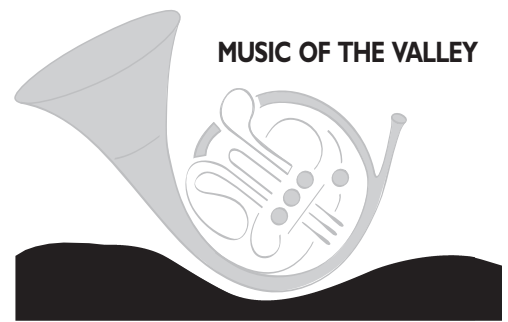


Livermore-Amador Symphony

Arthur P. Barnes, Music Director

May 16, 2009, 8 p.m.

Bankhead Theater, Livermore



La Gazza Ladra Overture

Gioachino Rossini
(1792–1868)

Symphony No. 3 (“Rhenish”)
Opus 97

Robert Schumann
(1810–1856)

Lebhaft
Scherzo
Nicht schnell
Feierlich
Lebhaft

Josh Cohen, conductor

————— INTERMISSION —————

Presentation of Student Awards by Symphony Association President Jean King

Violin Concerto No. 2
Opus 44

Max Bruch
(1838–1920)

Adagio ma non troppo
Recitative: Allegro moderato
Finale: Allegro molto

Anthony Doheny, violin

“Russian Sailors’ Dance”
from the ballet *The Red Poppy*

Reinhold Glière
(1875–1956)

CONDUCTOR
Arthur P. Barnes

Jackie McBride
Holly McLean*
Margaret Morrad
Nissa Nack

Joanne Lenigan
Daniel Skipp
Dave Walter

CLARINET
Lesley Watson
Kathy Boster

TROMBONE
Chuck Smith
Mark Hil

**ASSISTANT
CONDUCTOR**
H. Robert Williams

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Hazelle Miloradovitch
Principal
Frances Fischer
Chair

STRING BASS
Robert Cooper
Principal
Elizabeth Foort
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Marion Clark
Kathleen Fasenfest
Audrey Horning
Laura Gilliard Miller
Marilyn Taylor

FLUTE
Barbara Gurnari
Nan Davies

HORN
Christine-Ann
Immesoete
Richard Lamb
Bryan Waugh
H. Robert Williams

TUBA
Betsy Hausburg

SECOND VIOLIN
Ursula Goldstein
Principal
Lisa Burkhart
Jeana Ernst
Denise Leddon

CELLO
Ken Windler
Principal
Naomi Adams
Nick Dargahi
Sharon Greene
Bronwyn Hagerty*

PICCOLO
Nan Davies

OBOE
Eva Langfeldt
Larry George

TRUMPET
Michael Portnoff
Hank Finn
Brian Maddox

TIMPANI
April Nissen

PERCUSSION
Paul Kasameyer
Walter Nissen
Peter Curzon

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and Anne Les

* *Livermore High School student and
winner of a scholarship from the LAS youth outreach program*

***La Gazza Ladra* Overture**

Gioachino Rossini
(1792–1868)

Rossini's opera *La Gazza Ladra* (*The Thieving Magpie*) was the hit of the 1817 season at La Scala Milan. At 25, Rossini was already the star of Italian opera and confidently attacking its entrenched "canary bird" orientation, in which the singer reigned supreme and the orchestra and theatrical values were lowly servants. La Scala, with its more sophisticated audiences already appreciative of Mozart and German opera, was a perfect place to unveil a more serious work that mixed comic elements with pathos and the threat of tragedy. *La Gazza Ladra* tells the story of a young servant girl, Ninetta, who is condemned to death for the theft of a silver spoon. Because she is hiding her father, an army deserter, and due to other plot complications, she cannot defend herself. Fortunately, the real culprit—a kleptomaniac pet magpie—is discovered just in the nick of time.

