

PENINSULA *symphony*

Symphony Sounds

November 2014

48th Season, Number 1

Editor: Terri Zinkiewicz

Concert I

Shall We Dance?

Sunday, November 23, 2014 at 7:00 PM

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

PROGRAM

Delibes	Prelude and Mazurka from <i>Coppélia</i>
Tchaikovsky	Selections from <i>Swan Lake</i>
Gounod	Ballet music from <i>Faust</i>
Minkus	Pas de deux from <i>Don Quixote</i>
Milhaud	<i>Le boeuf sur le toit</i>

CONCERT DETAILS

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

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

General public admitted at approx. 6:50 PM.

POST- CONCERT RECEPTION

Immediately after the concert, Symphony Association members at the Sponsor level and above (\$250+) are invited to a reception at:

Ws China Bistro
1410 Pacific Coast Highway
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

Please contact the Symphony office at 310-544-0320 if you wish to upgrade your membership to attend.

Symphony's Opening Night Features Ballet Music

Maestro Berkson has programmed a full evening of ballet music for the opening concert of the Peninsula Symphony's season. Berkson has a deep background in conducting fully-staged ballet productions, primarily in Europe. He was previously the Royal Swedish Ballet's Resident Conductor, and he also directed full-length ballet performances with the Dutch National Ballet, the Norwegian National Ballet, the Nederlands Dans Theater I & II, Hamburg Ballet, and the Finnish National Ballet.

Although this concert will be fully dedicated to ballet music (a concert performance, without dancers or theatrical sets), it is not the first time Berkson has led the Peninsula Symphony in ballet music. For example, in May 2011, the orchestra performed selections from *The Sleeping Beauty* ballet, Opus 66 by Tchaikovsky. This beloved, well-known work was a highlight of the Maestro's second year with the Peninsula Symphony. The upcoming concert performance includes samples from across the ballet genre. Concert attendees will be treated to some of the most familiar, beautiful melodies



and orchestrations in the literature, as well as a few that may be less familiar to you. Enjoy the concert, and come early to listen to the pre-concert lecture.

Music Preview (Please see the 2014-2015 Program Book that is distributed at all concerts for more detailed program notes.)

Prelude and Mazurka from *Coppélia*
Léo Delibes (1836-1891)

First performed in Paris in 1870, this romantic comedy ballet has become a favorite in the genre. The Prelude and Mazurka begin this full-length ballet and will leave you wishing to hear more.

Léo Delibes is most well-known for his ballets, operas, and other stage works. He achieved much of his fame from *Coppélia*, and it remains a favorite today. He is also well-known for his Flower Duet from *Lakmé*.

Selections from *Swan Lake*
Pytor Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

This ballet premiered in 1877 and is part of the repertoire of virtually every major classical ballet company. Most people are familiar with the story. An evil sorcerer places a curse on Princess Odette that turns her into a swan. The Symphony will perform three selections from the *Swan Lake Suite* – two Scènes from Act II and a Valse from Act I. One of the Scènes includes a beautiful violin solo and then a duet between the Concertmaster and the Principal Cellist. The solo parts will be played by Rebecca Rutkowski and Vladimir Zherdev.

Tchaikovsky began studying piano as a young child in Russia, prior to studying composition. His works are known for flowing melodies and rich orchestrations, and many are favorites of Peninsula Symphony audiences. An interesting note: Tchaikovsky was Guest Conductor at the opening of Carnegie Hall in 1891.

Ballet music from *Faust*
Charles Gounod (1818-1893)

This ballet suite, consisting of seven sections running fewer than 20 minutes in total, was added to Gounod's opera *Faust* for its revival in Paris in 1869. The opera was performed more than any other in Paris for many years.

Charles Gounod, born in Paris, also spent some time in Italy and England. He wrote 12 operas and *Faust* is the most familiar, but he is probably best known for his beautiful *Ave Maria* tune set with Bach's Prelude No 1 in C major for keyboard.

Pas de deux from *Don Quixote*
Ludwig Minkus (1826-1917)

The complete ballet score for *Don Quixote* consists of approximately 54 separate musical selections (depending on the edition), and this concert will feature six near the end of the work. Listen for the Spanish flare and some of these familiar melodies.

