

PENINSULA

symphony

Symphony Sounds

June 2010

43rd Season, Number 4

Editor: Kenneth Gash

Concert IV

Sunday, June 27 at 7:00 PM

Rolling Hills Covenant Church
2222 Palos Verdes Drive North
Rolling Hills Estates

PROGRAM

Celebrating Schumann: 200 Years Old!

Brahms *Academic Festival Overture*

Elgar *Cello Concerto in E Minor*

Soloist: **Chloe J. Y. Hong**
(Winner of 2010 Knox Performance Competition)

Schumann *Symphony Nr. 3, ("Rhenish")*

CONCERT DETAILS

Symphony Association members admitted at 6:00. Center-section priority seating is reserved for members at the Patron level and above.

Concert Preview by **Gary Berkson** at 6:15 PM

General public will be admitted at approximately 6:50 PM

POST-CONCERT MEET THE CONDUCTOR

After the concert, the audience is invited to Carlson Hall for a reception for the Knox and Rips winners. Gary Berkson will also be there and you will have an opportunity to ask him questions and provide comments.

This is the final concert of the Inaugural Season of our conductor Gary Berkson and it promises to be very *romantic*. The Romantic Era in music is roughly divided into three main sections and the three pieces performed at this concert are from the Early, Middle and Late periods.

Music Preview

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

"And he has come, this chosen youth, over whose cradle the Graces and Heroes seem to have kept watch. His name is Johannes Brahms; he comes from Hamburg, where he has been working in quiet obscurity, instructed by an excellent, enthusiastic teacher in the most difficult principles of his art, and lately introduced to me by an honoured and well-known master. His mere outward appearance assures us that he is one of the elect. Seated at the piano, he disclosed wondrous regions. We were drawn into an enchanted circle. Then came a moment of inspiration which transformed the piano into an orchestra of wailing and jubilant voices."

These words were written by Robert Schumann and published in the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik" less than a month after the twenty-year old Brahms appeared unannounced at Schumann's door. Brahms was welcomed into the Schumann's home and became a lifelong friend and colleague of both Robert and Clara.

As you probably know, the Academic Festival Overture was written as a musical "thank you"

to the University of Breslau, which had awarded him an honorary doctorate the previous year. The person who had nominated him for the degree requested "...a fine symphony, well orchestrated, old boy, not too uniformly thick!" Brahms produced a complex, humorous, intricately designed piece requiring a very large ("thick") orchestra. While presenting neither a symphony nor a ditty, Brahms displays a depiction of the full range of student experiences, from parties to academics, through a masterful potpourri of student songs and other popular melodies.

Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Sir Edward Elgar was born in a small village near Worcester, England. His father owned a music shop and was also a violinist and organist of professional standard. Edward was surrounded by music from an early age and took piano and violin lessons, but he was essentially self-taught as a composer. While working as an orchestral musician and as a violin teacher in Worcestershire, he gained experience as an arranger and composer of songs, choral and chamber works. It was not until he was in his forties when the success of his *Enigma Variations* in 1899 brought his music to the concert halls of London and throughout Europe. His music is influenced by Romantic composers such as Wagner, Brahms, Schumann, and Liszt and is characterized by chromatic harmony and virtuoso orchestration. The confident, ebullient manner of his ceremonial music is contrasted with a deeper and poetic vein, demonstrating the often painful insecurities of his period, class and religion .

Two concertos for the cello are performed more often than any others. One is by Antonin Dvořák, an epic work brimming with melodies and embracing a wide range of emotion. The other is Elgar's: intimate, highly concentrated and unlike any other ever written for the instrument. Its initial performance was not well received because of inadequate rehearsal. It was probably due

to this bad start that it took quite a while for the concerto to gain its present popularity.

Elgar wrote the concerto, his last great masterpiece, in 1919, just after the Great War. Appalled and disillusioned by the suffering caused by the war, he realized that life in Europe would never be the same after such destruction. The piece has been described as an intimate portrait of an old man looking back on his life while looking ahead to his own death. It is reflective, playful, tearful, and energetic by turns and unlike the traditional concerto it has four movements, not three.

Rather than having an orchestral introduction, the concerto opens with the soloist playing a dramatic declamatory statement that is then picked up by the orchestra; the violas introduce a long and flowing theme with the cello joining in. The balance of the movement is broad and lyrical.

There is no break before the second movement begins with the cellist strumming the strings in a truncated version of the opening declamatory statement. Once the cello introduces a new theme, hesitantly at first, the movement takes off in a sparkling scherzo.

The passionate, expansive (and all too short) Adagio is the heart of the piece. The orchestra is pared down, so that the solo cello can sing freely above it.

