

Conductor's Note



Michael Gerdes, guest conductor

As I was preparing to conduct the La Jolla Symphony for this series of concerts, I was drawn into the sound world of Vivian Fung's *Biennale Snapshots*, a work that will receive its American premiere this weekend. In it, Vivian has allowed 'the visual to inspire the aural.' Each movement is based on another work of art featured in the Open Air Museum of the Vancouver Biennale. The work is a powerful example of how the arts, visual and performing, inform one another. It is also a statement that reflects both the timelessness of the artist's relationship with nature and rumination on the impact that we as humans have upon our world. The piece opens with the orchestra performing a movement of whispers, sighs, and exhalations. It is a peaceful introduction in a work that quickly begins to challenge the listener.

The gentle sounds of the second movement, 'Tree,' lead to violent outbursts in the orchestra. We can hear the effects of deforestation. The aural representation forces itself upon the listener. Before the piece ends, the listener journeys through Brazilian folk music, hip hop, the cascading sounds of waves, and a fanfare to cap it all off.

While listening to the piece, you'll be able to watch the videos created by Tina Tallon for our performance. The aural has now inspired the visual and each artist's involvement adds a new level of interpretation and understanding to the work as a whole. This common thread, the collaborative nature of art, runs through this weekend's concerts.

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As the concert opens with the Nielsen *Flute Concerto*, not only will you have a chance to hear an exciting young soloist, but also the interchange between that player and the orchestra. The music showcases the extraordinary ability of the La Jolla Symphony, with virtuosic writing for the woodwinds and a trombone part that is among the most tricky and exciting in all the repertoire.

Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* ends the concert. It is Mussorgsky's own aural impression of the visual works of his dear friend Viktor Hartmann. Moved to write the music after the sudden death of his friend, and inspired by the posthumous exposition of Hartmann's works, Mussorgsky has not only crafted a musical depiction of visual art but also a remembrance of the artist who was so dear to him. Today, we will play Maurice Ravel's orchestration of the original piano piece. Here, Ravel has transformed the pianistic styling of Mussorgsky into beautiful trumpet solos, sensual saxophone melodies, and sweeping brass fanfares. It is a masterpiece but the music takes on even more meaning when one understands its

transformation from the work of Hartmann to the piano solo of Mussorgsky and eventually into the orchestral showpiece that Ravel has created.

Artists will always find inspiration in the world around them. But the composers featured tonight have engaged in a conversation with their peers, with the very work that inspires them. The final piece in this equation is, of course, you. All this work, the sublime and beautiful, the thought-provoking and challenging, the soothing and the shocking, would mean nothing if there were no one to hear it. If you have come here for *Biennale Snapshots*, I hope that you find joy in the arrival at The Great Gate of Kiev. If *Pictures* is your favorite piece, I hope that you are challenged and entertained by Vivian Fung's new aural depiction of visual artwork. I hope you are inspired to engage with live art and support this very special orchestra that does so much to perform the masterworks of the past along with the music of today. Enjoy the show!

Michael Gerdes

About Our Young Artists Performer: Carlos Aguilar



Soloing in the Carl Nielsen *Flute Concerto* is the winner of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus 2015 Young Artists Competition, instrumental division. Carlos Aguilar began private instruction at the age of 14 with our own co-principal flutist Dr. Elena Yarritu. Carlos now studies at the New England Conservatory of Music with Paula Robison.

News from the Executive Director

Congratulations to our orchestra and chorus on a phenomenal 3-day concert of Verdi's "Requiem" in March. We had many calls after the concert weekend of folks having heard how terrific the concert was and wondering when we planned to perform it again! If you haven't read the excellent reviews they are posted on our website at www.lajollasympphony.com, "LJS&C in the News." Not only was the concert an artistic home run, but the ticket intake exceeded our financial goal by almost \$7,000, helping fill the gap of lower-than-expected subscription sales this season.

**HELP LJS&C
REACH ITS
ENDOWMENT
GOAL!**

\$1.5 million

\$1.5 million

\$1.4 million

**Money
Raised
To-Date**

\$65,000 Gift-Match Challenge – we're getting close! At the time of this writing, we are a little over halfway through the Gift-Match Challenge period and have raised \$46,000 toward the \$65,000 gift match so far! This challenge concludes on May 7th and we must reach our goal of raising \$65,000 during the 7-week gift-match period to qualify for the full amount of matching funds. We're almost there! This is an incredible opportunity to double your impact with an endowment gift before May 7th. The success of the Gift-Match Challenge in attracting new donors, coupled with the David Chase Choral Composition Award fundraising (also part of the endowment), put us at \$1,306,000 in gifts and pledges to-date toward our \$1.5 million goal by June 30.

