



Symphony Notes

A publication of the Livermore-Amador Symphony and Guild, Vol. 63, No. 2, February 2026

LIVERMORE-AMADOR SYMPHONY

Lara Webber, Music Director & Conductor

Presents

Forbidden Love

Saturday, February 14, 2026, at 7:30 p.m.

Featuring two winners of the Competition for Young Musicians

Lara Webber, Conductor

7-7:15 Inside the Music preconcert talk by Lara Webber.

**BANKHEAD THEATER, 2400 First Street, Livermore
Livermore Valley Performing Arts Center**

The Walk to the Paradise Garden

Frederick Delius

Cello Concerto in B Minor, 1st movement

Antonín Dvořák

Cara Wang, soloist

Intermission

Rococo Variations for Cello

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Donghu Kim, soloist

Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 2

Sergei Prokofiev

Salut d'Amour

Edward Elgar

**Teen Jazz Band *Element 116*, under the direction of Matt Finders,
will perform in the lobby at intermission.**

***The audience and performers are invited to enjoy a post-concert reception
in the lobby hosted by the Livermore-Amador Symphony Guild.***

**Tickets: <https://livermoreamadorsymphony.org/tickets.html>;
Bankhead ticket office at 2400 First St., Livermore; or 925-373-6800.
Youth under age 22 are always FREE.**



LIVERMORE AMADOR SYMPHONY

Forbidden Love

Spend Valentine's Day with the Symphony!

Hear Elgar's musical love letter, and immerse yourself in passionate music of Delius and Prokofiev inspired by the Shakespearean lovers Romeo and Juliet.



February 14, 2026 7:30 p.m.

Inside the Music 7:00 pm with Conductor, Lara Webber

LIVERMORE
arts
BANKHEAD THEATER

livermoreamadorsymphony.org

SMILE with your Valentine! **STRIKE** a pose with friends!
SNAP a photo at our **Valentine's Day** backdrop.

Youth under 22
Tickets are free!

Valentine's Day
Intermission
Performance



Element 116
Jazz Band

Cara Wang



Dvorak's Cello Concerto
in B Minor, mvt #1

Donghu Kim



Tchaikovsky's
Rococo Variations

Two of our Youth Competition
Winners Perform

Third Performance June 6

Complimentary **Livermore Valley Wines** after the concert,
paired with **Valentine's chocolate** 🍫

A Message from LAS GUILD PRESIDENT PJ Wells



The remnants of the holidays are nearly gone, with the exception of a festive array of plaid vests on proud display during daily dog walks in the local parks. I wonder if this is the canine equivalent of a Christmas Sweater Competition, like our GUILD HOLIDAY LUNCH? Oh my! The turnout was good and the spirit of the group was high as well. Was it the \$6 margaritas or the candy cane headgear ~ yah, both? Maybe it was the cold medicine as I hardly remember the food, but I have a few photos to share. Thank you to all who attended and presented ~ you made it special!

Our December 6 family holiday concert with associated petting zoo continued to draw a big crowd of enthusiastic kids and parents determined to try the largest instruments in the orchestra. I coaxed a few wee ones into the “faux flute” line so they could get their hands on a pint-sized instrument, but fascination with tubas and a double bass has a weird impact on children: they want to get their hands on the big units. The evening concert was well attended and our soloist, violist Jenny Douglass, was a pure delight.

We held the JANUARY GEMS youth recital/reception on January 18 featuring 3 soloists, all selected runners-up from the Competition for Young Musicians: Ivy Cui (piano), Hiroshi Corro (piano), and Claire Lin (violin). Our April Guild spring business meeting will feature additional runners-up from the competition. We are pleased to host these young musicians who are willing to perform in small and large venues. The Guild youth recital/receptions are free and addicting! Many symphony lovers say this is one of their favorite small events of the season, plus you stand a very good chance of chatting with the performers over desserts and coffee afterwards. Better yet, talk to their parents and get the real scoop on teen life today.

LAS continues to explore ways to enhance and personalize each concert. In February we focus on romance as a fitting tribute to Valentine’s Day. An evening at the symphony is a terrific value! The ticket price not only includes the concert performance, but Music Director Lara Webber’s 7 p.m. pre-talk, *Inside the Music*; intermission entertainment (jazz band *Element 116* at the February concert), and a wine reception in the lobby afterwards where you can chat with orchestra musicians, soloists, the conductor, audience friends, and Guild members. We will sweeten our February 14 Valentine’s Day concert with chocolates and offer a lobby photo opportunity to send you home that evening with a couple snapshots of you in Valentine’s mode!

Meanwhile, keep those plaid vests handy. It is still chilly winter, Fido needs the warmth, but a future concert this season may prompt you to break out the tartan and unleash your inner plaid! Extra points if you and Fido have matching plaid vests. :-)

Yes, let’s go out and play!