Ludwig Minkus, an Austrian composer and violin virtuoso who spent a major portion of his adult life in Russia before returning to Vienna, is best known for his ballet music. He composed *Don Quixote* for the Bolshoi Theater in 1869. The score was later reworked for a new production in St. Petersburg. He remained active as a professional violinist.

Le boeuf sur le toit
Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)

The literal translation of this short, 15-minute work is "The Cow on the Roof," and it was set in a Prohibition-era, American bar. The performers were circus clowns and acrobats rather than classically trained dancers.

Darius Milhaud worked as a secretary to France's ambassador to Brazil. He incorporated many popular Brazilian tunes/dances into this work. You may recognize a distinctive South American influence in the rhythms.

This will likely be the first concert performance of this piece for most audience members. The composition is in a Rondo form, which means the thematic, beginning section (call it part "A"), recurs after every other section (as in A-B-A-C-A-D, etc.). In *Le boeuf sur le toit*, each time the Rondo theme comes back, it is in a different key. In some sections, Milhaud challenges the audiences and players alike by orchestrating in two or even three different keys simultaneously.

Past Events

The Norris Foundation Concert

The fourth regular concert of last season began with Beethoven's Overture to *The Creatures of Prometheus*, opus 43. Following that, we heard Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn and Orchestra, K.297b. This performance was special, because it featured four of the Peninsula Symphony's own principal players. These four talented musicians collaborated with Maestro Berkson to provide a memorable performance. Mozart has long been a favorite composer of Peninsula Symphony audiences.

Following intermission, cellist Erick Chong, winner of the 2014 Edith Knox Competition, performed Dvořák's Concerto for Cello and Orchestra in B minor, opus 104. Chong, then a senior at Mira Costa High School, wowed the audience with his technique and interpretation of this major, 40-minute work.



John Campbell (bassoon), Lisa Cherry (French horn), Linda Muggeridge (oboe), and David Nicholson (clarinet)



Erick Chong performing with the Peninsula Symphony.

Summer Pops Concert



Guest conductor Wayne Abravanel led the Peninsula Symphony in its July 27, 2014 Pops Concert. The *Lullaby of Broadway* theme included musical theater favorites from

almost every decade since the 1930s, beginning with selections from Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, and ending with selections from *Les Misérables*. The large audience at Redondo Union High School Auditorium was highly appreciative and was treated to an encore, *A Salute to the Big Apple*, arranged by Calvin Custer.

Abravanel's background includes over two dozen Broadway and Off-Broadway shows as music director, conductor, pianist, arranger, and orchestrator. He is currently Music Director and Conductor of the Coachella Valley Symphony.

Board of Directors' Installation Brunch

In what is becoming an annual tradition, Marion Ruth hosted the Board of Directors' summer Installation Brunch. John Williams, serving another term as President, addressed the group. Virginia Butler served as installing officer. We welcomed Lilli Tom to the Board as Volunteer Coordinator and thanked these retiring Board members for their service: Bob Coffey, Duane Conover, Jacky Glass, and Dan Keller. If you would like to consider becoming a member of the Board in the future, Carol Schamp (cschamp@aol.com) or any of the other current Board members would be happy to talk to you.

There are other ways to help the Peninsula Symphony, in addition to Symphony Association membership or Board service. There are many opportunities for volunteers for one-time or continuing duties. Examples include: concert photographer, ushers, and stuffing inserts into programs. There will be a table in the lobby at the first concert where you can explore some of these opportunities.



Symphony Association President John Williams

Peninsula Symphony Association Officers:

President: **John Williams**
 Past President: **Ken Gash**
 Vice President: **June Sung**
 Secretary: **Faye Schwartz**
 Treasurer: **D. Paul Nibarger**

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Artistic Committee: Ken Gash
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 Events: Mona Gifford
 Receptions: Marion Ruth
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 Sponsorship: Inga Liden
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 Knox Competition: Larry & Terri Zinkiewicz

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Meet a Community Player

Symphony Sounds introduces a new column called "Meet a Community Player." Approximately half of the Symphony musicians are community players who attend weekly rehearsals for the joy of making music with their colleagues. Many were music majors who moved to careers in other fields. All have interesting stories to tell. This issue highlights Paul Wehrman, a violinist.

