

## Life is bursting with promise ... Music Director Steven Schick



We call this concert, "Life is bursting with promise." But is it? Really?

Russian troops have pushed through the Crimean border. A weary American president is hounded by critics at home and embroiled in conflict abroad. The world seems poised on the brink of cataclysmic change.

I am talking about the summer of 1944. Sergei Prokofiev was holed up in the relatively peaceful confines of an artists' colony at Ivanovo, near Moscow, putting the finishing touches on his *Symphony No. 5*, a work completed in a breathless month of work. Life looked grim then, but by the time the *Symphony* was premiered in January of 1945, Soviet troops had crossed the Vistula and the tide of the war had turned. The Nazis were doomed.

Was Prokofiev prescient? Did he somehow see through the storm clouds of one of the 20<sup>th</sup>

century's darkest moments and see the coming of dawn? And how could he have conceived of a work, which was in his words the "ultimate expression of the grandeur of the human spirit," at one of the least humane moments in the history of our species?

The response to these questions has much to do with the mysterious qualities of the *Symphony*: more with what is hidden rather than what is revealed. A listener searching for an uncomplicated and uplifting narrative will be disappointed. It's true the upwardly moving melodic lines of the first movement do seem to strive for spiritual high ground. And they would sound truly uplifting if only their harmonies were not so dark. And, the fast second and fourth movements do indeed generate a kind of euphoric electricity, but the music often seems to be spinning in place – a mechanical avatar of joy rather than real and unbridled joy itself. No. A listener searching for a simple story will not find it there. But a listener searching for deeper answers, someone who will dig into the piece, will eventually find in the tightly wound core of contradictory impulses, a kind of truth.

The contradictions in Prokofiev rub and spark. They urge us to dig deeper and fly higher. Happiness does not fall into our laps in Prokofiev's world, but like the owl in John Haines's great poem, we "soar above the Alder flats, searching with tawny eyes." That's why we call this concert "bursting with promise," rather than "fat, happy and contented."

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Perhaps the same contradictions are also there in Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*. The piece is a setting of some of the most inspirational and joyous texts of the Bible. And the music – rhythmic and buoyant – follows suit. You know that Bernstein gets it when he sets the text from the twenty-third Psalm: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." But among Bernstein's compositions *Chichester Psalms* immediately follows his *Symphony No. 3*, ("Kaddish"), a work perched at the edge of the abyss of despair. The two works are rightly considered the composer's most overtly Jewish statements, and they operate very much like a pair. Merge them and you get close to the often-incongruous impulses that lie at the root of prayer: pleas and praise. I hear the exuberance of the *Chichester Psalms* and revel in its rhythmic vitality, just like a generation of listeners has. But I can't forget that its spiritual twin is the "Kaddish." Here, like Prokofiev, Bernstein leads us directly into the fickle heart of humankind, capable of the highest and lowest orders of thought and deed.

This concert, including a lovely outlier in the form of Heitor Villa-Lobos's *Saxophone Fantasia*, performed by this year's Young Artist, Chika Inoue, is not about arrival but about struggle. It's not about fulfillment but about the search for – and the promise of – fulfillment. That's how Prokofiev could write a symphony of spiritual triumph at a time of despair.

Once again Russian troops are at the Crimean border. Once again the world seems poised on the precipice of chaos. And now, as before, our moment is bursting with promise.



## Bernstein, LJS&C and Mr. Shaw ... Choral Director David Chase

Do you remember when *Chichester Psalms* was a strange, new piece? (Those under 30 needn't answer that question!) When it was premiered in 1965 (the year I graduated from high school), the musical world welcomed it with one raised eyebrow. They couldn't decide whether Bernstein was a Broadway composer or a "serious" composer, and this piece didn't help. Furthermore the 7/4 and 10/4 meters seemed so advanced – choral directors had to learn new beat patterns!

In my mind, *Chichester* chronicles the development of our chorus. Yes, it was challenging when, in 1981, I prepared the chorus for Tom Nee to conduct. And it was exhilarating in 1996, when I conducted it.

But it was terrifying when I prepared LJS&C for Robert Shaw to conduct *Chichester* with the San Diego Symphony in 1991. It was the first time I carried that awesome responsibility for the *Maestro* whose shadow had loomed over my musical life since I was 12 years old, and whose temper was as legendary as his artistry.

The first rehearsal was unnerving. He sat back and said, "You take 'em through it the first time, David." I mounted the podium on shaky legs and did as I was told. My wife, Ann, was seated near him and reported later that night that he leaned over to her half way through the piece and whispered, "Good. I can tell Caroline [his wife] that we can enjoy our week in San Diego."