Today this opera has been forgotten, but its dramatic, witty overture retains its popularity; Rossini biographer Francis Toye ranks it just behind the *William Tell* overture as the finest of Rossini's more than 20 overtures. Unlike many of them that merely set a generic mood of comedy or tragedy, this overture actually contains themes used in the opera. Before Rossini, Italian opera house orchestras were minimally competent pit bands, heavily oriented toward the strings, and composers didn't ask very much of them. But it takes a crack ensemble to realize the brilliance of this overture. In his orchestral writing, Rossini expanded the role of the woodwinds and brass, asking them to carry important thematic material. In the second section of the Allegro, a low woodwind-and-brass chorale ushers in the jaunty, whistling-in-the-dark theme sung by the solo oboe, for which this overture is so famous. Woodwinds continue to dominate as the music moves into the trademark Rossini crescendo, here presented twice and made all the more exciting by a new instrument: the snare drum. The electrifying drum rolls that open the military-style introduction must have instantly stopped the chatter in La Scala's boxes in 1817, and they remain every bit as effective today.

Symphony No. 3 ("Rhenish") Opus 97

Robert Schumann
(1810–1856)

Many have charged that Robert Schumann's orchestral works are little more than thinly veiled transcriptions of musical thoughts that fall more naturally on the keyboard and that he lacked the necessary skill to realize his purely orchestral ideas effectively. Largely due to musicians' popular acceptance of these criticisms, Schumann's four mature symphonies have suffered long periods of neglect.

A highly individual sense of formal design, strikingly beautiful thematic and harmonic substance, and a powerful influence on such later symphony composers as Brahms and Tchaikovsky all recommend these musical gems to both audiences and musicians, who would do well to re-evaluate them on their own terms and not compare them with the works of

later composers who clearly had different means and goals.

Schumann's "Rhenish" Symphony, the Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Opus 97, bears the name because Schumann wrote it in the fall of 1850 during the composer's tenure as conductor at Düsseldorf on the famous Rhine river. In a letter to the publisher N. Simrock in 1851, Schumann claimed that the history and spirit of that noble river and its people were running through his mind as he composed the work.

The symphony was less successful at its premiere, in February 1851 (under the composer's direction), than his two previous symphonic premieres had been. Although the third in number, the "Rhenish" is actually Schumann's final entry in the genre, Schumann having composed the forthcoming Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Opus 120, in 1841.

The heroic main theme of the opening *Lebhaft* ("lively") is laced with hemiolas, pairs of bars that shift the rhythmic emphasis from triple time to duple time; these in effect transform the basic $\frac{3}{4}$ time into larger bars of $\frac{3}{2}$. The oboe and clarinet offer a second theme in G minor before the violins take it over. The astute listener will have noticed a keen similarity between the rhythmic outline of Schumann's main theme and that of the main theme of the opening movement of Johannes Brahms' Symphony No. 3 in F major. This similarity becomes even further apparent during the transition to the second theme in the recapitulation, when the figure plays out with precisely the same interval content as the later Brahms melody—just one example of the deep and abiding influence the music of Schumann had on his younger associate.

Schumann incorporates the jovial "Rheinweiniied" ("Rhine Wine Song") into the Scherzo, which, as in his second symphony, appears as the second—rather than the more traditional third—movement. The trio section in A minor briefly shakes up the solid C-major foundation (although, rather stubbornly, the bass continues to putter around on low C).

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the "Rhenish" Symphony is the interpolation of an extra movement. Marked *feierlich* ("solemn"), the movement originally carried the inscription "in the manner of an accompaniment to a solemn ceremony."

The Finale is a robust outburst (marked, like the first movement, *Lebhaft*) that recalls some of the main theme from the fourth movement before plunging into a final burst of joyful E-flat.

