

Appert earns third music award for composing

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staff reporter

The head of the music department at Clark College has won his third award for composing.

Donald Appert, who is music director and conductor of the Clark College Orchestra, received the award from the *American Society of Composers, Authors and Poets* (ASCAP). He said the award, the third he has received from ASCAP, is based on the performances of his original compositions during one year.

The Vancouver resident's compositions were performed in 2008 in Japan, Spain, Italy and Romania. Next year he plans to travel to Romania, Italy and El Salvador for performances.

Appert began composing in 1978 and has been a member of ASCAP since then. He is in his 19th year at Clark College and he also conducts Oregon Sinfonietta, a community orchestra made up of musicians from Vancouver and Portland.

Recently, the conductor was commissioned to write a piece for the 125th anniversary of St. John's Presbyterian Church in Camas. His composition, "Fantasia on Darwell's 148th," is written for choir and piano. The words for the piece are based on a hymn.

"I did that during the summer," he said. "It took about eight hours."

Appert has also been asked to write orchestral music for symphonies in Japan, including the "Elegy for Strings," commissioned by the Ashiya Chamber Orchestra of Kobe. He was introduced to the orchestras of Japan by two Japanese citizens who have performed with the Clark Orchestra in the past.

His "Nara Variations" premiered in Kobe last year, and "Elegy for Strings" was performed in Italy as well as by the Clark orchestra in June. Another composition, "Prism," was performed in Italy.

The composer, teacher and conductor has written for brass and strings. His "Prism" uses strings and one each of the woodwinds and brass.

Appert said teaching at Clark and directing two orchestras take most of his time.

"I have ideas for new compositions," he said. "Unfortunately, I'm so busy with con-

ducting and college, it's hard to find time to work them out."

The Clark orchestra schedules one performance each

quarter, while the sinfonietta performs four concerts each year in Portland.



DONALD APPERT directs the Clark College Orchestra. Appert, head of the music department, recently won an award for his compositions.