

1967 50 Years 2017
PENINSULA
s y m p h o n y

Symphony Sounds

February, 2017

50th Season, Number 2

Editor: Terri Zinkiewicz

Peninsula Symphony Concert

Sunday, February 19, 2017, at 7:00 PM

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

A Royal Affair **Inna Faliks, Piano**

Strauss Jr. *Emperor Waltz*, Opus 437
Reinecke Selections from *King Manfred*,
Opus 93
Beethoven Concerto No. 3 for Piano and
Orchestra in C minor, Opus 37

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 begins at 6:15 PM for all Symphony Association members.

General public admitted at approx. 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.

The Peninsula Symphony's 50th Anniversary Season Continues

We are now approaching the second concert of our 50th anniversary season. The February 19 concert features a fresh look at one selection, Strauss' *Emperor Waltz*, from the Peninsula Symphony's inaugural concert. You will recognize the familiar waltz tunes. Other composers include Beethoven, one of the best known, and the lesser-known Carl Reinecke. UCLA faculty member Inna Faliks performs the solo part in Beethoven's third piano concerto.

It is not too late to renew or upgrade your Peninsula Symphony Association membership. You may visit the membership table at any of our concerts or call our office at 310-544-0320.

This edition of ***Symphony Sounds*** includes photos from the prior concert and reception, short previews of the pieces and composers that will be performed at our next concert and other articles. We look forward to greeting you at our February 19th concert.



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

Music Preview (Please see the 2016-2017 Program Book that is distributed at all concerts for more detailed program notes.)

Emperor Waltz, Opus 437
Johann Strauss Jr. (1825-1899)

Son of a famous musician, the Austrian Johann Strauss Jr. is known as “The Waltz King.” His first instrument was violin, and he often conducted with his violin in hand like André Rieu does today. Strauss performed some of his first compositions in 1844 and won praise from the critics immediately. He toured throughout Europe and later the United States. He wrote mostly dance music and operettas. Some of his most popular works are *The Blue Danube*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, and our current selection, *Emperor Waltz*.

Emperor Waltz, Opus 437 (*Kaiser-Walzer*) was written in 1889 to honor the Austrian emperor Franz Joseph’s visit to the German Kaiser Wilhelm II. Unlike the waltz sections, which are in the usual 3/4 time, the *Emperor Waltz* composition starts with an introduction in 2/4 march time, but marked *pianissimo* (very soft). A cello solo links the introduction to the first of the four upbeat waltz tunes.

Selections from King Manfred, Opus 93
Carl Reinecke (1824-1910)

German composer Carl Reinecke began to write music at the ripe old age of seven. His first public appearance was as a pianist, and he also played violin. He was known as an excellent Mozart performer and collaborative pianist. He wrote many cadenzas to Bach, Mozart and Beethoven concertos. He was director of the Gewandhaus Orchestra concerts in Leipzig for 35 years and professor at the Conservatorium even longer. Although Reinecke was highly influential and respected while alive, his almost three hundred published compositions are not performed very often today.

King Manfred is a five act opera written in 1866 and first performed the following year in Wiesbaden. The opera is about Manfred, King of Sicily from 1258-1266, who died in battle. Although the full opera was performed for only a few years, the overture, preludes and ballet

music remain in the concert repertoire. The Peninsula Symphony will perform the following four selections:

Overture
 Romance: Prelude to Act IV
 Prelude to Act V
 Ballet Music No. 2

Concerto No. 3 for Piano and Orchestra
in C minor, Opus 37
Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

The German composer Ludwig van Beethoven is one of the most well-known and loved composers of all time. He is credited for his role in the transition from the classical musical era of the 18th century to the romanticism of the 19th century. Most music lovers know that Beethoven suffered from hearing loss for much of his life, and he was almost completely deaf during the last ten years of his life when he produced a great number of masterpieces.

Beethoven’s first music teacher (violin and clavier) was his father, who treated his young student brutally and insisted on middle-of-the-night practice sessions. Ludwig played his first public recital at the age of seven, and he published his first composition at the age of twelve. Two years later he began supporting his family as Assistant Court Organist. In 1792 he settled permanently in Vienna where he studied with Haydn and was considered a virtuoso pianist and improviser.

Many consider that there were three periods in Beethoven’s compositions. The third piano concerto was written in 1803, which was early in the “middle” or “heroic” period (~1803-1812) when he also wrote symphonies nos. 3 through 8, the *Moonlight* sonata and his opera *Fidelio*.

The third piano concerto took over three years to write. Its 1803 premiere was part of a marathon concert that also included the premieres of the Symphony No. 2 and the oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, plus a repeat performance of the Symphony No. 1. All of this was done with only one eight-hour rehearsal the same day as the concert. The solo piano part was in Beethoven’s head but only somewhat scratched out on paper when

Beethoven performed the solo part for that premiere. The next year one of his students played it using a fully completed manuscript.

One of the interesting notes about the third piano concerto is Beethoven's use of the additional keys that extended the range of the standard pianos. He did this via octaves playing the main theme at the beginning of the first movement's solo section.

