

Conductor's Note



Steven Schick, Music Director
Photo: courtesy of San Diego UT

You may recall that the opening lines of Dante's "Inferno" with its message of self-discovery and renewal serve as inspiration for the 2016-17 Season of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus.

Let's start with a disclaimer: I accept that "The Inferno" is not typically the focus for a holiday-season concert, but there is an important point and maybe even a happy ending here. Dante's story is indeed about his traversal of Hades. But as he descends farther and farther he also gets closer to returning home, to seeing the stars again as Dante says in his very last lines. (E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle—"and from there we came out once more to see the stars.") For the composers whom I am tying to this story, there is also the homeward tug, and in

music as in literature the only way to go back is by forging ahead.

By the time Dante reaches the seventh level of Hell in Canto XVI, he is crossing paths with some pretty unsavory characters. Far behind him in the upper circles of the underworld are the nearly innocent-unbaptized Pagans and otherwise well-behaved adulterers. But here close to the very navel of Satan, the avaricious and the prodigal are condemned to push heavy weights in an eternal circle. So, it comes as almost comic relief when Dante recognizes three crooked politicians, fellow Florentines, and strikes up a mostly pleasant conversation.

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The three—Guido Guerra, Tegghiaio Aldobrandi, and Jacopo Rusticucci—are the real life political allies of the historical Dante, a strange incursion of contemporary politics into fantastical literature. They chat for a while and the three ask Dante to give their regards to Florence when he returns. Dante promises to do this and then ske-daddles.

Two thoughts come to mind as I write about these three shady politicians in the week before our election. Firstly, the seventh level of Hell seems just about right as punishment for what I read in the newspapers every day. But, more to the point of this concert, the sweet pull of nostalgia is denied to no one. And even if you are a scoundrel condemned to the bowels of Hell, a pleasant memory of your hometown is at least momentary comfort.

And so it is in this weekend's concerts. Our four composers are no scoundrels, but each wrestles with the Manichean project of pushing forward against the steady undertow of the ever-receding past. Listen carefully to this music and you'll hear the siren song of the goddess Nostalgia, patroness of pandering politicians, Civil War re-enactors, sensitive middle-aged artists and even some of the young gunslingers in contemporary music.

The two emerging composers on this weekend's program escape nostalgia in its most extreme forms. While it's true that in City Razaz's *In the Midst of Flux*, we

hear the aura of her native Iran, her great strength is that she has roots in this music but not flowers. The sounds of Persia glide easily on the currents of her work, but by refraining from outright quotation and easy autobiography she never lets art become commodity. Kevin Zhang's brand new work, ***new true mirrors, furrowed, flooded, extended quite far***, this year's Thomas Nee commission to a UC San Diego graduate student, first seems to have no nostalgic tendencies. But it is in the nature of a successful "companion piece"—in this case Kevin's piece is composed for the same instrumental and vocal forces as Stravinsky's haunting *Symphony of Psalms*—to interrogate its model, and therefore to some degree to live in the past. In an inspired variation of the Stravinsky scoring, Zhang adds solo parts for our two terrific co-concertmasters, Peter Clarke and David Buckley.

And then we come to Beethoven and Stravinsky, whose extraordinary works presented this weekend, are convex images of each other. Beethoven, who summited the purified pinnacle of the classical style with his first five symphonies, comes literally down to earth with images of simple country-folk communing with nature in his 6th. And Stravinsky, from another peak, gave us the ultimate music of the earth in his *Rite of Spring*, with its quotations of Ukrainian folk songs and images of Pagan sacrifice. In *Symphony of Psalms* he begins the productive middle period of his life in which, again and again, he sought the cool peace of classicism.

It seems that each craved the past of the other.

