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LA JOLLA SYMPHONY & CHORUS PRESENTS

Latin Spice



Dances from Mexico and Spain!
Virtuoso mariachi Jeff Nevin will be guest conducting *Huapango*, José Moncayo's spicy setting of folk-dances from Vera Cruz, and *Dances from The Three-Cornered Hat* from Falla's comic ballet. Choral Director David Chase leads Cary Ratcliff's colorful setting of texts, *Ode to Common Things*, by the Nobel Prize-winning Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, featuring vocal soloists, a virtuoso guitarist, chorus, and orchestra.

DAVID CHASE, CONDUCTING
JEFF NEVIN, GUEST CONDUCTING



VICTORIA MATURE
SOPRANO

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In a departure from standard holiday fare, the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus Association presents its second Music on the Move concert of the season: "Latin Spice" features dances from Mexico and Spain, plus a colorful setting of texts by the Nobel Prize-winning Chilean poet PABLO NERUDA.

JEFF NEVIN, Music Director of *Mariachi Champaña Nevín*, guest-conducts *Huapango*, JOSÉ MONCAYO's spicy setting of folk dances from Vera Cruz, and *Dances from the Three-Cornered Hat* from MANUEL DE FALLA's comic ballet.

DAVID CHASE, celebrating his 30th season as Choral Director of the LJS&CA, conducts CARY RATCLIFF's colorful *Ode to Common Things*, based on five of Neruda's poems. Neruda's poetry transforms everyday things into something wildly exotic, transcendent and magical. Sung in Spanish, the oratorio features vocal soloists, virtuoso classical guitarist, a 150-voice chorus, and orchestra. Featured soloists are soprano VICTORIA MATURE, mezzo soprano AVA BAKER LISS, tenor MARCO LA BASTIDA, and guitarist RANDY PILE.

HOW I BECAME A CONDUCTOR ... Jeff Nevin

You might be wondering how I came to be standing in front of the Orchestra waving my arms like a madman -- a far cry from my usual position, seated in the back blowing my brains out like a madman ... and, well, in some ways, so am I! It was actually sort of an accident, but here's the story...

HARVEY SOLLBERGER planned to be out of the country on sabbatical at the end of this quarter, and assumed that, since the December concert features our Chorus so prominently, David would conduct the whole thing. But somehow lines got crossed, and since David has been so busy with Ratcliff Choral rehearsals he was unable to prepare the Orchestra for our Orchestra-alone music. So, a vast international search committee was formed and empowered to find someone with exceptional conducting prowess, impeccable musical talents, and an expertise in Latin music without peer who would be available to conduct the orchestra on ridiculously short notice. When they came up empty, they called me! (I know ... old joke -- sorry!)

Anyway, as you may or may not know, I have been performing Mexican mariachi music since I was a teenager, and since receiving my Ph.D. in composition from UCSD I have been making my living teaching and writing for and about mariachi (I am a full-time professor of mariachi at Southwestern College in Chula Vista). I also have my own professional group, *Mariachi Champaña Nevín*, that has recorded several CDs with my arrangements and given a number of pretty high-profile performances throughout California over the past few years. Given this, and since I have also led the winds through a few sectionals this past spring, Harvey called me in late September to ask if I would take the baton from him (so to speak) for this one concert, and obviously I said yes.

I also mentioned that my mariachi will be soloing again with the *San Diego Symphony* this coming February 27 and 28, and that I was composing an orchestral showpiece for them to play before the mariachi piece comes out (in truth I hadn't started it yet, but don't tell Harvey that!). I asked if we



could perform it in December with the LJS, and he graciously agreed to add it to the program -- our performance will be the world premier. By the way, there is also a concert put on by **Sinfonia Mexicana** in San Bernardino that I will be conducting February 21 on which this piece will be performed, hopefully with the **San Bernardo Symphony**.

My working title for the piece was simply *Mariachi Overture*, since that is what it is, but since then *La Fuerza del Mariachi* surfaced. It will be fairly short (5-6 minutes), with several contrasting melodies (original ones), some very literally representing mariachi sounds and rhythms, and others more abstractly evoking mariachi "moods," all strung together in more or less common "overture" fashion -- in other words, heavy on melody and contrast, light on development! I think it will be fun to play and hear ... a good curtain-raiser as they say. Let me know what you think.