The finale is large and varied. It begins, like the concerto itself, with a recitative for the cello. Though much of what follows is spirited, there is still an underlying tone of sadness, and, near the end, when Elgar is tying things up, he adds an epilogue in slow tempo, as passionate as anything he had ever written, wherein the cello recalls a single heartbreaking phrase from the Adagio. Finally, the cello interjects its very first phrase, and the orchestra sweeps to a brief, energetic conclusion.

In my research for these notes, I looked for any past performances of this piece by our orchestra and was surprised to find that there

had never been *any* piece by Edward Elgar performed! Perhaps in the future we might be treated to *The Enigma Variations*, *The Wand of Youth Suite* or one of the *Pomp and Circumstances Overtures*.

Robert Schumann (1810 to 1856)

One of the great composers of the nineteenth century, Schumann was the quintessential artist whose life and work embody the idea of Romanticism in music. His work is noted for its links to literature and many of his compositions allude to characters or scenes from poems, novels, and plays. This intimate relationship with the written word gives his music an extra dimension. At the same time, its sheer joyfulness ranks it among the best loved music of the age.

His musical studies were interrupted after his father died and his mother convinced him to go to Leipzig to study law. While he was there, he began piano lessons with Friedrich Wieck . During the years he studied with Wieck, two important things occurred: he met Wieck's daughter, Clara, who would eventually become his wife, and he injured his right hand so that any dreams of becoming a concert pianist were shattered.

Throughout his life, he was an emotionally unstable man who alternated between manic bouts of awesome creativity (he once wrote an entire symphony in four days) and terrifying fits of depression. Two years before his death he attempted suicide and was committed (at his own request) to spend the remaining time in an insane asylum.

The third of his four symphonies, subtitled "Rhenish", was written in the fall of 1850 during the composer's tenure as conductor at Düsseldorf on the famous Rhine River. In a letter to his publisher in 1851, Schumann claimed that the history and spirit of that noble river and its people were running through his mind as he composed the work.

The opening movement plunges headlong into a bright, lively, and heroic first theme. It is almost as if Schumann wanted to immediately show that he was a composer at the peak of his powers.

Schumann incorporates the jovial *Rheinweinlied* (Rhine-wine Song) into the Scherzo, which appears as the second - rather than the more traditional - third movement.

The third movement, marked *Nicht Schnell*, is tenderly lyrical, like a love scene, with a light scoring for woodwinds, two horns and strings.

The "extra" fourth movement, marked *Feierlich* (solemnly ceremonial) was apparently inspired by an actual ceremonial occasion in the Cathedral of Cologne.

The finale is lively, lighthearted and dancing and has been likened to stepping from the somber atmosphere of a medieval cathedral into the sunshine of life outside.

Chloe J. Y. Hong

The soloist for this evening's performance of the Elgar Cello Concerto is Chloe J. Y. Hong who is the winner of this year's Edith Knox Performance Competition.



Chloe Hong performing at the Knox Competition

Chloe is 13 years old and is in the 8th grade in the public schools of Irvine, California. She began her cello studies when she was eight, and her teacher is Jung Sun Jun.

Prior to her success at the Knox competition, Chloe has won a number of other awards, most notably from the South Coast Symphony in 2009 (with whom she performed in 2009) and Torrance Symphony in 2009 (with whom she performed in 2010).

A major inspiration for Chloe was Jacqueline du Pré, a British cellist acknowledged as one of the greatest players of the instrument. Ms. du Pré was particularly associated with Elgar's Cello Concerto which, coincidentally, she first performed when she was thirteen years old.

Past Events

Third Concert

The third concert of our forty-third season took place on April 18, 2010. The program, called "Divine Comedy", included the Strauss "Artists' Quadrille", Mozart's *Musical Joke* and Schickele's *Eine Kleine Nichtmusik*. It also included *Francesca da Rimini* by Tchaikovsky.



The audience members chuckled and sometimes gasped at the comedic allusions apparent in the first three selections. The concluding piece was intense and dramatic and was certainly not comedic even though it was inspired by a section of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

As we have come to expect, Gary presented a delightful pre-concert lecture; he also made some additional comments from the stage prior to starting.

After the performance, about fifty members of the audience remained in the auditorium to engage the conductor and Concertmaster Rebecca Rutkowski in a lively question-and-answer session.

Dress Rehearsal

Elementary school students from San Pedro were able once again to attend the dress rehearsal preceding the concert. There were also a few adults in attendance but there are still plenty of seats left. The informal setting and the opportunity to ask questions provides a relaxed atmosphere to hear some great music and see how an orchestra prepares to perform it.

The dress rehearsals are held in the same auditorium as the concert. They start at 2:00 PM and are open to the public. Please join us at the next one on June 27.

