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FEATURES

A & E Spotlights (part 2): LYO, Ground Floor, Yandell

By LEO Weekly

Spotlight On: THE LOUISVILLE YOUTH ORCHESTRA
Director challenges youth during their formative years



Jason Seber: PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LOUISVILLE YOUTH ORCHESTRA
Jason Seber is starting his third year directing The Louisville Youth Orchestra

In 2005 Jason Seber moved to Louisville from Cleveland with a master's degree in conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music, plus stints as assistant conductor of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra and the National Repertory Orchestra, as well as guest conductor work for several regional orchestras. In his third year as music director of the Louisville Youth Orchestra, Seber, 31, is bringing new challenges to its young musicians during the organization's 49th season.

sneezing, you should take the story "with a grain of salt," so the piece begins with what he calls "a huge orchestral sneeze."

Those include a suite from Zoltán Kodály's opera "Háry János." Seber describes the piece as very Hungarian in flavor, about a soldier dreaming comic and dramatic tales, such as defeating Napoleon and stealing his wife. Seber says that in Hungarian culture, if someone begins a story by

The piece, to be performed by the LYO's Symphony Orchestra on March 9 at the Brown Theatre, uses two instruments rarely used in orchestra — the saxophone (to evoke the character of Napoleon) and a cimbalom, which resembles a small piano. While it is used in many eastern European cultures, this is the first time the LYO is using the instrument in a piece.

LYO has four core orchestras and members for each are determined through auditions. The Symphony and Repertory orchestras are full orchestras with highly developed players, while beginners play in the Serenade Orchestra and intermediate string musicians play in the Concert Orchestra.

Seber says young people in Louisville with advanced skill and talent are fortunate to have two full youth orchestras. While there are dozens of full youth orchestras in the United State, they are not common. Seber says students gain an advantage by participating in a full orchestra because they learn more and different kinds of music than they would by taking lessons with one teacher. It also, he adds, teaches them how to play pieces written for performance.

Seber wants to teach students the importance of music and turn them into great performers, but, moreover, he wants to "turn them on to arts in general." He strives to impart to his students that learning about music or art is far from drudgery, of the kind one thinks of in practicing the piano as a child.

"I want them to work hard and learn, but I mostly want them to have fun," he says. "They have an important role in society as far as playing music and making people aware of how important the arts are."

BY ERIN CLEPHAS
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Spotlight On: THE GROUND FLOOR GALLERY
Traveling gallery turns heads to art

It all started with the quest to have a good time. Sara Robinette and Jesse Levesque, former roommates and two of the principles of The Ground Floor Gallery, were chatting when an idea come to them.

"Wouldn't it be fun to go to something like this?" Robinette said. "Then we realized we could pull this off."

"This" was their idea of themed events featuring a mix of visual arts, performing arts, music, food and people dressing in costume at venues around the city. Thus The Ground Floor Gallery was born, with a focus on local emerging artists.

From the idea, the group grew to include Levesque's sister, Amanda Bishop; her mother, Cynda Bishop; Amanda's friend, Teresa Huarte; and several volunteers. They planned four events based on the elements of air, water, fire and earth.



Ground Floor Gallery: PHOTO COURTESY THE GROUND FLOOR GALLERY
Louisville artist Sarah Lyon (far right) talks to visitors about her work

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