

Livermore-Amador Symphony

Lara Webber, Music Director & Conductor

Arthur P. Barnes, Music Director Emeritus

Saturday, February 24, 2018, 8 p.m.

Bankhead Theater, Livermore



MUSIC OF THE VALLEY



Prelude Talk at 7 p.m. by Lara Webber

Fountains of Rome

Ottorino Respighi
(1879–1936)

Flute Concerto No. 1 in G Major

K. 313—1st movement

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(1756–1791)

David Davisson, soloist

Cello Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major

Opus 107—1st movement

Dmitri Shostakovich

(1906–1975)

Sean Lee, soloist

INTERMISSION

with entertainment in the lobby by Element 116

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor

Opus 18—1st movement

Sergei Rachmaninoff

(1873–1943)

Joey Zhu, soloist

Four Sea Interludes, from *Peter Grimes*

Opus 33a

Benjamin Britten

(1913–1976)

I. Dawn

II. Sunday Morning

III. Moonlight

IV. Storm

*The audience and performers are invited
to enjoy cookies, cider, coffee, and sparkling wine in the lobby after the concert
at a reception hosted by the Livermore-Amador Symphony Guild.*

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Conductor

Lara Webber

First Violin

Kristina Anderson

Concertmaster

Juliana Zolynas

Assistant

Concertmaster

Norman Back

Amanda Bewley

Feliza Bourguet

Judy Eckart

Lana Hodzic

Susan Ivie

Jackie Maruskin

Jutta Massoud

Doug Morrison

Nicholas Travia

Second Violin

Ursula Goldstein

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String Bass

Markus Salasoo

Acting Principal

Alan Frank

Patricia Lay

Aaron Plattner

Flute

Marianne Beeler

Principal

Nan Davies

Beth Wilson

Piccolo

Nan Davies

Oboe

Eva Langfeldt

Principal

Jeanne Brown

Jeff Lenigan

English Horn

Jeanne Brown

E-flat Clarinet

Kathy Boster

B-flat Clarinet

Lesley Watson

Principal

Kathy Boster

Bass Clarinet

Phil Pollard

Bassoon

Doug Stark

Principal

Katie Brunner

Contrabassoon

Carlos Rodriguez

Horn

Christine-Ann Immesoete

Principal

James Hartman

Bryan Waugh

Robert Williams

Trumpet

Michael Portnoff

Principal

Steven Anderson

Bob Bryant

Trombone

Diane Schildbach

Principal

Marcus Schildbach

Bass Trombone

Tom Munns

Tuba

Betsy Hausburg

Timpani

April Nissen

Percussion

April Nissen

Principal

Tom Dreiman

Todd Evans

Walt Nissen

Harp ²

Constance Koo

Sarah Goss

Celesta

April Nissen

Piano

Todd Evans

¹ High school student

² The Livermore-Amador Symphony Guild is underwriting the cost of providing harp players at LAS concerts during the 2017–2018 season.

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Program Notes

Fountains of Rome

Ottorino Respighi

(1879–1936)

Ottorino Respighi began his career as a violinist and violist, studying first with his father and then at the Liceo Musicale in Bologna. After graduating, he became principal violist in the orchestra of the Russian Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg. There he studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov, one of the great masters of orchestral color, whose influence can be heard in all of Respighi's most popular works, the three symphonic poems celebrating the glories of his adopted city: *Fountains of Rome* (1917), *Pines of Rome* (1924), and *Roman Festivals* (1929). Each is orchestrated on a lavish, virtually cinematic scale and dotted with evocative musical descriptions.

Fountains of Rome has four sections, played without pause. This is how Respighi described the contents: "In this symphonic poem, the composer has endeavored to give expression to the sentiments and visions suggested to him by four of Rome's fountains contemplated at the hour in which their character is most in harmony with the surrounding landscape, or in which their beauty appears most impressive to the observer.

