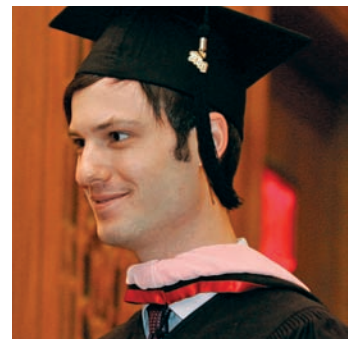


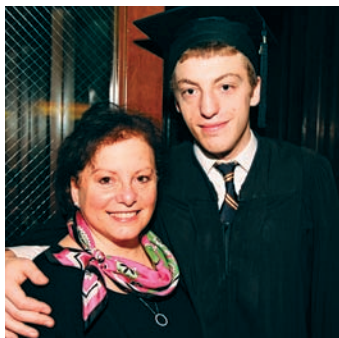


In celebration of the Class of 2010 and Curtis's seventy-seventh commencement and conferring of degrees, Overtones asked two new graduates and the parent of a third to reflect on the Curtis experience. Also included are some of the thoughts shared at the ceremony by alumnus Alan Gilbert, music director of the New York Philharmonic, who received an honorary doctorate.



COMMENCE

'We're never really done with Curtis'



MUSIC FOR A MOTHER

BY LAURA MEYERS

The e-mail said, "Please report to 1726 Locust Street at 10:05 a.m. on Monday." With that admissions e-mail in March 2006, my son, Chris Rogerson, began his Curtis adventure. A week later, he received the call from a faculty member in the Composition Department that he had a place at Curtis. All of his teachers told him, "Curtis is an offer you can't refuse."

One hot, sweaty afternoon that August, I helped move Chris into the apartment he would share with his roommate for the next four years. Philadelphia seemed big and scary. I felt so anxious because I would be leaving my son to fend for himself: to shop and cook, do his own laundry, and navigate the city streets. Parents' Orientation helped calm my nerves; I met the psychologist and student services director, two caring adults who would be there if he needed them.

But I have a particularly vivid memory of one speaker's remark: that parting with our children would be particularly poignant as they would be taking their music with them. I burst into tears because Chris and his older sister, Bethany, *had* filled our home with beautiful music—the soundtrack to my life. Chris would often play the musical ideas that he was thinking of using in his chamber or orchestral pieces, something we did together that I cherished. The thought of a quiet house made me feel so sad, and I looked around and saw I wasn't the only one with tears in my eyes.

To say that the next four years flew by may sound like a cliché, but they really did. Chris turned out to be just fine. He cooked for himself without setting the kitchen or anything else on fire. Sometimes I would get a call from him at Trader Joe's, "Mom, how do you make that chicken dish?" or "Mom, what is the recipe for your chocolate-chip cookies?"

I returned to Philadelphia many times for concerts and recitals. During those visits, I met the wonderfully generous Curtis faculty,

PHOTOS BY DAVID SWANSON

(opposite page, top) Student speakers William Short and Sarah Shafer applaud their fellow graduates

(opposite page, bottom from left) Graduates Coline-Marie Orliac (with Ya-Jhu Yang), Evan Hughes, Charlotte Dobbs, and Benjamin Folk

(this page, top) Graduate Chris Rogerson with his mother, Laura Meyers.

(below) Graduate Korey Marshall with faculty member Mary-Jean Hayden



MENT 2010



Faculty member Pamela Frank
with graduate Vicki Powell

who taught and guided my son into maturity both as a musician and a young man. I also got to know Chris's friends, other students who challenged and inspired him.

On Mother's Day, I attended Chris's last concert at Curtis, his grad recital. The final selection on the program was commissioned by a fellow Curtis student, cellist Natalie Helm. Earlier in the year, Chris had played two musical themes for the commission on our piano at home. I commented to him, "Why not combine them into one piece?" He dedicated the performance of *A Song to a Friend* for cello and piano to me. What a wonderful way to bring closure to both his and my adventure at Curtis and what a Mother's Day gift!

