

Latin America Fest Sizzles With Excitement

BY SARA WISE

On Saturday, January 22nd, students at NCSSM had the opportunity to step out of the cold and into the sizzling hot hispanic culture at Latin America Fest. This festival was organized by seniors Aden VanNoppen and Elena Bryce, and hosted by the MPCs and the Hispanic Cultures Club.

The occurrence of this exciting new festival is a very significant step in increasing awareness of other cultures. VanNoppen explains, "Latin cultures are becoming increasingly more important in our community, both inside and outside the NCSSM campus. It is important that we recognize and celebrate these cultures in order to raise awareness and appreciation of

them."

For the event, the PEC was transformed into a carnival. Delicious tortillas and quesadillas were served as the NCSSM Jazz Combo set the atmosphere. The audience was then entertained by a performance by Elena Bryce and Elizabeth Moose. The duo recited two poems from Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. One of the poems, "Cuerpo de mujer," was particularly enchanting, with lines such as, "Body of a woman, white hills, white thighs, you look like a world, lying in surrender."

Following the poetry reading, the audience was treated with a story reading by Rachel Wingo. Everyone listened intently to find out whether the

protagonist would be able to outwit the lady Death. Without a doubt, those who came to the festival were lucky to learn about the passion and the culture of Latin American literature.

Next, the audience enjoyed

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the privilege of hearing guest speaker Professor Steve Ellner, who has been living in Venezuela for the past 30 years. Although Professor Ellner hadn't planned on staying more than a semester, he was enticed by the hospitality

of the Venezuelans and the interesting situation of the laborers. He had an incredible wealth of knowledge to share that provided listeners the opportunity to understand the unique situation of one Latin American country.

Soon afterwards, the fiesta started heating up. VanNoppen and salsa dancer Andrew Pearson performed two beautiful Spanish dances. The crowd could not take their eyes off of the graceful pair as they whirled around the dance floor.

Another fast-paced and lively dance demonstration followed, led by flamenco dancer Sharon Bryant. She later gave a brief dancing lesson for anyone who wanted to learn the rhythmic steps of the flamenco.

After the scheduled events had taken place, everyone par-

took in the fun activities of the carnival. Participants could choose from a variety of games and activities, from swinging at a pinata to making paper flowers.

As Latin America Fest drew to a close, everyone was sorry to leave. However, they encountered one last surprise before they left. Every person who took their shoes off before entering the festival found that their shoes were now filled with candy. This is a popular Christmas custom in many Latin American countries.

This is also just another example of the detail and dedication that was put into the festival by the MPCs and the Hispanic Cultures Club. Everyone who attended the festival is already hoping that this will become a part of the NCSSM cultural tradition that will continue in the future.

To Gun comma Jen
I love you hair curly or
straight.
I love the way you skate
I love you running down
da hall
I love it when you fall
Be mine? Now
Love, YSA

To the Cowgirls,
Cowgirls do it better!!!
10, 20, 10
-Genevieve Pike

To Ground C
Happy valentine's day
from Sara!
I love all of you and
I don't know what I'd do
without you! You have
helped to make this the
best year ever!
-Sara Wise

To 1E, 2E, 2D
You're the greatest!!
Happy V-day!!
-Anna

To Mr. Zachary
"Nice" Armfield
Here's to the all-
seeing eye of drama,
laughing at Stoddard
and Stoppard,
Recommendations and
SAT scores
"For me to poop on,"
and big babies
Thanks for making
04-05 a bit funnier.
-The Versatile actor

To Amanda Mason
I hope every wish
You've ever had comes
true
I love you
-MBWA Kalisana

To my sweetie;
Sorry I missed Prom
last year
But I will make good on
My promise to you
Love, your Schnookums

To Robin Kandl
I love you very much!
You are the best room-
mate I could ever have
these past two years.
Love ya Butthead!!
-Robeana

To the Pirates of 1D
If I was a parrot
I'd always pick
You shoulder to sit on
Love, Jane Lee

NCSSM Performs the Lord Nelson Mass

LUCIE GUO

During the summer of 1798, in the Battle of the Nile, Napoleon was devastated by the British navy under the command of Admiral Horatio Nelson. Seven years later, Admiral Nelson stopped Napoleon from invading England and died in the struggle.

While Europe was gripped in the turmoil of the Napoleonic wars, the composer Joseph Haydn worked within earshot of battle cannons. That summer, Haydn composed the choral piece - Mass in D minor - also called the "Mass in Time of Distress". It was later named the Lord Nelson Mass in tribute to the admiral.

Now, more than 200 years after its composition, the masterpiece will be resurrected on the stage of our own auditorium. It brings together the NCSSM Chorale, Orchestra, and the choir of Durham's Blackall Memorial Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Scott Laird, conductor of the NCSSM groups, said

that this collaboration between student and adult choirs is an endeavor that NCSSM has never attempted before. He teams up with Mr. Dave Stuntz, who is his old friend and the conductor of the Blackall choir.

"Here is a project that thrusts folks ranging from

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teenagers to 60-plus-year-olds into the same arena, with the same goals; they are peers." Stuntz said.

Laird and Stuntz both noted that the appeal of the Mass was the way it defied choral expectations of the time. "The high dramatic elements in this piece stood out to both of us," Stuntz commented.

The Lord Nelson Mass is Hadyn's biggest, most well-known choral work. It is also his only mass in a minor key. The text of this work praises God, but the music does not

have a serene and prayerful setting. Instead, it is often intertwined with frustration and anger. In the Benedictus movement, the orchestra begins with a storm. Three trumpets create a war-like fanfare in the climax of the movement. "The chorus is essentially screaming the text, with

kettle drums booming and trumpets blaring away." Stuntz described. Through such unconventional elements, the composition sends out a disturbing message - "Where is the blessed one? Is that person coming at all?"

"The best art sometimes raises the most disquieting of questions," Stuntz said.

Through bringing Hadyn's masterpiece to life, NCSSM students and adults of the Blackall choir partake in a unified endeavor of music-making. Even NCSSM faculty members are getting involved in the project. Dr. Jo Ann Lutz participates as an alto singer in the NCSSM Chorale. "I have always loved

singing," she said. "The students are very talented and also very helpful to me."

"Rehearsals are fun," said Toan Tran-Phu, a violinist in the NCSSM Orchestra, "but they are also terse and focused. The performance is soon, and the pressure is mounting. But it's music, so we have fun."

Preparing such a masterpiece involves immense dedication. The performers are required to attend rehearsals outside of class, even on a Saturday morning. But many agree that such efforts reap great rewards. "As much as I love the perform-

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ing," Stuntz said, "I love the rehearsing even more."

Both he and Laird believe that one of the most enjoyable aspects of music-making is its social, interactive environment. "The heart of art is relationships," Stuntz commented, "lives touching lives, intersect-

ing, impacting and being impacted by others."

"The process begins with my seeking to 'hear' what Haydn is saying to me from 1798," Stuntz said, "then - my life intersecting with Mr. Laird's, each of us talking and rehearsing with our respective choirs, then combining and continuing the process. And the performance is the extension of that: the performers are touched by the music, they have the opportunity to touch the audience."

"That's the big deal to me," he continued, "not musical purity or perfection of performance, but a passionate engagement with the moment, being filled up with the music, the text, and the lives around you. What an astonishing privilege is ours in the arts, to spend our time in such pursuits!"

The NCSSM music department invites you to join them in the experience. The performance of the Mass will take the stage on March 12, at 4:00pm in the NCSSM auditorium.