

# PENINSULA *symphony*

## *Symphony Sounds*

August 2021

55<sup>th</sup> Season, Number 1

Terri Zinkiewicz

### **The Peninsula Symphony Announces its 2021-2022 Season Concert Dates, Guest Conductors and Soloists**

After a full season and a half with no concerts, the Peninsula Symphony is preparing a full season of four classical concerts, the Edith Knox Young Artists Performance Competition and a summer Pops concert.

We previously announced our four guest conductors for the classical concerts. There has been one change, with David Cubek now slated to guest conduct the June concert. In addition, newly retired Music Director Gary Berkson will guest conduct the summer Pops Concert.



David Cubek



Anthony Panther



Andrew Shulman



Jorge Luis Uzcátegui

All concerts will be at our usual location - Redondo Union High School Auditorium. Following are the tentative dates, which are subject to change:

Sunday, November 7, 2021, at 7:00 PM  
Sunday, February 20, 2022, at 7:00 PM  
Sunday, February 27, 2022, at 2:00 (Edith Knox Competition Finals)  
Sunday, April 24, 2022, at 7:00 PM  
Sunday, June 26, 2022, at 7:00 PM  
Sunday, July 31, 2022, at 5:00 (Pops Concert)

Soloists will include violinist Erica Uzca, cellist Quenton Blache, trumpeter Rob Shaer and 2020 Knox Competition winner, pianist Mi-Hyun Suh.

Please check our website at [www.pensym.org](http://www.pensym.org) for the latest updates.

### **The Peninsula Symphony Berkson Years**

Gary Berkson retired as Music Director/Conductor June 30, 2021, as planned. However, he is not relocating back to Sweden immediately, and he will guest conduct the July 31, 2022, Pops Concert. This will provide an opportunity for our musicians to work one final time with Gary and for the audience to say a more formal goodbye to the man who provided such outstanding, dedicated service to the Peninsula Symphony for twelve years.

Berkson provided us with an enlightening summary of the works that he conducted during his tenure. There were 42 Classical concerts and five Pops concerts with performances of a total of 147 different works. Only one piece, the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, was repeated, and that was for a Knox competition winner.

The orchestra played selections from 74 composers who were from twenty different countries. Berkson programmed at least one piece by an American composer each season, for a total of nineteen, which was about 13% of the total repertoire. The top three composers were all musician and audience favorites –

Brahms and Mozart with ten selections each and Beethoven with nine. Almost 2/3 of the compositions were performed by the Peninsula Symphony for the first time.

We collaborated with a wide range of soloists, including women's chorus, piano trio, wind quartet, harp, guitar, narrator, violin/viola duo, flute, clarinet, mezzo-soprano, baritone, piano duo, violin, viola, cello, piano, bassoon, two young actors and a pre-recorded whale song.

### **The Edith Knox Young Artists Performance Competition**

We plan to resume the competition in 2022, and for that year only we will increase the maximum age requirement by one year (must be under age 26 on June 1, 2022) so that no one should miss their final year of eligibility due to no competition in 2021. Applications will be posted on-line in November at [www.pensym.org](http://www.pensym.org). Since our 2020 winner did not have an opportunity to perform as soloist with the Peninsula Symphony, she will be featured in the June 2022 concert. The 2022 Knox winner will be the soloist in the first concert of the 2022-2023 season.

### **Membership Update**

Thank you to the Peninsula Symphony Association members who have already renewed their memberships for the 2021-2022 season and especially those who also contributed last year.

We have a full concert season planned for the upcoming year, and it will include meet-and-greets for members and the Guest Conductors as well as one or more fundraisers. In addition, audience members will be asked to provide their evaluations of the conductors' performances that will be considered as we select our new Music Director.

The Symphony Association begins the season in good financial condition, even though membership was down last year. Clearly, we had no concert expenses. However, this year will be very different. The concerts require slightly larger orchestras than we have had in some of the past concerts. Other expenses have increased, in some cases dramatically. For

example, our concert venue expenses are more than 2 ½ times what they used to be. We do not have many options for venues, because we require a large stage for a full orchestra, an onstage sound shell, and significant audience seating in an area not too far away from most audience members. So, memberships are more important than ever this year.

### **Thank you to our 2020-2021 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 thank the Virtuoso contributors for the 2020-2021 season:

Ken and Anita Gash

Anna and Yuri Itkis

Marylyn and Chuck Klaus

Dorothy and Allen Lay

### **Thank you to our 2020-2021 Sponsors and Advertisers!**

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### Meet David Cubek, Guest Conductor for the June 2022 Concert



David Cubek has been the director of the Claremont Concert Orchestra of Claremont McKenna, Harvey Mudd, Pitzer, and Scripps Colleges since 2010. He also serves as Assistant Conductor of the Pasadena Symphony, Conductor of the Pasadena Youth Symphony Orchestra Philharmonic, and Conductor of new music ensemble Fonema Consort. In addition to being passionate about conducting and teaching, he is a firm believer in the power of music to foster social change. Mr. Cubek has conducted various ensembles from Venezuela's admired music education program known as El Sistema, including the internationally recognized Teresa Carreño and Simón Bolívar symphony orchestras. In the United States, he has also collaborated with El Sistema inspired programs such as YOLA (Los Angeles), OrchKids (Baltimore), and Harmony Program (NYC).

Born in Caracas, Venezuela, Mr. Cubek began private piano and composition lessons at the age of seven before entering the Simón Bolívar Conservatory. In 1999, he moved to Montreal to continue his music education, studying piano and music theory at McGill University and orchestral conducting at the Conservatory of Montreal. At the latter institution, he was awarded First Prize with Great Distinction in orchestral conducting. Mr. Cubek completed his doctoral studies in orchestral conducting at Northwestern University, where he served as assistant and guest conductor of the opera

program, and the Chamber and Symphony Orchestras. He was music director of the University of Chicago Chamber Orchestra and a lecturer in music theory at both Northwestern and McGill. In addition, Mr. Cubek has led ensembles in Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Italy, Mexico, and Ukraine. In California, recent engagements include guest appearances with the San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra and the Eastern Sierra Symphony (Mammoth Lakes).

A recipient of Scripps College's Mary W. Johnson Award for excellence in teaching, Mr. Cubek is an enthusiastic advocate of new music. At the Claremont Colleges, he regularly teaches classes based on 20th- and 21st-century repertoires. As conductor of Fonema Consort, he sustains an active international concert schedule focused on premiering new compositions.

### Call for Community Players

Are you or do you know an advanced amateur orchestral musician? Maybe someone who was a top high school musician or a college music major who went on to a career in a different field. If so, please consider joining the Peninsula Symphony. Rehearsals are Tuesday evenings. Openings are limited, and we especially welcome string players. Please contact the symphony's office at 310-544-0320 for more information and auditions.



Post Office Box 2602  
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274

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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 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Leave a message on our answering machine (310-544-0320), and phone replies will usually be made during normal staffing hours. You can also e-mail us at [music.pensym@verizon.net](mailto:music.pensym@verizon.net). General information about the Symphony can be found on our website ([www.pensym.org](http://www.pensym.org)).

You may also contact:

Peninsula Symphony Association president, John Williams [jwskrs@verizon.net](mailto:jwskrs@verizon.net)