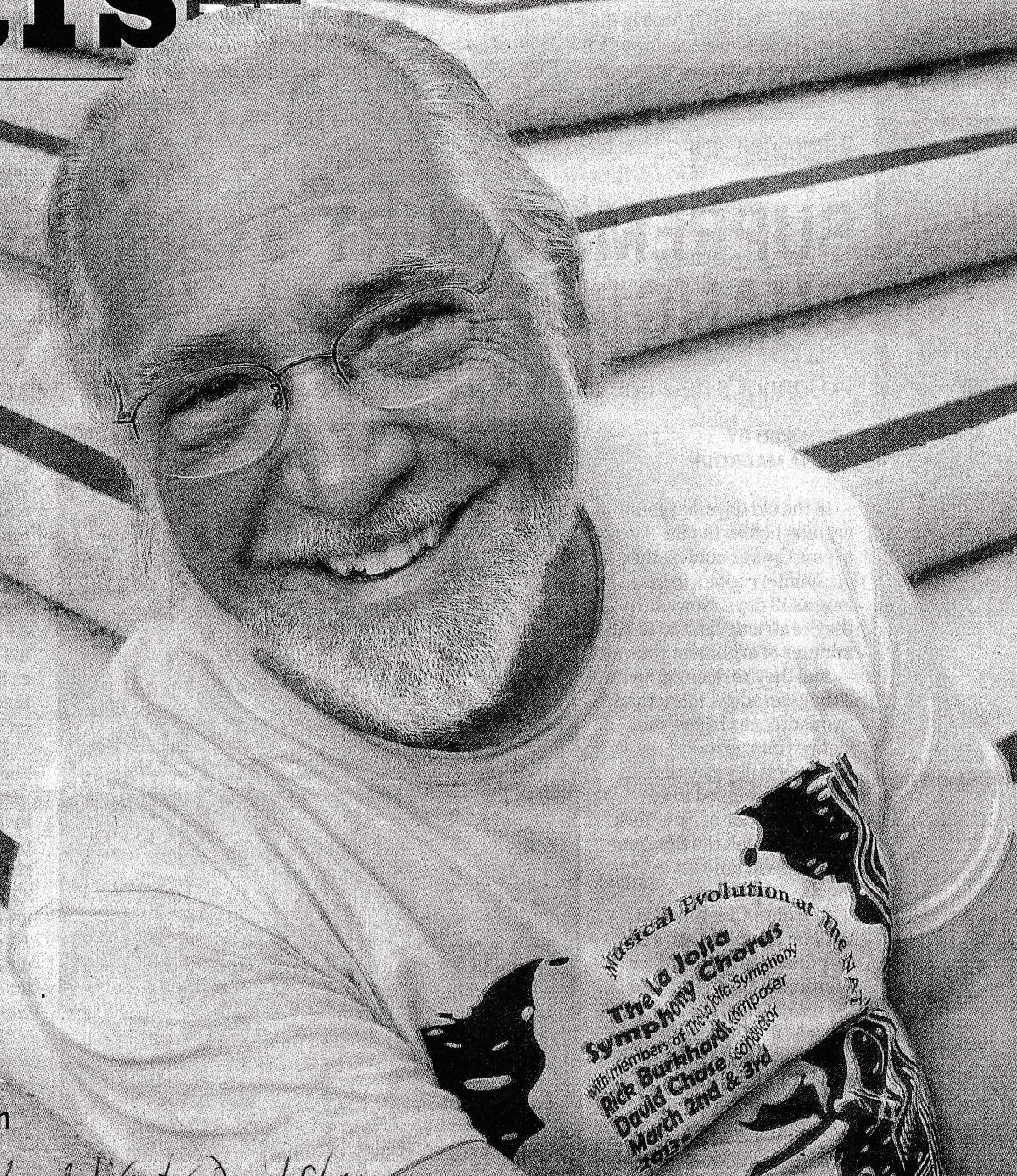
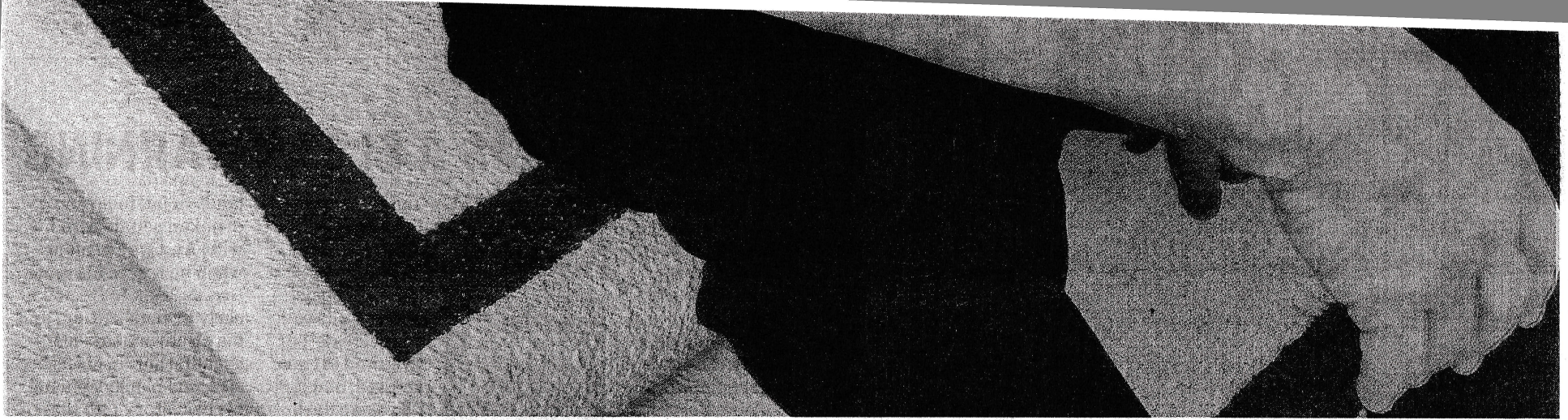


