

2012 - 2013 Season

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus

Mandeville Auditorium

February 9 - 10, 2013

Angle of Repose



STEVEN SCHICK

Music Director

DAVID CHASE

Choral Director

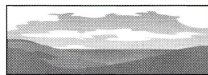
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STEVEN SCHICK
music director



DAVID CHASE
choral director

INSIDE / OUTSIDE

Saturday, February 9, 2013, 7:30pm | Sunday, February 10, 2013, 2:00pm
Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

Steven Schick conducting

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis

BERIO

Folk Songs

*Black is the color
I wonder as I wander
Loosin yelav
Rossignolet du bois
A la femminisca
La donna ideale
Ballo
Motettu de tristura
Malurous qu'o uno fenno
Lo fiolaire
Azerbaijani love song*

Jessica Aszodi, soprano

INTERMISSION

NIELSEN

Symphony No. 3, Opus 27 "Sinfonia Espansiva" FS60

*Allegro espansivo
Andante pastorale
Allegretto un poco
Allegro*

Bonnie Lander, soprano

Austin Thompson, baritone

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FROM THE CONDUCTOR



As a pedagogical provocation I often asked my Freshman music appreciation classes how big the space was within which a given piece of music existed. They asked in response, "What do you mean, how big?" I said, "Big, you know, how big is this space?"

We usually went around like that until someone said something like, "It's loud, so it must be big." That line of argument never really worked for me and I tell them so, citing Morton Feldman's soft-to-the-point-of-inaudible

The King of Denmark, which seems to occupy a large emotional, if not sonic, space. Or, on the other end of the spectrum there are Glenn Branca's works for electric guitar, which are earsplitting but because the pick-up "listens" to the string from a distance of centimeters, the sonic space seems compact, about the size of a walk-in closet. A very loud closet.

About this moment I tell the students a story about an art exhibition I saw in New York not too long ago. I am sorry I don't remember the name of the artist. Upon entering a large suite of empty rooms, all of different sizes and all painted top to bottom in a sort of non-descript grey, a viewer is given a small penlight like the kind you might have on a key chain to find a lock in the dark. You wander in the space as the light casts just enough illumination to keep you from running into the walls or other patrons, but never enough to see how large the room is. Soon enough you realize that you can only tell how big a darkened space is by tuning in to the echoes of your footfalls and breathing. The experience quickly turns into an exercise in acute listening, and by extension in managing the anxiety that results from not knowing where you are. Very odd feelings arise: sitting in the middle of a large space and being unsure whether it's 300 or 30,000 square feet produces a peculiar moment of claustrophobia. On the other hand small rooms feel ample because echo-location makes the entire space usable.

This concert, "Inside/Outside," explores just this issue of space. How big is it and how do we know where we are? In our season-long touchstone work of fiction, "Angle of Repose," space was usually pretty clearly divided. Forgetting for a moment that Oliver's "outside job" was often in the cramped depths of a mine, inside was usually small and outside was large. Issues of musical space are rarely that clear. With sound, a greater amount of echo (or reverberation or distortion) usually signals a larger space. But space has metaphorical, and by extension emotional, components as well. Artistic meaning often results from a disparity in scale between material size and emotional impact. Enormous musical forces can provide very intimate experiences. Mahler offers any number of these. And for true grandeur listen to the hushed "Cavatina" from Beethoven's late string quartet, *Opus 130 in B-flat major*.

This weekend's program enjoys a similar array of meaningful contradictions. Some things seem clear. Luciano Berio's enchanting *Folk Songs*, sung here by Jessica Aszodi—brilliant soprano, rising rock star of the vocal world, and winner of our 2012 Young Artists Competition—are intimate and, well, small. The full orchestra is used rarely, and Berio often returns to mini-combinations of instruments within the larger group. A duo for violas for example, often in combination with harp, provides a sonic center within the instrumental sound. Occasionally there are subtle

percussive sound effects, quarter-tone slides in the strings, and other small-scale musical gestures. The result is that the voice seems well framed by its instrumental context. Both the means and the message of the eleven short songs are intimate, the stories of life's small miracles and losses.

Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* is justifiably well known in the repertory for string orchestra. And, truly, the soaring arcs of melody make for some beautiful moments. But our interest here is also in its telescoping sense of scale. The ensemble consists of three groups: a large orchestra, a much smaller second orchestra that often echoes the bigger statements, and the smallest version of all, a solo string quartet, played beautifully here by our principal string players. It's a musical version of Russian dolls: inside the big one is a smaller one, and inside that a smaller one yet. This allows Vaughan Williams to shape-shift the piece and simultaneously create grandness and intimacy, near and far, perhaps even inside and outside.

Carl Nielsen's *Third Symphony* offers a further set of poignant contradictions. The subtitle, "Espansiva," alludes to the wide-open spaces of Scandinavia. And indeed some of that is represented here. The opening two minutes of the work are grand, explosive, and magnificent, just as you would expect. But for me the most telling passages of the piece are the small ones, moments of intricate rhythmic combinations among the sections of the orchestra, and a beautiful, hushed start of the second movement. Then there's the very size—or lack of it—

in the work. It's certainly large enough, but by the date of its composition in 1911 the standard romantic orchestra was huge. See again the works of Gustav Mahler, along with Stravinsky, Scriabin and the young Arnold Schoenberg. The "Espansiva" has a robust brass section, but it's not huge, and there is no percussion beyond timpani, no off-stage winds, and no chorus. It's a full-length work, but shorter than Beethoven's *Third Symphony*, which was composed more than a hundred years earlier, and less than a third the length of the middle Mahlers. It's as though—and this is exactly the point—size is not a precise measurement of space but a state of mind, a quality of perception. Nielsen is telling us that, no matter how long or large the piece is (or is not), he wants us to "listen big." We are invited to imagine the music as it echoes off cliff faces and ice shelves. And, at the same time we are asked to take account of our own smallness.

The manipulation of scale is often thought to be the visual artist's tool, but here in music we see the profound effects of judging the music to be smaller than we are—as it often seems to be in *Folk Songs*—and to dwarf us as it sometimes does in the Nielsen. And since scale is a quality of perception that cannot exist outside the presence of a third-party observer, much about the amplitude of an artistic experience is what we make of it. We first create the yardstick and then we use it to locate ourselves.

So, the correct answer to my question, "How big is this space?" would have been, "As big as we want it to be." ■

STEVEN SCHICK conductor

For more than 30 years Steven Schick has championed contemporary music as a percussionist and teacher by commissioning and premiering more than 100 new works. Schick is a professor of music at the University of California, San Diego and in 2008 was awarded the title of Distinguished Professor by the UCSD Academic Senate.

Schick was one of the original members and percussionist of the Bang on a Can All-Stars of New York City (1992-2002). He has served as artistic director of the Centre International de Percussion de Genève in Geneva, Switzerland, and as consulting artist in percussion at the Manhattan School of Music. Schick is founder and artistic director of the acclaimed percussion group, red fish blue fish, a UCSD ensemble composed of his graduate percussion students that performs regularly throughout San Diego and has

toured internationally. He also is founding artistic director (June 2009) of "Roots & Rhizomes"—an annual international course for percussionists hosted by the Banff Center for the Arts in Canada.

As a percussion soloist, Schick has appeared in Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, The Royal Albert Hall (London), Centre Pompidou (Paris), The Sydney Opera House and Disney Hall among many other national and international venues.

Schick is a frequent guest conductor with the International Contemporary Ensemble (Chicago and New York City), and in 2011 he was appointed artistic director and conductor of the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players. Schick has been music director and conductor of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus since 2007.

