

## Remembering Stephen Rubin

by Daniel Hathaway



It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Stephen Rubin on October 13.

Well-known as the successful publisher of a stream of best-selling books, Rubin was also deeply committed to the preservation and advancement of classical music journalism, and *ClevelandClassical.com* has been a direct recipient of his largesse.

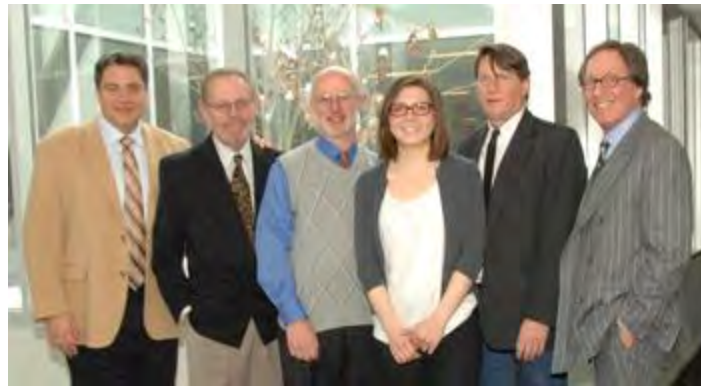
Appalled by the gradual disappearance of critical writing from the pages of mainstream newspapers, he launched the Rubin Institute for Music Criticism at the Oberlin Conservatory in 2011 in cooperation with Dean David Stull.

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The first Institute was held at Oberlin in January, 2012, when ten students (above) wrote overnight reviews of Finney Chapel performances to be evaluated by a panel of leading critics.

To prepare the inaugural Rubin Fellows for their task, Mike Telin and myself, along with then-*Plain Dealer* critic Donald Rosenberg, were invited to develop a course in music journalism. That class continues to this day, even after the Institute has moved along with Stull to the San Francisco Conservatory.



*L-R: David Stull, Daniel Hathaway, Donald Rosenberg, the 2012 public winner, Mike Telin, Steve Rubin.*

Rubin's generosity reached further into the field by funding publications like ours — a grant from the Rubin Institute allowed us to begin to pay writers. A number of our students who were Rubin Fellows have gone on to careers in music journalism, some of whom continue to write for *ClevelandClassical.com*. We asked them to reflect on how the Rubin Institute affected them.



*Rubin Institute Class of 2014, with Steve Rubin.*

Jarrett Hoffman, a 2014 Rubin Fellow, serves as managing editor of this publication

while pursuing a career as a freelance clarinetist in New York. He writes, “The Rubin Institute was absolutely eye-opening for me. Nowhere else could you fill a room with that many inspiring people with a passion for this subject. You walk away a little short on sleep, but feeling like your brain is turning its gears in a new direction when it comes to writing and music.

Also a member of the Rubin Class of 2014 as well as the inaugural Nicholas Jones Young Writer Fellow for *ClevelandClassical.com*, Daniel Hautzinger was hired as a digital producer for WTTW, Chicago’s PBS station, right out of college. “Taking part in the Rubin Institute in San Francisco was a signal part of my education in music and development as a writer. It was the first time I had to write on deadline; I got to meet some of my journalistic heroes; I met other young people keen to share and explicate the joys of music.”

The most recent Rubin alum, Stephanie Manning, wrote extensively for *ClevelandClassical.com* while majoring in bassoon performance at Oberlin. “My experience at the Rubin Institute was honestly life-changing. The support I received there gave me so much confidence, and the connections I made are the reason why I’m now pursuing a graduate diploma in journalism (at Concordia University in Montreal).”

Peter Feher was a Rubin Fellow while studying at the San Francisco Conservatory, and later became an editor for *San Francisco Classical Voice* and a correspondent for *ClevelandClassical.com*. “I met many of the people I work with every day at the Rubin Institute. There’d be far fewer writers covering classical music today without the program’s support.”

Stephen Rubin’s vision shone brightly on *Clevelandclassical.com* when the publication was still in its infancy. So it is with deep gratitude that we express our thanks even as we mark the sad occasion of his passing. Among his many virtues, his sense of humor will be missed. He was one-of-a-kind.

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