

From E.B. White's *Here is New York*, 1949

Another hot night I stop off at the band concert in the Mall in Central Park. The people seated on the benches fanned out in front of the band shell are attentive, appreciative. In the trees the night wind sings, bringing leaves to life, endowing them with speech; the electric lights illuminate the green branches from the under side, translating them into a new language. On a bench directly in front of me, a boy sits with his arm around his girl; they are proud of each other and are swathed in music. The cornetist steps forward for a solo, begins, "Drink to me only with thine eyes. . ." In the wide, warm night the horn is startlingly pure and magical. Then from the North River another horn solo begins—the

"Queen Mary" announcing her intentions. She is not on key; she is a half tone off. The trumpeter in the bandstand never flinches. The horns quarrel savagely, but no one minds having the intimation of travel injected into the pledge of love. "I leave," sobs Mary. "And I will pledge with mine," sighs the trumpeter. Along the asphalt paths strollers pass to and fro; they behave considerably, respecting the musical atmosphere. Popsicles are moving well. In the warm grass beyond the fence, forms wriggle in the shadows, and the skirts of girls approaching on the Mall are ballooned by the breeze, and their bare shoulders catch the lamplight. "Drink to me only with thine eyes." It is a magical occasion, and it's all free.

Since 1905, the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts has continuously presented free, outdoor classical music concerts to New Yorkers of all walks of life. Named after founder and philanthropist Elkan Naumburg, who donated the Naumburg Bandshell to New York City in 1923, and inspired by his own love of music, the series seeks to stimulate and encourage new and expanded audiences for classical music in the informal and beautiful setting of Central Park.

In late nineteenth century New York, Mr. Naumburg felt a need to encourage and stimulate the public's interest in symphonic and semi-classical music. In 1873, Naumburg founded the Oratorio Society of New York in the family parlor, where Leopold Damrosch, Theodore Thomas and Marcella Sembrich, among others, played weekly in the 1870's, 80's & 90's. Mr. Naumburg's wife, Bertha, gave that group its name. Elkan's son, Walter, further reinforced the family tradition of supporting classical music, when he established the Walter W. Naumburg Prize in 1926, as did his grand-niece, Eleanor Naumburg Sanger, who co-founded WQXR, New York's classical music radio station.

In 1912, the Concert Ground's earlier Central Park Bandstand was deemed inadequate. Elkan's replacement greatly improved the conditions for musical performance over the earlier facility. A nephew, William G. Tachau, designed the building in 1916. In 1992 a lawsuit was filed against the Central Park Conservancy and the Parks Department to save the Bandshell from imminent demolition. A decision on July 6th, 1993 by New York's highest court ended both the litigation and the planned demolition.

After Elkan Naumburg's death in 1924, his sons, Walter W. Naumburg and George W. Naumburg continued the park concerts. When Walter W. Naumburg died in 1959, his will provided for the perpetuation of these concerts.

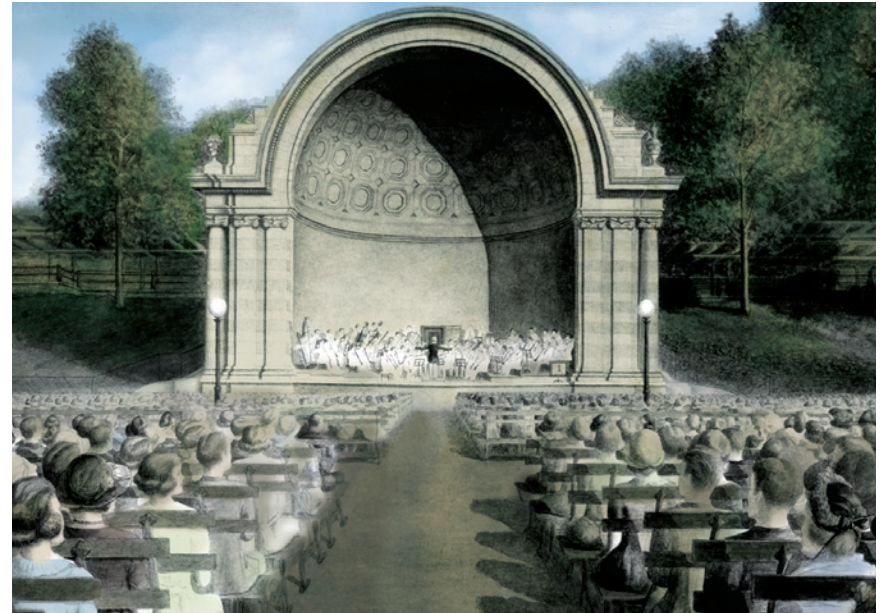
Today, the concerts feature promising new talent and promote the professional development of young composers and conductors. It is the oldest such concert series in the United States. The Naumburg Orchestral Concerts is a non-profit organization managed by a volunteer board of trustees; contributions towards its programs are fully tax-deductible.