PJ Wells

2025-2026 President

Livermore-Amador Symphony Guild

Letter from LASA PRESIDENT ANNE ANAYA



I am so proud that for more than 60 years, our symphony has been a place where young musicians first discovered the spark that would shape their musical paths.

A big bravo to **Stacy Hughes** and her team of symphony musicians who created an **orchestra petting zoo** for our December Family Concert. The lobby was alive with energy as our players connected with families, shared their knowledge, and invited guests of all ages to explore the instruments up close. It was a wonderful opening act—introducing new sounds, igniting curiosity, and encouraging the next generation to find their own rhythm. 🎵

What a true highlight it was to introduce our **2025 Award Winners** at the December concert. The evening held special meaning as I had the pleasure of meeting and celebrating four remarkable student musicians. Our sincere appreciation goes to **Nissa Nack** and her team, who devoted countless hours to selecting this year's award recipients—a thoughtful process deserving of a standing ovation. 🎵

What a treat to perform on Valentine's Day! This concert is always close to our hearts, especially as we shine the spotlight on two winners from our **53rd annual Competition for Young Musicians**. A heartfelt thank-you for the competition leadership of **Anne Badders**, who connected young musicians across Alameda and Contra Costa Counties to our organization. Get ready to be captivated by two exceptional cello performances showcasing young artists this Valentine's Day. 💕🎵

Years ago, the Livermore Amador Symphony welcomed me into the second violins in high school and later honored me with an award—experiences that left a lasting impact. I was inspired by the generosity and passion of the musicians around me. Today I'm deeply grateful to our Board and orchestra members who keep **young musicians in the spotlight!**

With a harmonious heart,

Anne Anaya,

President, Livermore-Amador Symphony Association



LIVERMORE AMADOR SYMPHONY

TO PURCHASE CONCERT TICKETS:

- Phone the Bankhead ticket office, 925-373-6800, **OR**
 - Order online: <https://livermoreamadorsymphony.org/tickets.html>, **OR**
 - Visit the Bankhead ticket office in person, 2400 First Street, Livermore.
- Adult single ticket prices: \$46, \$39, \$31. Youth tickets through age 21 are always **FREE**.

Ticket Purchase Questions? Call the Symphony at 925-789-5724.



LIVERMORE AMADOR SYMPHONY

LAS Concert

Saturday, February 14

Forbidden Love

Concert begins at 7:30 p.m.

Inside the Music: 7-7:15

Bankhead Theater Livermore



Some Notes about the Concert from

Lara Webber, Music Director and Conductor

Our program showcases young musical talent with performances by two of our 3 winners of the Symphony's 53rd Competition for Young Musicians, Cara Wang and Donghu Kim.

Both are cellists, playing beloved music of Dvořák and Tchaikovsky, and are featured further in this newsletter.

Our third winner, harp soloist Charlotte Trinh, will perform in our season finale, June 6.

This Valentine's Day concert features two composers whose music vividly captures the love story of Romeo and Juliet. The concert opens with music of Frederick Delius. His "The Walk to the Paradise Garden" captures a rare moment of peace and tranquility in nature for Romeo and Juliet. Serene harmony and lush melodies capture the devotion and trust of these two lovers. Passionate sweeping melodies erupt and envelop us and then gently set us down again in the calm beauty of the garden. It is deeply loving music.

Prokofiev's melodic gifts and harmonic language capture each character in Shakespeare's play vividly and specifically. He uses extremes of sound in the orchestra, from the lowest sounds of tuba and bass clarinet to the highest notes of the piccolo. Expressive solos shared across woodwind and string instruments follow the development of the characters themselves. You'll literally feel the exuberance and energy of Juliet at just 13 years old. The moral center of Friar Lawrence and his care for the young lovers is carried beautifully by bassoon and tuba, and the balcony scene and tragic ending feature some of Prokofiev's most delicate and dramatic music.

Finally, we finish with Edward Elgar's deeply sentimental and romantic "Salut d'Amour," sure to lift everyone's hearts at the end of the evening.

Teen jazz band Element 116, under the director of Matt Finders, performs in the lobby at intermission. Also in the lobby: a photo booth and a special post-concert reception. Plus, keep your eyes peeled for Romeo and Juliet, who might pop up somewhere during the evening!

We can't wait to see you at the Bankhead on February 14!

~ Lara Webber~



***Two Winners of the 53rd Annual COMPETITION for YOUNG MUSICIANS,
Cara Wang and Donghu Kim, will perform February 14***

***The Livermore-Amador Symphony Association conducts the Competition each October.
Winners are awarded \$750 prizes and perform as soloists with LAS.***

The third winner, Charlotte Trinh, will be the featured harp soloist at our June 6 LAS concert.