Philadelphia became home to Chris, and he leaves Curtis with a sense of sadness and gratitude ... as do I. Curtis is an incredible institution that will always have a special place in my heart. It's the place that gave my son a fabulous start to his career. It's a place where, indeed, legends begin.

GOING—AND COMING BACK

BY SARAH SHAFER

It's hard to believe that it's been four years since I first walked through the doors of Curtis. This fall I'll be returning as a master's student in opera, so in reality not that much will be changing ... except that I'll be one step closer to achieving my dream of becoming a professional singer.

Reflecting on all the opportunities Curtis has provided during the last four years, it's hard to keep track of them all! A leading role in an opera, an array of characters in thirteen total productions, professional oratorio experience, and the chance to perform a song cycle on tour are only a few examples of the advantages of Curtis for a singer.

Dedication and hard work funneled through the extraordinary opportunities Curtis brings to us culminate in a myriad of life-changing artistic experiences. I remember most clearly my first time singing Webern in the spring of my third year. A few other students and I were scheduled to perform six short songs as part of a Curtis 20/21 concert, and I had never been so afraid of a piece in my life. I struggled for several weeks getting the unfamiliar intervals and difficult rhythms into my voice, and working diligently with our German coach to render the poems understandable. Finally the time came to put it together with the instruments, and what had at first seemed impossible finally began to make sense. I will always remember the performance as being fulfilling and memorable, if a little nerve-wracking. It was something I never would have chosen for myself, but performing it opened up so many doors and helped me to grow both as a musician and a singer.

This summer I headed to the Marlboro Music Festival, along with several other Curtis students. At Marlboro the focus is on chamber music and song literature, which is ideal, as I hope to make this repertoire an important part of my career and had the opportunity, over the summer, to home in on this particular genre of singing. One essential part of the career is meeting and working with many different people, and I'm thrilled to have worked with some incredible musicians at Marlboro. And the presence of so many Curtis students and alumni was terrific—it really makes a difference when you're performing with friends.

In addition to some great roles this year for the Curtis Opera Theatre, I hope to perform in an opera at a European festival next summer. I am so grateful to Curtis for the amazing opportunities it provides, and am very excited to begin a new chapter of my time here!

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perspective, from being
out in the real world
for a couple of decades
—can it really be decades?—
I can say that Curtis really
is a very special haven
for music. It is insulated
and protected in a
most wonderful way.
—ALAN GILBERT

FINDING CURTIS IN ... CUBA?

BY WILLIAM SHORT

Ten days. That's all it took after giving the commencement address with Sarah Shafer—about how, though we may have graduated, we certainly are not done with Curtis—to learn just how pervasive the Curtis influence is.

In a fortuitous convergence of events, I found myself in possibly the least likely place on Earth one might find a Curtis connection—Cuba—as bassoonist of a local quintet called the Liberty Winds (though we changed the name to Philadelphia Winds for this trip, not wanting to step on any ideological toes). The quintet comprised Stephanie Wilson, oboe; David DiGiacobe, flute; Joshua Kovach, clarinet; Adam Lesnick, horn; and myself. Adam had, I can only assume magically, procured for us permission from the U.S. State Department to go to Havana for five days of concerts and master classes.

On our first night, we were, naturally, excited to go out and explore Habana Vieja (“Old Havana”), where we were staying. We were in one of the plazas surrounding our hotel when Stephanie pointed out that there was a sound drifting our way that sounded suspiciously like a bassoon. Intrigued, we suddenly found ourselves before a wind quartet (oboe, clarinet, flute, and bassoon) playing traditional Cuban music outside a restaurant on the square.

We began talking to these immensely skilled musicians during one of their breaks and managed, between our broken Spanish and their significantly less-broken English, to strike up a spirited discussion.

Here's where the story gets interesting. I dimly recalled that a colleague of mine from the Curtis bassoon studio, Julia Harguindey, once mentioned that she had developed a close relationship with a bassoonist in Havana (as a native Argentinian/Canadian, Julia can deftly avoid the legal potholes we Americans must face). On a whim, I asked the bassoonist (Alina) if she knew Julia.

