La Jolla Symphony & Chorus
2016-2017 Season

MUSIC FROM THE MIDDLE OF LIFE

February 11 - 12, 2017
Mandeville Auditorium

Steven Schick
Music Director

David Chase
Choral Director
We gratefully acknowledge our underwriters for this concert

Gary & Susan Brown / Dr. Robert Engler & Julie Ruedi / Bob & Judy Gaukel and Family of Joan Forrest
From the Conductor

The rains of winter have arrived, but it's the inclemency of our current political and cultural situation that has me down. Somewhere between the ascension of science in the late Renaissance (where facts came to mean everything) and the Somewhere between the ascension of science in the late Renaissance (where facts came to mean nearly nothing) we've lost track of the role of music at its richest and most complex, grappling with life's insults and Artistic Director of the percussion group, “red fish blue fish.” Currently he is Music Director of the La Jolla Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Nova Orchestra, the Santa Fe Chamber Orchestra, and the Oregon Symphony Orchestra. In 2011, he was appointed Music Director of the 2011 Ojai Music Festival.

Steven Schick
Conductor & Music Director

Percussionist, conductor, and author Steven Schick was born in Iowa and raised in a farming family. For forty years he has championed contemporary music by commissioning or premiering more than 150 new works. He was the founding percussionist of the Bang on a Can All-Stars (1992-2002) and served as Artistic Director of the Centre International de Percussion de Geneve (2000-2005). Schick is founder and Artistic Director of the percussion group, “red fish blue fish.” Currently he is Music Director of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus and Artistic Director of the San Francisco Contemporary Players. In June 2015, he served as Music Director of the 2015 Ojai Music Festival. Schick founded and is Artistic Director of “Roots and Rhizomes,” a summer course on contemporary percussion music held at the Banff Centre for the Arts. In 2017 he will also serve as co-artistic director with Claire Chase of the Centre’s Summer Music Program. He maintains a lively schedule of guest conducting including appearances with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Nova Chamber Ensemble and the Asko/Schönb erg Ensemble. Among his acclaimed publications are a book, “The Percussionists’ Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams,” and a superbly-poised melody for violins. The music rushes ahead with its famous “laughing” main theme, which sets exactly the right mood for all the fun to follow.

Program Notes by Eric Bromberg

Overture to The Barber of Seville
GIOACCHINO ROSSINI
Born February 29, 1792, Pesaro
Died November 13, 1868, Paris

From the moment of its premiere in Rome on February 20, 1816, Rossini’s The Barber of Seville has been an audience favorite. The opera is one of the finest examples of opera buffa, full of witty music and comic intrigue in the battle of the sexes, and one of the most popular parts of The Barber has always been its overture, which sets exactly the right mood for all the fun to follow.

Yet this overture had originally been composed three years earlier as the introduction to a comic opera, Aureliano in Palmira. And, two years later, Rossini used it again as the overture to his historical opera about Queen Elizabeth I, Elisabetta, Regina d’Inghilterra. Finally, in 1816, it became the overture to The Barber of Seville. It seems hard to believe that an overture composed for a tragic opera could function so perfectly as the introduction to a comic tale, yet it does, and—on the stage or in the concert hall—this music continues to work its charm.

In modified sonata-form, the overture is scored for Mozart’s orchestra (pairs of winds, plus timpani and strings) with the addition of one very non-classical instrument, a bass drum. The overture begins with a slow introduction marked Andante maestoso, which features crashing chords, gathering energy, and a beautifully-pesante melody for violins. The music rushes ahead at the Allegro con brio, with its famous "laughing" main theme, full of point and expectancy. Solo oboe introduces the second theme-group, marked dolce, and this alternates with the main violin theme. The entire piece is several layers of crescendos that were a virtuoso Rossini trademark (his nickname was “Monsieur Crescendo”), and one of these drives this sparkling music home in a great blast of energy.