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NAUMBURG ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

102ND ANNIVERSARY SEASON OF FREE CONCERTS FOR THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK

PRESENTS THE

NAUMBURG ORCHESTRA

Jean-Marie Zeitouni, *Conductor*
Jennifer Rivera, *Mezzo-Soprano*

7:30PM WEDNESDAY
AUGUST 15, 2007

The Naumburg Bandshell on the Concert Ground of Central Park

Please visit WWW.NAUMBURGCONCERTS.ORG for more information on our series.

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Jean-Marie Zeitouni, Conductor

Jennifer Rivera, Mezzo-Soprano

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A Simple Symphony (1933)

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Jennifer Rivera, mezzo-soprano

Nikos Skalkottas (1904-1949)
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INTERMISSION

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-93)
Serenade for Strings Op. 48 (1880)

From the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts

DEAR FRIENDS:

We hope you enjoy tonight's musical performance presented by the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts.

The Naumburg Orchestral Concerts has a 102-year tradition of providing free outdoor classical music concerts to New Yorkers. This was the vision of my great-grandfather, who founded the series in 1905, and of my great-uncle, who endowed it in 1959.

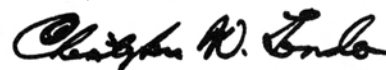
Rising costs and a stagnant endowment, however, had forced us to reduce the number of concerts from its original four to two or three each year. We hope that, with the help of our friends and devoted followers, we can remain with our four concert season.

We invite you to become a patron of the Naumburg Orchestral Concerts, a non-profit 501(c)3 located in Manhattan and managed by a board of trustees. All contributions are fully tax-deductible and will be used towards the direct costs of presenting the concerts—musicians' honoraria, park fees, chair rentals, printing and promotion.

Your gift will help to ensure that we can continue what has become a delightful musical tradition in the beautiful setting of Central Park. Please contribute what you can— all gifts, great or small, will be enormously appreciated and help us raise money from other funders.

Thank you for your interest and support.

Sincerely Yours,



Christopher W. London
President

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Jean-Marie Zeitouni - conductor– has emerged as one of Canada's brightest young conductors whose eloquent yet fiery style in repertoire ranging from Baroque to contemporary music results in regular re-engagements across

Canada and the United States. He has a five year association with Les Violons du Roy, first as conductor-in-residence and since 2004 as associate conductor. He has led the ensemble in over 100 performances in the province of Québec, around Canada and in Mexico. He is also music director of their Young Artist Opera Program at the Banff Centre. His recent CD with the ensemble, titled "Piazzola," garnered him a JUNO Award for Classical Album of The Year in the category Solo or Chamber Ensemble in 2007. During Bernard Labadie's tenure, he was associate conductor and chorus master at l'Opéra de Montréal, also heading its opera studio.