Finally, I wanted to openly thank Harvey, David, and all the Symphony folks for giving me this opportunity -- it sounds hokey, but it's true. Not many people get the chance to lead their orchestra or have their music read -- much less performed -- by a full orchestra these days, in part because most orchestra conductors and administrators are unwilling to give folks the chance to do it. It says a lot about our organization that it would allow me to do all of this. It's an adventurous group... and I hope everyone enjoys the concert!

Also, listen to KPBS radio, 89.6 FM, this Wednesday, December 5, 6:30-7:30 PM, when I will be interviewed on "The Lounge," with host DIRK SUTRO. I'll play excerpts of my new piece, as well as some mariachi recordings to illustrate what inspired it. Dirk is a great host, and it should be a really interesting show. And if you have the chance, check out the San Diego Union-Tribune's "Enlace" section on Thursday, where something about the concerts is expected to be featured.

DEVELOPMENT NEWS ... Colleen Phillips

Congratulations! Congratulations to the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus for being Sign-on-San Diego's *Audience Choice Winner* for 2003 Best Classical Music Group. This is the second year in a row we have received this honor. If we keep this up, we won't be San Diego's best kept secret for long!

"Hagar" to the Rescue. As we begin the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus Association's 49th concert season, I would like to take a minute to thank one of our angels, JERRY FARRELL, for his considerable donation of a new computer to the LJS&CA administrative offices. People tend to forget what happens when the curtain drops, in terms of all the administrative details -- the press releases, grant proposals, database and web maintenance, ticket printing, and accounting -- that make the organization run smoothly. The computers used by the staff are (kindly put) ancient and decrepit, but with a small budget and in these difficult economic times the organization has been unable to budget any money towards the acquisition of new machines. Instead, we put up with daily crashes and freezes, lost data, and purple-screened monitors (no, I'm not joking ... purple). Then into the office

What sorts of things would
YOU like to know and read
about?

descended an angel who purchased us a new computer (through his company, **BAE Systems**), contributing also a new monitor, key-board, and mouse. Words do not express the appreciation we have for his generosity. We can now work with the assurance that our data will not be lost every five minutes, and that we do not need to wear yellow-hued glasses to read our computer screens.

Jerry has asked me to call him by his nickname, "Hagar the Horrible" - and I will, to his face -- but behind his back I call him Jerry, the newest of our Angels. He joins a small but distinguished company which sees the little needs of our organization and makes the effort to meet them. So to all our Angels, and to "Hagar" ... thank you! We could never do what we do without you.

A Farewell from Your Development Director. For almost 5 years it has been a special privilege for me to have worked with the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus Association in the development department, and it is with a mixture of sadness and excitement that I announce my departure from the organization. I will be leaving as of November 30, joining the development team at the **Scripps Institution of Oceanography's Birch Aquarium** on December 8. Through Birch I hope to continue to grow and develop our local community and focus on increasing enhanced educational opportunities for students throughout San Diego county.

My 5 years with the LJS&CA have been remarkable and rewarding. I have worked with stellar colleagues and a devoted group of Board members to build the Association's development department from the ground up. When I joined we were receiving funding from only the San Diego Commission for Arts & Culture and the California Arts Council. We now receive continued support from a myriad of local companies and foundations, including (to name a few) the San Diego County Board of Supervisors, Qualcomm, the Mandell Weiss Charitable Trust, the Ackerman Foundation, the James S. Copley Foundation, and the Kiwanis Club of La Jolla.

I leave knowing what I have believed all along: that the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus Association is one of the greatest organizations in San Diego, providing quality music, exciting programming, effective educational opportunities, and a heightened sense of community throughout the county. I am proud to have been a part of this organization for so long. Thank you for the memories. I look forward to celebrating the LJS&CA's 50th anniversary ... from the audience!

FROM THE OFFICE ... Cindy Collins

Young Artists Competition. The La Jolla Symphony & Chorus Association's 45th annual Young Artist Competition will be held on January 31, 2004. The Winners' Showcase Concert will be held February 1st, 2004 at 1:00 PM. Both the competition and the showcase concert are free and open to the public.

Over \$6,000 in award money will be given away to the winners. Contestants must be residents of San Diego County or Baja California or have studied with a music teacher in San Diego County or Baja California. Age for

Please direct any questions,
comments, news, or story
ideas to the Editor at (858)
534-3642, or
scjones@ucsd.edu.

instrumentalists at the time of the competition is 14-26; for vocalists it is 18-28.