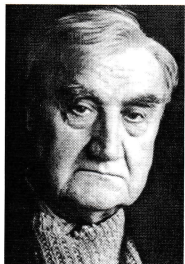
PROGRAM NOTES by Eric Bromberger

FANTASIA ON A THEME BY THOMAS TALLIS

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Born October 12, 1872, Down Ampney

Died August 26, 1958, London



In 1904 Ralph Vaughan Williams, then 32 and a respected if not widely-known composer, was asked to edit a new edition of the *English Hymnal*. He was at first reluctant to take on the task, fearing that it would demand too much of his time, but he

finally accepted the responsibility and for the next two years gave virtually all his energies to editing hymns from England's past. The immediate result of his labors was the new hymnal, published in 1906, but a more important effect was that he became interested in the music of England's past, a discovery that was to have a powerful effect on his subsequent career as a composer.

One of the hymns he edited drew his particular attention. In 1567, Thomas Tallis (1505?-1585) had contributed nine tunes to Archbishop Parker's Metrical Psalter, and the third of these was later set with Addison's words: "When rising from the bed of death." When Vaughan Williams was asked to contribute a work of his own to the Gloucester Festival of 1910, he wrote a piece for string orchestra based on Tallis' tune. *The Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* was first performed on September 6, 1910, in Gloucester Cathedral, the composer conducting.

The composer's wife felt that the knowledge that he was composing a work for performance in a cathedral helped shape the music Vaughan Williams eventually wrote. Everyone who hears the *Fantasia* instinctively feels that it has a "cathedral" sound—it should be heard not in a concert hall but in some huge cathedral, with stone arches far above and the sound echoing across vast and solemn spaces. This "cathedral" sound results in great part from Vaughan Williams' clever handling of his instrumental forces, which produces the impressive "cathedral" sound

even when this music is performed in a small or uncongenial space. Rather than writing for a normal string orchestra, the composer divides his players into three groups: a string quartet, a large string orchestra, and a small string orchestra of nine players which Vaughan Williams asks be set some distance away from the other players. The separation of forces gives the *Fantasia* its special sound: the music shifts around between these groups, much as in early antiphonal church music. Vaughan Williams also employs a great range of string sonorities: massed chords, pizzicato, tremolo, solo writing, passages played entirely without vibrato. This is music that must be heard in live performance to be heard at all, for no recording—no matter how good its sound reproduction or stereophonic separation—can give a true sense of its contrasting sonorities or of the way those sounds move from group to group within the orchestra.

But if this music were distinguished only by the use of the Tallis theme or by its sonorities, it would not have achieved its present popularity (and there are currently forty different versions available on compact disc). The real power of the *Fantasia* lies in the fact that it is such endlessly beautiful music—every measure is suffused with a sense of peace, radiance, and solemnity in a way that seems to transport its audience into another world for the few minutes it takes to perform this music. One of the listeners at the first performance in 1910 grasped this immediately, saying: "The work is wonderful because it seems to lift one into some unknown region of musical thought and feeling. Throughout its course, one is never quiet sure whether one is listening to something very old or very new." ■

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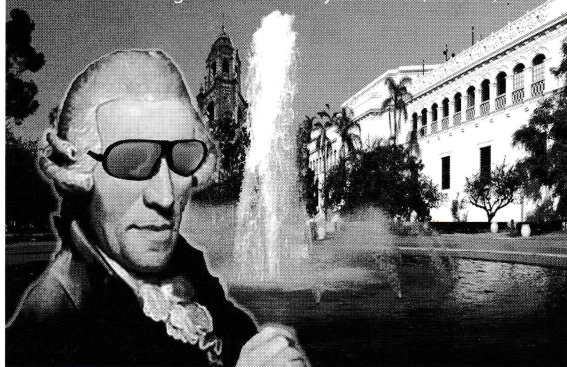
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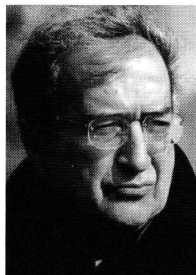
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FOLK SONGS

LUCIANO BERIO

Born October 24, 1925, Oneglia, Italy

Died May 27, 2003, Rome



Luciano Berio was always on the cutting edge of music, and he wrote using such different techniques as serialism, indeterminacy, electronic music, and collage. Yet Berio also had a profound sense of the past, and he made a number of arrangements of music by earlier composers. Some of these were of composers from the distant past (Frescobaldi, Gabrieli, Purcell), some of the major composers from the symphonic repertory (Schubert, Brahms, and Mahler), and some were arrangements of contemporary songs, ranging from Kurt Weill to the Beatles. Berio's *Folk Songs* fall into the final category.