In June of 1988, I was on a concert tour of Eastern Europe, having just arrived in Poland from Moscow (where I saw Reagan and Gorbachev together on Red Square.) I found myself sitting down with the American composer Kenneth Gaburo to a post-concert light meal in a small Warsaw apartment. I asked them again recently. For a musician the answer can feel maddeningly simple. We will continue—doing our best to create powerful, complex musical experiences that illuminate and complicate our current lives. But is that enough in this frightening time?

Don’t underestimate music. The language of music alone is cause for hope. There are musical terms for passion, action, sadness, and a long list of phrases for togetherness: ensemble, tutti, and even the word concert itself. But nowhere in the musical lexicon will you find the hateful word homophobia, and bigotry. This is a moment to lean on music—for its language of inclusion, passion, and resistance and for its power to illuminate life.

I have related the following story in this space before, but please indulge me again. It continues to be relevant.

In June of 1988, I was on a concert tour of Eastern Europe, having just arrived in Poland from Moscow (where I saw Reagan and Gorbachev together on Red Square.) I found myself sitting down with the American composer Kenneth Gaburo to a post-concert light meal in a small Warsaw apartment. I asked them again recently. For a musician the answer can feel maddeningly simple. We will continue—doing our best to create powerful, complex musical experiences that illuminate and complicate our current lives. But is that enough in this frightening time?

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Beethoven's manuscript. Premiere Clement sightread some of the concerto from long as possible. Clement had scheduled his concert for habit with commission — put off work on the concerto for as powerful Concerto The easy majesty and spacious in conception (the first movement alone lasts 24 minutes—his longest symphonic movement). Yet which unfolds with a sort of relaxed nobility. Part—but not all—of the reason lies in the concerto's generally broad tempos: the first concerto he makes full use of the violin's lyric capabilities. Another reason lies in the unusually lyric nature of the music. We do not normally think of Beethoven as a melodist, but in this concerto he makes full use of the violin's lyric capabilities. Another reason lies in the concerto's generally broad tempos: the first movement is spectacular. Here the piano is joined along the way by the timpani, and the two engage in an impressive and at times violent dialogue—Beethoven's dramatic cadenza makes us re-consider the entire nature of the first movement. The composer would remember this combination of piano and timpani when he composed his "Emperor" Concerto two years later.

But now the story takes one more turn. In the 1950s Austrian violinist Wolfgang Schneiderhan, for many years concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic, reversed the process once again: he took Beethoven's cadenzas for the piano version of this concerto and arranged them for violin. His motives were clear: he wanted to play the Beethoven Violin Concerto with authentic Beethoven cadenzas, and he found the piano cadenzas fully worthy of this great music. At these concerts David Bowlin performs Schneiderhan's rarely-heard violin arrangement of the only cadenzas Beethoven wrote for this concerto, complete with the surprisingly fierce duet between soloist and timpanist in the first movement, a far cry from the conventional cadenza as the bridge between the second and third movements, and brilliant outburst in the finale.

The concerto has a remarkable beginning. Beethoven breaks the silence with five timpani strokes. By itself, this is an extraordinary opening, but those five pulses also perform a variety of roles through the first movement—sometimes they function as accompaniment, sometimes as harsh contrast with the soloist, sometimes as a way of modulating to new keys. The movement is built on two ideas: the dignified chordal melody announced by the woodwinds immediately after the opening timpani strokes and a rising-and-falling second idea, also first stated by the woodwinds (this theme is quietly accompanied by the five-note pulse in the strings). Beethoven delays the appearance of the soloist, and this long movement is based exclusively on its two main themes.

The Langhanno, in G major, is a theme-and-variation movement. Mixed strings present the theme, and the soloist begins to embellish that simple melody, which grows more and more ornate as the movement proceeds. A brief cadenza leads directly into the finale, a rondo based on the stately rhythmic idea announced immediately by the violin. This is an unusual rondo: its various episodes begin to develop and take on lives of their own (for this reason, the movement is sometimes classified as a sonata-rondo). One of these episodes, in G minor and marked dolce, is exceptionally haunting—Beethoven develops this theme briefly and then it vanishes, never to return. The movement is marked by a huge climax, with the violin soaring high above the turbulent orchestra, and the music subsides and comes to its close when Beethoven—almost as an afterthought—it seems—turns the rondo theme into the graceful concluding gesture.