For more information on the competition or to receive an application, please visit our web site at <http://www.lajollasympphony.com>, or call the office at (858) 534-4637.

LJS&C on UCSD-TV. The La Jolla Symphony & Chorus' 1996 Christmas concert -- Handel, Honegger, Bernstein & Stravinsky -- will air on UCSD-TV at 8:00 PM on Thursday, Dec 25, 2004.

[UHF Channel 35, Time Warner 18, Del Mar TV66, Cox Communications 66, Cox North County 69]

CHORUS MEMBERS IN *PORGY & BESS* ... Ken Bell

Okay, chorus junkies, here's the deal: the San Diego Symphony asked us to be back-up to some great singers from L.A. for a concert version of *Porgy & Bess* way early in our season. Wanna do it? Good responses ... lots of sops, fewer altos, some tenors, only 3 basses, and some "tentative"? How am I gonna split them in two? Call in favors ... and more altos, while you're at it. Cell phone is hot on my ear.



Got the concert version from the SDS ... what else is on the program? "Dr. Jesus" and "Buzzard Song" ... you sure this is *Porgy & Bess*? Where do I get them?! Paranoia ... first rehearsal with the conductor and we don't have something ... aghhhhhhhh! Tell the SDO Librarian ... who blows me off. Finally somebody listens. Pick up scores, but no "Buzzards" ... don't worry, we'll photocopy them for you...

First rehearsal, many of us riding high from *Beethoven 9*. Good balance, good sounds, good reading ... lots of music (had to copy "Jesus" and "Buzzard" myself, of course). Now it's meet the composer ... can't find space at UCSD. How about at the Symphony? Okay, but need piano ... need music stand ... need doors unlocked. Okay ... what else can I do? Arrival.... DOH! Forgot to ask for lights! Strange evening. I think we're ready. Conductor arrives ... I think he thinks I'm the janitor ... two hours of sight-singing by memory. He leaves, hopefully to go to bed.

The next copy deadline is ...

Symphony Hall on stage ... a magical place, full of strong, good vibrations. What great throats those 12 folks have!! The band plays well ... technical snafus ... seems ambitious ... hard to understand full concept. We're warm, not hot yet. But we're tighter with each reading. Ok, gang, time to start enjoying this, and let the audience know. The music, with its incredible harmonic rhythm, primitive percussiveness, and soaring, evocative melodies, is infectious. We are swept into this awesome musical maelstrom of the early sounds of fully orchestrated, symphonic jazz from the genius of GEORGE GERSHWIN. We bring the show in from out of town. Good idea. The enthusiasm on the stage is palpable.

What an evening! I was very proud of your commitment, enthusiasm, hard work, and focus. And, a bonus: two positive sentences in a review ... without a qualifier!! Congratulations, and thanks!

PORGY & BESS VIEWING ... Walt Desmond

Chorus members were treated to a one-time only viewing of their recent *Porgy & Bess* performance with the San Diego Symphony. Sherry and bass MARTY BLOOM hosted the potluck at their home on November 23, providing the DVD and beautiful large flat-screen viewing. The recording was done at the October 25 Symphony Hall performance featuring the **Spirit Chorus of Los Angeles**, a small group of singers from the LJSC, and the San Diego Symphony, conducted by MURRAY SIDLIN. The pleasure of getting to know Gershwin from within was enhanced greatly by the privilege of sharing the stage with the inspiring soloists from the Spirit Chorus. This was (for most of us) a rare experience to see and hear such technical and artistic excellence up-close, and to share the 'spirit' that is part of their name. (Don't miss them next time they're in town!) Thanks to Marty and Sherry, and also to tenor CHUCK CARVER for his work behind-the-scenes.

A BIT OF CHORUS HISTORY ... Vicki Heins-Shaw

This group sticks together! Here's the break-down of the REAL 'old-timers' of the Chorus, those who joined from 1973 to 1990. (Sorry for any errors of omission or commission.)

