

Applause for the Maestro



Don Appert (*Tom Seeman*)

This fall marks music professor Don Appert's 25th year teaching at Clark College, and as befits the director of the college's orchestra, he's celebrating the occasion with plenty of fanfare—winning three prestigious music awards in less than a month.

Last month, Appert received third place the American Prize in the national The American Prize in Orchestral Programming competition. He recently also earned a 2014 ASCAP Plus Award in recognition of performances in Romania, Japan, and the US of his musical compositions. And on November 18, he is receiving a the Clark County Arts Commision's Lifetime Achievement Award.

"It is a great honor to receive the 2014 Clark County Arts Commission Lifetime Achievement Award," says Appert. "In fact it is a bit overwhelming and somewhat difficult to adequately express my feelings in words. To be recognized for one's work is always deeply satisfying. Concurrently winning Third Place in The American Prize for Orchestral Programming and also another ASCAP Plus Award for my musical compositions makes this a truly significant 25th anniversary of my teaching at Clark College."

Appert, 61, chairs the college's music department and conducts its orchestra. He also serves as the music director/conductor for the Oregon Sinfonietta and Jewish Community Orchestra in Portland, as well as the Sanctuary Choir Director for First United Methodist Church of Vancouver, and has been a guest conductor for the Vancouver Symphony. Appert has bachelor's and master's degrees in trombone from the New England Conservatory of Music and a doctorate in orchestral conducting at the University of Kansas.

Clark County commissioners and the arts commission will present the Lifetime Achievement Award at 9:45 a.m. at the Clark County Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin St. Appert will also be featured in a CTV "Clark County Close Up" program that will begin airing November 16 on Comcast channels 21 and 23 and online.

Clark College Director of Choirs April Duvic nominated Appert for the award, according to a news release issued Friday by the county.

"Don has always been a champion of promoting music by and for the community," she wrote. "The Clark College Orchestra is an amazing connection for players from all walks of life. The community members serve as examples and mentors for the students as well. Don composes music for the college choirs and the students are eager and honored to perform his works. It's rare to have a composer of his excellence and renown at a community college."

"It has been a great pleasure to watch the ongoing growth and development in size and quality of the Music Department, the Clark College Orchestra, and my own creative efforts as educator, conductor, and composer," says Appert. "My thanks and deep appreciation go to my colleagues in Clark College's faculty, staff, and administration, as well as to the student and community musicians who have encouraged and supported me these past 25 years."

Photo courtesy of Clark College Music Department