But, certainly this must be something more than simply envying what you don't have. It must be that within Beethoven's classicism there lurked poignant, unuttered memories of nature and her sounds. And perhaps also within Stravinsky's atavistic excesses, something cooler and more formal lay latent. And then something triggered the dormant seeds. Something made them reach forward and up for the stars even as they sought the past. Was it something traumatic like Beethoven's deafness, or Stravinsky's permanent exile from Russia? Or was it perhaps something inner and more basic, closer to what the poet Wendell Berry meant in his poem "History," that "learning the landmarks and the ways of the land so that I could go back, if I wanted to, my mind grew new and lost the backward way."

It is the fate of great art, first to seek and then to lose the backward way.

Steven Schick

My View of Our Next Choral Director



Dr. Patrick Walders with wife Katie and daughter Tallis

LJS&C is a unique musical organization with a clear mission and a bright future. I am proud of the four decades I've dedicated to it and I take very seriously the importance of its future leadership. As I step down, it's critically important to have the right choral person to guide the future arc of this very special pair of ensembles – an inspiring conductor, with a broad and deep background, and connections to everything new and exciting in a San Diego musical environment that has recently blossomed.

Dr. Patrick Walders has the whole complement of skills: He is a fine singer – a baritone who can sing “Thus Saith the Lord” and a counter-tenor who

can sing Medieval carols and Benjamin Britten. He has a thorough instrumental background and is impeccably trained as a conductor. There's nothing parochial or biased in his musical taste. And he is a born educator with great discipline for continually training students of all levels, from middle school to professionals.

I've been aware of his career since 2013, when I was preparing Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* and I discovered there was another performance of it in town. It was his, at San Diego State. Skeptical, I went to hear his work. And what I discovered reminded me of the famous quote about Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire: “She did everything he did, but backwards and in heels.” . . . Patrick did what I was doing but with a massed choir of young folks and a student orchestra. And it was excellent!

When it came time to search for the new director, a very thorough committee went through a very thorough process. I was asked to stand back while they proceeded. I was, in fact, relieved not to be part of that process, but I was at least as anxious about the outcome as anyone in the ensemble! The committee voted unanimously for Patrick. He also met with Steve, who clearly shared my enthusiasm. It was a done deal, and happily so.

Patrick and I have met often, sometimes with Mea, to discuss plans for the transition. That process also has been smooth and encouraging. A rebirth of the choral side of La Jolla Symphony & Chorus has begun, and it makes me proud all over again.

David Chase

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Please give a round of applause for the members of “SING”: Connie Lawthers, Ken Bell, Marianne Schamp, and Sam Rohrbach!!

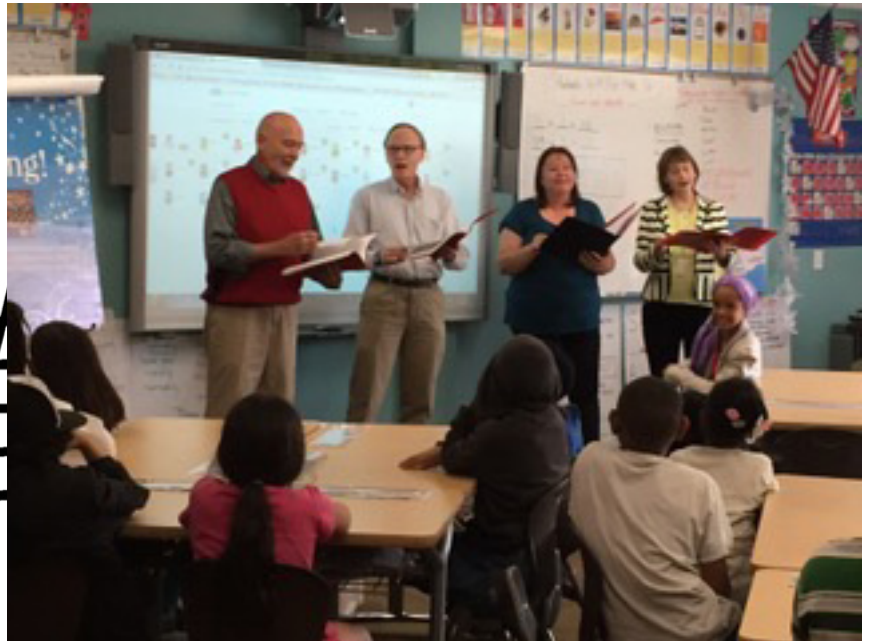
Along with some other members of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus (Tony Leonard, Sean McCormac, Joseph Allen, Mark Madison, Mark Walters, Christine Lehman, and Karen Erickson, to name a few of those who volunteered), they have represented our LJS&C in Solana Beach and Oceanside school communities by presenting a vocal program for the last five years.