1973

Sally Husch Dean
Vicki Heins-Shaw
Chuck Carver
Elie Schneour (former member)

1978

Debby Park
Mary Ellen Walther
Becky Tarrant Ramirez
Ed Lee
Paul Friedman

1974

Marty Hambright
Carolyn Chase
Jean Lowerison
Walt Desmond

1979

Beda Farrell

1980

Valerie Cahoone Rubins

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Sylvia Grace, Executive Director
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Satomi Sato (alto), December 8

Susan Taggart (alto) and Sharon Jones (soprano), December 15

Debby Park (alto), December 19

Wenbi Lai (soprano), December 23

Amee Wood (alto) and David Hertzell (bass), December 28

[Editor's Note: This is the latest in tenor Chuck Carver's continual efforts to bring culinary splendor to the Chorus's rehearsal breaks. Week after week, year after year, we come to rehearsal knowing that it will not be something ordinary that awaits us at 'half-time']

CHORAL ARRANGEMENTS ... Beda Farrell

A Message of Hope from Bhutan

On Monday, November 17, JIGME DRUKPA, our host musician and friend in Bhutan, sent the following message to the LJSC "Voices From America" tour coordinator BRENDA MONTIEL. The message was forwarded to the "Bhutanaires and Bhutaneers" (singers and travel companions). But Jigme's thoughts were not limited to the tour group. His message in fact reflects the nature of the Bhutanese people, and their concern for everyone throughout the world.

I want to let you know that I am saddened by the wildfires in California. I hope and pray that all the people who came to Bhutan are safe with their lives and properties. Please convey them my love and prayers, and send me a word to let me know how you are doing. ... I can feel the kind of pain and hopelessness people there have been through, with most of them still not able to believe what had happened to their friends and properties. Unfortunately, we are not able to help in any way, and the little we can do from here is to offer butter lamps and prayers so that people are able to regain light and hope in their lives soon again from such a dark and painful experience. Tomorrow my family will go to north of Thimphu valley to a special monastery to offer butter lamps and prayers for all the people who suffered and are suffering after the fires in California.

With prayers for your well being!

Love, Jigme

LJSC to Sing in Las Vegas

DAVID CHASE and the Chorus have been invited to perform at the February 2004 Western Division American Choral Directors Association Annual Convention in Las Vegas. This is the first time that the La Jolla Symphony Chorus has been honored for "work that is truly outstanding and representative of the high standards of performance required of all groups invited to perform at an ACDA convention." Singers will travel to Las Vegas on Friday, February 27, arriving in time for a warm-up and sound check at the Guardian Angel Cathedral. The performance is at 10:00 AM the following morning. The Chorus will sing Mvt. I, "Oda a las cosas" (Ode to Things) from CARY RATCLIFF's *Ode to Common Things*, arranged for piano (four hands) and percussion. Two works arranged by David Chase will also be featured:

Cancioncilla Romántica Venezolana by Venezuelan composer JUAN BAUTISTA PLAZA, arranged for women's voices; and *Eres Tu* (with soloist REBECCA RAMIREZ) by Spanish composer JUAN CARLOS CALDERON.

We also look forward to seeing our old friend MARIA GUINAND from the University of Simón Bolívar in Caracas, Venezuela. Maria, who we first met at the International Choral Kathaumixw in Canada in 1992, is a presenter at the convention.

Messiah-Sing Information

Messiah-Sing is an annual community event. Soloists, members of the LJSC, the LJS Chamber Orchestra, and audience join together on the Christmas portion of Handel's spectacular oratorio. This year the event will be on Sunday, December 14, at 4:00 PM, at St. Elizabeth Seton Church in Carlsbad (La Costa), Alga Rd. at El Fuerte.

Featured soloists will be soprano MARY JAEB, mezzo-soprano MARTHA JANE WEAVER, tenor MAX CHODOS, and baritone JOE PECHOTA. ALISON LUEDECKE will be the organist.

Tickets: \$12/\$10/\$8. For advance purchase, call (858) 534-4637. Rental scores will be available at the door (\$3). If you wish to purchase a score beforehand, see bass STEW SHAW.

'Tis the season when malls are full of shoppers, and choirs sing songs of the season. For more history surrounding the tradition of performing Messiah, see <http://classicalmusic.about.com/library/weekly/aa121399a.htm>.

Martha Neal-Brown Fundraiser

"I Long To See You," a fund-raiser for the Martha Neal-Brown Story Arts Fund, has been rescheduled to Sunday, January 11, 2004, at 7:30 PM, in the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of San Dieguito, 1036 Solana Dr., Solana Beach. Admission is \$10 (tax-deductible). For more information, please contact SALLY DEAN at (760) 436-7125, sallydean@cox.net, or Story Arts at (760) 436-3970.



