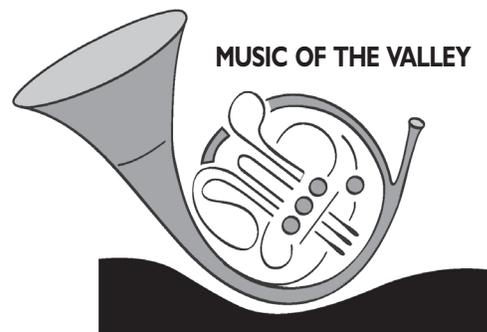


Livermore-Amador Symphony

Arthur P. Barnes, Music Director & Conductor

May 12, 2012, 8 p.m.

Bankhead Theater, Livermore



Guest Maestro: Lara Webber

Prelude Talk at 7 p.m. by Lara Webber, guest conductor,
and Peter Curzon, LAS percussionist and music committee member

Symphony No. 1 in C Major

Opus 21 (1800)

Adagio molto—Allegro con brio

Andante cantabile con moto

Menuetto: Allegro molto e vivace

Adagio—Allegro molto e vivace

Ludwig van Beethoven

(1770–1827)

El Sombrero de Tres Picos (The Three-Cornered Hat) (1919)

Dance of the Miller's Wife

Dance of the Neighbors

Dance of the Miller

Manuel de Falla

(1876–1946)

INTERMISSION

Presentation of student awards by Alan Frank, LAS Association president and string bass player

Symphony in D Minor (1888)

I. Lento—Allegro ma non troppo

II. Allegretto

III. Finale: Allegro non troppo

César Franck

(1822–1890)

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Symphony No 1 in C Major Opus 21 (1800)

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

When Ludwig van Beethoven left his native Bonn to seek his fortune as a pianist and composer in Vienna, the academic center and capital of high culture, he was entering a world dominated by the spirit of the late, lamented Mozart and the still living and universally revered Haydn. Beethoven had the good manners to leave the 1700s to those two juggernauts by waiting until 1800 to premiere his first symphony.

Beethoven's First Symphony was an important landmark in his compositional output, as it was his first major work for orchestra. It is wrong to think of this symphony as an early work. Beethoven was 30 when he finally completed it. At that age, Mozart had completed his 36th symphony (the "Linz") and Schubert had written all nine of his symphonies. Furthermore, the composition had occupied Beethoven for a very long time. The earliest known sketches date from 1795, suggesting that his first symphony took him longer to write than any of his later ones. Perhaps the young composer was struggling with the seeming impossibility of writing a symphony that could compare favorably with the whole series of symphonic masterpieces that had flowed effortlessly from the pen of Joseph Haydn in the early 1790s.

In launching himself as a symphonist at the end of the century in which Haydn had defined the terms of the symphony, Beethoven quite understandably showed his respect for his revered teacher and very likely felt that it was only appropriate to demonstrate his mastery of established practice before venturing a more individual style. Nonetheless, barely a year after the premiere, a Leipzig critic condemned the First Symphony as "the outrageous effrontery of a young man," and nine years later still, a writer in Paris complained of Beethoven's "prodigal use of the most barbaric dissonances" in the work. Evidently no one at the premiere had any problem with the symphony, however; one Viennese critic, in fact, recorded these altogether positive impressions:

Beethoven has written his First Symphony in C major. It is a masterpiece which does equal honor to his power of invention and his musical skill. It is as beautiful and excellent in design as in execution; a clear and radiant order reigns, and the work is marked by such a stream of the most pleasant melodies, as well as such a rich but never fatiguing instrumentation, that this symphony may be rightly considered the equal of any by Mozart or Haydn.

Many have debated about the slow introduction to the symphony, whose opening bars were a particular target for the contemporary critics. A conventional symphony of the time would have announced the key clearly at the start of the work, but instead of starting out with a C major chord, Beethoven teases the listener by suggesting first that the key is F major and then G major. To our modern ears, the opening sounds perfectly innocent, and indeed much more audacious harmonic progressions had been used regularly by Haydn and other contemporary composers, but virtually never at the opening of a symphony. Beethoven clearly liked the device, using it again almost immediately in his *Prometheus* Overture and, at one point, he planned to open his Third Symphony with it.

