

Livermore-Amador Symphony

Lara Webber, Music Director & Conductor

Arthur P. Barnes, Music Director Emeritus

Saturday, April 11, 2015, 8 p.m.

 **BANKHEAD**
THEATER



MUSIC OF THE VALLEY

Fantastic Flute!

Prelude Talk at 7 p.m. by Lara Webber

Our Town

Aaron Copland

(1900–1990)

Flute Concerto No. 7 in E Minor

Allegro

Adagio

Rondo: Allegretto

François Devienne

(1759–1803)

Annie Wu, soloist

Intermission

Symphony No. 1 in E Minor, Opus 39

Andante, ma non troppo – Allegro energico

Andante

Scherzo: Allegro

Finale: Quasi una Fantasia

Jean Sibelius

(1865–1957)

Conductor

Lara Webber

First Violin

Kristina Anderson

Concertmaster

Norman Back

Feliza Bourguet

JoAnn Cox

Laurel Dahlgren

Judy Eckart

Daniel Gibbard*

Susan Ivie

Jutta Massoud

Doug Morrison

Anthony Westrope*

Juliana Zolynas

Second Violin

Ursula Goldstein

Principal

Anne Anaya

Gale Anderson

Stephanie Black

Mary Burchett

Lisa Burkhart

Jeana Ernst

Jeannie Guzis

Denise Leddon

Jacqueline McBride

Nissa Nack

Leslie Stevens

Deborah Weir

Beth Wilson

Viola

Judy Beck

Principal

Lynda Alvarez

Adrian Boiangiu

Karen Connolly

David Friburg

Audrey Horning

Jessica Hurst*

Dora Scott

Cello

Jim Aikin

Acting Principal

Naomi Adams

Alan Copeland

Muriel Haupt

Kara Holthe

Hildi Kang

Joanne Lenigan

Paul Pappas

Sharon Schumacher

String Bass

Nick James

Principal

Walt Birkedahl

Alan Frank

Patricia Lay

Flute

Marianne Beeler

Nan Davies

Piccolo

Nan Davies

Oboe

Eva Langfeldt

Jeanne Brown

English Horn

Jeanne Brown

Clarinet

Lesley Watson

Kathy Boster

Cyndy Salmon

Bass Clarinet

Kathy Boster

Bassoon

Doug Stark

Lynn Stasko

Horn

Roy Pollock

James Hartman

Bryan Waugh

Robert Williams

Trumpet

Michael Portnoff

Mark Williams

Brian Maddox

Trombone

Bonnie Maddox

Jay Maddox

Bass Trombone

Forrest Jones

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Program Notes

Our Town

Aaron Copland (1900–1990)

Our Town, Thornton Wilder's emotionally affecting stage portrayal of life and death in a New England village, opened on Broadway in February 1938. It scored an immediate success. Brooks Atkinson, theater critic of the *New York Times*, called it "a beautifully evocative play ... [that] has transmuted the simple events of human life into universal reverie." Audiences agreed, and *Our Town* enjoyed an initial Broadway run of 336 performances. The play's triumph called Wilder to Hollywood, where he wrote a screen adaptation of his work that was filmed in 1939. For the film score, the movie's producer turned to Aaron Copland, who had recently composed music for the film version of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. Copland had seen Wilder's play, but he now reread it and sketched some musical ideas. Arriving in California from his New York home, he marveled that those ideas "seemed so right when put with the picture."

Copland expanded these and other themes to create an unusual film score. "My job," he observed, "was to create the atmosphere of a typical New Hampshire town, and to reflect the [film's] shifts from the real to the fantasy world. Because of the nostalgic nature of the story, most of the music had to be in slow tempo.... I tried for clean and clear sounds, and in general used straightforward harmonies and rhythms that would project the serenity and sense of security of the play." The film of *Our Town* opened in May 1940 to acclaim scarcely less enthusiastic than that garnered by Wilder's play. Already Copland had quickly arranged about 10 minutes of his film score into a concert suite. This was played during a radio broadcast before the movie appeared in theaters. Afterward, the composer prepared a more carefully crafted version of the suite. This definitive version received its first performance in 1944 in Boston, conducted by Leonard Bernstein, to whom Copland dedicated the score.