A NOTE ON THE CADENZAS AT THIS PERFORMANCE:

Beethoven wrote no cadenzas for this concerto, preferring to leave that to Clement at the premiere, and many subsequent musicians have supplied cadenzas of their own, notably Fritz Kreisler and Leopold Auer. But in a sense Beethoven did write cadenzas for this concerto, and this makes a very interesting story. In May 1807, five months after the premiere of the Violin Concerto, the pianist-composer-publisher Muzio Clementi commissioned Beethoven to make a piano arrangement of it. Beethoven was naturally not enthusiastic about such arrangements, but Clement's offer was generous, and he agreed. This arrangement was made sometime in 1807, though it is unclear how much of it is the work of Beethoven himself and how much he may have delegated to others. The piano version of the Violin Concerto has never been very successful—such eminently violinistic music does not translate idiomatically to the piano—but in the process of arranging this concerto for his own instrument, Beethoven did compose cadenzas for each of the three movements. The cadenza for the first movement is spectacular. Here the piano is joined along the way by the timpani, and the two engage in an impressive and at times violent dialogue—Beethoven's dramatic cadenza makes us re-consider the entire nature of the first movement. The composer would remember this combination of piano and timpani when he composed his "Emperor" Concerto two years later.

David Bowlin violinist David Bowlin's solo and chamber performances of a wide-ranging repertoire have won him critical acclaim from the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, and the Chicago Sun-Times. A passionate proponent of contemporary literature, among his dozens of premières are Mahagoni, a violin concerto written for him by Austrian composer Alexander Hermenstein-Karastoyanova, and the 2016 world premiere of Marcos Balter's Violin Concerto at Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart festival. His latest solo CD release (2015) features solo and duos works by the American composer Roger Sessions, and a 2014 release on Oberlin Music features concerts and solo works by Luciano Berio and Huang Ruo. Another 2015 release with the Oberlin trio features music by Joan Tower, Shostakovich, and Dvořák. Bowlin is a founding member of the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), and a former member of the Naumburg Award-winning Da Capo Chamber Players, whose recording of music by Chinary Ung was named one of NPR's Top 5 Best American Contemporary Classical Albums of 2010. His awards include first prize in the Washington International Competition and the Samuel Baron Prize from Stony Brook University. Bowlin currently teaches on the faculty of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. He is a graduate of Oberlin, the Juillard School, and Stony Brook University.
Dear Friends,

As we come down the home stretch of our $1.5 million Endowment Campaign to sustain the musical future of LJSS&C, I’d like to share some easy ways to give with very little pain but lots of gain.

Gift Your IRA Distribution

If you are required to take a mandatory distribution from your retirement account why not earmark that income for the LJSS&C Endowment Campaign? It may make sense, tax-wise, for you to donate and receive a charitable tax deduction rather than add your IRA distribution to your taxable income. Though many folks wait until year-end to take their distribution, you can take it at any time during the calendar year.

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Our five-year campaign concludes on June 30 this year. We are $360,000 short of our goal. Whether you make a one-time gift or pledge a gift to be paid in the future, the support of everyone in our audience and on stage is critical to our success. Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

Anne Word

Wood Endowment Chair

PROFILEs in Giving

Hima Joshi & Jeremy Copp

I joined the chorus midway through my first year of graduate school in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at UCSD. It was January of 1995. Aside from a three-year break when I was away for work, I have been in the group since.

This chorus has made me a better musician. More importantly, this chorus has offered me friendship and support. There is something very special about a group of singers who are volunteers. We sing because we love it, and the music sustains us. I would not have been able to sustain myself during my graduate years without LJSS&C. In fact, I included David Chase in my acknowledgments at my PhD thesis defense in 2001. Since then, I have taught chemistry at the college level for eight years and also at Francis Parker School. And LJSS&C continues to be a source of spiritual growth for me.

LJSS&C introduced my husband to choral music when we started dating in graduate school, and he has become a dedicated fan. In fact, it is because of LJSS&C that Benjamin Britten is one of his favorite composers.