During the 2007/08 season Zeitouni debuts with the Edmonton Opera in a production of **Carmen**, and the following summer he conducts **Lucia de Lammermoor** by Donizetti at Cincinnati Opera, its first staging of that work ever. Equally in demand on the symphonic stage, he guest-conducts the Honolulu Symphony, Columbus Symphony, Huntsville Symphony and the Monterey Symphony. In Canada, he returns to the Festival Lanaudière with both the Montreal Symphony and Les Violon du Roy, and the Edmonton Symphony.

Jean-Marie Zeitouni graduated from the Montreal Conservatory in conducting, percussion and theory. He studied with Maestro Raffi Armenian.



Jennifer Rivera - Mezzo-Soprano – has earned recognition as a superb lyric mezzo soprano by both the *New York Times* & the *New York Sun*, the latter finding her "someone

to watch". In 2002, she won the New York City Opera's Stanley Tausend Award for Outstanding Debut Artist, and she has appeared in various roles with the company such as Cherubino in **Le Nozze di Figaro**, Lazuli in Chabrier's **L'Etoile**, Hansel in **Hansel and Gretel**, Rosina in **Barbiere di Siviglia**, Meg in **Little Women**, and Mhrynn in **Lysistrata**. Rivera's performances at City Opera garnered praise from the *NY Times*, writing that - she sang "marvelously" with "richness, ease, and exactness" in **L'Etoile**, and that - she was "again delightful as the Stage Boy – all flailing limbs, and fresh, ready singing" in **Hansel**.

In 2007, Rivera will reprise her acclaimed **Hansel** at NYC Opera. Other future engagements include singing Sharon Falconer in the World Premiere of **Elmer Gantry** with Nashville Opera, returning to Opera Columbus for **La Cenerentola**, and starring opposite Ruth Ann Swenson as Nerone in **Agrippina** at NYC Opera. Rivera will make her Italian debut in the spring of 2008 at the Teatro Regio di Torino as Sesto in **La Clemenza di Tito**, a role she will repeat with Opera di Bologna.

Rivera received a Bachelor of Music from Boston University and a Master of Music from the Juilliard School.

Music Pavillion



From a Tiffany & Co. card © 1995

In 1859 Jacob Wrey Mould, an amateur musician and the architect who designed many of the original structures in Central Park, persuaded his wealthy friends to pay for free band concerts at a temporary bandstand in the Ramble, and he arranged their musical programs. The first concert, on July 13, included the Festival March from *Tannhäuser*, Mendelssohn's song, "I would that my Love," selections from *La Traviata* and Strauss's *Sorgenbrecher Waltz*. In the summer of 1860 concerts were transferred to the Mall, and *The New York Herald* reported that the September 22 concert attracted "at least five thousand persons gathered around the performers, while outside of these were stationed an immense number of carriages... filled with the beauty and fashion of New York." The overwhelming popularity of the concerts prompted Central Park's board to finance them and to build a permanent Music Pavilion on the west side of the Mall near the Terrace. Mould designed the elaborately painted and brightly gilded Moorish-style wooden and cast-iron structure, completed in 1862. The Parks Department razed the Music Pavilion in 1923.

The Naumburg Bandshell, a gift of Elkan Naumburg to 'the City of New York and its Music Lovers', replaced in purpose the former structure. Though the Naumburg Bandshell opened on September 29th 1923, the Art Commission of New York had approved of the change in 1912 and the design of the Bandshell in 1916. 'On the Mall', composed by Edwin F. Goldman in 1923, to honor Elkan Naumburg, was premiered that September afternoon, conducted by Franz Kaltenborn. Astonishingly, during that summer, 959 concerts were presented on the Concert Ground, over 400 of which were underwritten by the Parks Department. It was a popular place, providing a well-liked activity.