Even though they have jobs and other responsibilities, these members have adjusted their schedules, practiced before and after chorus, driven many miles to schools in north San Diego County, and have sung a variety of interactive songs to meet the

Fine Arts Standards for elementary schools.

They have truly kept the music flowing for many students in the Solana Beach and Oceanside communities. These singers were funded by the Betty Scalice Grant, but the small payment was not their reward. Their love of singing and sharing their talent was a reward for all involved.

Mary Ellen Walther



MEET CELLIST CURTIS CHAN

Dr. Curtis Chan is many things: avid cellist, equally avid dentist, California native, husband, father of four, candy collector.

Curtis Chan was born in the Los Angeles area, number four of five sons, into a family where music was very important. His mother taught private piano lessons, and, when Curtis turned six, insisted that he learn piano from one of her colleagues. His older brothers played trumpet and trombone, his physician father even took up the flugelhorn, so the Chan family home was filled with classical music.

At a 1972 concert of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Curtis heard the Dvorak Cello Concerto for the first time. That night he pleaded with his parents to let him take cello lessons. Negotiations ensued. They insisted he continue his piano studies as well. Curtis was so thrilled and excited he remembers setting his alarm clock so he could begin his cello practice at 5:15 a.m. He woke up the household, but no one complained.



As Curtis progressed, he discovered a great new experience: playing in an ensemble. Early on he played with the Los Angeles Junior Philharmonic. He continued when the family moved to West Germany, playing with various junior German community orchestras for five years.

Back home and attending Claremont Men's College, Curtis happily joined the Pomona College Orchestra. Life was good. But then....dental school. There was no way to give proper due to both dentistry and music at once, so he reluctantly laid his cello down. As soon as he had his DDS in hand, he picked it back up again, moved to La Jolla and found himself auditioning with Tom Nee to join the cello section of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus.

"I love the cello," Curtis says. "It is an instrument that totally resonates with my soul....To perform and play with the LJS&C has been an incredible experience....I can only thank my fellow musicians, and our great leadership at LJS&C. I get a grin on my face each week when I listen to local FM classi-

cal stations and realize that the majority of the music played on the stations I have actually performed with the LJS&C over the years....Mahler, Beethoven, Grieg, Stravinsky, Mozart, Brahms, Britten, Cage, Adams, etc....One of my greatest joys is when my parents (now 90 and 85 years old) come to our concerts to still hear me play."

Curtis Chan has practiced dentistry for 30 years in the North County area of San Diego where he and his wife Mae, who grew up in the Del Mar area, live with their four children, ages 13, 14, 15, and 17, and where he enjoys golfing, body-boarding, tennis, and basketball. He has organized an annual Halloween Candy Give Back (Buy Back) for the past eight years, a program he and his Carmel Valley/Del Mar team organized to support the troops abroad. The candy they collect goes into care packages, which also include thank you letters and practical items. This year Curtis delivered nearly five tons of Halloween candy to Operation Gratitude.