The rest of that week was pleasant and focused on the music itself. LJS&C had become an instrument worthy of that great conductor. After he returned to Atlanta, Mr. Shaw sent us the letter reproduced below. It was not only gracious, but a perfect example of his folksy and philosophical personal style.

In this concert, we approach Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* once again. But it looks different now. We have experienced his huge *Mass*, and a lot of other challenging music. We're not afraid of a little 7/4 or 10/4! It makes a good measuring stick for our musical journey together.

## Contributors:

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Beda Farrell

Jean Lowerison

Diane Salisbury

Steven Schick

Mitzi Sobash

Susan Taggart



## ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Yoel Levi, Music Director

April 5, 1991

Robert Shaw  
Music Director Emeritus

Members of the La Jolla Civic/University Chorus  
c/o Mr. David Chase  
1815 Hygeia  
Leucadia, CA 92024

Dear Friends -

Your wonderful performances of the Chichester Psalms still ring loud and clean in my memory -- as well as the delights of rehearsal.

Among those I have "guested" in recent years, I really cannot recall another chorus which was so carefully prepared and which took its responsibilities with such seriousness -- and joy.

-- Which is the way music ought to be anyway.

It's amazing that living out there, with that world of unutterable beauty outside your windows, you can find time, energy and the discipline to make your "innards" beautiful, too.

Congratulations, and thanks.



Robert Shaw

J. Thomas Bacchetti, Executive Director

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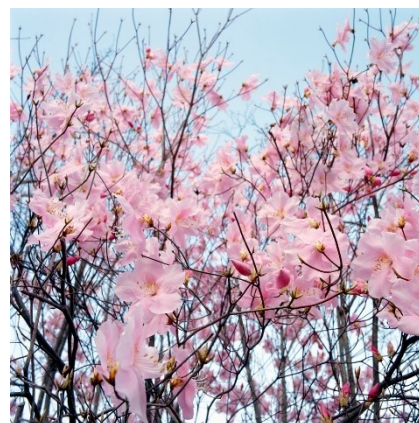
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Look for TUTTI NEWSLETTER on the right side of the home page.

### *Sostenuto*: Investing in a future for LJS&C ... Walt Desmond

Our *Sostenuto* campaign to ensure a LJS&C in future years by guaranteeing support for our artistic directors, is growing toward its goal, now with the contributions of orchestra and chorus members. Total contributed to date is \$634,152 thanks to the generosity of musician members as well as continued contributions from special friends. Our initial goal is to reach the \$750,000 halfway point as we finish yet another rewarding season — and prepare for a spectacular anniversary season. Reaching that goal will be a good starting point for "going public" during the next year. Ensemble members are invited to help your organization reach its goals — remember your contribution can be both an immediate donation and/or a pledge over several years.

You can get more information on ways to support *Sostenuto* from ensemble endowment representatives or by contacting Diane Salisbury at 858-822-3774.





## News from the Executive Director ... Diane Salisbury

It was such a treat having choral conductor Maria Guinand with us for 10 days in March, and the concert of Latin American music that she and David shared continues to gather enthusiastic responses from everyone who attended. What a unique experience we offer our patrons. While Maria was with us she also supported our educational outreach efforts with a two-day workshop in Encinitas working with Sally Dean's North Coast Singers youth choir, and by teaching a master class for SDSU's choral program. She also found time for an appearance on KPBS Radio's "Midday Edition" with Maestro Chase.

The March concert also provided the full houses we like to see when announcing our new season – the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Our early bird subscription drive is off to a good start with audiences enthusiastically looking forward to next season's offerings. We've sold over 150 subscriptions already!

In March, we said a fond farewell to development associate Beth Julsonnet, who is about to have a baby and will be moving to Orange County with her husband. Wendy Matalon has taken over for Beth. See more about Wendy in this issue of Tutti.



## LJS&C considering summer 2015 tour of Spain

A performance tour for members of La Jolla Symphony and Chorus is being developed for summer 2015. This will be a self-funded experience of travel and performance in Spain. Although details remain to be worked out, venues planned include Cordoba, Seville, Madrid, and Barcelona covering 12 days in July/August. Concert repertoire will be selected when a clear picture of singers and instrumentalists has developed. A **Tour Interest** form will be available in the near future. Responses received on the interest form are crucial to the planning process.



## Congratulations, Sally!

Soprano Sally Husch Dean has just received her Master of Music degree in Conducting from Cal State Los Angeles. Congratulations, Sally!