Paul Wehrman, a Torrance resident, is a retired electrician. He is also a kidney transplant recipient. After not playing violin for 15 years he saw the Harbor College listing for orchestra as a Tuesday night class and attended a rehearsal. Founding conductor Joe Valenti welcomed him to join the Peninsula Symphony, and he has been a member since 1993. Paul has also added the Bellflower, Beach Cities, Corelli Ensemble, and Huntington Beach orchestras to his regular activities. He also plays some shows with the Aerospace Players. He likes the challenge and the music, and especially loves to play Mozart.

Paul fulfills a very important role for the Peninsula Symphony as its librarian and is responsible for keeping track of all of the music. He is usually the first to arrive in order to set up the rehearsal room and he is also the last to leave after everything is put away. The librarian post is a paid position with most orchestras, but Paul cheerfully does it for no compensation. Paul's favorite memory of the Peninsula Symphony was his first rehearsal. After not playing for quite a while he was quite nervous, intimidated, and worried that he might not be good enough. He stated that the first concert was almost surreal, being onstage with "real musicians." Everyone made him feel very welcome.

Other favorite pursuits include running his car in autocross, golf, camping, and fishing. Paul states, "I have enjoyed my time with the orchestra and look forward to many more years with some very nice people whom I admire a great deal."



Paul Wehrman setting up for a Corelli Ensemble rehearsal on a very hot fall Saturday afternoon.

Orchestra Member Potluck

The Peninsula Symphony held a summer potluck get-together on August 31 at Marion Ruth's lovely Rolling Hills home. Approximately 20 community players, Board members, and their guests joined Maestro Gary Berkson and party coordinator Sophia Momand-Bunker to share some of their favorite dishes and enjoy a spirited competition playing musical games such as "name that composer" and "music jeopardy." We were all surprised by Hao Zhou's stunning performance of Nathan Milstein's virtuosic "Paganiniana."



Hao Zhou at the Symphony potluck.

Zhou, now 17 and a senior in high school, was the winner of the Peninsula Symphony's Edith Knox Young Artists Performance competition in 2013. Following the surprise performance he joined the party participants for dinner and the music games.



Peninsula Symphony musicians and friends, including Diesel, hostess Marion Ruth's five year-old Great Dane.

Symphony Sounds Has Transitioned To A New Editor

After a successful run of six years and 24 issues, former ***Symphony Sounds*** editor Ken Gash has handed the "baton" (actually, the computer keyboard) over to Terri Zinkiewicz.

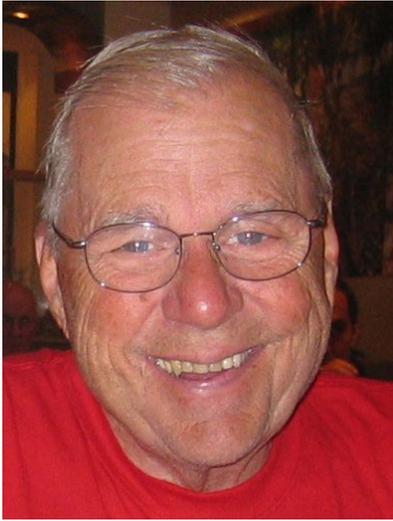
Moving On – A Note from Ken Gash

In the early Spring of 2008, Warren Erikson asked me if I would take over the production of ***Symphony Sounds***, which he had been doing for eleven years. I had always wanted to be able to share some of my experience gathered through a lifetime of listening to classical music, so I agreed to undertake the assignment.

There were exciting changes during the six years I was editor. The Peninsula Symphony Orchestra's Maestro Joe Valenti had just retired after forty-one years, and we chose a new leader for the orchestra during the 2008-2009 season after listening to each of the four concerts conducted by the four finalists for the position. The 2009-2010 season was our introduction to the newly appointed Conductor and Music Director, Gary Berkson, who immediately started to bring a new level of enthusiasm to the audience through his wonderful pre-concert talks and his choice of musical selections (some new, some familiar) for his concerts.

This past year saw us moving to the Redondo Union High School Auditorium after we needed

to leave the Rolling Hills Covenant



Church. The vastly improved acoustics of the new venue allowed the full richness of our orchestra to shine, and to show how much Maestro Berkson made the orchestra his own. It was a great experience

writing *Symphony Sounds* and I will miss doing it. I thank all of the people who helped, especially my very necessary proofreaders. I also thank all of you who have provided me with comments, both good and bad, over the years. I look forward to working with the new editor, Terri Zinkiewicz as she takes up the word processor to continue this wonderful newsletter.