La Jolla  
Symphony &  
Chorus' season  
is dedicated  
*to longtime choral director David Chase*







Conductor David Chase will celebrate his 40th anniversary as choral director of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus. DON BOOMER • U-T

# 'He's all heart'

JAMES CHUTE • U-T

**D**avid Chase insists it was Steven Schick's idea for the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus to devote the ensemble's 2013-14 season to celebrating Chase's 40th anniversary as the organization's choral director. ■ "It's pure Steve Schick," said Chase. "How can I say anything but thank you?" ■ Schick, the ensemble's music director, admits that the 2013-14 "Life" season was his creation. But he's not making any apologies. ■ "I love working with David," Schick said. "He has all the tools of a terrific choral conductor: great ears, a real sense of line, and best of all, he's all heart."

Chase, who prepares the chorus for the programs conducted by Schick, typically conducts one of the six season programs (June 8-9 in 2013). He'll share the podium in three of the six 2013-14 programs, including the final concerts, which conclude with Cary Ratcliff's "Ode to Common Things," a piece particu-

larly meaningful to Chase. The veteran conductor is passionate about expanding chorale repertoire beyond the sacred texts that form the basis of much vocal music of the past four centuries.

"Choral music is not just standing on the risers and singing 'Holy, Holy, Holy,'" Chase said. "'Ode to Common Things'

gives us a chance to do something really different, where this year, we'll be doing (Vaughan Williams') 'Dona Nobis Pacem' in that (season-ending) position."

Not that there's anything wrong with "Dona Nobis Pacem." You can't be a choral conductor without a high regard for the standard repertoire. But the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus' unique identity is based on its innovative programming and commitment to the music of our time, not on endlessly repeating the great choral and orchestra masterworks.

That makes it an ideal fit with Chase's own wide-ranging musical tastes, and he's grateful for the opportunity.

"It has become a community of real strength and real purpose," Chase said. "It's astonishing. What better way is there to make a living?"

## Young and crazy

Chase, with his wife, Ann, arrived in

San Diego in the early 1970s. They had been living in Cincinnati, where Ann Chase was attending graduate school at the College-Conservatory of Music, when they decided to head for San Diego, essentially on a whim and a vague choral conducting offer from UC San Diego.

"We were crazy and we were young," Chase said. "Ann had hit a bump and I hadn't found my place there, so it just seemed like it was this idealistic thing we must do. We paid bitterly for it over the next few years, but I guess you could say it's really paid off because it's been a great place to grow."