<https://www.operationgratitude.com/>

Pat Finn



**HELP US
REACH OUR
ENDOWMENT
GOAL!**

\$1.5 million

\$1.5 million

\$1.3 million

\$1.1 million

**Money
Raised
To-Date**

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Our season-opener was a terrific artistic and financial success! Concert attendance averaged 85% capacity for the hall, which translates to about 1,200 patrons. On Friday before the concert, we held our fourth annual Young People's Concert. Thank you to orchestra members who embraced the Halloween spirit and dressed accordingly! (See story and photos in this issue of Tutti.)

Endowment News: The Endowment Committee made a splash on opening concert weekend with an announcement from the stage by Endowment Chair Amee Wood, a presentation of the "Sostenuto" video, and banners in the auditorium and lobby highlighting our progress. Since the Endowment announcement at the concert, we have received nearly \$60,000 in new and/or increased gifts to the endowment, moving the campaign to \$1.12 million as we work our way toward our goal of \$1.5 million by June.

Subscriptions – Now in Smaller Packages!

How about giving the gift of music to family and friends this holiday season? Subscriptions are available for the balance

of the season in two options: a 5-concert (\$129-\$150) series and a 3-concert (\$78-\$90) "sampler" series. To purchase, contact Patron Services Manager Adam Perez at 858-534-4637. Subscriptions will also be on sale in the lobby during the December 3-4 concert weekend.

Young Artists Competition:

Do you know an up-and-coming talent who could benefit by showcasing his or her skills at our Young Artists Competition? Open to vocalists and instrumentalists, ages 14-28, this season's Competition will be held on Saturday, January 28, from 9:00 am-4:00 pm in Conrad Prebys Music Center. Applications are due by December 15. For entry information, rules and regulations, and more go to www.lajollasympphony.com. The Competition is free and open to the public to attend. I hope to see some of you there to listen to and support these young musicians.

Diane Salisbury

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERT FUN FOR ALL

An appreciative audience of about 450 adults and children attended this year's Young People's Concert on October 28 for a tour of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, guided by Steven Schick. The free event is becoming a staple for many families who are grateful for the opportunity to expose their children and grandchildren to the symphony experience in this fun and interactive way. Questions by the audience are always a highlight, as "kids say the darnedest things." Our Maestro handled all with aplomb.

Diane Salisbury



Children of all ages – and sizes – asked questions of the Maestro and orchestra members during a break in the music.

Photo: Tina Tallon



LJS&C logo giveaways were a huge hit with the younger set after the performance. Photo: Diane Salisbury



Many orchestra members were decked out in full costume, with special commendation to the horn section!

Photo: Tina Tallon



Photo: Diane Salisbury

Article Watch

From Susan L. Taggart "Paramusical Ensemble"

Produced by - Tim Grabham & Prof Eduardo Reck Miranda
Filmed, edited and directed by - Tim Grabham
October 23, 2015

<https://vimeo.com/143363985>



From Susan L. Taggart The San Diego Union-Tribune "Changing Course" By Beth Wood Oct 23rd, 2016

<http://enewspaper.sandiegouniontribune.com/desktop/sdut/default.aspx?pnun=88&edid=bbbc5286-636f-4a92-af47-eacd17056dc7>

From Vicki Heins-Shaw "Letter of Recommendation: Choir" By SARAH MANGUSO OCT. 20, 2016 <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/23/magazine/letter-of-recommendation-choir.html?emc=eta1&r=0>

Crossword Key Tutti Vol. 21 No.1

Across

1. PentatonicScale
2. Part
3. Chord
4. StringQuartet
5. Scherzo
6. Debussy
7. Coda
8. Primadonna
9. Symphony
10. Carol
11. Allegro
12. Tuning
13. Tempo

Down

1. Elegy
2. Carmen
3. Movement
4. Rococo
5. Clef
6. Octave
7. Haydn
8. Finale
9. TimeSignature
10. Vibrato
11. Gershwin
12. Scale
13. Alto
14. Choir
15. Staff
16. Rondo



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If you find an interesting, music-related article or web site, please send the information about it to Danbi at yoahn@ucsd.edu