



## Musical Treasure Chest #15

May 9<sup>th</sup> was to have been a special day for Musicians of Ma'alwyck, for the third successive year we were to play a concert at Hyde Hall for their delightful pre-Mother's Day tea. Hyde Hall, which is situated very near the Glimmerglass Opera Theater, pulses with history—the stories of James Fennimore Cooper's beautiful vistas and life in America in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the awakening of our young nation. The legacy of George Hyde Clarke, Hyde Hall is rather like upstate New York's *Monticello*: a superb mansion (albeit English rather than Greek inspired), designed by its owner and equipped with cutting edge technology for its era. The house sits on a hill with a sublime view looking down Otsego Lake towards Cooperstown, a more idyllic spot really doesn't exist. Inside Hyde Hall, high ceilinged rooms, with glorious appointments, winding staircases and all sorts of special nooks and crannies in a seemingly endless procession greet you. I love this place!

But our special concert fell victim to COVID, and the day came and went without our performance. The director of Hyde Hall, Jonathan Maney, is passionate about the site; he is also creative and innovative—always thinking outside the box. When it became obvious that we wouldn't be able to play, he not only wrote his apologies but added, "let's make a CD or something instead!" The Clarke family, as many others of their status, were well-tutored musicians, and in the site's archives are some fascinating and delightful collections of music. Norm Thibodeau and I spent a day a few years ago going through the materials and discovering many musical gems. Luckily for us, flute was one of the instruments the Clarke family played, and their binders contained numerous pieces practically written for Musicians of Ma'alwyck! When Jon suggested the CD, I jumped, I knew we had the ideal repertory to record: transcriptions of 1830s opera material transcribed for flute, violin and guitar or some combination thereof. Since the original CD proposal, the project has expanded. We are not only recording music of Rossini, Bellini, Auber and Meyerbeer, we are also filming a concert in Hyde Hall's incredible inner courtyard for streaming and filming two mini-documentaries—one on the musical

collections at Hyde and another on the making of the CD. We are thrilled.

One of Jon Maney's great gifts as director is his touch for making Hyde Hall come to life. The house doesn't feel like a museum, but rather it lives and breathes. Every time I enter the grounds, I sense that around the next corner I could meet one of the Clarkes or see a horse and carriage pull up. The site has reopened for tours on a limited basis and by reservation only. I'm pasting the link here. <https://hydehall.org/> I strongly encourage you to visit. It's just an hour from the Capital Region, and the drive is quite scenic if you take Route 20 west. We will be working on the CD July 27<sup>th</sup> through August 2<sup>nd</sup>, and while you cannot observe the actual recording, if you tour on one of those days, you can see the set up.

For today's music I include links to some of the repertory we are recording. These are operatic versions, since we are the first to record these period transcriptions. And if I can take a moment to ask: **We need your financial support for this project.** Please visit our website and [donate on-line](#) or mail us a check at Musicians of Ma'alwyck, 511 Mohawk Ave, Scotia, NY 12302. Thank you very much.

Here are two selections:

- **Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*** (this is a great opera, if you don't know it, you should definitely listen) [www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDfpOu-VWGw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDfpOu-VWGw)
- **Overture to Auber's *La Muette de Portici*** (another completely underperformed work) [www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOWIP-ctCoc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOWIP-ctCoc)