## LJS&C welcomes new Development Associate, Wendy

### Matalon ... Diane Salisbury

Wendy Matalon has joined the LJS&C as Development Associate to assist with the endowment campaign, events and general fundraising. Wendy's last position was executive director at White Sands La Jolla retirement home. During her tenure she successfully created a philanthropic culture in that community. She also has deep roots in La Jolla and is a 20-year member of La Jolla Kiwanis. Say "hi" to Wendy at our next concert or event.



## Need to contact the LJS&C?

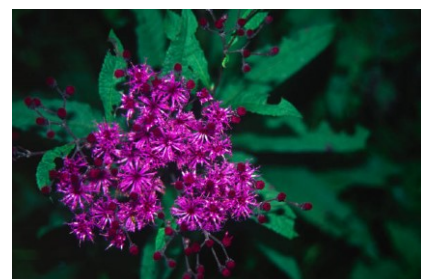
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## Meet Mitzi Sobash ... Evon Carpenter

Writing these articles for *Tutti* is so much fun! I get to discover and explore the most interesting people, those who make up our ensembles. This time my subject is Mitzi Sobash, a soprano in the chorus for her eighteenth season.

Mitzi is a very active singer in the San Diego area. She began her involvement with music playing the flute in fifth grade. In high school she played both flute and



saxophone in the concert band and sang with the Vocal Jazz Ensemble in her senior year. Since that time she has been a member of various church choirs, including the San Diego Diocesan Chorale, and is the cantor/section leader at St. Elizabeth Seton. She sings in the Palomar Chorale and recently joined Sorelle San Diego. Throughout college she took music classes and studied voice with Ann Chase and Rebecca Steinke. She says, "Music was never my major focus in school, but always a part of my life, my sanity."

A friend at church, who told Mitzi she needed to do more than church music, signed her up for an audition with the chorus. She only had a week to prepare for the audition, put together a solo piece and review a little music theory. She remembers having her eyes closed throughout the entire solo and says she has learned so much in the seventeen years since that audition. When asked what she likes about being part of the chorus she replied, "I like the challenging music and working with dedicated people who strive to do better each time. It is a very rewarding experience being a part of an organization of this quality. I like the (sometimes) fearless selection of our

repertoire and that we have an outreach program. Also, I have enjoyed the summer tours; since France in 1998, I haven't missed one."

Mitzi was born in San Francisco and is the only member of her immediate family to be born in the United States. Both of her parents sang in classical choruses in El Salvador and there was always music, live and recorded, in their home. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree, in Interior Design, at San Jose State and initially worked as a commercial space planner in San Francisco. When Mitzi and her husband had the first of their three children, she began doing residential design and consulting on a part time basis. Mitzi currently works as an Administrator for a CPA firm.

This talented lady became active in fund raising and development activities for her children's schools and she continues to fund raise for community groups today. She is currently a board member for North Coast Singers because she feels preserving the arts by educating our youth is very important. Two of her children are professional artists: her son is a bassist/composer in San Diego, and her daughter is a dancer/choreographer and arts administrator in San Francisco. Mitzi is a strong supporter of local artists and programming. She enjoys travel, hiking, kayaking and Pilates.

I am so proud to have Mitzi as a member of our ensembles! Thank you, Mitzi!



## The LJS&CA Board

(Board representatives to the ensemble in bold)

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## City Heights Music School ... Victoria Eicher

This month, Victoria has provided photos of what goes on at City Heights Music School.



Capoeira



Carlos practices



Guitar class



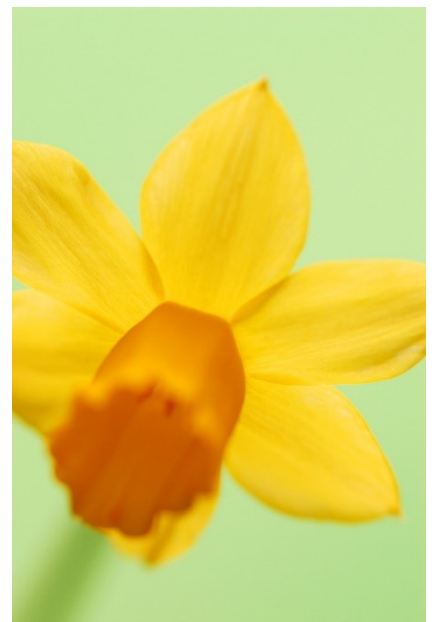
Keyboard class

Have some news  
to report?

