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Tuesday, June 18, 2013

## WCMS strengthening bonds to community

### Chamber music group announces season

#### MUSIC



The Worcester Chamber Music Society's upcoming season will include a first-time collaboration with Music Worcester Inc. featuring renowned pianist Randall Hodgkinson. (T&G File Photo/TOM RETTIG)

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It must be the company they keep.

The Worcester Chamber Music Society has a core group of musicians who have been together for most if not all of the ensemble's seven years.

So as the group announces its eighth season beginning Sept. 20 and featuring at least 15 concerts (more may be added) throughout Worcester County, the musicians

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recognize a strong connection when they play that has deepened over the years, said WCMS executive director and flutist Tracy Kraus.

"Absolutely. I think some of our regulars (WCMS concert-goers) have noticed that," Kraus said.

"It's not only playing together, but the work we do in education and the community has pulled us together in a way that's unique. We all really like each other. There's a bond that is generated," she said.

The 2013-14 season will open with a program titled "Autumn Mood" featuring Haydn's Trio for flute, cello and piano in D major; a recently discovered late string quintet by Max Bruch; and Brahms' early masterpiece String Sextet No. 2 in G Major. Performances will be 7:30 p.m. Sept. 20 at Congregational Church, Grafton, and 7:30 p.m. Sept. 21 at First Baptist Church, Worcester.

The WCMS season includes its main concert series, a Café Series at Nuovo Restaurant, 92 Shrewsbury St., Worcester, and its "Very Open Rehearsals." WCMS also has a summer festival at Clark University with concerts beginning July 9.

Another main concert series program, "Enchanted Notes" (April 4, 2014, Congregational Church, Grafton; April 5, 2014, Tuckerman Hall, Worcester) will see a first-time collaboration with Music Worcester Inc. that will bring in renowned pianist Randall Hodgkinson.

The mood left from the seventh season definitely sounds harmonic.

"Last season was phenomenal," Kraus said. "Audiences were up on all counts." WCMS saw more diversity in the audiences as well. "Younger audiences; teenagers. It's really nice to see. We like to think that's a direct result of our work in the community," Kraus said.

WCMS has gone out of its way since its inception to keep company with the community at large, she said. Initiatives include its Neighborhood Strings program (offering free music lessons in violin, viola and cello to youth from the Main South neighborhood), which just finished its first year, and an annual free family concert at Mechanics Hall (next season "Peter and the Wolf" March 2, 2014).

The chamber group's core members consist of musicians who live locally but have international reputations: Peter Sulski (artistic director, violin/viola); Kraus (flute); Maria Ferrante (soprano); Krista Buckland Reisner (violin); Amy Rawstron (violin); Rohan Gregory (violin); Mark Berger (resident composer/violinist); David Russell (cello); Joshua Gordon (cello); Ian Watson (harpsichord, piano); and William Ness (piano and organist).

Kraus said she is excited about the Music Worcester collaboration. "I'm really pleased we can have a relationship with them," she said. The "Enchanted Notes" concerts are the result of several talks Kraus has had with Music Worcester's new executive director Adrien C. Finley.

Music Worcester joins several arts groups and organizations that WCMS has kept company with over the last seven years, including the Worcester Art Museum.

Kraus said that she and Finley have "spoken quite a bit about collaborations in the future in other areas. I think the conversation is ongoing."

For complete information about the WCMS 2013-14 season, visit [www.worcesterchambermusic.org](http://www.worcesterchambermusic.org).

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**“ Last season was phenomenal. Audiences were up on all counts. ”**

-- TRACY KRAUS, WCMS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND FLUTIST



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