"The first part of the poem, inspired by the fountain of Valle Giulia, depicts a pastoral landscape: droves of cattle pass and disappear in the fresh damp mists of a Roman dawn. A sudden loud and insistent blast of horns above the whole orchestra introduces the second part, 'The Triton Fountain.' It is like a joyous call, summoning troops of naiads and tritons, who come running up, pursuing each other and mingling in a frenzied dance between the jets of water.

"Next there appears a solemn theme borne on the undulations of the orchestra. It is the fountain of Trevi at midday. The solemn theme, passing from the woodwind to the brass instruments, assumes a triumphal character. Trumpets peal: across the radiant surface of the water there passes Neptune's chariot drawn by seahorses and followed by a train of sirens and tritons. The procession then vanishes while faint trumpet blasts resound in the distance. The fourth part, 'The Villa Medici Fountain,' is announced by a sad theme that rises above a subdued warbling. It is the nostalgic hour of sunset. The air is full of the sound of tolling bells, birds twittering, leaves rustling. Then all dies peacefully into the silence of the night."

Flute Concerto No. 1 in G Major Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

K. 313—1st movement

(1756–1791)

In September 1777, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart left his home in Salzburg to begin an 18-month journey throughout Europe. Mozart, who felt that his talents were not appreciated in his native city, hoped to find steady employment elsewhere. His journey took him to Munich, Augsburg, Mannheim, and finally to Paris.

While in Mannheim, Mozart made the acquaintance of a Dutch visitor to the German city, a surgeon and amateur flutist by the name of Ferdinand De Jean, who commissioned him to compose "three short, easy concerti and a pair of flute quartets."

Mozart did not have great affection for the flute, at least as a solo instrument, but ultimately fulfilled De Jean's commission, which included the composer's two flute concerti—in G Major, K. 313, and in D Major, K. 314 (the latter an adaptation of the composer's Oboe Concerto in C Major).

The concerto opens with the orchestra's forte declaration of the movement's initial theme. A series of subsidiary themes follows, capped by a descending cadence.

The soloist enters with an elaborate restatement of the thematic material. A series of sixteenth notes by the soloist launches the extended development section, whose frequent journeys into the minor key lend a more somber tone to the opening movement. A scurrying passage by the soloist heralds the recapitulation of the principal themes. A final statement of the initial theme by the orchestra yields to the flutist's solo cadenza and the emphatic concluding bars.

Cello Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major

Dmitri Shostakovich

Opus 107—1st movement

(1906–1975)

"The major work in my immediate plans is a cello concerto," Dmitri Shostakovich had said to a friend in the spring of 1959. "Its first movement, an allegretto in the nature of a scherzo-like march, is ready. I think the concerto will have three movements, but I am at a loss to say anything definite about its content.... It often happens that in the process of writing a piece, the form, expressive media, and even the genre of a work undergo a marked change."

Shostakovich created both of his cello concerti for Mstislav Rostropovich, the peerless Russian cellist with the big, vibrant tone who continued to champion the cause of the composer's music long after Shostakovich's death, in 1975. When the concerto was finished, Rostropovich rushed to Leningrad with his accompanist and received the score from Shostakovich. Four days later, he went to the composer's dacha in Komarovo to play the concerto for him. Shostakovich rummaged around for a music stand, but Rostropovich told him he didn't need one—he had completely memorized the piece in four days.

The composer said of this work, "I took a simple little theme and tried to develop it." This quizzical little four-note motive, stated brusquely by the solo cello in the opening bars of the concerto, is clearly related to the composer's personal musical monogram—D–E flat–C–B (or D–S–C–H in German notation)—and appears again in the tragic Eighth String Quartet. Shostakovich called the first movement "a jocular march," but its humor is darkly grotesque and acerbic, rudely punctuated by four loud blows from the timpani.

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Opus 18—1st movement

(1873–1943)

Sergei Rachmaninoff's difficulties as the composer-to-be of Concerto No. 2 began in 1897, when his newly completed First Symphony was viciously denounced by critics—one even suggested that the work might have been produced by "a conservatory in hell." The young man was devastated and, for several years, had great difficulty applying himself to his work. At the same time, he was struggling financially, a situation not helped by the fact that his publisher had neglected to obtain an international copyright on the very popular Prelude in C-Sharp Minor, which was being reproduced indiscriminately in Britain and the US without proper payment.

