

PENINSULA *symphony*

Symphony Sounds

June, 2016

49th Season, Number 5

Editor: Terri Zinkiewicz

Peninsula Symphony Concert

Sunday, June 19, 2016, at 7:00 PM

Redondo Union High School Auditorium
222 North Pacific Coast Highway
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

The Norris Foundation Concert

BRAHMS CYCLE IV

Caroline Ho, piano

Rossini	Overture to <i>The Italian Girl in Algiers</i>
Tchaikovsky	Concerto No. 1 for Piano and Orchestra in B-flat minor, Opus 23
Brahms	Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Opus 98

Concert Details

Doors open at 6:00 PM. Center-section seating is reserved for members at the Patron level and above.

Pre-concert lecture by **Maestro Berkson** at 6:15 PM for Symphony Association members and first-time attendees.

General public admitted at 6:50 PM.

Post-concert — Meet the Performers

After the concert, the audience is invited to remain in the auditorium and meet informally with our conductor, Gary Berkson, and with our soloist. The artists may make a few remarks about the performance, and then the audience will have an opportunity to ask questions. Please call our office at 310-544-0320 if you have any questions about this event.

Come Hear the Conclusion of the Brahms Cycle on Sunday, June 19

The fourth and final Peninsula Symphony concert of the 2015-2016 season highlights the 2016 Edith Knox Young Artists Performance Competition winner, pianist Caroline Ho, playing Tchaikovsky's Concerto No. 1. This is a big crowd favorite that you will not want to miss. We will also present Brahms' Symphony No. 4 which brings our *Brahms Cycle* concerts to a conclusion. The concert will open with Rossini's popular Overture to *The Italian Girl in Algiers*.

We are already looking ahead to next year, our 50th anniversary season. The festivities begin with a gala on Saturday, September 24th in Rolling Hills and then our big 50th anniversary concert on Sunday, October 30. Make sure that you are included in mailings for all the festivities by renewing your Symphony Association membership or by becoming a new member. Information will be available at the concert, and you may also call our office at 310-544-0320.

This edition of ***Symphony Sounds*** includes short previews of the pieces and composers that will be performed at the June 19th concert, a profile of our soloist, photos from our April 17th concert and next season's concert dates.



Maestro Gary Berkson presents a pre-concert lecture before every concert to introduce the music and composers. He illustrates with keyboard examples and interesting stories. Take advantage of this membership perk!

Music Preview (Please see the 2015-2016 Program Book that is distributed at all concerts for more detailed program notes on the Rossini and Brahms works.)

**Overture to *The Italian Girl in Algiers*
Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868)**

Rossini's music reflects his love of Mozart and Haydn. His operas were extremely popular in the early 19th century. The opera overture is intended to be played by the orchestra at the beginning of the opera to get the audience warmed up and ready for what is to come. Many of Rossini's overtures have become stand-alone pieces for the concert stage, including the Overture to *The Italian Girl in Algiers*.

The Italian Girl in Algiers, a two-act, *opera buffa* (comic opera), was Rossini's fifth opera. It was written in less than one month and premiered in Venice in 1813 when the composer was only twenty-one. Subsequently, Rossini was considered the premiere Italian opera composer of his time. The overture begins with a slow introduction with pizzicato (plucked) strings, interrupted by a surprise (think Haydn), and then a nice, slow oboe melody. Then the music builds and becomes more lively – typical of Rossini, who is known for his crescendos. More quiet sections and melodic passages follow, before a build-up in both tempo (speed) and dynamic (volume) to the end.

Rossini spent most of his childhood in Bologna, Italy and learned to play violin, horn, cello and harpsichord in addition to singing in public. He became an accompanist and conductor and moved to Venice. Rossini is mostly known for his thirty-nine operas and beautiful melodies. His most famous operas include *The Barber of Seville*, *William Tell* and *The Thieving Magpie*. Rossini believed the Venetians did not comprehend his opera, *Semiramide*, so he left Italy in 1823 and settled in Paris. Following the premiere of the French language *William Tell* in 1829, Rossini "retired" from composing as a wealthy man and enjoyed being an amateur chef. He wrote very few meaningful works in the last part of his life – nearly forty years.