The graceful theme that begins the Andante is presented as a series of entries in fugal style, although the movement does not develop as a fugue and does not contain much contrapuntal material. Rather it is a graceful and beautiful movement in simple form with the repeat of the first section being more varied and decorated.

The third movement, which Hector Berlioz called "the one truly original thing in this symphony," is a more striking departure from the established norm. Although labeled Menuetto, it is actually the first of Beethoven's symphonic scherzos, music with which, in music critic Lawrence Gilman's words, he "took a leap into a new world."

In contrast to the groundbreaking third movement, the final movement is very like a tribute to Haydn. It is unlikely that Beethoven

would have consciously intended to eulogize his former teacher, with whom he had a tempestuous relationship, but nonetheless he seems to have assimilated all the most brilliant aspects of Haydn's orchestral technique and incorporated them into a movement in his own inimitable style. The short, slow introduction, in which the violins repeatedly play a rising scale, varying the rhythm and adding an extra note each time, is a good example of Beethoven's wit. When the allegro finally starts, it is full of energy and exuberance, with dramatic interludes and brilliant orchestral writing.

El Sombrero de Tres Picos (The Three-Cornered Hat) (1919)

Manuel de Falla
(1876–1946)

LAS is performing three of the set of eight dances.

Manuel de Falla, considered Spain's most celebrated composer, was born in Cádiz in 1876 and began studying music with his mother before he was introduced to his first piano professor, at the age of 9. However, this relationship did not last, and from the late 1890s, he studied music in Madrid—piano with José Tragó and composition with Felipe Pedrell. It was because of Pedrell that Falla became interested in native Spanish music, particularly Andalusian flamenco, the influence of which is obvious in many of his compositions. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Falla also spent some seven years in Paris, where he met several prominent French composers who had an influence on his style, including Maurice Ravel, Claude Debussy, and Paul Dukas. Falla spent a long period of time in Granada, and he died in Argentina in 1946.

Falla based his ballet *The Three-Cornered Hat* on a novel of the same name by Pedro de Alarcón (1833–91). Although an Andalusian folk tale, it follows in the tradition of Spanish picaresque novels—the most famous being Cervantes' *Don Quixote*—in which various characters have endless adventures of love and jealousy, buffoonery and gallantry, tragedy and banality, sketching the vast tapestry of the human condition. The story is a humorous tale of a magistrate who becomes infatuated with the wife of a miller, has him arrested on trumped-up charges, and then tries to seduce her. It includes such time-honored theatrical comedy traditions as pratfalls, clothes-swapping, and seduction-as-revenge, with everybody happy at the end except possibly the lecherous magistrate.

Falla's first version was a short 1916 chamber work with pantomime. In 1919 Sergei Diaghilev of the Ballets Russes—the same impresario who staged Stravinsky's great ballets—was struggling to keep the ballet company afloat. Although largely responsible for commissioning some of the greatest musical works of the 20th century, Diaghilev and his troupe were nearly in financial ruin by the end of World War I. Once the war ended, Diaghilev strove to re-create the lavish splendor for which his productions were known, and *The Three-Cornered Hat* proved to be a big part of the postwar musical culture.

Much of the work, and indeed much of Falla's compositional style, is in an international musical language, but the sophisticated rhythms and melodies help create a highly stylized depiction of Spanish life. Falla incorporates both authentic and newly composed folk melodies and tosses them around the orchestra with a suave grace. The tone is decidedly light throughout, in stark contrast to the dark depiction of Spain in Falla's earlier masterpiece *El Amor Brujo*.

