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Lloyd Schwartz Wins Pulitzer Prize In Music Criticism For Reviews In Boston Phoenix

English professor Lloyd Schwartz, whose appreciation of classical music was cultivated when he listened as a child to records on his mother's Victrola, has won the 1994 Pulitzer Prize in Criticism for 10 music reviews that appeared last year in the Boston Phoenix. "I have a wonderful feeling of accomplishment," says Schwartz, "I am stunned." He is the University's, and the Phoenix's, first Pulitzer Prize winner, receiving the honor "for his skillful and resonant classical music criticism."

Schwartz began his teaching career at Hellenic College in 1968 and joined the faculty of Boston State College in 1970. He came to the Harbor Campus with the rank of associate professor when the abiding interest in all types of music and a record of competition were typical of the body of work that classical music was cultivated when he listened as a student. "There was a wonderful feeling of accomplishment," says English professor Lloyd Schwartz Wins Pulitzer Prize. "I'd sit in the newsroom I'd feel like I was in a happily satisfied student."

Schwartz's entry into journalism began through his friendship with longtime Boston Globe music critic Richard Dyer, a Harvard University classmate of Schwartz's. In 1975, Dyer recommended Schwartz for a temporary freelance assignment with the Boston Herald, covering concerts by singer Beverly Sills and pianist Arthur Rubinstein. Schwartz's impressive performance led to a permanent freelance position with the newspaper.

According to Schwartz, there were quixotic and practical reasons for his involvement in journalism. "When I'd sit in the newsroom I'd feel like I was in a movie," he says. "Also, the $50 per story helped me pay the bills." He contributed articles to the Herald for three years, then joined the Phoenix, a weekly alternative publication that focuses on the cultural scene. Over the last 16 years Schwartz wrote approximately 30 articles a year. On three occasions, he has won the American Society of Composers and Publishers' Deems Taylor Award, a national prize given annually by ASCAP to a reviewer of classical music.

A Critic, Not A Musician

Apart from a keen ear for music inherited from his mother and grandmother, who would spend evenings listening to classical compositions on a wind-up Victrola, Schwartz claims no gift for music. "I can't play any instruments," he says. Schwartz adds that his lack of training in music may explain why his writing style differs from that of many critics. "I'm neither a musician nor a musicologist," he says. "I'm not comfortable with musical language. When I write a review, my intention is to talk to the reader, not talk down to the reader."

Schwartz grew up in the Brooklyn and Queens boroughs of New York City. He received a bachelor's degree from Queens College and a Ph.D. in English from Harvard. As a student at Harvard in the early 1970s Schwartz pursued an acting career. He performed in an amateur theater company that included then Harvard students Tommie Lee Jones and Stockard Channing, as well as James Woods. "I was very serious about becoming an actor, but decided to let it go to concentrate on my dissertation," Schwartz says.

The UMass Boston professor says he's still getting used to his new celebrity, and hopes it will raise awareness of his poetry. "Maybe more people will be inclined to read some of my work," he says. Schwartz and the other Pulitzer Prize recipients will receive their awards and $3,000 in prize money in May at a luncheon at Columbia University.

Campus Notes

A public forum at the John F. Kennedy Library on Thursday, April 29, will feature a discussion of the troubled relationship between the news media and politicians. Panelists include Boston University president John Silber, Harvard University's Nieman Foundation curator Bill Kovach, former Lyndon Johnson press secretary George Reedy and McCormick Institute senior fellow Menzie. The discussion will take place from 5:30 to 7:15 p.m. It is co-sponsored by the McCormick Institute. More information is available by calling 929-4371.

CEOs and high-level executives from a host of Bay State companies were at the Harbor Campus April 15 to meet with University of Massachusetts college of management administrators from the Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth and Lowell campuses.

A study by McCormick Institute senior fellow Phyllis Freeman calls the current models for national health care reform "a formula for failure" because they do not emphasize improving public health. Freeman says the preoccupation with containing costs along with the failure to reduce the prospects for disease will ultimately cost more money.

The University Chorus and the UMass Boston Chamber singers will perform jointly in the Snowden Auditorium on Wednesday, May 11, at 7:30 p.m. The evening will also feature Balinese music and dance.

McCormick Institute senior fellow Al Cardani is quoted in an April 11 U.S. News & World Report article on the steep rise in the rate of unsolved murders.

Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino To Speak At UMass Boston Commencement on June 4

Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino will deliver the keynote address at UMass Boston's 26th annual commencement exercises on Saturday, June 4, at the Harbor Campus. During the ceremony the mayor will be awarded the Chancellor's Medal for public service.

Menino, a UMass Boston alumnus, received a degree in community planning from CPCC in 1988. He attended CPCC while representing the Hyde Park and Roslindale neighborhoods on the Boston City Council. The Mayor considers the experience of earning a degree at the University as the "real enrichment period" in his life.

"We have chosen Mayor Menino to address our commencement because of his past and current association with the UMass Boston community," Chancellor Sherry H. Penney stated. "He has always personified a vital part of the University's vision — service to others, deep interest in the community, and a profound commitment to preserving and enhancing urban life."

"As a successful graduate of one of our colleges, he also symbolizes so many of our students who surmount numerous obstacles to gain their degrees and thus change the direction of their lives. We at the University are proud to be collaborating with the Mayor and his administration in seeking ways to revitalize Boston's economy and its neighborhoods."

Menino is a lifelong resident of Hyde Park and has devoted much of his political career to assisting small businesses. He served on the City Council for nine years. He became its president last year, and was acting mayor for four months before being elected to the post last November. Besides his UMass Boston degree, Menino holds a certificate from the government executives program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.
Student Artists Assist in Campus Sculpture

A globe on the Harbor Campus plaza constructed of metal pipe and plywood boxes was built by five UMass Boston art students under the direction of John Tagiuri, a prominent Cambridge sculptor whose outdoor site specific works emphasize environmental decay.

Tagiuri chose UMass Boston as his site for his globe exhibit because of the campus' Earth Day activities this month. He used several small grants from local arts councils to purchase materials for the globe. The students who assisted Tagiuri during the building process are Duncan Frazee, Julie Lewitt, Ek Sismaat, Christopher McDonald and Ellen Venis. They are taking a course this semester on site specific works taught by outdoor sculptor Laura Baring-Gould, a lecturer in the art department.

Baring-Gould and Tagiuri are members of Reclamation Artists, a local group that uses organic and raw building materials to construct temporary sculptures on neglected city landscapes, usually to underscore environmental or aesthetic distress.

Each of the 18 students in Baring-Gould's class has been assigned to create a outdoor sculpture on the campus over the next few weeks. The range of ideas include Sismaat's plan to construct several bamboo human figures, each enclosed in a box and stationed at a various locations on the plaza. The exhibit is intended to symbolize the sometimes solitary experience of students, according to Sismaat, a sophomore from Fitchburg who is majoring in art.

"I'm completely impressed by the creative ideas that our students are generating," says Baring-Gould, who last year built an exhibit at Chapel Gallery in West Newton using beeswax, copper, honey, salt and twigs. "I want the students to view the campus as a pallet for their work. Art can exist in the community, not just in a gallery or museum."

More Campus Notes

Chancellor Penney was among six people whose organizations were cited by the committee "Black and White Coming Together" for building effective working relationships among African-Americans and whites. The other winners were former U.S. attorney Wayne Budd, Boston Police commissioner Paul Evans, Boston Schools superintendent Lois Harrison-Jones, Blue Cross/Blue Shield CEO William Van Faassen and Suffolk County district attorney Ralph Martin.

Management professor Ellen Greenberg has won a Fulbright award and will lecture in Bulgaria during the 1994-95 academic year.

Several faculty were among a group of local and national officials who met this month to discuss management of Shellwagen Bank, the fertile fishing and research waters between Cape Ann and Provincetown. Taking part in the discussion were environmental scientists Bernie Gardner, Eugene Gallagher, Gordon Wallace, William Robinson and Tracy Villareal, and anthropologist's Barbara Luedtke and Timothy Sieber. Urban Harbors Institute assistant director Jack Wiggins organized the conference.

At the annual meeting of the National Council of Urban Economic Development in Philadelphia, CPCS professor Philip Hart presented strategies for distressed communities to attract and retain technological firms.

Music professor Brian Thompson has once again organized a two-week festival of French language song that will take place at various locations throughout Greater Boston from April 21 to May 6. More information is available by calling 7-7088.

The annual reception honoring faculty and professional staff who have either submitted a proposal for an external grant or had a book published will take place on Tuesday, May 10, at the University Club from 3:30 to 7:00 p.m.

The reception will also serve as a prelude to the annual meeting of the National Council of Urban Economic Development.