**Concerto No. 1 for Piano and
Orchestra in B-flat minor, Opus 23
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)**

Tchaikovsky's famous Concerto No. 1 for Piano and Orchestra was written in 1874-5 and revised in both 1879 and 1888-90. Its 1875 premiere was in Boston during an American tour of pianist Hans von Bülow. The piece uses Ukrainian, French, and Russian songs that were all well-known at the time. It was an immediate success with the audience, although less so with the critics. Like the Rachmaninoff Concerto No. 2, this concerto is a much-loved standard in the concert repertoire.

The first movement begins with four notes from the French horns and then a series of chords from the solo piano as the strings play the well-known introductory section.

The second movement employs the orchestra less than the first. The flute introduces the theme, and the piece finishes with a dynamic marking of *ppp*, which means "very, very soft."

The finale has two themes that alternate. The first theme is heard three times and is played mostly by the piano. The second theme is also presented three times, but they are very different and are even in different keys.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in 1840, and he was one of the first graduates of the St. Petersburg Conservatory. His study of Western European music enabled him to incorporate both Russian and Western elements into his compositions. This caused some mixed critical opinions at home, but his music was successful with audiences worldwide. He had only limited piano skills, so he relied on other artists to perform his difficult music. His personal life was not always happy, as he had many personal crises and suffered from depression.

This concerto was heard as part of the closing ceremony of the 2014 Winter Olympics, in many films, and it was performed by Van Cliburn when he won the First International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow in 1958. The most recent Peninsula Symphony performance was with Knox winner Min Hwan Kim in 2006.

Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Opus 98 Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Brahms' fourth and final symphony was completed in 1885, ten years after the premiere of his first symphony. Brahms conducted the premiere performance of this large orchestral work in 1885 in Meiningen, Germany. The playing time is approximately forty minutes.

Musicologists consider the Fourth Symphony to be very complex. It has some dark, deep moments, but many melodies are familiar and the piece is very popular among musicians, conductors, and audiences alike. The first movement begins with a series of somewhat fragmented, descending and then ascending thirds that should be recognizable. It ends powerfully. Like all of the Brahms symphonies, there is no movement that is truly "slow." Here the second movement is marked *Andante moderato* (*andante* is generally considered a walking pace). The third movement is a scherzo in sonata form, in a livelier tempo. The third movement includes a piccolo and triangle in addition to the instruments in the other movements.

The fourth movement is a passacaglia, based on an ostinato (a short, repeated phrase) that is first introduced by the brass and winds. It is written in triple meter. There are about thirty different variations of the theme that was adapted from a Bach cantata.

Johannes Brahms was a German virtuoso pianist and composer. His compositions were widely recognized during a concert tour he did at the age of twenty. He was the piano soloist in 1859 when his Piano Concerto No. 1 was his first orchestral composition to be performed in public. Brahms' reputation was assured after *A German Requiem*, his major choral work, premiered in 1868, and he became quite wealthy. He wrote over 200 songs. Other well-known, smaller works include the *Hungarian Dances* and the *Liebeslieder Waltzes*.

Brahms favored absolute music rather than tone poems, program music, or opera. He studied Baroque and Classical composers and was strongly influenced by Robert Schumann.

Soloist – Caroline Ho, piano

Caroline Ho, 17, is in the 11th grade at Santa Monica High School. She has studied piano for 3½ years with Anders Martinson, following earlier studies with Jessi Spikes and Marco Rambaldo. Mr. Martinson was a second-place winner in the Peninsula Symphony's concerto competition in 1989 as a fifteen-year-old, and he performed the same Tchaikovsky piano concerto that his student Caroline will perform.



Caroline Ho, piano soloist

Caroline has been in the winner's circle of many local, regional and statewide competitions in which her top honors have included first place wins in the Parness Young Artists Competition, in the Alice Frazier Kitchen Memorial Competition, in the Brentwood-Westwood "Artists of Tomorrow" Competition, and in the Palisades Young Artist Awards Competition. In addition, Caroline has received the Alfred Newman Memorial Scholarship Award from the Palisades Symphony and the Dr. Gordon Ross scholarship from the Westside Committee of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Caroline has performed the first movement of Grieg's Piano Concerto with the Brentwood-Westwood Symphony Orchestra, the first movement of Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3 with the Palisades Symphony, and the first movement of Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto with the Culver City Symphony Orchestra.

Ms. Ho is not only an accomplished pianist, but also a prize-winning cellist and composer. She recently enjoyed the Italian debut of her composition, "Suite for Strings" at a festival in Tuscany and she has performed as cello soloist with the Palisades Symphony.