The answer was “yes,” though to my ears it sounded more like a delighted squeal. What I would come to understand is that Cubans contend with problems I had never imagined. They have little or no access to reed-making equipment, sheet music, and other basic necessities we Americans take for granted—and Julia represents something of a lifeline for Alina and, by extension, all bassoonists in the close-knit community of Havana. Every opportunity she gets, Julia sends to Alina all these things that we need never give a second thought, but are all but inaccessible in Cuba. In short, Julia is a hero to these incredibly gifted, dedicated, but impoverished musicians.

Let us consider this for a moment. In a country that is a mere forty-five minute flight from Miami, yet, due to legal complications, is possibly the world's most remote country to us, it took all of approximately nine hours to stumble across someone who was a close friend and great admirer of one of my studio-mates from school.

I suppose we never really *are* done with Curtis.

PRACTICAL + PURE

BY ALAN GILBERT

It's amazing to think that it's been eighteen years since I graduated from Curtis. Time has a curious way of expanding and contracting—although a lot has happened since then, the three years I spent here were so important. They allowed me to find my way as a musician in such a meaningful way, that I have the feeling that my Curtis years took up relatively more space as a portion of my life than many longer stretches that have happened since then. ...



(left) Barbara Moskow (Voice '50), Alumni Council representative to the Curtis Board of Trustees, welcomed the newest Curtis alumni during the Commencement ceremony.

(below) Paul Bryan, registrar and associate dean of academic affairs, lined up the graduating students for the opening procession.



Now that I have a certain perspective, from being out in the “real world” for a couple of decades—can it really be decades?—I can say that Curtis really is a very special haven for music. It is insulated and protected in a most wonderful way.

I have always thought of Curtis as a fantastically idealistic place where you can hone your craft in security and safety, surrounded by some of the greatest musicians in the world. This would not work if what went on here had no connection to what I might call “music-making-on-the-outside.” What makes things unique is the real and very direct connection to professional performance of the highest caliber. Many of the faculty, not to mention quite a few students, *are* actually “making music on the outside,” and all of the faculty have a deep understanding of what it actually takes to live the life of a practicing musician. This is a hugely important aspect of the Curtis Experience—the melding of the practical and the pure in an environment unencumbered by the ruthless realities of the professional grind.

As I look back I do remember one exception in my memories of this sheltered, supportive existence. There was a very challenging rehearsal period that seemed to be unnecessarily brutal for the orchestra. It got so bad that we, the students, mobilized and officially complained to the administration: We felt that it was unfair, and educationally indefensible, to have to learn so much music in such a short period of time. The soloist for that concert—one Isaac Stern—sided with the school, and defended the pressure and pace by saying, “Come on guys! This is what it’s really like out there!” Hearing that was a shock; it was an intrusion of a harsh reality into our Curtis lives. It also seemed like a facile justification, and even today, from an educational standpoint, I don’t think I would argue that it is desirable to place such demands on a student orchestra. Still, I do have to say that Stern was right: The experience was a dose of reality, and it may well have been a good lesson.

The challenge for all of us as we leave Curtis is to keep our idealism intact, to keep our courage and ambitions strong in the face of the sorts of pressures that exert themselves in professional life.

We musicians are very lucky to be in this field. It is enormously hard work, and it is really difficult to do what we need to do to make great music. That very difficulty is one of the privileges we are granted: that you can give it all you have—physically, intellectually, organizationally, socially, all the “lys”—and still be challenged. If music-making starts to feel easy, then you’re missing something. You are not asking enough of yourself, and you are not allowing the work to be as gratifying as it can be.

This is not to say that the musician’s life needs to be monastic. On the contrary, I encourage all of you to explore, to find other passions in life, whether it is to be an avid reader, to appreciate fine food or the visual arts, or to enjoy time with your family. Many of the musicians I’ve most admired are the ones who have been able to balance a full personal life with their professional pursuits. And I don’t think it’s a coincidence that many of the most successful musicians are the most interesting people. Music is the expression of life. The fuller the life you lead, the greater your exposure to what the world has to offer; those experiences will make the stories you have to tell through your performances all the more interesting.