Flute Concerto No. 7 in E Minor François Devienne (1759–1803)

François Devienne was a leading French flutist and a founding professor of the Paris Conservatory, which was established by the Revolutionary government in 1795 to standardize musical and compositional training in the new republic (and also to take it out of the hands of the Church). He was part of a line of French flutists and composers who, over a period of a century, had adopted a German innovation, the transverse flute (also known as the German flute), and made it a quintessentially French musical instrument. Devienne followed the path of predecessors such as Michel de la Barre and Michel Blavet in establishing a French school of flute playing and composition.

Devienne wrote literally hundreds of works for the instrument and a famous instructional manual for it. The seventh is rated as the best of his dozen or more flute concertos. Devienne composed it in or around 1787. The entire monarchical system of Europe was about to crumble, with the simultaneous humiliating defeat of the Holy Roman (Austrian) Empire in war and the overthrow of the French King Louis XVI. The passions of the time seem, in this concerto as in contemporary works of Mozart, to coil around the surface sweetness of the music, particularly when it is in a minor key.

It was the fashion at the time to begin concertos with an exposition of the main material by the orchestra without the soloist. Devienne gets around this—and gives his soloist a chance to get a bit warmed up—by sneaking the flute in, doubling the first violins as they

play the second theme of the opening allegro. This theme is gentle, in E major, in contrast to a rather resolute and vigorous opening theme in E minor. Rather than repeat the exposition with the flute taking the melody, Devienne inventively adds a third major theme to the movement and, with this lyrical and birdlike theme, lets the flute take center stage. Using these three themes, Devienne is able to keep the music unhackneyed and unpredictable. The flute part grows consistently more virtuosic as the movement progresses.

The second movement, Adagio, opens in a reserved mood, but an astonishingly long, lyrical melody (requiring immensely well-developed breath control) introduces a Romantic mood. Unusually, a cadenza appears as the second half of the movement.

The finale is marked "Rondo allegretto; Poco moderato." The piece begins in the sedate mood these markings imply. But the tempo is deceptive. It is slow so that the flute can burst into 16th notes, triplet 16ths, and then 32nd notes, so that the flute is in reality playing presto material of utmost fieriness that seems to anticipate the coming Romantic virtuoso vogue.

Symphony No. 1

Jean Sibelius (1865–1957)

Despite an increasing reputation as a nationalist hero, Sibelius was struggling in the shadow of Tchaikovsky and Bruckner (who died in 1894 and 1897, respectively) when he produced his first symphony, at the age of 33 in 1899, at a time when Finland was very much under the heel of the Russian government, with free speech and the right of assembly severely suppressed. Before the composition of this symphony, Sibelius, with characteristic nationalist zeal, had immersed himself in the study of the *Kalevala* and other Finnish epics, a journey that would lead him eventually to become the undisputed musical poet of his nation, combining the physical boldness of its primitive traditions with the intellectual strength of emerging nationalism.

Although the first movement's haunting introductory clarinet solo is also quoted at the start of the finale, its function is more one of mood-setting than providing important material for later development. Considerably more significant is the quietly sustained accompanying timpani roll. This is the first of many long-held notes ("pedal points") that dominate the symphony and form such an important feature of Sibelius' musical style. When the main "Allegro energico" gets under way, the pedal points help create a sense of vast slow motion deep below the agitated surface. The ability to shift imperceptibly between these extremes of speed is one of the great hallmarks of Sibelius' music, and this movement is a fine example.

The "Allegro energico" starts in G major with two broad and vigorous melodies. Conventionally, one would expect these themes to play the most important role later in the movement, particularly when the first one is restated with increased vehemence, but a transitional passage brings a short dancing phrase in the flutes, and it is this phrase that forms the basis of much of the development section. The main thematic material eventually reaches its final synthesis, through which it seems to achieve an additional dimension. The movement is in sonata form, but in the recapitulation, the themes appear in a different order.

A broad melody is announced at the outset of the slow movement, and when this has been fully established, a new theme in the bassoons is taken up successively by the woodwinds, eventually breaking down the broad melody into its constituent phrases. After a brief reappearance of a fragment of the main melody on solo cello, an episode, "Molto tranquillo," is provided by the horns against harp arpeggios and a light accompaniment from the violins. After the unmistakably Sibelian fearsome central climax and the stormy return of the opening melody, the movement falls into silence.