2010 - 2011 Concert Schedule

A full schedule for the exciting Second Season of the orchestra under the direction of Maestro Gary Berkson will be available at the Membership Desk at the June 27 concert. Gary has prepared a wonderful program with soloists at three concerts and a surprise celebrity. Be sure to get one, read it and then renew your membership.

Friends of the Peninsula Symphony

The Friends had a festive afternoon on April 13th, thanks to gracious hostess, Marion Ruth and our guest of honor, Annika Löf Berkson. Annika, who is the wife of Maestro Gary Berkson, shared her love of dance as well as highlights of her career --- dancing with the Royal Swedish Opera, appearances in other theaters and the teaching of dance. It



was such a pleasure to spend time with and get to know Maestro Berkson's talented and charming wife!



Friends Spring Fund Raiser

By now all Friends and Members of the Peninsula Symphony Association should have received an invitation to "Keep the

Music Playing." This year's approach to our Spring Gala is an uncomplicated opportunity to support your Symphony without having to drive



a single mile. One hundred percent of your donation from this fund raiser will go to the symphony.

Maestro Berkson has included a letter of appreciation for your support in his first year with the Symphony. So, as we move toward the end of the 43rd season for the Peninsula Symphony, we urge you to participate in our effort to "Keep the Music Playing."

Thanks to our Supporters

At the end of each season, we take the opportunity to express our appreciation to all of the organizations and individuals who donated their time and money, without which we would not be able to provide our exhilarating concerts. I have tried, in the following lists, to thank every person and organization, and I apologize in advance for any error or omission.

The primary group of supporters are our almost 500 members of the **Peninsula Symphony Association** whose donations (in the form of Symphony Association memberships) provide the majority of the funds needed for operations. In

addition, many of our members belong to the Friends of the Peninsula Symphony. These volunteers have annually raised \$20,000 to augment the membership donations!

Our beautiful Program Book contains advertisements from over eighty local organizations and businesses who provide much-needed support. You can find their names listed on page 50, and we encourage you to patronize these supporters.

There are a large number of organizations and individuals that have provided services or donated money:

Anza Event Rentals, Bay Cities National Bank, Boeing, City of Rolling Hills, City of Torrance, CMS Design Portraiture, County of Los Angeles, Supervisor Don Knabe, Daily Breeze, Edler Realty Center, Harbor College, Malaga Bank, Helene Mirich-Spear, Kenneth T. & Eileen L. Norris Foundation, Law Offices of Conover & Grebe LLP, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Norris Center for the Performing Arts, Palos Verdes Peninsula News, Peninsula People, Peninsula Seniors (Karen Goularte), Recording Industries' Music Performing Trust Funds, Marshall & David Rips Fund.

This year's **Edith Knox Performance Competition** had the largest audience ever. If you were not there, please plan to attend next year. The prize money for the finalists was provided by the generous donations of the Competition Angels: **Dr. & Mrs. William Horowitz, Jackie Crowley, Midge & Jack Trost, Lee Dorsey, Dwight & Kay Yamada, Lester & Pearl Kim, Robert & Helene Reid, and Frank & Eunee Yee.**

Duane Conover, The Performance Competition Chair also thanks the dedicated volunteers who helped him this year. They are: **Ken Gash (MC), Gary Berkson (Judges' Coordinator), Kay Yamada (Artists' Coordinator), Eunee Yee (Music Score Coordinator), Helene Reid (Office Coordinator), Carol Schamp (Flyers and Publicity), June Schwarzmann (Publications), Jeffrey Yakubik (Staff Asst.), Jackie Crowley, and Marion Ruth, Receptions Assistants.**

Finally, we thank everyone who made donations to one of the designated accounts that were created to fund specific activities managed by the Peninsula Symphony Association. These include: **the J. William Finkel Concert Quality Endowment** (helps fund extra rehearsals & other quality improvements), **the Elizabeth Holborn Chair** (helps pay the cost of the concertmaster), **the Julian Spear Chair** (helps pay the cost of the principal clarinetist), **the Marshall & David Rips Fund** (helps pay for the Rips scholarship), **the Edith Knox Fund and the Mimi Horowitz Fund** (both of these help cover costs of running the Performance Competition). Everyone is encouraged to contribute to these accounts to both honor the named individuals and help us continue – and eventually expand - these activities.

Thanks to Our Volunteers

Time is a precious commodity, and dozens of individuals in our community donate large portions of their time as volunteers to enable the Peninsula Symphony to operate.

The Peninsula Symphony Board of Directors, listed on Page 47 of the Program Book, are a group of multi-tasking volunteers who, in addition to managing the operational and fiscal affairs of the organization also do many of the tasks that might be done by paid employees. As you read the names of volunteers below, note how many of them are on the Board.