As an organization, LJSS&C has the courage to take on well-known works and the intellectual curiosity to experiment with new compositions. As a chemist, I am all about experimentation. And because I was a graduate student at UCSD, I enjoy singing pieces written by UCSD students who are pursuing their degrees. I need LJSS&C, and so does the community. That’s why Jeremy and I donated to Sostenuto.
Sinfonia
LUCIANO BERIO
Born October 24, 1925, Oneglia, Italy
Died May 27, 2003, Rome

The New York Philharmonic, which had been founded in 1842 is the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and for its 125th anniversary the Philharmonic commissioned a new work from Luciano Berio. Berio, then 43 and teaching at Juilliard, was known largely as the composer of electronic music, vocal music and virtuoso pieces for solo performers. Now he found himself faced with composing a large-scale work for a major orchestra. It was an invigorating challenge, and it came at a tumultuous moment: 1968 was a violent, unsettling year—it saw the Vietnam War and the protests against it at its most intense, the assassinations of both Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, the student uprising in Chicago, and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The times seemed to call which is normal enough ("symphony"), but he stressed that this was vocal soloists, and he wrote those parts specifically for the Swingle Singers, a vocal ensemble that had made its reputation "vocalizing" instrumental works by Bach and others. Berio compared the technique of the third movement to a continuously-flowing river that sometimes drops out of sight, only to return, still flowing. The metaphor of moving water might be applied with some justice to all of Sinfonia: the music flows, its myriad fragments jostle against each other and re-emerge, and by the end a sort of order is achieved.

The Sinfonia is in five movements that span about half an hour, and it calls for a huge orchestra, one that includes full wind, brass, and string sections, as well as harpsichord, piano, electric organ, and two saxophones. Berio divides the violins into three sections, with the third section positioned behind the firsts and seconds. The eight vocal soloists, each of whom is mixed individually, are seated in a semi-circle immediately in front of the conductor.

The first movement presents a series of fragments from the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss's 1964 study La cru et le cuit ("The Raw and the Cooked"), particularly entries that speak of Brazilian myths about the creation of water. The second movement, titled O King, may be understood as a tribute to Martin Luther King Jr., who had been assassinated in April 1968. The vocalists exchange bits of sound that make up King's name until these fragments finally anneal in a complete statement of his name.

Longest of the movements in Sinfonia, the third has become its most famous and perhaps the movement that best encapsulates Berio's technique in this music. Here Berio uses the third movement, the scherzo, of Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony as a structuring element: Mahler's music flows throughout this movement, sometimes disappearing altogether, only to reappear moments later. Over Mahler's music, which originally set an ironic song about St. Anthony's sermon to the fishes, Berio lays down a cascade of fragmentary quotations. The vocal fragments are from Samuel Beckett's 1953 novel The Unnamable about an armless and legless man who lives in a jar, completely cut off from life. The musical fragments, however, are from the entire range of Western art music: listeners may not immediately perceive the unity Berio speaks of, and he knew that audiences would neither comprehend nor grasp all the quotations on a first hearing of Sinfonia (or even after many hearings). Berio said that he hoped that a listener's experience would be one of "not quite hearing" all that he had written. Faced with writing a large-scale work for full symphony orchestra at a tumultuous moment, Berio turned to both the past and the present for his sources and made Sinfonia the vehicle by which he could simultaneously evoke and question the ideas and the great symphonic tradition of Western civilization.

Concert Video Educational Fund

Thanks to a generous gift by the family of Joan Forrest, in her memory, La Jolla Symphony & Chorus will be videotaping each of the final four concerts this season. These videos will be posted on our YouTube channel for educators and the public to access free of charge as part of our music education outreach effort. The videos will also be broadcast by UCSD-TV to all 11 UC campuses and by satellite and cable to over 100,000 viewers.

With your ongoing support, we can turn JS&BC’s unique commitment to performing new music and lesser-known works into an invaluable educational resource. If you are interested in joining the family of Joan Forrest in supporting this effort, please contact Dane Salisbury at dsalisbury@laJollasymphony.com for details.
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