard work and all of the volunteers who supported them.

In November, I told you we were looking at the idea of providing our newsletter to members on the internet and I asked for your comments. Since that time I have received a few comments and they all supported the idea. As a result we will vote on this matter at our January Board meeting and I will let you know the results. In the meantime I encourage you to check out the website [www.HSLBA.org](http://www.HSLBA.org) It has information about our organization activities, the downtown Houston Symphony concert schedule and our monthly newsletters.

We have an exciting new year ahead. Please plan to attend our monthly meetings and volunteer to help when you can. We have a great organization and I encourage you to invite friends to attend a meeting and join our League. I wish everyone a happy, healthy and peaceful new year.

Yvonne Herring

### **The Houston Symphony The Planets -- An HD Odyssey**

Jones Hall  
Sunday, January 24 2 PM

Hans Graf, conductor  
Duncan Copp, producer/director  
Women of the Houston Symphony Chorus

Experience a powerful performance of composer Gustav Hoist's The Planets paired with an HD film from NASA's latest exploration of the solar system.

Tickets : \$34 & \$44—Mezzanine; \$70—Mid Section; \$89 — Center

Call Gail McMaster, HS, 713-238-1438 to reserve your seat with HSLBA group. No ticket service fees will be charged to our group. Invite your friends. If we have more than 50 attendees, we can charter a bus to Jones Hall for \$10 per person.

In Remembrance

Peggy McKinney

**'A Day by the Bay'**  
**Home Tour Weekend - March 26-28, 2010**

The Home Tour Steering Committee will announce preparations for the March 26-28 event at the January 15 general meeting to encourage our members to hopefully participate more fully.

Although it has been announced that tickets will go on sale beginning at the February evening meeting, it's quite possible that sales will begin in January.

Pat Biddle, chair of the PreTour party, hopes it will be a sell-out! The party will be held at the "Mansion on the Hill" on Todville Road, Seabrook. Food will be catered by Robinette & Company Caterers with a special cake created by students at the Art Institute of Houston. Of course, there will be music. This very special event is being dedicated to our 2004-2005 President, Emyre Barrios Robinson, who died in an accident last June.

Diane McLaughlin, House Coordinator, who is still accepting volunteer docents, says, "Remember, you do not have to be a member of our league to participate." Invite non-member friends to work with you. They might become prospective members. If you have not signed up to be a docent for the Home Tour on March 27 and 28, please call Diane at 281-474-4932 or email dmclaughlin03@comcast.net. Let her know if you can do a shift and any preferences or limitations you might have. The shifts are 12 - 2:30 and 2:30-5 both days. We are hoping that you all can help. It will save the House Chairs a lot of time if you sign up and thereby save them calling you to request your help.

Patience Myers encourages members to sell ads for the program book (a basic business card ad is still only \$75) or to contact her with suggestions of whom to approach.

Art work generously supplied by Michell Martin McDulin depicts a view of Galveston Bay from a waterfront dock. Printed on blue paper, it will be the front cover of our program book and used for flyers and invitations. We plan to increase the use of flyers this year and place them in the many shops dealing with home and garden décor. Please contact Pat Brackett by March 1st with suggestions of locations that have a great deal of traffic.

If you have any suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact members of the steering committee.

General Chair: Dana Puddy  
Co-Chair: Natalie Ong  
Assistant Co-Chair: Elaine Stoermer  
Pre-Tour Party: Pat Biddle  
House Coordinator: Diane McLaughlin  
Advertising Sales: Patience Myers  
Publicity: Pat Brackett  
Ticket Sales: Jean Raffeto

**CONCERTO COMPETITION**

The annual Concerto Competition was held January 9, 2010 at the Moores Opera House at the University of Houston. For over 50 years the Houston Symphony League has offered this as a major educational and artistic experience for advanced student instrumentalists in the Houston metropolitan area. The mission of the Competition is to identify gifted young musicians and encourage them to aspire to the highest levels of performing excellence by providing an evaluation forum of distinguished professional musicians.

HSLBA awarded \$1000 to the first place winner. It was our honor to welcome the winner to be our guest artist at a future monthly meeting. On the day of competition, our League provided hospitality, including a light lunch, snacks, and drinks, to the judges and volunteers. Many thanks to Doris Humbach and Polly Hanley for coordinating the hospitality and volunteers for this stellar event. Doris and Polly extend their thanks to the volunteers who donated food and time to support this event

# HOUSTON SYMPHONY LEAGUE BAY AREA

P.O. Box 57425  
Webster, Texas 77598-7425

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Articles for the February newsletter are due on January 27.

**Linda Coney**  
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## General Meeting

January 13, 2010  
10 am  
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

## Board Meeting

January 18  
9:30 am  
Home of Diana McLaughlin

## Memorial Music Education Fund

Houston Symphony League Bay Area has established the Memorial Music Education Fund to accept donations in memory of friends and family members. HSLBA will gratefully accept and acknowledge any contributions. State the name of the person you wish to remember and provide the name and address of the person to receive notification of the contribution.

Make checks payable to HSLBA and send to:

Roberta Liston, Education Treasurer  
126 Bristol Bend Lane  
Dickinson, Texas 77536

If you know of an HSLBA member who has had a serious illness, or death of a spouse or child, please notify Suzanne Jaax.