Past Events

March 28 Symphony Association Annual Meeting

The Peninsula Symphony Association held its annual meeting on March 28, 2016, immediately following its regular monthly meeting. Although all members were notified and invited per the posting in the February, 2016 edition of **Symphony Sounds**, the attendees were primarily Board members. Attendees ratified the appointment of Helene Reid as a Board member, elected Inga Lidén to another three-year term and noted that Dorothy Lay, whose term had expired, had decided not to seek another term on the Board. In addition, minor changes to the Symphony Association's by-laws were approved.

April 17th Peninsula Symphony Concert

The April 17, 2016, Peninsula Symphony concert, titled "*BRAHMS CYCLE III*," began with Maestro Berkson's pre-concert lecture. He indicated this concert would be the first time the Peninsula Symphony incorporated a chorus and the first time they included some of the string players from the Los Angeles Harbor College/Peninsula Symphony Association Youth Orchestra (LAHC/PSA). He also cautioned the audience that this concert could be difficult for listeners, because every movement of every piece ends softly.

The concert began with *The Unanswered Question* by Charles Ives. This piece required two conductors, and we welcomed Richard Babcock, conductor of LAHC/PSA Youth Orchestra, to the podium along with approximately twenty of his young musicians. The Canzona Women's Ensemble joined the Peninsula Symphony for the next two musical selections. The first featured Suzanna Guzmán

as mezzo-soprano soloist in Ralph Vaughan Williams' Magnificat. The second featured the Peninsula Symphony's principal flutist, Beth Pflueger in John Fernström's Concertino for Flute with Small Orchestra and Women's Chorus, Opus 52. Both of these pieces were first-time performances by the orchestra and were new to most of the audience.



Mezzo-soprano Suzanna Guzmán and The Canzona Women's Ensemble rehearse with the Peninsula Symphony prior to the evening concert.



Richard Babcock was the primary conductor for Charles Ives' *The Unanswered Question*.

Following intermission, the featured symphony was Symphony No. 3 in F major, Opus 90 by Johannes Brahms, and immediately following the concert, the audience met with the soloists and guests: Richard Babcock; Susanna Guzmán; Co-Artistic Directors of the Canzona Women's Ensemble, Jill Anderson and Cricket Handler; and Beth Pflueger. Discussion included the challenge of rehearsing and putting

together a performance with complex logistics. It put a lot of pressure on the dress rehearsal, which was the first time all of the musicians were on the stage at the same time.



Flutist Beth Pflueger and the Peninsula Symphony.



From left to right: Gary Berkson, Cricket Handler, Jill Anderson, Peninsula Symphony Association VP Terri Zinkiewicz, Beth Pflueger, Suzanna Guzmán, and Richard Babcock all participated in the post-concert Q&A session.

2016 Edith Knox Young Artists Performance Competition

The final round of competition was held on Sunday, April 3 at Redondo Union High School Auditorium. Five finalists each performed their full concert selections with piano accompaniment. A panel of three professional musicians determined the placements. The winner, Caroline Ho, won a cash prize of \$1,500 and will be the featured soloist in the June 19 concert. Cash prizes were also awarded to each of the other four finalists and the best accompanist award winner. The final results were:

First Place. Caroline Ho, 17, piano
 Second Place: Rainer Crosett, 24, cello
 Third Place: Dillon Parker, 23, trumpet
 Fourth Place: Max Hammond, 15, piano

Fifth Place: Kristi Kim, 16, cello
 Best Accompanist: Izumi Kashiwagi



Caroline Ho during her winning performance.



Rainer Crosett earned the second place finish.



All contestants were present on the stage with competition co-chairs Larry and Terri Zinkiewicz.

Next Season's Membership Drive

We will soon be initiating our 2016-2017 membership drive. As you are aware, there is no admission fee for any of the Peninsula Symphony's public concerts. We rely on donations, and our individual Symphony

Association memberships are our biggest source of income. There are several different membership tiers, ranging from the Contributor level (minimum donation of \$75) up to the Virtuoso level (\$5000+). We are now offering Sustaining Memberships for the 2016-2017 season through which members agree to have a fixed amount deducted from their credit cards each month rather than a one-time payment. This service is provided by PayPal.

All membership tiers include the pre-concert lectures, and higher levels continue to add valuable perks. Have you wondered what it takes to get an invitation to a private reception held in conjunction with the first concert? (Sponsor \$250+). What about a reserved seat of your choice? (Benefactor \$1000+). The up-close, reserved parking spaces are available to Conductor's Circle (\$2000+) and Virtuoso (\$5000+) members.

