

ARSC New York Chapter

JANUARY 2018 Meeting

7:00 P. M. Thursday, 1/18/18

→At the CUNY Sonic Arts Center←

West 140th Street & Convent Avenue, New York

Or enter at 138th Street off Convent Avenue

Shepard Hall (the Gothic building) – Recital Hall (Room 95, ground floor)

An elevator is located in the center of the building

Jeffrey Swann remembers

Renato Caccamo

RENATO CACCAMO was born 26 August, 1934 in Siderno, Calabria in Italy's deep South. His love of music began early and was centered on the piano. In Rome, he studied Law and also studied piano at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia. He was he was in his mid 20's when he moved to Milan in the late 50s. He became both a criminal judge and a devotee of that city's concert life, his interest focused on the Teatro alla Scala. Because of unique opportunities stemming from his important social position, his persistence and an indefatigable energy, he became La Scala's *de facto* archivist in the early 60s. For the next 20 years he recorded (or had recorded for him on first class sound equipment) not only everything at La Scala — operas and concerts — but also virtually everything of substance in all of Italy's major venues: RAI, Rome, Florence, Venice, Naples, various festivals, etc. He recorded almost everything, but his chief interests were opera (originally Wagner) and piano, his own instrument. He became close friends with many major musical celebrities during this period, e.g. Abbado, Pollini, Muti, Weissenberg, Leila Gencer, Nikita Magaloff, Dino Ciani, and many others, due, at least in part, because he was so useful to them in making copies of performances from his ever-growing collection. I myself became his friend in 1975 when I won the first Dino Ciani piano competition at La Scala. Ciani had tragically died in an auto accident the year before at the age of 32, and for the next 36 years Renato's apartment in Piazza Borromeo was my chief European residence. During the first part of this period, Hardly a day passed without a call from someone such as Abbado or Muti or Pollini or Accardo to request a copy of some specific performance. And every day recordings from Europe and America and, occasionally, Japan would arrive in exchange for recordings that he had made. So the collection became gigantic (and rather out of control). In the meantime Renato had become an increasingly powerful and important judge. His position at retirement was President of the Court of Appeals, Fourth District (Milan).

Due to the temporary liberalization of piracy laws in the late 80s, many of Renato's tapes were becoming commercial records. With the loss of exclusivity, Renato's zeal to record substantially diminished. By the mid 90's his passion for collecting was mostly in the realm of books, of which he possessed 80-90,000 volumes. At his death, on 6 September, 2011, Renato's collection of recordings was in a sadly confused state. The catalogues were long out of date, and not all of the older recordings had been migrated to more durable formats. The entire collection is now housed at La Scala, but inaccessible on account of the lack of resolution of privacy and copyright issues. The collection also includes something like 10,000 hours of video recordings (many informal) made between 1995 and his death. There are extraordinary treasures buried there, some of which I will describe.

JEFFREY SWANN is currently Artistic Director of the Dino Ciani Festival & Academy in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy; Professor of Piano at New York University; and the President's Distinguished Artist-in-Residence at Northern Arizona University. Himself a native of Northern Arizona, he studied with Alexander Uninsky at Southern Methodist University, and with Beveridge Webster and Adele Marcus at The Juilliard School, where he received the B.M., M.M. and D.M.A. Degrees. He won first prize in the Dino Ciani Competition sponsored by Milan's La Scala; a gold medal at the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels; and top honors at the Warsaw Chopin, Van Cliburn, Vianna da Motta and Montreal Competitions, as well as the Young Concert Artists auditions in New York City. His large and varied repertoire embraces more than 60 concertos and solo works ranging from Bach to Boulez. His performing career has taken him throughout the United States, Europe, Latin America and Asia, appearing with major orchestras and conductors. He lectures regularly at the Bayreuth Festival, and at Wagner Societies in the United States and Italy, and is a frequent judge at competitions. He has recorded for DG, RCA Italiana, Fonit-Cetra, Replica, Agorà, Replica, and Music and Arts.

Our next meeting will be on February 15, 2018
Matthew Barton presenting Bobby Robinson

DIRECTIONS TO THE SONIC ARTS CENTER

Subway: Take the 1 train to 137th Street City College and walk north to 140th St. & Broadway, then go east to 140th St. & Convent Avenue. Take the A, B, C, or D trains to 145th St, go south on St. Nicholas to 141st St, (one long block), then west one block to Convent Avenue, and south one more block to 140th & Convent Avenue. **Bus:** M4 and M5 on Broadway; M 100, 101 on Amsterdam Ave. (one block West of Convent Avenue)



The Sonic Arts Center at CCNY offers 4-year Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in Music with a concentration in Music and Audio Technology. Their program provides an in-depth curriculum emphasizing real-world skills with a project-based approach. Students enjoy a well-rounded program, with emphasis on audio technology, music theory, orchestration, and history to help them compete in a field that today demands an ever-growing and highly diverse skill set.

All ARSC NY Chapter meetings are free and open to the public.
Voluntary contributions to help defray our expenses are welcome!

To join ARSC, visit <http://www.arsc-audio.org>

