

The Role of Classical Music In Saving Humanity Today

by Nancy Spannaus

Feb. 11—In designing the programs for the Schiller Institute’s series of conferences on “A New Paradigm To Save Mankind,” Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche mandated a prominent role for the performance and discussion of Classical music. The experience of Classical music, as well as Classical drama and poetry, is a means of educating the emotions, specifically, the quality of empathy, or sensitive compassion, of which the poet Friedrich Schiller wrote, Zepp-LaRouche stated in her keynote presentation at the Schiller conference Jan. 26 in New York City. Therefore, it is as much an integral part of a program of recovery as is a program for economic development.

The Schiller Institute chorus provided a demonstration of the power of Classical music with its performance of J.S. Bach’s “Magnificat” at the New York conference. This was followed up by a number of presentations by those fighting for a Classical music revival, in a world dominated by the ugly sounds of what passes for music today.

The first presentation was given by Elvira Green, a veteran of the musical movement founded by renowned pianist and operatic vocal coach Sylvia Olden Lee (1917-2004), and a close collaborator with the Schiller Institute for 10 years. Green entitled her speech “Classical Music is the World’s Music.”

The next two offerings were from Lynn Yen, a founder of the Foundation for the Revival of Classical Culture, who is working in New York City to uplift and inspire the lives of young people, against the current

tide. Yen first introduced to the audience a young lyrical soprano, Fang Tao Jiang, who spoke on the topic “Let My Children Hear Music!” Later in the evening, Yen described her own efforts in New York City, where she has brought the beauty of Classical music to thousands of young people. Both women moved the audience profoundly with stories of their personal struggles, and paid tribute to the Schiller Institute’s dedication to achieving political freedom through beauty—a commitment they have taken as their own.

The evening panel featured two other music performances. The first was Beethoven’s Sonata for cello and piano, Op. 102, #1, presented by Schiller Institute members My-Hoa Steger on piano and Jean-Sebastian Tremblay on cello.

Schiller Institute choral conductor John Sigerson then provided a pedagogical discussion of the science of musical tuning, with particular concentration on the work of Giuseppe Verdi. The Institute has launched a campaign to revive the Verdi tuning, which returns to the Classical C=256 standard, which was adopted as law in Italy in the 19th Century, thanks to the great Italian opera composer.

Sigerson utilized the groundbreaking Schiller Institute work available in *A Manual on the Rudiments of Tuning and Registration*, a DVD composed from the Institute’s 1992 book on that subject. He then illustrated his argument by having the chorus perform the chorus “Va, pensiero” from Verdi’s opera “Nabucco,” at the A=432 Verdi tuning, and then at the popular A=440 tuning of

today. (The materials on which Sigerson's presentation was based can be found on the www.larouchepub.com website, under the "Buy Publications" icon.)