Brochures and letters will be mailed to you soon. Renew your membership at the June 19 concert or send a check to the Symphony office. You may also use PayPal at our website, www.pensym.org. New members are always welcome. More information about the benefits of membership and the 2016-2017 programs can be found in our membership brochure and on our website.

Meet a Community Player

Symphony Sounds continues its "Meet a Community Player" column. Many of the Symphony musicians are community players who attend weekly rehearsals for the joy of making music with their colleagues. Some were music majors who moved to careers in other fields. All have interesting stories to tell. This issue features clarinetist Gayleen Marmarelis.

Gayleen Marmarelis, a Rancho Palos Verdes resident, is currently in her nineteenth season with the Peninsula Symphony. She originally played only in the rehearsals until she filled in at the last minute for the orchestra's second clarinet player, and she has been there ever since. Gayleen enjoyed it so much that she went back to school and earned a degree in clarinet performance. She says she really

enjoys the experience of playing orchestral repertoire in an ensemble.

Gayleen works part-time as a registered nurse. When she is not doing that or playing clarinet she enjoys the outdoors, riding horses and competing in dressage, playing tennis in a local league, hiking, backpacking, and playing with her dog, Frankie. She has two daughters and is excited about becoming a grandma for the first time this summer.



Gayleen Marmarelis

Future Events

Interpretive Center Fundraiser July 13

Please plan to join your fellow Peninsula Symphony supporters at a fund-raiser on Wednesday, July 13 from 7:00 PM-9:00 PM at the Point Vicente Interpretive Center. Those who attended last year's successful fundraiser know that the Interpretive Center offers stunning sunset views of the ocean and Point Vicente lighthouse as well as both inside and outside meeting space. This year there will be special musical entertainment, and we will be serving a variety of strawberry desserts. Please contact the Symphony office at 310-544-0320 or Mona Gifford at monagee@cox.net for more information on this event.

Save the Date

Next season is the Peninsula Symphony's 50th anniversary season, and we have several events planned to recognize this milestone, including a spectacular private concert and dinner event on

Saturday, September 24

The gala will be held at the Colyear Estate in Rolling Hills, beginning at 4:00 PM. Come stroll through the formal gardens with a spectacular view of the city while you watch the sunset from the top of the hill. Seating is limited. More information will be coming soon.

Concert Dates for the 2016-2017 50th Anniversary Season**CONCERT I**

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2016
50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
Rufus Choi, Piano

CONCERT II

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2017
A ROYAL AFFAIR
Inna Faliks, Piano

**EDITH KNOX YOUNG ARTISTS
COMPETITION FINALS**

SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 2017 (2:00 PM)

CONCERT III

SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 2017
SATISFYING A "SUITE" TOOTH
Vladimir Chernov, Baritone

CONCERT IV

THE KENNETH T. & EILEEN NORRIS
FOUNDATION CONCERT
SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 2017
AN IDYLLIC EVENING
2017 Edith Knox Performance Competition
Winner

SUMMER POPS CONCERT

SUNDAY, JULY 23, 2017 (5:00 PM)
AROUND THE WORLD IN 60 MINUTES
Esther Keel, Piano

Peninsula Symphony on Facebook

Have you checked out the Peninsula Symphony Facebook entries lately? This is a very good source of information. You may paste the link below into your browser. This site is updated frequently.

<https://www.facebook.com/PenSym/>

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The Peninsula Symphony's concerts are also
generously supported by the Recording
Industry's Music Performance Trust Fund.

Enjoy the Next Concert!

BRAHMS CYCLE IV

**Sunday, June 19, 2016, at 7:00 PM
Redondo Union High School Auditorium**



Post Office Box 2602
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Contact Information

Any questions or requests about the Peninsula Symphony, the Peninsula Symphony Association or ***Symphony Sounds*** should be sent to the Peninsula Symphony Association office. We will route your message to the appropriate person.

The Peninsula Symphony Association
Post Office Box 2602
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274

The office is normally staffed on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. You may call at any time (310-544-0320) and leave a message on our answering machine, but phone replies will usually be made only during normal staffing hours. You can also e-mail us at music.pensym@verizon.net. General information about the Symphony (current season schedule, maps and directions, etc.) can be found on our website (www.pensym.org).

Other contacts are:

Peninsula Symphony Association President, John Williams wskrs@verizon.com

Music Director/Conductor, Gary Berkson conductor.pensym@verizon.net