Berio spent the decade 1962-72 in the United States, where he taught at Mills College, Harvard, and Juilliard. In 1964 he arranged a set of eleven folk songs from eight different countries for mezzo-soprano and a chamber ensemble of flute, clarinet, viola, cello, harp, and two percussionists; this version was premiered that year in Oakland by the composer's wife, the soprano Cathy Berberian. Following his return to Europe, Berio

arranged the *Folk Songs* for singer and small orchestra, and this version was premiered, again by Cathy Berberian, in Zurich in 1973.

These eleven songs hail originally from the United States, Armenia, France, Sicily, Italy, Sardinia, the Auvergne, and Azerbaijan. Some of the songs are well-known, some utterly obscure, and two of them Berio composed himself in the manner of national folk songs. These are fairly straightforward settings—Berio does not re-compose the songs, nor does he take unusual liberties with them. He preserves the original vocal line and creates an orchestral framework that, as he said, tries to preserve some of the national character of each song. By their nature, these songs do not require commentary, and just a few observations may be in order. Many listeners will recognize the first two, for both are by John Jacob Niles, written in the manner of Appalachian folk songs. The opening of the first is meant to invoke the sound of country fiddling, and Berio creates that sound here with two keening violas. Berio took the liberty of composing the two Italian songs, *La donna ideale* and *Ballo*, and the two songs from the Auvergne may also be familiar, for they are among the songs that Joseph Canteloube set in his *Songs from the Auvergne*. The concluding Azerbaijani love song is particularly interesting. It was discovered on an aged and much-scratched 78 rpm recording by Cathy Berberian, who transcribed the words from that recording; a note in the score points out that this text has “so far defied translation.” ■



Jessica Aszodi, 26, holds a master of music performance from UC San Diego and a bachelor of music performance from the Victorian College of

the Arts, and in 2009 she completed the Young Artist Program at the Victorian Opera Company. Aszodi's performances have been praised for their “virtuosic whimsy” (*New York Times*), “imagination for colour and dramatic presentation” (*Sydney Morning Herald*) and “utmost security and power” (*Chicago Tribune*). Her performance

JESSICA ASZODI soprano

practice takes in opera, chamber music, experimental, conventional, and contemporary-classical music. Passionate about performing new music, she has given more than 40 premiere performances. Aszodi has performed with ensembles as diverse as ICE (International Contemporary Ensemble), Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Center for Contemporary Opera, Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra, Bang on a Can, and Eighth Blackbird. Her operatic roles include Elliot Carter's *Rose (What Next?)*, Mozart's *Elvira (Don Giovanni)*, and the title role in Satie's *Socrates*, to name a few.

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SYMPHONY NO. 3, OPUS 27 **“SINFONIA ESPANSIVA” FS60**

CARL NIELSEN

Born June 9, 1865, Norre-Lyndelse

Died October 2, 1931, Copenhagen



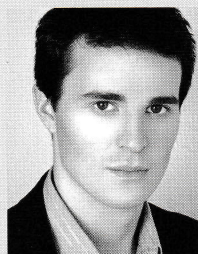
Carl Nielsen's path to success was difficult, and it was slow. The Nielsen family was poor: the composer's father was a housepainter, and as a boy Carl contributed to the family income by herding geese. Nielsen's own musical education took a long time, his early music did not find an audience, and to support his own young family Nielsen was forced to take a job as a second violinist in the Royal Orchestra. It was killing work, and he spent sixteen years in that orchestra. In 1908, Nielsen became second conductor in the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, trading his violin for a baton and leading operas, yet he continued to struggle as a composer: his first two symphonies, composed in 1892 and 1902, had attracted only modest notice.