So I wish you well, and encourage you never to forget what inspired you to become a musician in the first place. The life of a musician isn’t easy, but it is always wonderful. No matter how much you put into it, it will always give you even more back. ♦

(from top) Alan Gilbert, Marguerite Lenfest, and H. F. “Gerry” Lenfest as they receive honorary degrees.



DEGREES AND AWARDS

DOCTORS OF MUSIC (HONORIS CAUSA)

ALAN GILBERT
MARGUERITE LENFEST
H. F. “GERRY” LENFEST

DIPLOMAS: 5

BACHELOR OF MUSIC: 27
MASTER OF MUSIC IN OPERA: 4

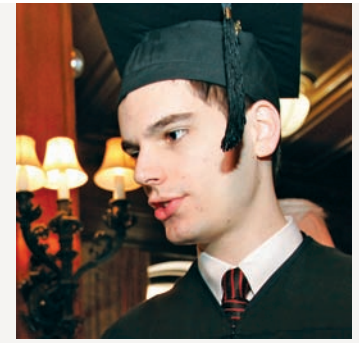
JOAN HUTTON LANDIS AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE IN ACADEMICS
COLINE-MARIE ORLIAC (Harp)

EDWARD ALDWELL AWARD FOR
EXCELLENCE IN MUSICAL STUDIES
ANDREW MARTIN TYSON (Piano)

CHARLES MILLER PRIZE:
THE ALFREDO CASELLA AWARD
CHRISTOPHER ALDEN ROGERSON
(Composition)

FESTORAZZI PRIZES
EVAN BEN HUGHES (Voice)
ANDREW MARTIN TYSON (Piano)

MILKA VIOLIN ARTIST PRIZE
PETR MATĚJÁK (Violin), in absentia



(from left) Graduates Joshua Stafford (with Maia Cabeza), Pallavi Mahidhara, Hyo-Rim Han, and Andrew Tyson

CLASS OF 2010 NOTATIONS

This summer **DAYNA KRISTIE ANDERSON** (Violin) played with the Grant Park Orchestra in Chicago and participated in Music from Angel Fire. She is concertmaster with the Delaware Symphony and in the orchestra of the Opera Company of Philadelphia.

EVAN BOYER (Opera) has joined the Ryan Opera Center for young artists at the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

BRANDON CEDEL (Voice) returns to Curtis for a master's degree in opera.

This summer **RAY CHEN** (Violin) performed at the Shanghai World Expo, St. Denis Music Festival in Paris, and the Bowdoin Music Festival in Maine. His website is www.raychenviolin.com.

After world travels this summer, **RUOKAI CHEN** (Clarinet) joined CIGNA as an actuarial senior analyst in its actuarial executive development program.

After playing recitals in Korea and Japan and performing at the Banff Music Festival in the summer, **KO-NI CHOI** (Harp) began an artist diploma program at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto with **JUDY LOMAN** (Harp '56).

REBEKAH DALEY (Horn) performed at Spoleto Festival USA and Music Academy of the West over the summer and is attending the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University this fall.

SCOTT DEVEREAUX (Tuba) works full-time at Cadence Cycling and Multisport while freelancing.

This summer **CHARLOTTE DOBBS** (Opera) sang in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in Denver and performed as the Governess in Benjamin Britten's *Turn of the Screw* at the Castleton Festival before going to Italy. This fall she is performing in Chicago and New York City, as well as auditioning in the United States and Europe.

ABRAHAM FEDER (Cello) has been principal cello of the Sarasota Orchestra since 2008.

BENJAMIN FOLK (Timpani and Percussion) lives and freelances in Philadelphia.

Over the summer **JOSHUA GERSEN** (Conducting) participated in the Aspen Music Festival's American Academy of Conducting. In June he conducted a production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Ruddigore* at Longwood Gardens near Philadelphia.

HYO RIM HAN (Violin) is spending a year in Philadelphia before heading to graduate school.