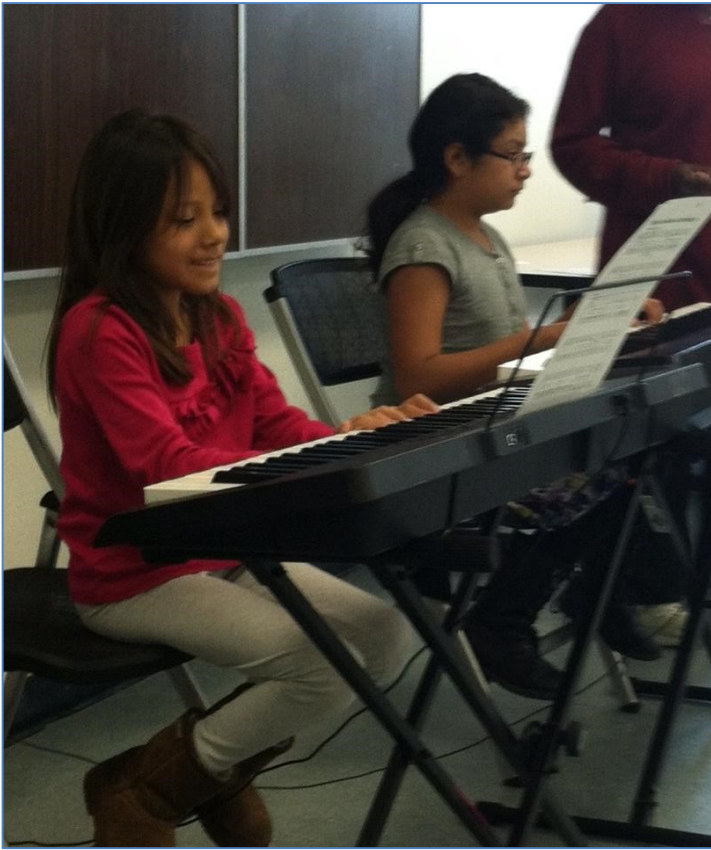
Let the editor  
know!

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(Be sure to mention *Tutti* in  
the subject so I know it's not  
spam!)







## Musician: paramedic or entertainer? ... by Karl

Paulnack, submitted by Evon Carpenter

*Karl Paulnack is a pianist and School of Music Dean at Ithaca College. This excerpt is from a welcome speech he gave to incoming freshman at the Boston Conservatory.*

...People walk into concert halls as they walk into emergency rooms, in need of healing. They may bring a broken body to a hospital, but they often bring with them to the concert a mind that is confused, a heart that is overwhelmed, a soul that is weary. Whether they go out whole again depends partly on how well musicians do their craft.

A musician is more of a paramedic than an entertainer. I'm not interested in entertaining you; I'm interested in keeping you alive, fully alive. We're a lot like cardiac surgeons; we hold people's hearts in our hands every day. We just use different instruments.

What should we expect from young people who choose a future in music? Frankly, I expect them to save the planet.

If there is a future wave of wellness, of harmony, of peace, an end to war, mutual understanding, equality, fairness, I don't expect it to come from a government, a military force, or a corporation.

If there is a future of peace for humankind, if we are to have an understanding of how these invisible, internal things should fit together, I expect it will come from the artists, because that's what we do.

As we did in the Nazi camps and on the evening of 9/11, the artists are the ones who might be able to help us with our internal, invisible lives.

For the full text of Karl Paulnack's speech go to [https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/centers/boisi/pdf/s091/Welcome\\_address\\_to\\_freshman\\_at\\_Boston\\_Conservatory.pdf](https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/centers/boisi/pdf/s091/Welcome_address_to_freshman_at_Boston_Conservatory.pdf)



## Article Watch

**From Susan Taggart:**  
*U-T San Diego, March 9, 2014*

"Answering the call – Amateurs in classical ensembles are drawn to the challenge and the need to make music"

By James Chute

<http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2014/mar/09/tp-answering-the-call/>



**From Jean Lowerison:**

*NY Times, March 12, 2014*

"In Performance: Claire Chase"

Video: Claire Chase performs Edgard Varèse's "Density 21.5" on a platinum flute.

[http://www.nytimes.com/video/arts/music/100000002762351/in-performance-claire-chase.html?emc=edit\\_th\\_20140313&nl=todaysheadlines&nli\\_d=68413755](http://www.nytimes.com/video/arts/music/100000002762351/in-performance-claire-chase.html?emc=edit_th_20140313&nl=todaysheadlines&nli_d=68413755)



**From Diane Salisbury:**

*La Jolla Light, March 26, 2014*

"Percussion star and La Jolla Steven Schick named Champion of New Music"

By Pat Sherman

<http://www.lajollalight.com/2014/03/26/percussion-star-and-la-jolla-steven-schick-named-champion-of-new-music/>



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