Soloist Inna Faliks, Piano

Ukrainian-born pianist Inna Faliks is currently Professor of Piano and Head of Piano at UCLA while maintaining a robust concert and recording career. She debuted with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra while still a teenager and has performed around the world, most recently on a Chinese tour that included concerts in Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin. She has also been featured on many different radio and television broadcasts.

Faliks performs much of the standard piano repertoire as well as rare and new music and works with many of today's composers.



Pianist Inna Faliks

Past Events

The 50th Anniversary Concert

The October 30, 2016 Peninsula Symphony concert, titled "50th Anniversary Celebration,"

was truly a special event. Following Music Director & Conductor Gary Berkson's pre-concert lecture the larger-than-usual audience heard a very short rendition of *Happy Anniversary* by American composer Aaron Copland. This was followed by three of the pieces from the Peninsula Symphony's first concert 50 years ago – *Finlandia*, Chopin's second piano concerto and Haydn's 104th symphony.

Almost everything Chopin wrote was for the piano. During the pre-concert lecture, Berkson characterized Chopin's music as "congenial and very beautiful, lyrical and emotional." The second piano concerto features elaborate embellishments with the pianist's right hand while the orchestra takes mostly a supporting role. Soloist Rufus Choi played it beautifully.

The program concluded in a spectacular fashion that both surprised and delighted the audience. In *The 50th Anniversary Concerto*, American Robert Wendel weaved together a piece that includes snippets of many of the most familiar pieces, such as Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff piano concertos, Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*, Mendelssohn's *Wedding March*, Chopsticks, Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, and many others. Two students from Redondo Union's drama department assisted with the performance. They staged a mock wedding, provided candelabra for the grand piano and rolled out the special anniversary cake.

Pianist Choi played the solo part and also provided some surprises of his own. For example, he discovered a "dead rat" in his piano and tossed the stuffed animal to a very startled audience member. He also stuck pins in balloons to simulate cannon blasts, got "confused" when playing part of Beethoven's *Für Elise* and had an impromptu discussion with conductor Berkson that resulted in one of the pages of Choi's music being thrown to the stage floor. The orchestra got into the fun with its noisy page turns and responsive pencil tapping.

Immediately following the concert, orchestra members gathered backstage to receive thanks from Symphony Association Board President John Williams. Then they enjoyed the special anniversary cake that had been wheeled onto the stage minutes before.



Pianist Rufus Choi performed the Chopin Piano Concerto No. 2 in the first half of the concert and then *Wendel's The 50th Anniversary Concerto* in the second half.



Don't all anniversaries merit a special cake?

Post-Concert Reception at Ws China Bistro

Following the October 30 concert, Symphony Association members at the Sponsor level and above (\$250+) were invited to a reception at Ws China Bistro in Redondo Beach. Conductor Gary Berkson, soloist Rufus Choi and most Symphony Association Board members also attended. We enjoyed delicious hors d'oeuvres and desserts catered by Ws.

Much of the conversation centered on *The 50th Anniversary Concerto* performance and its stage "antics" such as the wedding, popping balloons for cannon sounds, and the pages of the score that Gary Berkson tore up. Only the orchestra and soloist knew about this piece prior to the concert performance, and it obviously made a large impact on all of the attendees. The reception was a fun ending to a great concert experience.



June Sung and Bruce Erickson enjoy the reception at Ws.

Youth Orchestra Concert

The Peninsula Symphony Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles Harbor College (PSYO-LAHC) presented its first concert of the 2016-2017 season on October 29 at Harbor College. This thirty-seven member ensemble under the direction of Richard Babcock continues to enhance the lives of all of its student members and their families.



The PYSO-LAHC at its Fall Concert.

Peter and the Wolf

One of the outreach programs for youth that the Peninsula Symphony has done for many years is to present an educational program for elementary school children at all Palos Verdes Peninsula public schools plus other schools in the harbor area. This is jointly sponsored by Campus Concerts and Don Knabe's AEPP grant. Flutist Pat Maki leads Campus Concerts and is the key person behind these educational presentations. Symphony Board member Mona Gifford is also instrumental in the coordination.



A wind quintet performed at one of the assemblies at Point Vicente School.



Pat Maki performed on flute.

Update on Membership

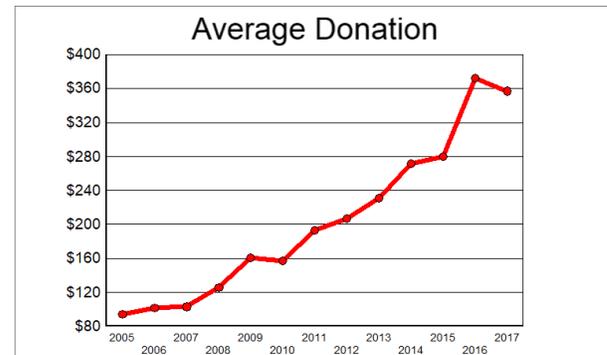
Our individual members are vital to the success of the Peninsula Symphony and, collectively, provide the largest share of our annual operating budget. It is never too late to upgrade your memberships or recruit new members.