BLAKE HINSON (Double Bass) spent the summer as a Tanglewood Music Center Fellow and joined the New World Symphony in the fall.

EVAN HUGHES (Opera) performed in the New York City premiere of Elliott Carter's *On Conversing with Paradise* and at the Ravinia Festival over the summer. This fall he is a young artist with Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera.

This fall **COREY KLEIN** (Horn) is a teacher's assistant at the University of Miami, where he is a Mancini fellowship recipient.

After attending the Marlboro, Santa Fe, Lucerne, and Bad Kissingen festivals in the summer, **KUOK-WAI LIO** (Piano) begins graduate school at Yale this fall.

ELLIOT MADORE (Opera) has joined the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera.

PALLAVI MAHIDHARA (Piano) attended the Marlboro Music Festival over the summer and is pursuing graduate studies at Escuela de Reina Sofia in Madrid, Spain, in the fall.

KOREY MARSHALL (Oboe) is attending Carnegie Mellon University.

PETR MATĚJÁK (Violin) performed over the summer with Curtis On Tour in Maine.

This fall **HIRO MATSUI** (Cello) will pursue a master's degree at Juilliard.

This summer **COLINE-MARIE ORLIAC** (Harp) won fourth prize at the USA International Harp Competition in Bloomington, Ind. She also won the prize for the best performance of the new work written for the competition.

MILENA PAJARO-VAN DE STADT (Viola) performed at the International Chamber Music Festival of Malibu and the Marlboro Music Festival. She returns to Curtis this fall with her colleagues in the Old City Quartet.

MASHA POPOVA (Flute) spent her summer at the Spoleto Festival USA and Pacific Music Festival and begins graduate studies at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University this fall.

After participating in the Marlboro Music Festival this summer, **VICKI POWELL** (Viola) is pursuing a master's degree at Juilliard with Misha Amory.

Over the summer **COURTNEY PRIZRENAC** (Horn) attended the Spoleto Festival USA and performed as a guest artist at the Bay Chamber Concerts Summer Music Festival in Maine. This fall she begins studies toward a master's degree at Juilliard with Julie Landsman.

During the summer **CHRIS ROGERSON** (Composition) participated in the Aspen Music Festival, studying with Christopher Rouse and Steven Stucky. This fall he is at Yale University, working toward a master's degree in composition. He is also a composer-in-residence for Young Concert Artists, Inc.

SARAH SHAFER (Voice) spent her summer at the Marlboro Music Festival studying chamber music with Martin Isepp and is pursuing a master's degree in opera at Curtis.

CAMDEN SHAW (Cello) returns to Curtis as a member of the Old City Quartet.

Over the summer **WILLIAM SHORT** (Bassoon) performed at and presented a master class in Havana, Cuba, with the Liberty Winds, a Philadelphia quintet, and then attended the Verbier Festival. This fall he is pursuing a master's degree at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University. He continues to perform as principal bassoon with the Delaware Symphony.

JOSHUA STAFFORD (Organ) attends the Yale School of Music's Institute of Sacred Music this fall. Over the summer he worked at St. Mark's Church in Philadelphia.

This fall **DANIEL STEWART** (Conducting) returns to Curtis to direct *La Tragédie de Carmen* with the Curtis Opera Theatre, participate in Barber's *Knoxville, Summer of 1915*, and give his graduation recital. Over the summer he participated in Aspen Music Festival's Academy of Conducting.

ANDREW TYSON (Piano) made the rounds with Curtis On Tour and **PAMELA FRANK** (Violin '89) over the summer. This fall he attends Juilliard to pursue a master's degree with **ROBERT MCDONALD** (Piano '76, '77).

After performing in the Verbier Festival Orchestra over the summer, **NATHAN VEDAL** (Double Bass) is attending Harvard University to pursue a master's degree in Chinese language and literature.

Over the summer **SANG HYUN MARY YONG** (Viola) performed at Great Mountains Music Festival in Korea before beginning a master's degree at Juilliard this fall. ♦