

Musical Biography of Maestro Dr. Donald L. Appert

Donald Lawrence Appert has appeared as a guest conductor in Japan, Australia, Central America, and throughout Europe. In Italy *La'ovadese* wrote, "...the performance of the 'Serenade in C Major' of Tchaikovsky, under the exceptional direction of Appert, was in such a style that it brought out the elegance and grace of the melodic lines with Mozartian inspiration. ...The L'Orchestra Sinfonica Città di Grosseto... performed the Barber 'Adagio' with rare effectiveness, emphasizing its intrinsically rich melody." *Giornale di Sicilla* praised his interpretation of Nielsen's First Symphony as "lyrical with an airy freshness," and his conducting as "precise, painstakingly accurate, and diligent." In the United States, he has appeared as a guest conductor of the Vancouver (Washington) Symphony, the University of Texas – Arlington Symphony Orchestra, the Eastern Washington University Symphony Orchestra, and the University of Central Arkansas Symphony. In a concert that featured his *Concertino for Bass Clarinet and String Orchestra*, Dr. Appert guest conducted the Satu-Mare Philharmonic in Romania.



As one of only five musicians chosen, Dr. Appert received the 2015 Honored Artists of The American Prize, the Honored Artists being "...individuals who have proven themselves to be musicians of "sustained excellence" over a number of seasons as contestants in the competitions." Adding to this distinctive honor is his 2011 The American Prize in Orchestral Programming/Vytautas Marijosius Memorial Award for his work with the Oregon Sinfonietta. Dr. Appert again won The American Prize in Orchestral Programming in 2020 for his work with both the Clark College Orchestra and Jewish Community Orchestra. As a signal honor, David Katz, chief judge and founder of The American Prize, cited Dr. Appert for his win. The citation reads in part, "Having examined Maestro Appert's programs for a number of seasons, ...I am always taken by two things: his *commitment* and his *courage*. ...His is a calling worthy and noble. It is a delight to honor him once again." (To read the full citation, please click [here](#).)

Throughout the years The American Prize has honored Dr. Appert, the Oregon Sinfonietta, Clark College Orchestra, and the Jewish Community Orchestra numerous times. The Clark College Orchestra placed as a Semi-Finalist in the 2020 – 2021 Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for Performance in American Music. Other notable awards include the Oregon Sinfonietta and Clark College Orchestra placing in 2018 – 2019 as Finalists in Orchestral Performance, with Clark College also receiving Finalist Honorable Mention in the Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for their performance of Dr. Appert's *Concerto for Cello and Orchestra*. (For the opening concert of the Oregon Sinfonietta's 50th season in 2022 – 2023, Dr. Appert's cello concerto will be performed by Diane Chaplin on November 6, 2022.) In 2017 – 2018, the Oregon Sinfonietta also received this award as a Finalist Honorable Mention for their performance of Dr. Appert's *Concerto for Viola and Orchestra*, with world-renowned violist Brett Deubner as soloist. (The performance of the viola concerto may be viewed on the Videos/Recordings page.) Other works of Dr. Appert for which he and the orchestras garnered awards are his *Sacred Song Cycle*, *Northwest Triptych*, and *Fantasy for Contrabass and Orchestra*, for which Dr. Appert placed as a Semi-Finalist in Orchestral Composition – Professional Division.

Dr. Appert is a recipient of the 2019 – 2020 Clark College Exceptional Faculty Awards, which recognizes faculty members for their exemplary work performance, positive impact on students, professional commitment, and other contributions to the college. "He doesn't just 'talk the talk.' He truly embodies everything he teaches his students, from being punctual for class to practicing his instrument every day. He puts his students before himself and goes out of his way to create the best learning experience. He expects a lot from his students, but expects even more from himself." Dr. Appert's other awards include the 2015 ASCAPLUS Award in recognition of his performances in Italy and the United States; his awards in previous years were for performances in Romania, Qatar, Europe, Central America, Japan, and the United States. In 2014, Dr. Appert received the Clark County Arts Commission Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award, and in 2009, he received the Washington Community College Humanities Association Exemplary Status Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the Humanities.