Violin Concerto No. 2 Opus 44

Max Bruch
(1838–1920)

Max Bruch, yet another composer who was a child prodigy, received his early musical training from his mother, a moderately successful concert soprano. At age 14, he composed a symphony that won the Frankfurt Mozart Foundation Prize, and he used the proceeds to obtain more-formal training from the respected teacher Ferdinand Hiller. At age 20, he began to support himself by teaching music and by

27 had risen to the position of music director of the orchestra in Koblenz. His proficiency and ability to carefully craft his works served him well, and he became a journeyman composer—respected, but not revered, although he eventually was awarded a master class in composition at the Berlin Academy. His career moved smoothly upward, until in 1893 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by Cambridge University and became chairman of the Royal Academy of the Arts in Berlin, a prestigious position.

Throughout his career, Bruch endeavored to write music that was tuneful and immediately appealing to his audiences. This put him somewhat at odds with the progressive “New German” school of composers and somewhat out of the mainstream. It also “dated” his style, and when tastes changed, his music gradually declined in popularity. Consequently, his compositions never earned the respect that he himself personally enjoyed. Although he wrote three operas, three symphonies, more than a dozen pieces for soloist (primarily violin, but also a few for cello) and orchestra, as well as many choral works, only his violin concerti have survived in the repertoire, and the First Violin Concerto is still frequently performed.

The Second Violin Concerto departs from the traditional structure. Like most other Romantic concerti, it comprises multiple movements (three in this case), with typical contrasting forms and tempi. But, as in Mendelssohn’s violin concerto, the movements are played without pause, giving the work a flow and sense of unity. The slow first movement is broad and powerful in its orchestration, with an almost symphonic style of musical development. It is full of virtuoso effects for the soloist. (The work was written for the great Spanish violinist Pablo de Sarasate, who gave the premiere.) The second movement is almost a pure recitative for the soloist, with minimal orchestral support. It leads directly into a fiery third movement, perhaps even more virtuosic than the first.

It is only infrequently played nowadays, far less often than Bruch’s First Violin Concerto. This is a shame, because the second contains some equally fine writing. The solo part ranges from lyric beauty to fiery technique, and the orchestral accompaniment contains as many moments of drama and expression as the solo part. Many of the melodies are very reminiscent of the famous First Concerto. The scoring is for a very full orchestra and (especially in the outer movements) takes full advantage of the resulting range of colors. This requires a “big” virtuosic approach in the solo part to balance the orchestra. As with all of Bruch’s other works, there are times when the soloist sings as if in solitary contemplation, with a softness that dares not disturb a tenuous thought. However, the overall effect is exuberant and extroverted. Bruch excels at both styles of writing, producing a piece that transports the listener to another world.

“Russian Sailors’ Dance” **Reinhold Glière**
from the ballet *The Red Poppy* **(1875–1956)**

Reinhold Glière was one of the most influential Rus-

sian composers during the transition from Czarist to Soviet Russia. He used the folk idioms of the Asiatic national group within the Soviet Union in a romantic, colorful style and later showed considerable regard for modern techniques in composition. He was extremely prolific, producing operas, ballets, symphonies, symphonic poems, overtures, chamber music, songs, and piano pieces.

The *Red Poppy* ballet, written in 1927, is one of Glière’s most famous works. The ballet is set in the Russian Revolution of 1917, during which a Soviet cargo ship has arrived in a Chinese port. It is the story of Tao, a Chinese dancer who falls in love with the captain of the ship. She gives him a red poppy as a symbol of her love. When Tao’s employer learns of this, he is jealous and orders her to kill the captain. She refuses and is later killed by her employer when a riot breaks out on the dock. As she dies, she gives another red poppy to a young Chinese girl, as a sign of love and freedom.

The “Russian Sailors’ Dance,” the best-known excerpt from the ballet, is based on the popular Russian folk tune “Yablochka” (“Little Angel”). The Soviet captain’s soldiers are dancing in celebration after having successfully stopped a riot on the boat dock. The dance takes the form of a series of variations on this striking song.