While much of his work was with student ensembles, both at UC San Diego and Palomar College, where he found a full-time faculty position, Chase was invited by conductor Thomas Nee to take over the volunteer 60-member chorus that accompanied the La Jolla

SEE CHASE • E7



# La Jolla Symphony & Chorus 2013-14 season

## Life\*

... is fresh,

**Sept. 20 (special event at 7:30 p.m.):** Jazz Composers Orchestra Institute Reading

**sometimes a little scary,**

**Nov. 1 (special event at 7 p.m.):** Young People's Concert

**Nov. 2-3 (season opening concerts):** Mozart, Sinfonia concertante (with ICE); Varèse, "Density 21.5" (Claire Chase, flute); Dai Fujikura, "Mina"; Berlioz, Symphonie Fantastique

**utterly ecstatic,**

**Dec. 7-8:** Aaron Jay Kernis, "Musica Celestis"; Paul Hembree, TBA (Thomas Nee Commission); Ravel, "Daphnis and Chloe"

**sometimes hidden (in plain sight)**

**Feb. 8-9, 2014:** Berlioz, Roman Carnival Overture; Lou Harrison, Piano Concerto (Sarah Cahill, piano); Brahms, Symphony No. 4

**made for sharing,**

**March 15-16, 2014:** Alberto Ginastera, "Malambo"; Carlos Chavez, Sinfonia de Antígona; Villa-Lobos, Chôros No. 10; Antonio Estévez, La Cantata Criolla, "Florentino, el que cantó con el Diablo"

**and bursting with promise.**

**May 3-4, 2014:** Villa-Lobos, Saxophone Fantasia (Chika Inoue, saxophone); Bernstein, Chichester Psalms; Prokofiev, Symphony #5

**Life is for celebrating.**

**June 7-8, 2014:** Leos Janacek, "Zárlivost"; Haydn, Symphony No. 104; Cary Ratcliff, "Ode to Common Things"

\*Life is fresh, sometimes a little scary, utterly ecstatic, sometimes hidden (in plain sight), made for sharing, and bursting with promise. Life is for celebrating. To David on his 40th year with the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus.

All concerts, except March 15-16, conducted by Stephen Schick. David Chase co-conducts the May 3-4 and June 7-8 concerts with Schick, the March 15-16 concerts with Maria Guinand. Concerts take place in UC San Diego's Mandeville Auditorium on Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Tickets and information: (858) 534-4637 or [lajollasympphony.com](http://lajollasympphony.com)

## FROM E3

Symphony, a fledgling community orchestra Nee had placed under UC San Diego's auspices when he took over from founder Peter Nicoloff.

"That first year, my wife would have to throw me out of the house after dinner to get me to go to rehearsal," Chase said. "I had student groups I taught during the day and that was rewarding, but this group was at such a low ebb, I'd say to her, 'Do I have to go to rehearsal?' She'd say, 'You have to go.'"

But Chase figures that period lasted less than two years, as he was able to build an ensemble, or more important, a community, that now numbers 120 members.

"The phenomenon of choral music is sort of the best of (what makes) a community," Chase said. "It's like a church, but without the dogma.

"People go to church every Sunday mostly because it makes them feel better and they are interacting with the people around them. And some of those people are people they wouldn't get along with in any other context.

"It's exactly the same with a once-a-week community chorus rehearsal. They look forward to it. They tell me when they take a week off or two they get cranky; they'd miss it."

## Old and wise

Conducting volunteers, however, takes certain skills, not unlike herding

cats. The only authority a conductor has is the authority they give him.

"Conducting a chorus is like composing with humans," said Chase, who wanted to be a composer when he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at Ohio State. "It suits my personality. I have a relationship with people — and it's not particularly gregarious, not particularly chatty — but it has something to do with making people want to head in a certain direction I think they ought to head in.

"That's basically what I've been doing for all of these years: pointing people in some direction and making them feel good about it."

That's no small task when you are asking people to sing music that is outside their comfort

zone, as was the case last weekend when Chase conducted the chorus in Rick Burkhardt's "Haydn in Plain Sight" at Balboa Park's Natural History Museum.

"I always worry that they are going to turn on me," Chase said, only half kidding. "I feel this crowd could turn at any minute. Maybe I ought to be up in front with chicken wire between me and them.

"But they haven't turned on me. They've worked really hard. Then what happens is when it starts to work, they have ownership of that in a way that you don't if you are doing the 12th million 'Messiah.'"

Although Chase had recommended the choral works Schick included on the 2013-14 season, and invited one of his mentors, Maria Guinand, to share a

program with him, Schick did manage to surprise Chase by suggesting they invite his daughter, MacArthur Fellow Claire Chase, to perform on the official opening concert with her ensemble, ICE (the International Contemporary Ensemble).

"This is Steve," Chase said. "It's all been going on in his head and then, boom, it's full blown. And he says, 'This is it: For the beginning of your season we're going to have Claire here.'"

"I said, 'Hold it, is that a little bit too much?'"

"He said, 'No, I've already looked into it. They have the date and we'd better grab them while we can.

"I thought, 'Great, let's do it.'"

"It's a bit of a shock, but I might as well enjoy it."