Things finally came to a head in January 1900, when the composer visited Leo Tolstoy. Rachmaninoff played the piano for the legendary writer, who complained, "Tell me, is such music needed by anybody? ... I must tell you how I dislike it all! ... Beethoven is nonsense, Pushkin and Lermontov also."

"It was awful," recalled Rachmaninoff. Later in the evening, Tolstoy apologized. Nevertheless, Rachmaninoff went into a deep depression and stopped composing altogether.

His cousins, with whom he had a close relationship, talked him into seeing an acquaintance of theirs, Dr. Nikolai Dahl. Dahl, himself an amateur musician, had

become interested in hypnosis and had devoted his practice to it. He combined that technique with pleasant and intelligent conversations about music, and Rachmaninoff began to improve rapidly. By summer he had started on Concerto No. 2. Work now progressed rapidly, and by the end of the year, he played the last two movements in a December concert in Moscow. He then turned to the first movement, with its dramatic and moody opening chords, and completed it very quickly.

Four Sea Interludes, from *Peter Grimes* Benjamin Britten Opus 33a (1913–1976)

Peter Grimes, Benjamin Britten's first opera, is about a fisherman in Aldeburgh on England's eastern coast, a misanthropic loner who is hounded to self-destruction by the townspeople after the mysterious, but accidental, deaths of two of his apprentices. The opera's premiere as the first postwar production of the Sadler's Wells Opera was immediately recognized as a landmark for both Britten and English opera.

In the opera, the sea interludes are scene changes. Britten was adept at making a virtue of the necessity of getting smoothly from one set to another, and his interludes not only take the listener from one physical location to another but also go inside the characters' minds, which are full of turmoil and doubt. There is not a bar in the interludes, no matter how beautiful, that is free of foreboding. They are integrated into the opera's action, leading into the next scene without pause. In making concert pieces out of them, Britten put them in a different sequence and changed some endings to make them self-contained.

"Dawn" is the first interlude in the opera, a bridge between the prologue (an inquest into the death of Peter's first apprentice) and the outdoor early morning of Act I. It follows a duet in which Peter and Ellen Orford, the schoolteacher he hopes to marry, sing about the hurt he suffers from the rumors about him. Britten divides his orchestra into three choirs that present three elements: flutes and violins play a high, largely static melody, against which the harp, violas, and clarinets interject shimmering arpeggios. The rest of the orchestra interrupts periodically with ominously surging chords.

"Sunday Morning" comprises the prologue to, and first moments of, Act II. Large church bells are suggested by clanging thirds from opposing pairs of horns, and later by actual bells. Woodwinds, strings, and trumpets represent smaller bells, while a flute evokes waking birds. A sweeping melody in the violins at the end is, in the opera, Ellen Orford's song greeting the morning.

"Moonlight," which bridges night and the following day, is the prologue to Act III. It is a curious and unsettling blend of motion and stasis, with moving parts against drones in other parts. It is built around the second-inversion chord (a major chord with the fifth at the bottom), which, in traditional harmony, is a consonance that functions like a dissonance because it doesn't feel at rest. A movement in which many such chords are strung together will necessarily have a subtle feeling of instability.

"Storm" comes from the middle of Act I, bridging a scene in which Grimes waits outside for an oncoming storm and a scene in which the townspeople wait out the storm in a pub. The sweeping theme heard when the storm music begins to subside has the feel of safety, and indeed it is to this music that Grimes had sung in the previous scene, "What harbor shelters peace, away from tidal waves, away from storms? What harbor can embrace terrors and tragedies?"

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

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(Corrections? Please contact Judy Eckart, judy@justjudy.com.)

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Winners of the 2017–2018 Competition for Young Musicians

David Davisson—Flute

David Davisson has studied the flute for six years; his current teacher is Susan Waller, formerly with the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra. David is a member of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra. Previously, he was a member of the Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra, with which he toured Cuba in the summer of 2016. He also participated in the All-State Honor Band and the Northern California Honor Band and last summer attended the Interlochen Flute Institute at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan.