Thanks to those who served as ushers at the concerts: **Elsa and Bert Wertz, Jim Jones, Corwin White, Jackie Crowley, Dick Chaussee, Ginny Bleier, Wally Christmas, Roger Schamp and Carole Low.**

Thanks to the volunteers who helped us with intermission refreshments at the concerts: **Jane Jones, Joan Ballreich, Virginia Butler, Jackie Crowley, Les Fishman, Nancy Mahr, Hugh Pendleton, Marion Ruth, Lilli Tom, Midge & Jack Trost, Sue Williams, Kay & Paul Nibarger, Faye Schwartz, George Camisa, Mary Chunko, Flora Hummel and Jean Shriver.**

For the last two seasons you will have noticed groups of chamber musicians performing in the lobby prior to the concert. These young people are local students, and we thank them for sharing their

talent with us: **Allan W. Chong, Violin, Bianca W. Chong, Violin, Carina W. Chong, Violin/Viola, Danica W. Chong, Cello.**

Our Program Book is created through the efforts of the following: **Nancy Mahr** and **Jackie Crowley, Steve Ozawa**, Design EDGE (the Program Book Art Director, who provided design and printing assistance), **Helene Reid** (who handled Symphony Association office support), **Chris Stillians**, CMS Design Portraiture (who did the cover photography – and some of the interior photos too), **Sue & Larry Andrews, Ken Gash** (who also provided photography), and **Carole Westberg** (who continues her many-year effort of writing our program notes).

For each concert, publicity flyers must be printed and distributed, detailed inserts are printed and inserted in the program books and the books must be stored and retrieved. We thank the volunteers who do these tasks: **Jack Reider, Ken Gash, Helene Mirich-Spear, D. Paul Nibarger, Helene Reid, Jack & Midge Trost, James & Margaret Vuncanon, Neville Howarth, Jane Copper, Charlie Shriver, Eugene McAdoo, Carol and Roger Schamp, George Bender, Brendon Bond, Bert Wertz and Chuck Klaus.**

We also thank the organizations that either allow us to place flyers at their facilities or help us distribute flyers to the community. These include: **Amuse Music, The Canterbury, Harbor College, Marshall Music, Palos Verdes Estates City Hall, Peninsula Seniors, Rancho Palos Verdes City Hall, Rolling Hills City Hall, Rolling Hills Covenant Church, Rolling Hills Estates City Hall, Palos Verdes Library, St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, Torrance City Hall, Torrance Library, San Pedro Library, First Presbyterian Church of San Pedro and 15th Street Elementary School in San Pedro.**

This year we had a grant from the California Arts Council which supported the bringing of children from elementary schools in San Pedro and Lomita to enjoy the orchestra's music at dress rehearsals. Among the many volunteers who helped with this were: **Jane and John Copper, Ken Gash, Sophia Momand-Bunker, and Terry Zinkiewicz** (both from the

orchestra) and principals **Louie Mardesich, Jennifer Mak, Sandy Du, and Assistant Principal Consuelo Acosta.**

There are many others who provide time and expertise, among whom is **Bruce Erickson** who maintains www.pensym.org Website (which you should visit often), and the staff at Rolling Hills Covenant Church, especially **Ellynn-Marie Artuccio** and **Ken & Diana Bauma.**

Finally, I thank those people without whom I could not have done this job - my proof readers, contributors, folders and mailers, and critics: **Helene Reid, Faye Schwartz, Jane Jones, Anita Gash, John Copper, Jim Vuncanon, Harriet Servis, George Bender, Brendon Bond, Roger and Carol Schamp, and Charlie and Jean Schriver.**

NEW MATCHING GRANT FOR 2011 SUMMER POPS CONCERT

A Board Member who wishes to remain anonymous has pledged \$10,000 to be matched 1:1 to help fund the 2011 Summer Pops concert.

Here's how it works:

Step up last year's \$150 membership to \$250 and your total donation will be doubled -the Symphony receives \$500.

Or double last year's pledge from \$500 to \$1000 and the Symphony receives \$2000.

We value your contribution at any level but by stepping up your giving, your total pledge dollars will be doubled and used to keep the music playing.



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Contact Information

Any questions or requests about the Peninsula Symphony, the Peninsula Symphony Association, **Symphony Sounds**, or the Friends of the Peninsula Symphony should be sent to the Peninsula Symphony Association office (we will route your message to the appropriate person):

The Peninsula Symphony Association
916 Silver Spur Road, #303
Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274

The office is normally staffed from 9:00 to noon on Monday, Wednesday, 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 e-mail us at music.pensym@verizon.net. General information about the Symphony (current season schedule, etc.) can be found on our website www.pensym.org

Other Contacts are:

Peninsula Symphony Association President, John Copper
310-375-1176 (Home), johncopper@cox.net

Friends of the Peninsula Symphony, Harriet Servis
310-832-3791, harrietservis@hotmail.com

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