Program notes compiled by Jeff Pelletier

Program booklet edited by Eva Langfeldt

JOSH COHEN

Guest Conductor

Josh Cohen studied violin with Daniel Kobialka and Nate Rubin and conducting with Denis de Coteau, at California State University, Hayward (now East Bay). He has been a violinist, bassist, concertmaster, conductor, board member, and impresario and has performed with chamber groups and orchestras in the U.S., Canada, England, Israel, and Australia. Musical director and conductor of the Castro Valley Chamber Orchestra, he also produces and performs chamber music concerts, directs opera and musical theater productions, and continues to perform on violin and bass.

ANTHONY DOHENY

Violin Soloist

Australian-born Anthony Doheny graduated with a doctorate in music from Stanford University. In Brisbane, Australia, he was for many years both the senior lecturer in violin and viola and the director of the Program for Gifted Children at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music. Subsequently he taught in Sydney at the Sydney Conservatorium and in Melbourne at Monash University and at the University of Melbourne. Since returning to the U.S. in 2006, he has been teaching at Stanford, at the Mountain View Community School of Music and Art, and privately.

STUDENT AWARDS

Each year up to four graduating high school seniors are presented with an award from funds administered by the Symphony Association. Chosen from a group of outstanding applicants, each has made significant contributions to school and community musical activities.

JOHN H. GREEN MEMORIAL AWARD

This award is given in memory of John H. Green, son of the late Tot and John W. Green.

Cory Chang was a piano soloist with LAS in February 2008 as a winner of the Competition for Young Musicians. Multitalented, he also plays violin, flute, and guitar. He has been the concertmaster of the Granada High School Orchestra, a first violinist in the Oakland Youth Orchestra, and an active musician with the East Bay Formosan United Methodist Church. He has played command performances on both piano and violin at the Livermore School District's Solo and Ensemble Festival as well as accompanying several other soloists. Though he plans to major in chemistry in college, Cory also plans to continue his musical studies.

BILL KING MEMORIAL AWARD

The award is given in memory of Bill King, son of Jean and Walter King, who loved music and played cello and trombone at Jackson and East Avenue Middle Schools.

Julian Reisenhel is a singer and bass guitarist. He has been a featured soloist with the Foothill High School Concert Choir, Chamber Choir, Men's Ensemble, and Jazz Singers as well as taking lead roles in school musicals. Julian also is a founder and performer in both the Y Chromo-Tones men's octet and the rock band Avided. Throughout his high school years, he has been active with the Valley Community Church Ministry Youth Worship Band. After studying music in college, Julian intends to use his musical and leadership talents to contribute toward resolving world problems as a member of the Peace Corps.

SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION STUDENT AWARDS

Each year the Livermore-Amador Symphony Association gives one or two awards to high school seniors in recognition of their musicianship and musical contributions to their school and community.

Annie Sandholtz is the fine violinist who played this February with LAS as a winner of the Competition for Young Musicians. She has participated in the Livermore High School Orchestra and Concert Choir as well as the Timpanogos Chamber Orchestra, the Utah All-State Orchestra, and the Junior Bach Festival. As concertmaster of the Young People's Symphony Orchestra, she toured Australia and New Zealand. Annie looks forward to playing the "Winter" solo in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* with the LAS Youth Orchestra this summer. This fall Annie will attend Brigham Young University as a violin performance major. Though she has many interests and may pursue a different career, she wants to have a violin studio in her home.

Valerie Yim is also a violinist. A senior at Amador Valley High School, Valerie has participated in the school orchestra and the pit orchestra for school musicals each year as well as playing in the senior orchestra at La Honda Music Camp each summer. She has also been active with the Cantabella Chamber Choir as a singer, an accompanist, and a member of the stage crew. The past three years, Valerie volunteered to help Harvest Park Middle School with its Music Department fundraiser and has assisted at the Tri-Valley Summer Music Camp. Valerie will attend the University of the Pacific to earn a teaching credential. She plans to continue to play violin in local symphony orchestras.

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