David has played at Tri-Valley Solo and Ensemble Festival Command Performances three times and has been awarded two scholarships for Silver Lake Band Camp. A member of the LAS youth orchestra for three years, he performed for the LAS Guild in 2017. He played in the pit orchestra in this past year's production of *The Nutcracker* with Valley Dance Theatre, as well as in the pit orchestra for his school's production of *In the Heights*.

The son of Lee Davisson and Heidi Kaseff, 16-year-old David is a junior at Livermore High School. He is the principal flute of the LHS symphonic band, he volunteers to tutor other LHS flutists weekly, and he is a private flute instructor. David also participates in the school's math club, and he is a math tutor for Green Engineering Academy students at LHS. After high school, he plans to pursue music at a conservatory and become a professional musician.

Sean Lee—Cello

Sean Lee started cello studies at age 8 with Jehah Han; he currently studies with Jonathan Koh. Sean was named a 2018 Mondavi National Young Artists Competition semifinalist. He has won awards from the American Protégé International Concerto Competition, US International Music Competition, Classical Masters Competition, Silicon Valley Youth Music Competition, and Diablo Valley College/Holy Names University Young Artist String Competition. He debuted as a soloist with El Camino Youth Symphony in 2015 and performed for the LAS Guild in both 2016 and 2017.



Sean is currently a member of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra and served as the principal cellist for the California Orchestra Directors Association Honor Orchestra for two years in a row. He is the cellist of the award-winning Epsilon Trio and the Quintet Tranquillo, principal cellist of the Livermore Pleasanton Youth Outreach Symphony, and a member of the Bay Area Visiting Musicians. He has performed for veterans, seniors, and hospice patients and recently helped organize a wildfire relief concert to benefit the American Red Cross.

Sean is 16 years old and a junior at Dougherty Valley High School. His parents are Oh Jae Lee and Kyong Hee Choi. When not making music, Sean enjoys playing basketball and archery. He has won gold medals at California State Archery Championships and holds the USA Archery national record for 50m double round.

Joey Zhu—Piano

Joey Zhu began playing piano at age 5. His current teachers are Jed Galant and Olya Katsman; previously he studied with Tamriko Siphshvili. Joey has per-

formed in Junior Bach Festivals and, at age 10, for the LAS Guild. Joey has won the Taghioff Award of the Fremont Symphony Orchestra young artist competition and the concerto competition of El Camino Youth Symphony (ECYS). He will be performing at Carnegie Hall in New York City this coming summer as a first-place winner of American Protégé International Music Talent competitions.



Joey also plays cello and is the principal cellist in his school chamber orchestra and in the senior orchestra of ECYS. Last summer, he performed with ECYS in Prague, Bratislava, Budapest, and Vienna. Joey has been a member of his church worship team since eighth grade and regularly serves as a piano accompanist for its choir. He played alto saxophone in middle school as a school jazz band member. He has studied music composition since age 6.

Joey is the son of Xiaobin Zhu and Eva Yang; was born in Montreal, Canada; and came to California at age 7. He is a junior at California High School in San Ramon. He is a member of his school's track and field team, Science Olympiad team, and math club. He also enjoys hanging out with friends, programming video games, and drawing. After high school, he hopes to study physics and computer science.

Element 116

Element 116 is a band composed of middle and high school students from several Livermore-area schools. Under the lead of director Matt Finders, a renowned jazz musician and composer who grew up in Livermore, the band plays a mix of jazz, Latin, rock, and swing. The band is named after Livermore's own chemical element, Livermorium, which has atomic number 116.

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Members of the A.P. Barnes Society have included the symphony in their estate plans. Please contact APBarnesSociety@livermoreamadorsymphony.org.

Next Concert: April 14, 2018

Our LAS concert this April will feature Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony No. 6, "The Unanswered Question" by Ives, and soloist Madeline Adkins playing the Korngold violin concerto. We hope that you will join us!

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.

LVPAC is a sponsor of this event.



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