In the summer of 1910, Nielsen went to his summer retreat, a house named Damgaard near Kolding in the Jutland section of Denmark, and began a new symphony, one that he nicknamed *Sinfonia Espansiva*. He wrote the first two movements that summer, finished the third in the fall after he returned to Copenhagen, and had the entire symphony complete on April 30, 1911. Nielsen led the Royal Orchestra in the first performance on February 28, 1912, and it was a triumph. The *Third Symphony* was soon performed in Amsterdam, Berlin, Stockholm, Helsinki, and Warsaw, and

after a performance in Stuttgart the local critic described it as “a mighty animating call from the North.” Nielsen had finally found success as a composer. He was 47 years old.

To understand Nielsen's *Third Symphony*, we need to see it in a larger context. In 1911 the world was on the verge of disaster: three years later, World War I would threaten the meaning of civilization. But the years leading up to the war were probably the richest in the history of music. At the exact moment Nielsen was writing his *Third Symphony*, Mahler was sketching his *Tenth Symphony*, Strauss was composing *Der Rosenkavalier*, Stravinsky was writing *Petrushka*, Schoenberg was orchestrating *Gurrelieder*, and Sibelius was composing his *Fourth Symphony*. In the spring of 1911, as Nielsen completed this symphony, Elgar's *Second Symphony*—which looked back to the grand symphonic tradition—was premiered in London and Alban Berg's *String Quartet*—which looked ahead to music of the twentieth century—was premiered in Vienna. In 1911 music was exploring new and fertile directions, and Nielsen's *Third Symphony* was part of that ferment.

The nickname *Espansiva* may have come from the composer, but it has provoked varying explanations. From its smashing opening chords, this symphony gives the impression of violence, but it is a healthy violence, spilling over itself, slashing outward, growing, expanding. Nielsen later commented to a Norwegian newspaper: “I am—or better—I was often a bone of contention... But that was because I wanted to protest against the typical Danish soft smoothing over. I wanted stronger rhythms and more advanced harmony.” Like so much of the other music written in 1911, the *Espansiva* breaks out and explores new worlds, particularly in matters of form and harmonic development.



AUSTIN THOMPSON baritone

Austin Thompson has sung the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Prospero in Lee Hoiby's *The Tempest*, Spencer Coyle in *Owen Wingrave*, Pandolfe in *Cendrillon*, Sprecher in *Die*

Zauberflöte, Simone in *Gianni Schicchi*, and Elijah in Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. Mr. Thompson attended the Aspen Opera Theater Center in 2011 where he covered the roles of Snug and Theseus in *Midsummer Night's Dream* and Pistola in *Falstaff*. In 2012, he performed the role of

Marcello in *La Bohème* with the Palm Springs Opera Guild, was invited to be a member of their outreach program, and will sing the role of Sharpless in their 2013 preview of *Madame Butterfly*. Mr. Thompson is a multiple-time grant recipient from the OperaBuffs Inc. in Los Angeles, and in August had the privilege of being a guest soloist with the José Iturbi Foundation at the Hollywood Bowl. He is currently pursuing his master's at the University of Southern California, where he will sing Marquis de la Force in their spring production of *Dialogue of the Carmelites*.

The *Allegro espansivo* rips to life on great hammered A's that ring out with a primal fury. Oddly spaced, those hammered A's catch us by surprise and quickly dash the music into its main theme, a surging, driving melody in 3/4. Just as our ears have adjusted to that triple meter (rather than the duple meter more common to symphonic first movements), that opening theme becomes a cosmic waltz, spinning off ever more energy as it dances through the heavens. All this energy gradually subsides for the second theme-group, marked *molto tranquillo* and introduced by solo woodwinds, and Nielsen drives his opening section to an emphatic close. The development, surprisingly brief, begins delicately with a solo flute, but the rollicking energy of the symphony's opening is never far away, and finally it returns to drive the movement to a grand close.