Diane Salisbury

New Venue for 2017 Gala.

Our October 14, 2017 Gala – "Magical Mystery Tour" -- will be held at the Fairbanks Ranch Country Club.



“Life Is a Cabernet” Wine Tasting Success

The 16th annual Wine Tasting, led by syndicated wine writer Robert Whitley, was held at the Rancho Santa Fe home of Judith Braaksma Judy and accompanied by a glorious day. Eighty guests enjoyed a reception of fine wine and appetizers. The Blind Tasting featured seven California Cabernets, followed by a wine raffle and auction of three rare wine lots. Proceeds for LJS&C were \$8100.



I. to r. David Chase, Carol Manifold, Steve Marsh, Wendy Patrick



Chorus members Marianne Schamp and Satomi Saito were caterers extraordinaire.



A string quartet of Wendy Patrick, Jeannie Saier, Judy Gaukel, and Loie Flood warmed the afternoon with beautiful music



Guests gather for the Blind Tasting portion of the event.

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Diane Salisbury, executive director
Steven Schick, music director

Meet Baritone Luke Schulze

I am a composer, music teacher, pianist and conductor.

I came to UC San Diego in 1991 to get a doctorate in composition. I have known the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus since that time—having watched Tom Nee, Harvey Sollberger, and now Steve Schick direct the orchestra.

My background is in composition and instrumental performance, but since taking a position directing a choir several years ago, and having been close to the department for decades, joining the chorus just seemed to make sense.

This has been a great experience for me; I never had a background in vocal music, as a singer. As a musician and teacher, I knew the repertoire, but not from the perspective of a singer. That has been particularly illuminating.

Outside of music, I write, surf, cook, travel, and enjoy the outdoors.

QUESTIONS FOR LUKE

When did you first sing in a choir, and what did you sing?

This is my first real work in a chorus big enough to have sections. I've done some informal singing—in bands, and small groups—but really, nothing like this.

What moves you to compose music?

Well, as a composer I'm trying to create work that will ask me the big questions, and, at the same time, help me to answer them, and further, to add to the world a bit more of what I love in it.

Which work you have performed as a member of the LJS&C did you like the most, and why?

The Verdi Requiem was literally life-changing in ways too numerous to go into fully. But the last moments, where the choir issues a great collective utterance of what must ultimately be an individual plea -- "Libera Me" -- are quite something. The Symphony of Psalms, too. I'd known the Stravinsky pretty well, having looked at the piece in my quals (right down to the shameless and cagey Scott Joplin lift at the ending), but again, actually singing the piece really changed my understanding of it.



Describe what it's been like singing with David Chase as choral director.

I've already learned a great deal from David. I'm extremely grateful to have such a capable and genial model for my own admittedly initial explorations of what a good director does.

What kinds of music do you like listen to?

I have pretty catholic, even arcane tastes: I'm big into the classical repertoire, with a taste for the avant-garde and experimental side of the music of the past and present. I love Jazz, rock, rap, hard-core...I try to stay open and on the prowl for interesting music wherever I can find it.

Favorite comfort food?

I don't think pizza ever hurt anyone.

Favorite way to spend free time?

I love being outside, in the water, looking at buildings, chasing down interesting neighborhoods, and having music in my life in as many ways as I can.

Pat Finn

Article Watch



From Walt Desmond

One author's journey through the science of his congenital amusia

"Author Tim Falconer didn't take his congenital amusia lying down. With the help of neuroscientists and vocal coaches, he tried to teach himself to sing against all odds."

The music lessons:

"Singing Through Tone Deafness"

<http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/48855/title/Singing-Through-Tone-Deafness/>

and the neuroscience lab:

"How Bad Singing Landed Me in an MRI Machine"

<http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/48581/title/How-Bad-Singing-Landed-Me-in-an-MRI-Machine/>

Verdi Requiem

Certainly the most unforgettable Verdi Requiem performances, mentioned by Steven Schick over our Verdi weekend, were those in the Terezin Nazi concentration camp under incredible circumstances. The Defiant Requiem Foundation produces Conductor Murray Sidlin's film about this story, with his performance reenactment at the concentration camp site.

A film trailer

<https://www.defiantrequiem.org/film/description/>

A film clip including survivors' accounts

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPbD1H3DKs0>

A PBS program, Defiant Requiem: Voices of Resistance

<http://www.pbs.org/program/defiant-requiem-voices-resistance/>

From Bill Eadie

NYTimes: Listen to Claire Chase, the Flutist Who Just Won \$100,000

Ms. Chase, who founded the International Contemporary Ensemble, won this year's prestigious Avery Fisher Prize.

<https://nyti.ms/2pl5Hgb>

Need to contact the LJS&C?

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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