

# Pod pal

## Professor's online talks give Tulsa orchestra 'cool' factor

By **JAMES D. WATTS JR.**  
World Scene Writer

Carol Reynolds' mother had a simple wish for her daughter.

"I hope," Reynolds' mother told her loquacious child one day, "that you find a way to make your living by talking."

That wasn't necessarily Reynolds' motivation for going into teaching, but in a sense, that maternal wish has come true.

Reynolds has been talking about the arts — classical music, mostly, but also about Russian art and history, among other topics — for more than two decades.

Until recently, her primary venue was the classrooms of Southern Methodist University's Meadows School of the Arts, where Reynolds was an associate professor of music history. She also led tours to cities in Russia and Austria, as well as the United States, that focused on the art and history of a given place.

These days, Reynolds continues to share her abiding love and wide-ranging knowledge about music through her Web site, [www.professorcarol.com](http://www.professorcarol.com). The site contains the special podcasts she had created for a variety of performing arts organizations, including the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra.

The most recent of her TSO podcasts is "The Essential Tchaikovsky," which examines the composer's life and work, focusing on his Symphony No. 5, in a concise and entertaining 15 minutes.

It was created in conjunction with the Tulsa Symphony's final concert of its inaugural season, which will feature the Symphony No. 5 in E Minor, Op. 64.

Also on this all-orchestral program, to be conducted by guest Alastair Willis, is the arrangement by Ottorino Respighi of the Passacaglia by J.S. Bach, Respighi's own "Church Windows," and the Adagio for Strings by Samuel Barber.

"I had met (Tulsa Symphony founder and president) Frank Letcher a number of years ago," Reynolds said, speaking by phone from her home on a farm north of Dallas. "We both share a deep-rooted interest in Russian culture, and we immediately connected on a heart-to-heart level because of that."

As plans for what would become the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra took shape, Letcher approached Reynolds about doing pre-concert talks via the Internet

### preview

**Event:** Tulsa Symphony Orchestra Season Finale

**When:** 7:30 p.m. Saturday

**Where:** Chapman Music Hall, Tulsa Performing Arts Center, Third Street and Cincinnati Avenue

**Tickets:** \$5-\$60, available at the PAC Ticket office, 596-7111; and [www.MyTicketOffice.com](http://www.MyTicketOffice.com)

what's being taught," Reynolds said. "And the fact that people can download my talks onto things like iPods — well, that automatically makes things 'cooler,' having it on your iPod."

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about the music the orchestra would perform.

"What the Tulsa Symphony is doing is so fresh and innovative and inspired," Reynolds said. "It's really been a pleasure doing these talks — watching this wonderful thing happen from afar."

Reynolds created talks for four of the orchestra's five concerts this season, and said she will likely continue the practice for TSO's 2007-08 season (see story, above).

"I find it intriguing that I can sit here in Texas, talk about subjects I love and have spent decades learning, and then these talks go out all over the world (through the Internet)," she said. "It's been amazing, the sort of response I've received from these talks. The ones that I especially get a kick out of are from people who simply have a love of the arts and are looking for ways to learn more about them."

Because of this, Reynolds said she works to keep her talks free of more arcane facts and technical talk.

"I try to give these talks substance without getting bogged down in a lot of details," she said. "I usually end up taking out half the stuff I originally wanted to use — I realized I don't really need all that stuff like opus numbers and the like."

She's also discovered that music teachers have been using her podcasts as part of their classes.

"I know teachers are always looking for something that will help connect their students to



**Reynolds**