As a member of ASCAP, most of Dr. Appert's compositions have been published and his works have been performed throughout the world. Dr. Appert's latest work, *Invictus for Brass Quintet*, was commissioned by the Rose City Brass Quintet, who will première the work in their 2022 – 2023 season, in addition to publishing and recording it on a CD. His composition *Contrapunctus (Mirrors)* for flute and trombone, commissioned by Dr. Philip Martinson and Dr. Shelly Martinson, faculty members of Southwestern Oklahoma State University and members of the Oklahoma City Philharmonic, was premièred in the summer of 2021 by the Martinsons at the International Trombone Association Workshop. Their recording of this work has been released on their new CD [Duprass: Music for Flute and Trombone](#). *Cortege* for low brass and percussion, commissioned by the Clark College Concert Band, Dr. Doug Harris, Director, premièred on June 15, 2019. (These last two works are available through Hickey's Music Center at <https://www.hickeys.com/search.php?q=Donald+Appert>.) Dr. Appert's *Concertino for Bass Clarinet and String Orchestra* was recently performed in its version of *Bass Clarinet and Piano* by Elena Betemps, a graduate student and student of internationally acclaimed Italian bass clarinetist Rocco Parisi, at the Conservatorio Antonio Vivaldi Di Alessandria in Italy. The work was commissioned by Mr. Parisi, who in 2011 premièred the work with the Clark College Orchestra. Mr. Parisi also performed the work in 2013 and 2017 in Romania. A former student of Mr. Parisi, Simone Zancchi, performed the work with the Qatar Philharmonic in 2012. The performance may be heard on Dr. Appert's website, listed below, in the audio section. Mr. Parisi and his Bass Clarinet Quartet also commissioned Dr. Appert's *Quartetto Basso*. Other works by Dr. Appert include his *Violin Concerto*, composed expressly for Darrell Hunt, concertmaster of the Oregon Sinfonietta, *Nara Variations*, *In the Similitude of a Dream*, *Thru a Glass Darkly*, *Elegy*, *Who Shall Know?* for a cappella choir, and *Sehnsucht* for trombone and harp, an early work (1981). (The performance of the violin concerto may be heard on the Videos/Recordings page, and to hear a video recording of *Sehnsucht* by the JOLO Duo from their CD *The Bounds of Spring*, please click on the following link, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dt_H7DnjsQ.) Dr. Appert's music can be heard on his publisher's website at <http://harmonicservicesgroup.com/c/donaldappert/orchworks.html>, as well as on his website at <http://www.maestrodonappert.com>.

Dr. Appert received his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music in Trombone from the New England Conservatory of Music, and he earned his Doctor of Musical Arts in Orchestral Conducting at the University of Kansas. Dr. Appert has studied conducting with Riccardo Muti, Otto Werner Mueller, Maurice Abravanel, Daniel Lewis, Fredrik Fennel, George Lawner, and Richard Pittman. He was one of fourteen conductors chosen to participate in Helmuth Rilling's Master Class at the 1992 Oregon Bach Festival. His trombone teachers include Ronald Barron, John Coffey, and Tyrone Breuninger. He has performed as a trombonist with the Kansas City Symphony, the Virginia Symphony, the Virginia Opera Orchestra, and the Springfield (Massachusetts) Symphony. The 2022 – 2023 school year is Dr. Appert's 33rd at Clark College, Vancouver, Washington, where he is a Full Professor of Music and Chair of the Music Department, in addition to being the Music Director and Conductor of the Clark College Orchestra. Dr. Appert is celebrating his 21st season as the Music Director and Conductor of the Oregon Sinfonietta, and his 12th season as the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Jewish Community Orchestra. Both orchestras rehearse and perform in Portland, Oregon. Dr. Appert lives in Vancouver, Washington with his wife Linda, a coloratura soprano and active voice teacher. They have two daughters: Laura, a violist, and Rebecca, a violinist. Both are graduates of the University of Cincinnati College – Conservatory of Music.