DONGHU KIM, age 16, is a cellist and sophomore at Dougherty Valley High School in San Ramon. He began studying the cello at age eleven, initially with Andy Ly, and later at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Pre-College Program with Amos Yang, San Francisco Symphony's assistant principal cello. He currently continues his studies there under Jason Wang.

Donghu serves as principal cellist of the Young People's Symphony Orchestra (YPSO) and is also a member of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra (SFSYO).

From an early stage, Donghu pursued music with curiosity and breadth, performing as a cellist, guitarist, and flutist in ensembles ranging from chamber groups to jazz band. Now fully devoted to the cello, he engages deeply in performance, chamber music, music theory, and Baroque studies at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Pre-College Program.

Moved by a message of hope from Los Angeles following a devastating fire, Donghu initiated an online fundraising project, uniting twelve Bay Area cellists in a virtual performance that raised \$1000 in relief donations.

As an orchestral musician, Donghu has performed with California All-State Music Education Conference, CODA Music Festival at Montreat College, and the Korean-American Music Supporters' Association Youth Symphony Orchestra. His artistry has been recognized through numerous awards, including second prize at the Diablo Valley College/Holy Names University Concerto Competition, honorable mention in the U.S. International Music Competition Young Artists Division, first prize in the USIMC Chamber Division, third prize in the USIMC Bach Division, and first prize in the U.S. Open Music Competition Chamber Division.



CARA WANG, age 16, studies cello with Amos Yang, having begun her cello journey at age 4 with Alan Yang. A previous winner of the Livermore-Amador Symphony Competition for Young Musicians, she is excited and grateful to return as a soloist with the symphony.

Cara has received numerous honors, including awards from Khuner Young Artist Competition, Pacific Musical Society and Foundation Competition, Prodigy International Music Competition, U.S. Open Music Competition, U.S. International Music Competition, Korean-American Music Supporters' Association Competition, Diablo Valley College Young Artist String Competition, CalASTA Strings State Competition, Houston International Music Competition, and American Protégé International Concerto Competition.

In addition to the Livermore-Amador Symphony, Cara has performed as a soloist with Central Oregon Symphony, Castro Valley Orchestra, Symphony Parnassus, and Prometheus Symphony Orchestra. Cara loves collaborating with others and was previously principal cellist of the SFCM Pre-College String Orchestra (2022-23) and performed with several chamber ensembles. She is currently a member of Young Chamber Musicians and the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra. Cara has attended the Bowdoin International

Music Festival (2025), Encore Summer Chamber Music Institute (2024, 2025), Meadowmount School of Music (2023), and Colburn Summer Chamber Music Intensive (2022). She is deeply grateful to the teachers and musicians who have inspired her and finds great joy in passing on that love of music by teaching young cellists in her community.

LIVERMORE-AMADOR SYMPHONY and GUILD CALENDAR 2025-2026

Livermore-Amador Symphony Concert Forbidden Love

Bankhead Theater, Livermore

Saturday, February 14, 2026, 7:30 p.m.

Inside the Music, 7-7:15

**Includes performances by 2 winners of the Competition for Young Musicians
and, in the lobby at intermission, teen jazz band, *Element 116***

Note concert start time 7:30pm!

March date to be determined, 4:00-7:00 p.m.

Guild Sponsored Event: Sipping for the Symphony

Cuda Ridge Wines, 2400 Arroyo Road, Livermore

Saturday, April 11, 2026, 7:30 p.m. (Inside the Music, 7-7:15)

Livermore-Amador Symphony Concert:

Spring Awakenings, Geoffrey Gallegos, guest conductor

Bankhead Theater, Livermore

Tuesday, April 21, 2026, 7:00-7:20 p.m. (at LAS rehearsal)

Association Annual Meeting-Board member election

East Avenue Middle School Music Room, 3951 East Ave., Livermore

Thursday, April 23, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

Guild Spring Business Meeting & Reception-Election of officers

With performances by selected runners-up of the Competition for Young Musicians

Bothwell Arts Center, 2466 8th Street, Livermore

Thursday, May 21, 2026, 12:00 noon

Guild Spring Luncheon, with introduction of 2026-27 officers

Beeb's Restaurant, 915 Clubhouse Dr., Livermore

Saturday, June 6, 2026, 7:30 p.m. (Inside the Music, 7-7:15)

Livermore-Amador Symphony Concert:

Dramatic Voices, Steve Sanchez, clarinet

Includes a performance by the 3rd winner of the Competition for Young Musicians

Bankhead Theater, Livermore

Symphony Notes is published four times a year for members of the Livermore-Amador Symphony Association, Orchestra, and Guild. Symphony Association President: Anne Anaya; Guild President: PJ Wells; Editor: Marcia Elchesen. PO Box 1049, Livermore, CA 94551; 925-789-5724; Tax ID: 23-7001614. Website: www.livermoreamadorsymphony.org; Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LivAmSymph/>.