The fine scherzo and trio, in which pedal notes are again very much in evidence, seems almost to combine the power of Beethoven with the harmonic fingerprints of Bruckner. The structure is most ingenious: The main “Scherzo” section is in sonata form, but a few bars into the recapitulation of the opening, a slow trio suddenly interrupts the flow before the sonata-scherzo resumes exactly where it left off.

This is followed by the finale, which, after the restatement of the introductory clarinet melody from the first movement, leads eventually to one of the broadest and most lyrically impassioned melodies Sibelius ever wrote. Later, a fugato is built up from a 16th-note figure that provides the orchestral background over which the woodwinds and brass fling out the short fragments of the “Allegro molto” that dominate the final pages of the score. In conclusion, three terse chords from the brass and woodwinds give way to two quiet pizzicato chords in the strings, an abrupt and typically Sibelian ending.

*program notes compiled by Kathy Boster
from Internet sources
edited by Eva Langfeldt*

Soloist—Annie Wu, flute

Nineteen-year-old Annie Wu, who is from Pleasanton, began playing flute at the age of 8 and has since achieved both national and international acclaim. Following her freshman year of high school, Annie received first prize in the National Flute Association’s High School Soloist Competition in Charlotte, North Carolina, as well as the prize for Best Performance of a New Work Commissioned, becoming the youngest first-prize winner in the flute competition’s history.

Last year, Annie was named a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts. She received the nomination after becoming a 2014 YoungArts Winner in classical music and was chosen by the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars based on “academic, civic, and artistic achievement.” This award, presented on behalf of the president, “is the highest honor that can be bestowed upon an artistically talented graduating high school senior.” In June 2014, Annie and twelve other arts scholars created and performed a show titled *A Salute to the U.S. Presidential Scholars* at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., directed by Tony Award winner Bill T. Jones. Annie is a member of the 50th class of Presidential Scholars.

Annie is a seasoned soloist. This March, she performed at several local school assemblies with Lara Webber and a string quartet from LAS, and she also played the “Renaissance Concerto” by Lukas Foss with the Kentucky Symphony Orchestra. In November 2012 and February 2013, she performed with the San Francisco Symphony in fourteen concerts for their Elements of Music and Music for Families programs. Through these concerts, Annie played a movement of the Ibert Flute Concerto for more than 25,000 Bay Area students (grades 3–9), teachers, and community members in Davies Symphony Hall. In 2012, Annie was invited as a soloist for the Vienna International Orchestra conducted by Michele Santorsola. Annie also has soloed with the Diablo Symphony Orchestra and the San José Chamber Orchestra.

As an orchestral musician, Annie was a member of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra throughout her four years in high school, performing in Davies Symphony Hall and on tour in Europe. With the SFSYO, she performed flute solos in Debussy’s “Prélude à l’Après-midi d’un faune,” Prokofiev’s “Peter and the Wolf,” and Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloé*, among others. Regarding her solo in Ravel’s *Daphnis*, a *San Francisco Classical Voice* critic noted: “Annie Wu’s long and virtuoso solo was especially breathtaking.”

During the summer of 2013, Annie was a member of the inaugural season of Carnegie Hall’s National Youth Orchestra of the USA with maestro Valery Gergiev and soloist Joshua Bell. She was principal flute in Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 10 at the Kennedy Center in Washington, the Royal Albert Hall in London, the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, and the Mariinsky II Theater in St. Petersburg. Of her playing in the Shostakovich, the music critic of the UK *Independent* wrote: “No praise too high for the flute and horn soloists ... a completely professional performance.” This past summer, Annie returned for the NYO’s second season and American tour, whose highlights were the performances in Carnegie Hall, Seiji Ozawa Hall, and Walt Disney Concert Hall. For the summer of 2015, Annie has been invited to the prestigious Music Academy of the West summer festival in Santa Barbara.