The Naumburg Bandshell design has historic precedents for its shape in the Pantheon of Rome, or even more closely, in the Imperial Russian pleasure park's pavilion at Gatchina Palace by Vincenzo Brenna—his 'Eagle Pavilion' of the 1790's, and also in the later work of the architect F.G.P. Poccianti, particularly his 'Cisternone' at Livorno of 1829-42. It has historic precedents for its function in the outdoor theatres and pavilions of Versailles, for example, or the temples and 'eye-catchers' found in the park-like gardens of British country houses such as Stourhead and Stowe. The use of European park architecture as a model for what to insert in Central Park was in keeping with Olmsted's design sources and methods of nearly 60 years earlier. The Naumburg Bandshell was set into the Manhattan schist hillside, which nestles it, to prevent views being blocked across the Mall and Concert Ground which caused an earlier proposal of Carrère & Hastings to be found wanting by city and park officials. The design also admirably reflects the architect William G. Tachau's own Ecole des Beaux-Arts classicist and historicist training. The result was Central Park's only Neo-Classical building.

The Mall, Central Park

SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1874

The double rows of American Elms, planted fourteen years earlier, create a green tunnel. Sunlight filters through the canopy of new leaves and throws dappled patterns of light and shade on the gravel walk. It is a beautiful day, the Mall is crowded: ladies in voluminous skirts and colorful hats; Irish nurses in bonnets and white aprons, pushing baby carriages; gentlemen in frock coats and top hats; a few young clerks in stylish broadcloth suits; the children in a variety of dress, miniature versions of their parents. It is a decorous crowd; tomorrow—Sunday—is when working people have a holiday and attendance will be even larger.

At the north end of the Mall, on the west side, is the bandstand. Mould has pulled out all the stops for this design. The raised platform is covered by a Moorish-style cupola, dark blue and covered with gilt stars. It is topped by a sculpture of a lyre. The roof is supported by crimson cast-iron columns. The bandstand is unoccupied—the Saturday—afternoon concerts start next month. The annual summer series is so popular—**up to forty-five thousand people attend**—that the park board has provided extra seating and has taken the unprecedented step of allowing listeners to sit on the grass. Not everyone admires these free concerts. "The barriers and hedges of society for the time being are let down," sniffs the *Times*, "unfortunately also a few of its decencies are forgotten."

The barriers of society are not altogether absent. Across the Mall from the bandstand is a broad concourse where the wealthy park their carriages and, separated from the lower orders by a long wisteria arbor, listen to the music in comfortable isolation. Beside the concourse stands a large one-story building with a swooping tiled roof and deep overhanging eaves. Originally the Ladies Refreshment Stand, it has recently been converted into a restaurant called the Casino.

{ An excerpt from Witold Rybczynski—*A Clearing in the Distance*, pp.317-18 in which a letter of Frederick Law Olmsted—a principal designer of Central Park is quoted. }

The Future of the Bandshell and its Concerts

The 1993 court decision guaranteed that the bandshell would remain. What it did not do was insure the maintenance and improvement of the facility. The Parks Department completed repairing the roof of the Naumburg Bandshell in 2005. No other restoration of the building is planned at present.

The structure lacks two graceful pairs of decorative urns at either side of the half-domed structure and a suspended cast bronze light within its ceiling. It also needs the paint removed from the coffered ceiling, its stonework repaired, the losses replaced, the doors restored, the gilded donor inscription returned and the backstage renovated and fitted with working bathrooms once again. Naumburg Orchestral Concerts hopes the Central Park Conservancy and the Parks Department will restore the Naumburg Bandshell and with it the Concert Ground's role, dating to the 19th century, as a place of great beauty and tranquility in which to enjoy musical concerts in Central Park.

Given the many demands on public and private funds in NYC it may be too much to hope for., though there is little doubt that it could benefit from lighting, sound, and electrical improvements. To that end we are considering a large capital campaign to repair the Bandshell and enlarge the endowment of Naumburg Orchestral Concerts so we can improve and expand our concert schedule. We would like your opinions, help, contributions, and suggestions. Please see one of us at a concert or write NAUMBURG ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS c/o C.W. LONDON 300 CENTRAL PARK WEST, 18 H NEWYORK, N.Y. 10024-1513