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Sound of music

TAMU Orchestra to host spring concert

By Christina Tiechman
THE BATTALION

This weekend the newly-founded Texas A&M Orchestra will be lifting its melodic sounds into the air at the Memorial Student Center.

The organization was founded during the 2003 fall semester, and its members are working hard to get the word out to their fellow students. The orchestra now consists of about 60 members, including undergraduate and graduate students. This spring will bring their first Spring Concert.

Robert A. Kenefick, a professor in the A&M physics department since 1965, and Paul Sikes, associate director of bands at A&M, are faculty advisers to the TAMU Orchestra.

Cynthia Lin, a junior biomedical sciences major us president of the TAMU Orchestra.

"My freshman year (at A & M), we started an ensemble which included seven people," said Cynthia Lin, president of the TAMU student orchestra and junior biomedical sciences major. "Last year we decided we wanted to become a bigger group so we applied to be a student organization."

Lin said the ensemble was called Philyra, which is Greek for "love of music," and that the group was fashioned to perform as a string orchestra with instruments such as violins, violas, string basses and cellos. Soon it evolved into an orchestra displaying a mixture of string and band instruments.

Brad Cawye, the orchestra's conductor, graduated in December 2003 from A&M with a degree in mathematics and minor in music.

"Brad works with Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra," Lin said. "He is applying for graduate school in orchestral conducting."

Zachary Olson, a sophomore physics major, who plays the viola for the TAMU Orchestra said some of the members interacted with each other before the group was formed.

"There had been a couple of string quartets and a couple of us knew each other from the Aggie Music Forum," Olson said.

Before the orchestra was formally united, there were several unofficial meetings, and talk of an orchestra starting was spread by word-of-mouth to those interested.

"I was glad to join (the orchestra) because I had played for nine years and really enjoyed it," Olson said.

Olson said all the members of the orchestra are hard working and take pride in their musical accomplishments.

"It's just great how everybody takes it and is so involved," Olson said.

Elizabeth Wong, the group's librarian, volunteer for TAMU Orchestra said her talent as a violin player is greatly improved due to time spent in the orchestra.

"TAMU Orchestra aims to provide its members an opportunity to improve and use their musical abilities through large and small practices and performances," Wong said.

Lin said some of the pieces audiences

hear performed include

"St. Paul's Suite,"

String Orchestra

Movements 1 and 2

Gustav

"Nimrod"

and several other inspiring compositions.

Wong said the orchestra plays a variety of musical styles.

"Although orchestras are usually associated with classical music, they play a wide range of musical styles from pop to jazz, modern and naturally classical," Wong said.

Stephen Goodman, a sophomore biomedical sciences major, saw the orchestra perform in concert. Because several of Goodman's friends are officers in the group, he had heard about the orchestra when it was beginning last fall.

"I thought it was unique that there was an orchestra on campus and that it was composed of students, and neat that the conductor was a student as well," Goodman said.

Goodman said there are many things people to look forward to at the TAMU Orchestra concert.

"I encourage anyone who is a fan of classical music or who wants to see what the rest of the student population is doing to go," Goodman said.

The TAMU Orchestra's concert will be held on weekend April 3, at 5 p.m. in the Memorial Student Center Flag Room and a silent auction will take place before the concert at 4 p.m. Admission is free.

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