Her prizes in the 2011 NFA Competition have led to a large audience in quite a different genre of music: Annie’s video rendition of Greg Pattillo’s *Three Beats for Beatbox Flute* (the 2011 National Flute Association commissioned piece) now has more than 1.4 million hits on YouTube. The success of the has video led to performances in San Francisco for the JIVE Company Conference, Las Vegas at the Cosmopolitan Hotel, and Vancouver at a TEDTalk private event. She was also featured in an article in the NFA’s magazine, *The Flutist Quarterly*, that she wrote herself and in an interview on San Francisco’s KGO Radio (810 AM).

In October 2012, she performed on the Emmy Award-winning national radio program *From The Top* with Christopher O’Riley, taped live at the Mondavi Center in Davis. They performed the last movement of Copland’s Duo for Flute and Piano, and Annie also played Pattillo’s third “Beat” from *Three Beats for Beatbox Flute*.

Annie is a 2014 Yamaha Young Performing Artist. At age 12, she performed in Carnegie Hall as the first-place winner of the American Fine Arts Competition, returning to the hall as first-prize winner in the 2010 Alexander & Buono International Flute Competition. She won first prizes in the woodwinds competition of the Music Teachers National Association, the Young Artist Competition of the Etude Club of Berkeley, the Young Artist Competition of the Diablo Symphony Orchestra, the International Chamber Competition of Areon Flutes, and high school division of the San Francisco International Flute Festival.

Annie has performed in master classes of renowned flutists such as Claude Monteux, Carol Wincenc, Jeffrey Khaner, Robert Stallman, Jim Walker, Catherine Payne, Mark Sparks, Christina Jennings, Gary Schocker, Ransom Wilson, Leone Buyse, Keith Underwood, Jill Felber, Sergio Pallottelli, Mario Caroli, John Heiss, and Liisa Ruoho. Annie’s previous teachers include Isabelle Chapuis, Esther Landau, and Shao-Jiang Huang.

This academic year, Annie began her studies in a five-year dual degree program of Harvard and the New England Conservatory of Music: Graduates of the program receive a Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard College and a Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory. At the conservatory, Annie studies with flutist Paula Robison. She is currently an undecided major at Harvard. When not surrounded by music, Annie enjoys watching movies, traveling, eating, painting, and spending time with her friends and family.

LAS Association Board Member?

Want to be more involved with the Symphony? You can help guide and build the future of our vibrant organization.

The Symphony Association needs a few more community volunteers to come join us on the Board of Directors. (Our board has twenty to thirty members; at least 40% but at most 60% of the directors are LAS orchestra members.) We meet once a month on Monday nights at the Livermore Library, except during the summer. Come help us advance.

Call (925) 447-6454 for more information.

May Concert Special Events

The LAS concert on May 16 will feature Elizabeth Pitcairn playing the famed Red Violin.

Film and More Thursday May 7

The 1998 film *The Red Violin*, with Joshua Bell as soloist on the soundtrack by John Corigliano, will be shown at the Vine Cinema, 1722 First Street, Livermore, on Thursday May 7 at 7 p.m., immediately followed by a dessert and wine buffet at Zephyr Grill and Bar, 1736 First Street (next door to the Vine). Cost: \$10, movie only; \$50, movie and buffet.

Call (925) 447-6454 for tickets.

Musical Soirée with Elizabeth Pitcairn Friday May 15

Elizabeth Pitcairn will perform a program of solo violin showpieces, share her particular insights and experiences, and engage personally with attendees. This is a rare opportunity to get to know one of this country's most celebrated virtuosos, hear her story, and hear the story of her remarkable instrument and its legacy. The event, hosted on the evening of Friday May 15 by the Symphony Guild in a private home, will include wine and a festive hors d'oeuvres buffet. Cost: \$85 (includes a \$50 donation to LAS).

Call (925) 447-6454 for tickets and information.

Grants and Matching Gifts

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Livermore Cultural Arts Council

Competition for Young Musicians

Recordings due September 27, competition October 18, 2015.

Next Concert —“Beethoven and the Red Violin,” May 16, 2015—featuring Elizabeth Pitcairn as violin soloist

Livermore-Amador Symphony is a member of the Livermore Cultural Arts Council and a resident company of the Bankhead Theater. See the Cultural Arts Calendar at www.independentnews.com.

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Memorial, awards fund, and “in honor of” donations will be acknowledged in the May concert program.

Corrections or questions?

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