Ken Gash

Welcome to Terri Zinkiewicz

Terri Zinkiewicz recently retired as Vice President and Controller for Northrop Grumman Aerospace Systems. Although most of her career was in the finance world, her background includes a BS and MS in music education in addition to an MBA in finance. She has played both piano and violin since childhood.

Terri is in her eighth season as a violinist in the Peninsula Symphony. She also plays violin in the Corelli Ensemble. She can be found volunteering at the grand piano in one of the Torrance Memorial Medical Center lobbies most Tuesday afternoons.

Terri and her husband Larry are both members of the Peninsula Symphony Board of Directors and the Conductor's Circle. They co-chair the annual Edith Knox Performance Competition. Other "retirement" interests the couple share include travel (especially cruises) and going to

concerts. They have lived in Rancho Palos Verdes for 30 years. Their daughter, Heather, is an attorney working in downtown Los Angeles.



Terri Zinkiewicz, new editor of *Symphony Sounds*

Future Events

Concert II

Sunday, February 22, 2015 at 7:00 PM

Czech-Mate

Andrew Sords, violin

Smetana	"The Moldau" from <i>Má Vlast</i>
Mozart	Symphony No. 38 in D major, K. 504 ("Prague")
Dvořák	Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in A minor, opus 53

Young Artists' Showcase

April 19, 2015 at 2:00 PM

The five finalists in the 2015 Edith Knox Performance Competition will perform in full concert dress with their accompanists for professional judging. The first-prize winner will be announced at the end of the program and will perform as soloist with the Peninsula Symphony at the June 21, 2015 concert. These events are open to the public.

2015 Edith Knox Performance Competition Applications

The application will be posted at www.pensym.org by December 1, 2014, and applications must be submitted electronically through the website by January 15, 2015. Entrants must be under age 25 and must perform a work for solo instrument and orchestra in its entirety from the standard repertoire. Preliminaries are Saturday, February 7 at Harbor College. Additional rules are posted on the website, along with updated information about many of our former winners.

Concert III Sunday, May 3, 2015 at 7:00 PM *From Russia With Love* Robert Thies, piano

Britten	<i>Russian Funeral</i>
Prokofiev	Concerto No. 3 for Piano and Orchestra in C major, opus 26
Tchaikovsky	Symphony No. 2 in C minor, opus 17 ("Little Russian")

Concert IV The Norris Foundation Concert June 21, 2015 at 7:00PM *Brave New World* 2015 Edith Knox Competition Winner Soloist

Sousa	<i>The Dwellers in the Western World</i>
TBA	Concerto performed by the Knox Competition winner
Dvořák	Symphony No. 9 in E minor, opus 95 ("From the New World")

Update on Member Benefits

This season we introduced two new Peninsula Symphony Association membership categories – Virtuoso and Student.

The Virtuoso is for those who make a financial commitment of at least \$5000 in a given year. Donors at this level can participate in "Dinner with the Maestro" in which the Virtuoso member and one guest will join Maestro Berkson and his wife, Annika, for a gourmet dinner. In addition, Virtuoso members may have four reserved seats and two VIP reserved parking spaces so their guests can also be treated in style.

The Student membership category is for full-time students under age 25. Proceeds from this membership level will be used to support the various student-oriented functions of the Peninsula Symphony Association. Student member benefits are comparable to the Contributor level.

We have introduced a new benefit this year for Benefactor (1000+), Conductor's Circle and Virtuoso levels – a private invitation to the Edith Knox Young Artists Competition Preliminaries. This all-day event is scheduled for Saturday, February 7 at Harbor College. If you enjoy full concertos with piano accompaniment and want to hear some fabulous young performers, this will be a very exciting day. You can arrive at any time to listen to just one performer or stay to hear all of them. Please visit the membership table in the lobby during concerts or call the Peninsula Symphony office at 310-544-0320 if you want to upgrade your membership level in order to enjoy this new benefit.

Enjoy the First Concert

Shall We Dance?

**Sunday, November 23, 2014 at 7:00 PM
Redondo Union High School Auditorium**



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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 from 9:00 AM to noon on Monday and Friday. 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 jwskrs@verizon.com

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