Symphony in D Minor (1888)

César Franck
(1822–1890)

César Franck was born in Liège, Belgium, in 1822 and studied at the Liège conservatory as a child. He toured Belgium as a child prodigy at 11, but because of his remarkable proficiency as a pianist, his father moved the family to Paris when he was 13, so César could obtain the best and most prestigious musical education. He entered the Paris Conservatory, and, a few months after his entrance examinations, received a special award for playing a fugue a third lower at

sight. Upon completion of his studies at the conservatory, he briefly returned to Belgium but went back to Paris in 1843, where he became a celebrated organist known for his skill in improvisation. He did not obtain a major position as professor of organ at his alma mater until he was 50 years old. He was a late bloomer as a composer, and four of his most significant works—the Violin Sonata, the *Symphonic Variations for Piano and Orchestra*, the String Quartet, and the Symphony in D minor—were all composed within four years of his death in 1890.

The Symphony in D Minor has been praised for its strong musical personality while simultaneously being reviled as structurally weak. Whatever the assessment of its value, it is a notable summation not only of Franck's life and work but also of trends explored by several nineteenth-century symphonists all the way back to Beethoven.

Winding chromatic themes, moving in a narrow melodic range, and a full, thick orchestral style are prominent characteristics of this symphony. It opens in the lower strings with a moody three-note motto that has been compared to thematic motives from Liszt's *Les Préludes* and Wagner's *Die Walküre*. After one false start, interrupted by a return of the motto, the Allegro finally gets under way, presenting two brighter themes that round out the exposition. A long but loosely designed development section, a full-voiced recapitulation of all the themes, and a coda highlighted by a victorious transformation of the motto bring the first movement to a triumphant conclusion.

The second of the symphony's three movements opens as a slow lyrical piece and then evolves into a scherzo, finally overlaying the two sections in an ingenious combination of a symphonic slow movement and scherzo. Franck describes the movements as follows:

It was my great ambition to construct them in such a way that each beat of the andante section should be exactly equal metrically to a measure in the scherzo ... and after the complete development of each section one theme could be superimposed on the other. In the finale ... all the themes are recalled, but they do not make their reappearance by being strictly imitative. I have ... made each of them play an entirely new part in the music.

Franck's use of English horn and harp recalls Berlioz's use of those instruments in his *Symphonie Fantastique*. The symphony's exhilarating finale recalls themes from the preceding two movements, honoring a tradition established in symphonies by Beethoven, Liszt, and Schumann.

Program notes compiled by Jeff Pelletier

Program booklet edited by Eva Langfeldt

THE ROSE TRADITION CONTINUES!

Renew season tickets this evening, and receive a rose. Brochures for 2012–13 (the Symphony's 50th season!) are available in the lobby.



GRANTS and MATCHING GIFTS

The Livermore-Amador Symphony Association and Guild gratefully acknowledge funding support from:

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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.

The fine clarinet soloist who performed at the Symphony's February 2012 concert, **Clifford Tam**, is this year's recipient of the John H. Green Memorial Award. A student of Joe Bonfiglio, Clifford has participated in Livermore High School's symphonic and marching bands all four years of high school and played in the pit orchestra for all four LHS musicals. He was selected for the Alameda County, All Northern California, and All State Honor Bands and performed with the Winter Percussion Ensemble. Other activities include Livermore Valley Education Foundation (LVEF) benefit concerts, California Music Educators Association (CMEA) Bay Section Festivals, and the Tri-M Music Honor Society (Tri-M). Clifford plans to major in clarinet performance at Caine College of the Arts and make a career of performing and teaching clarinet and composing music.

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.

The recipient of the Bill King Memorial Award is **Elise Savoy**. Elise studies voice with Toni Chamenti and flute with Sarah Franklin. She also plays piano and oboe. Elise has participated in the Symphony's youth orchestra, LASYO, and in this season's Competition for Young Musicians. At Livermore High, Elise has participated in the marching and symphonic bands, the pit orchestra, the concert and chamber choirs, Tri-M, LVEF concerts, and the Livermore Solo and Ensemble Festival. She has shared her talents with community groups including the Livermore Valley Opera Chorus, the Valley Concert Chorale, the Pleasanton Community Concert Band, and several retirement and convalescent homes. Elise plans to major in vocal performance, working toward a BA and an MA in music with a goal of performing and teaching music.

SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION AWARDS

Each year the Livermore-Amador Symphony Association gives one or two awards to high school seniors. This year the awards are given in memory of Al Oliver and Bob Stearns.

The LAS Association Award in memory of Albert Oliver, Jr., goes to **Nancy Ly**. Nancy has been a member of the LAS first violin section the past two seasons and also played in the LAS pit orchestra in December 2010 and 2011. As a student at Livermore High, she has played in the LHS orchestra all four years as well as participating in the Livermore Solo and Ensemble Festival and Tri-M. At U. C. Davis next fall, Nancy is considering majoring in a biological science and joining the orchestra.

Girish Kowligi receives the LAS Association Award in memory of Robert Stearns. Girish plays in the LAS viola section and also played in the LAS pit orchestra for *The Nutcracker* in December 2011. He has played in the Livermore High Orchestra, participated in the Livermore Solo and Ensemble Festival, and been a member of Tri-M throughout his four years at Livermore High. This year he was selected to play in the CODA Honors Orchestra of the California Orchestra Directors Association. Girish will attend U. C. Santa Barbara with a major in computer science. He plans to continue playing viola and may even minor in music. Expect Girish to have programmed the hottest video game of 2020.

2012–2013 COMPETITION FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS

October 7, 2012: Recordings due

October 28, 2012: Competition

GUEST CONDUCTOR LARA WEBBER



Widely recognized early in her career as one of the most talented and versatile conductors of her generation, Lara Webber has successfully led many major American orchestras in a broad range of repertoire. She most recently held the positions of assistant and then associate conductor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. In that role, Webber programmed and conducted over 80 concerts annually, including classical subscription programs and educational, pops, and community concerts. She served as cover conductor for Maestro Yuri Temirkanov and guest conductors throughout the main season. Prior to her appointment with the BSO, she was associate conductor of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra in South Carolina and previously served as music director and conductor of the Los Angeles Debut Orchestra, a post previously held by such conductors as André Previn, Lawrence Foster, and Michael Tilson Thomas. Strongly committed to arts education, Webber was a conductor of Disney's Young Musicians Symphony Orchestra; its Emmy-nominated concerts were broadcast nationally by the Disney Channel to more than 50 million viewers nationwide.

Webber's activities as a guest conductor include performances with the symphony orchestras of Annapolis, Houston, Pittsburgh, San Antonio, Louisville, Colorado Springs, and Modesto; the Baltimore

Chamber Orchestra; and the Chicago Sinfonietta. She has served as a cover conductor for the San Francisco Symphony. Webber's operatic activities include posts as the assistant conductor at Glimmerglass Opera and conductor of the Baltimore Opera Studio's production of *Don Giovanni*. She has taught student conductors as a faculty member of the League of American Orchestras' conductor workshops and has coached youth and community orchestras.

Lara Webber began her conducting studies at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music with Robert Spano, where she received her Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance. She continued her studies at the Sweelinck Conservatory in Amsterdam and participated in the conducting seminars of the Aspen and Tanglewood Music Festivals. Webber received her Master of Music degree in orchestral conducting from the University of Southern California, where she studied with Daniel Lewis. Webber was among the first conductors selected to participate in League of American Orchestras' National Conductor Preview.

Webber is the recipient of several awards and grants, including the Leonard Bernstein Music Award, a grant from the Geraldine C. and Emory M. Ford Foundation, and the Young Musicians Foundation/BMI Foundation/Lionel Newman Conducting Study Grant. Upon completion of her tenure with the Los Angeles Debut Orchestra, Webber was honored with a Los Angeles City Council resolution in recognition of her outstanding service to the community,

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