

Oscar-winning professor returns triumphantly

by C. B. Morley

"And the Oscar goes to..."

When these words were spoken at the 72nd Annual Academy Awards to announce the winner of Best Score for a Motion Picture, the recipient was Lehman College professor John Corigliano.

Corigliano, 62, was honored for his original score for the film *The Red Violin*. His other two film scores for *Altered States* and *Revolution* have also received critical acclaim, including an Academy Award nomination and the prestigious British Anthony Asquith Award.

On Monday, April 3, Corigliano returned to his Bronx classroom and students, toting his Oscar and recounting stories from his experiences in Hollywood.

"[During his Academy Award acceptance speech] there was this giant four-foot teleprompter that had nothing on it," he recalled. "I was going down a list of names of people that I wanted to thank when I saw appear, in giant two-foot letters, 'GET OFF.' Music started playing and I had to get off the stage."

A Manhattan resident, the Brooklyn-born composer has been teaching at Lehman College since 1972 and plans to continue teaching in the Bronx.

"I love New York — I'm a New Yorker," he said. "I love it here at Lehman. They're a great group of kids."

Corigliano spoke of a course Lehman offered where professional musicians could make use of their real-world experience to obtain teaching credentials.

"We get members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and the City Opera Orchestra," Corigliano explained. "A lot of them keep their night jobs even after they begin teaching."

The award-winning instructor noted that several



Academy Award winner John Corigliano returns to his Lehman College classroom on the morning of April 3. - PHOTO BY C. B. MORLEY

graduates of the program have gone on to teach at area high schools.

Despite winning the Oscar, Corigliano views himself as predominately a classical music composer.

"I'm a composer from another world — a world of classical music," he said.

The film, *The Red Violin*, is a film about music. It follows the life of a violin over the course of 300 years and shows pieces of the lives of its owners. Corigliano was able to rise to the challenge of writing music for a film about

music.

"The mood of the music is really the film's mood. When you're writing, you have to respond to the film," he said.

Following the Academy Awards on March 26, Corigliano spent a week in Minneapolis, Minnesota where the Minnesota Orchestra was debuting his newest work, "Phantasmagoria."

How do people react to seeing his Oscar?

"People want to touch it," Corigliano joked. "It's like it's a God or something."