

Bach With Verse is supported in part by a grant from the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts & the National Endowment for the Arts.



Bringing hope, inspiration and laughter through music and stories to underserved audiences.

2010-2011 Season In Review

476 Apple Hill Road
Nelson, NH 03457

Bach With Verse

CD Release



J.S. BACH: SIX SOLO SUITES LIVE
Richard Hartshorne, *double bass*

Recorded Live In Bolivia, 2011

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Bach With Verse

2010-2011 Season In Review

Most Successful Year!

5 Countries, 95 Concerts & Masterclasses

Iraq July 25 - August 8



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Orchestra of Iraq in whatever way I could. The orchestra was the brainchild of a 17 year old Iraqi girl from Baghdad. She organized and funded it through the internet. We met in the North in Erbil in the Kurdish sector. The members were Arabs and Kurds, Shia and Sunni, Moslems and

The temperature hovered in the high 130s. It was summer in Iraq. Luckily our hotel was air conditioned as was the space where we taught and rehearsed. I was there to help the National Youth

Orchestra of Iraq in whatever way I could. The orchestra was the brainchild of a 17 year old Iraqi girl from Baghdad. She organized and funded it through the internet. We met in the North in Erbil in the Kurdish sector. The members were Arabs and Kurds, Shia and Sunni, Moslems and even Christians ages 16 though 27. It is the face of Iraq that we have all been hoping for since the horrible war started. I worked closely with the two bass players, one Kurdish and one Arab. Language logistics were difficult as everyone needed translators. The faculty spoke English (Europeans and two Americans). The Kurds spoke Kurdish and the Arabs spoke Arabic. When I played for the whole group, I did the fifth Bach Suite and then told one story in Arabic and one in Kurdish. I also participated in a concert for orphans and young children. After two weeks of intense work, the orchestra played a concert of Beethoven's First Symphony, the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto and two works by local composers, one Arab and one Kurd. The prime minister of Kuristan was there and invited us all to his residence to thank us. I am looking forward to returning in September to expand outreach concerts into the community with the orchestra members.

South Africa December 5 - 15



As I landed in Durban, South Africa, it began to rain. It was still raining when I left. The humidity was so high that my bridge swelled up putting the strings on my bass way above the fingerboard. I was there to work with the National Youth Orchestra through a connection I made in Iraq. The

musical level in South Africa is extremely high and one of the two orchestras did a fabulous performance of Mahler's 5th Symphony. There were seven bass players and in two weeks I had them thinking about playing the bass in a different way. There was time to go very deeply into the basic approach to playing. We also drilled and drilled the fugue passages in the fifth movement which seemed beyond our reach on day one, but which they nailed on concert day. In addition to playing for the whole group, I also played for an elder facility across the street from where we rehearsed. One of the residents, an amputee in a wheel chair, was so excited about my visit that he came to the orchestra concert

the next week. A young Zulu trumpet player translated one of my stories to Zulu and made a recording of his voice saying the words. Some clicking and popping was involved, but I managed to learn it and performed it along with Bach at two orphanages. The children and teachers told me they could understand it perfectly.



Visit our website to see videos on Dobbs' tours to Afghanistan, South Africa, Iraq, Bolivia & US prisons, and join Dobbs Music on Facebook.



www.bachwithverse.org

Afghanistan January 25 - February 7.....



Bass students at NIMA

I went to Afghanistan in January and spent the first day being as cold as I ever remember being except in a crevasse at 22,000 feet in the Himilayas (but that's another story). I went from the airport directly to the YAAR Guest House where I have stayed during my last two visits to Kabul. Because they are my friends, the room and the food are free. The reason I was so cold is that the guest house no longer has any guests. It used to serve as a home away from home

for friends of the directors at the NGO YAAR traveling from Jalalabad or even Peshawar in Pakistan. Since I was the only guest (they later corrected me and said I was not a guest but rather family), the room had not been heated all winter. After hours of shivering under a blanket, one of my friends brought a propane heater. It took a couple of days to heat the walls. I was invited by the National Institute of Music in Afghanistan (NIMA) for their first Winter Academy. It is amazing



Afghans 4 Tomorrow School



WADAN Drug Rehab Center

to see what has happened to that institution in the last year. The building is remodeled and teachers have been hired from Europe and America, and kids are learning how to play. I worked every day with a group who wanted to study bass. We did hand exercises for an hour every day. I handed them off to the cello teacher and I hope some of them will be playing when I return. I also played at one elementary school (most were closed for the winter), three drug rehab centers, several NGO offices and on National TV on the Good Morning Afghanistan show.

Bolivia March 31 - April 9.....

I had great weather for my return to Bolivia after 40 years. 40 years ago I was a Peace Corps Volunteer stationed in La Paz playing in the National Symphony and teaching at the National Conservatory. I was invited to play the six Bach Suites at BachFest in Cochabamba. It took place in the Patiño Palace where I had played 40 years ago with the symphony. Unbelievably



Salon de Honor Teatro Municipal

some of my friends were there for the performances and I saw others back in La Paz. I can't really describe what it felt like to be in that place playing that music after all that time. I'm at a loss, but it was amazing. I also did masterclasses for bass players in

both cities and played three more concerts in La Paz concluding with the six suites again in the Salon de honor of the Teatro Municipal. I also did five short segments on Channel 9 in La Paz, this time on a late night show, as well as a radio interview on Radio Cristal. For this trip, I needed to travel with two basses, one for suites 1-5 and one to play no. 6. The logistics for this were extraordinary but it all worked out well.



Traveling with 2 basses



Cochabamba Masterclass

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Prison Concert Project May - June 2011.....

In May, I was back in Northern California playing in Prisons. I played four times in New Folsom or "Sac" as it's called including one performance for 10 men in cages. They were brought in, shackled and then locked in individual phone booth size cages. After I played, one of the men thanked me for reminding him that there is still beauty in the world. I also did my first

performance in Old Folsom next door. It was on the yard where there were 700 men exercising so the acoustics weren't great, but some guys enjoyed it and the Lieutenant who organized it is now planning multiple concerts for next year, but they will all be held inside. I returned to the Napa State Hospital where the staff continues to be amazed at the effect Bach has on severely

medicated and disturbed patients. And I returned to play for kids at the Marin County Juvenile Facility. There was a crisis going on and while I waited there were some emergency parental meetings going on in a room with a window. I couldn't hear anything but the body language made your heart break for those kids.



Riding around SAC

Finally in May and June, I've went all over the state playing 10 concerts in New Hampshire jails: Hillsborough County, Belknap County, Grafton County and Cheshire County. Here's what one inmate wrote to me last week:

Dear Mr. Dobbs,

I just wanted to write and thank you for coming to Belknap County Jail and giving your precious time. Playing the music with your bass violin gave me in the almost 7 months I've been here a great inner peace of mind. It's a very giving music that gave me a very relaxed sensation. You are very great at what you do. I really hope you do and can continue to give more inmates this great gift that you have to listen and take in more of. Thank you again and may god be with you.

Sincerely, Joshua Rogers

Get Involved.....

We survived another year, but just barely. Had it not been for numerous donors and two extraordinary gifts at the last minute, we would not have been able to finish the fiscal year. To start the new year on the best foot, please join the people listed above and become a supporter of Bach With Verse. Visit www.bachwithverse.org for details. I thank you, and the inmates and refugees and recovering drug addicts and young musicians around the world thank you!

Dobbs



New Hampshire State Council on the Arts

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