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COURTESY PHOTO

The Dakota Chamber Orchestra debuts two new concertos during performances tonight (Friday) in Yankton and Saturday in Freeman. Tonight's 7 p.m. concert is at Bishop Marty Chapel.

ORCHESTRAL MANEUVERS

Dakota Chamber Orchestra To Debut Two New Concertos In Yankton And Freeman

BY SHAUNA MARLETTE
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The development of a new orchestral piece is a complex working relationship between the composer, the soloists, the orchestra and the directors who will perform the piece. The Dakota Chamber Orchestra is presenting a unique opportunity tonight (Friday), when it premieres two new concertos during the group's annual visit to Yankton.

The Dakota Chamber Orchestra, with special guest soloist Peter Kenote from the New York Philharmonic, will perform at Bishop Marty Chapel in Yankton at 7 p.m. tonight. The concert is sponsored by Avera McKennan Hospital and the South Dakota Arts Council.

The orchestra will also be performing at 4 p.m. Saturday at Freeman Academy.

The relationship between the South Dakota Symphony and the New York Philharmonic is one that has been cultivated for many years.

"The Washington Pavilion had the New York Philharmonic play the very first show there when it opened 10 years ago," said Maestro Delta David Gier, music director of the South Dakota symphony. "The symphony brings a soloist from the New York Philharmonic to play a concert every year."

Kenote and the Dakota Chamber Orchestra will premiere a Concerto for Viola and Orchestra, written expressly for Kenote by Harnly. Also being premiered is a Concerto for Bassoon performed by South Dakota Symphony principal bassoonist, John Tomkins, and written by his brother, Benjamin Tomkins. The program will conclude with Mozart's Symphony No. 35 in D major, also known as the "Hafner Symphony." Both contemporary composers will be at the concert to talk about their pieces and how they were developed.

"It is kind of like a wedding: something old, something new, something borrowed," Gier said. "The three pieces we will be performing on this

tour could not be more different from each other. Benjamin Tomkins has written a fun, quirky piece that goes all over the place with a lot of fun, witty elements. The viola piece, written by Neal Harnly is more serious and expressive in a classical music piece."

For Gier, seeing the final version of Concerto for Viola and Orchestra is a culmination of nearly six years of work between Harnly and Kenote.

"I was an assistant conductor with the New York Philharmonic for 15 years," Gier said. "(Kenote and I) have worked together for years. The viola concerto we are premiering is an extension of a piece that we premiered five or six years ago. It was a shorter piece then. Both Peter and I told (Harnly), 'This is the beginning of a longer piece,' so, this is the fruition of that conversation."

Gier said that the development of a piece that is written for a specific performer creates a unique working relationship.

"I think the collaboration really comes between the soloist and the composer because Neil was writing the piece specifically for the performer," he said. "So the two of them collaborated very closely. More recently, three of us went through the piece very closely and it is now my job to bring the composer's vision to the orchestra."

For Benjamin Tomkins, the development of his Concerto for Bassoon has been an even more personal journey.

John Tomkins has served as the principal bassoon in the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra and Dakota Wind Quintet since 2002.

"It is exciting to be there anytime one of my pieces is going to be performed," Benjamin Tomkins said. "Writing a piece for my brother is something I have wanted to do for a long, long time. (As for) writing a concerto for your brother, I know him a bit as a player, obviously and as a person, so you are able to put snippets of

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Peter KENOTE



Neal HARNLY



John TOMKINS



Benjamin TOMKINS

Two For One: MMC's Chautauqua Teams With National Players Next Week

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
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Two annual events will come together next week when Mount Marty College presents a Chautauqua experience in conjunction with the National Players Tour of Washington, D.C.

Audiences will be treated to William Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" on Monday and William Golding's "Lord of the Flies" on Tuesday. Both productions begin at 7:30 p.m. in Marian Auditorium on the MMC campus and are free to the public. General admission seating will begin at 7 p.m. each evening.

This year's event represents a team effort between MMC history professor Rich Lofthus and MMC associate speech-theater professor Andy Henrickson.

Lofthus, who helped revive the Chautauqua movement in Yankton, said he is excited to combine forces with the traveling theater company. "Normally, the National Players come in April. This year, they were scheduled in February at about the same time as the Chautauqua Theater," he said.

"Theater was a part of Chautauqua in the past, and it worked out conveniently that National Players will be here in February. I hope those who support Chautauqua will come to the theater."

The Dakota Territorial Museum partners with the Chautauqua and promotes it among its membership, Lofthus said.

"This is our sixth year for Chautauqua, and we feel we have a following," he said. "It has been a February event since we revived it. We started out by doing it the first Sunday night after the Super Bowl. This year, we merged with the National Players and have expanded it to two nights. People can go to a Shakespearean play, a modern play or both."

National Players was founded in 1949 by Father Gilbert V.

"This year, we merged (the Chautauqua) with the National Players and have expanded it to two nights. People can go to a Shakespearean play, a modern play or both."

RICH LOFTHUS

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