We have a loyal cadre of members who have renewed or increased their contributions over time, but we need to expand our membership base to include others who are currently enjoying our concerts. We will then reach out to the larger population.

Our total membership number has decreased from 537 in 2005 to 290 in 2016 and 264 so far in our 2017 fiscal year that started last July. The better news is that the average contribution

per member has increased from just under \$100 in 2005 to \$357 this season. Although this is good news, it is worth noting that just 14 families in the Virtuoso and Conductor's Circle categories account for close to half of the total membership revenue. We would love to invite others to some of the highest membership levels.

Again, thank you to those who renewed your memberships for the 2016-2017 season and double thank you to those who upgraded their memberships or invited friends to become new members. We cannot afford to take our foot off the gas pedal on this one.



From the Symphony's Archives

Since this is the Peninsula Symphony's 50th anniversary season, ***Symphony Sounds*** has instituted a new column that will feature a different "did you know" item from the orchestra's history in each issue.

Did you know that Ferde Grofé attended the Peninsula Symphony's November 7, 1970 concert at Palos Verdes High School to hear a performance of his *Grand Canyon Suite*?

The *Grand Canyon Suite* was premiered in 1931 and was the first American piece recorded by Arturo Toscanini (in Carnegie Hall in 1945, with Grofé in attendance). The original score is in the Library of Congress.

Grofé was 78 years old at the time of the Peninsula Symphony concert, and the Peninsula Symphony was beginning its fourth season. Grofé had been a Los Angeles-area resident since 1945.

Future Events

2017 Edith Knox Performance Competition

The January 31 application deadline has just passed for the 2017 Edith Knox Performance Competition. The next step for the competitors is the preliminary competition round on Saturday, March 4 at Harbor College. Each contestant will perform, from memory, an entire work for solo instrument and orchestra from the standard repertoire.

Symphony Association members at the level of Benefactor and above are invited to attend the preliminary competition. Parents and teachers are allowed to hear their own children and students, but not the other competitors. A panel of three judges will select five individuals to perform in the competition finals in Redondo Beach on Sunday, April 9. All finalists will receive cash prizes following their Redondo Beach performances. In addition, the winner will also be featured in a short, professional recital at 12:15 PM on May 5, 2017, in the Classical Crossroads' First Fridays at First concert series.

Symphony Association members and the general public are invited to the April 9 Young Artists' Showcase. Admission is free. The names of the finalists and more information on the competition and prior winners will be available on our website at www.pensym.org and in an upcoming edition of *Symphony Sounds*.

Young Artists' Showcase Sunday, April 9, 2017 at 2:00 PM

The five finalists in the 2017 Edith Knox Performance Competition will perform in full concert dress with piano accompaniment for professional judging. The first-prize winner will be announced at the end of the program and will solo with the Peninsula Symphony at its June 19, 2017, Norris Foundation concert. These events are free and open to the public.

General Meeting of the Peninsula Symphony Association

The Symphony Association's annual meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 27, 2017 at Keller Williams Realty Office, 550 Deep Valley Drive (top floor of the Promenade), Rolling Hills Estates. The Board meeting begins at 7:30 PM and the annual membership meeting will follow, at approximately 9:00 PM. All Symphony Association members are eligible to attend either or both meetings.

The primary item of business at the annual meeting is the election of new Board members for the 2017-2018 fiscal year that will begin in July, 2017. The Nominating Committee will present a list of candidates. Association members attending this meeting may nominate additional candidates and may also vote. Please call the Symphony Association office (310-544-0320) if you plan to attend, so that we have sufficient capacity for all attendees. You will receive additional details about the meeting location when you call.

Peninsula Symphony Concert Sunday, April 30, 2017 at 7:00 PM

SATISFYING A "SUITE TOOTH"
Vladimir Chernov, baritone

Grieg	<i>Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Opus 46</i>
Prokofiev	<i>Lieutenant Kijé Suite, Opus 601n</i>
Vaughan Williams	<i>English Folk Song Suite</i>
Ravel	<i>Mother Goose Suite</i>

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

Thank you to our Virtuoso Level Members

Our highest membership level, Virtuoso, is for individuals or couples who contribute at least \$5000 to the Peninsula Symphony Association in a single season. We are proud to announce the 2016-2017 season Virtuoso contributors:

Ken and Anita Gash
Dorothy and Allen Lay
The Shlens Family
John and Sue Williams



Audience members arriving for the October 30, 2016 concert. The Membership and information desks are staffed by volunteers.



Young musicians from the Redondo Union High School Band & Guard Boosters sell refreshments during intermission at all Peninsula Symphony concerts. Please support their fundraisers and enjoy a cup of coffee and a tasty treat.

Enjoy the Next Concert!

A ROYAL AFFAIR

**Sunday, February 19, 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 from 9:00 AM 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 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