The *Andante pastorale* is aptly named. After the dynamic first movement, we find ourselves in a different world altogether, where the music seems to loll on a hot summer afternoon. Across the span of this movement Nielsen alternates long woodwind solos (the sound of a shepherd's pipe?) with an impassioned hymn for strings. In the closing minutes comes one of the most striking touches of all: Nielsen introduces a soprano and a baritone, who sing a wordless melodic line on the letter A. In effect, these voices become instruments in the orchestra, but it is worth quoting the text that Nielsen had originally planned to have them sing at this point: "All thoughts disappear. Ah! All thoughts disappear. I lie beneath the sky."

The third movement should be a scherzo, but this *Allegretto un poco* is not quite that: it is in 2/4 (rather than the expected triple meter), and its pace is not particularly fast. Nielsen himself called this movement "the work's heartbeat," and its

main theme came to him while he was riding the tram in Copenhagen—rather than risking losing that idea, he jotted it down on his shirt-cuff. This movement alternates a fizzing energy with more rustic interludes, and the composer left a cryptic and provocative program for it: "The third movement is something that cannot really be characterized in that both good and evil make themselves felt without a real character."

Nielsen also commented on the character of the final movement: "The Finale, on the other hand, is straightforward: a hymn to work and the healthy enjoyment of daily life. Not a pathetic celebration of life, but a sort of general joy in being able to participate in the business of everyday living and to see activity and skill unfold all around us." This *Allegro* bursts to life on a grand tune that seems to exude the health Nielsen describes. There are no battles fought and won in this finale—there is no struggle at all, only a further exploration of the energy of the beginning, and the *Sinfonia Espansiva* drives to a sunlit close on a vast unison A.

And in that sense, this symphony closes back on itself: it began with unison A's, and it concludes with unison A's, but the harmonic progress of this music is anything but static. The hammered A's at the beginning are actually the dominant of the true opening key, D minor, and the unison A at the close is the root of the final destination, A major. The tonal progress across the span of this music is astonishing—it is part of the "expansive" quality of this symphony—as Nielsen takes us on a varied journey: of harmonies, of different kinds of music set alongside each other, of different philosophic states, of unexpected musical structures. The *Sinfonia Espansiva* is not just part of the musical ferment before World War I—it is one of the most distinguished achievements of that exhilarating era. ■



BONNIE LANDER soprano

Bonnie Lander specializes in the performance and presentation of contemporary music. She has performed throughout the United States as an improviser, classical soprano, contemporary soprano, and avant-garde interpreter at institutions such as The 92nd Street Y in NYC, The Kimmel Center in Philadelphia, Walt Disney Concert Hall, and the Library of Congress. She has collaborated with many composers, improvisers, and musicians of various genres, with the belief that no one genre can be responsible for the

growth and forward motion of new music. A prolific presence on the East Coast, Ms. Lander is a founding member of Baltimore-based Rhymes With Opera—a chamber music company dedicated to new vocal repertoire. Currently a DMA candidate at UC San Diego under Susan Narucki, she received an MM and GPD at Peabody Institute for Voice and Computer Music Performance, and a BM in voice from the University of Miami Frost School of Music. She is the only graduate who has twice received the Phyllis Bryn-Julson Award for the Commitment to and Performance of 20th/21st Century Music at the Peabody Institute.

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OBOE

Carol Rothrock, *Principal*
Ron Fox
Heather Marks

ENGLISH HORN

Ron Fox

CLARINET

Jenny Smerud, *Principal*
Gabe Merton
Fran Tonello

BASS CLARINET

Gabe Merton

BASSOON

Tom Schubert, *Principal*
Daniel Freilich
William Propp

CONTRABASSOON

William Propp

HORN

Nicolee Kuester, *Principal*
David Ryan, *Assistant First*
Ryan Beard
Jonathan Rudin
David Tuttle

TRUMPET

Ken Fitzgerald, *Principal*
Yaphet Jones, *Assistant Principal*
Tim Brandt
Julie Lees

TROMBONE

R. Theodore Bietz, *Principal*
Patrick Yanni

BASS TROMBONE

Jonathan Hammer

TUBA

Kenneth Earnest

TIMPANI

Ryan Nestor

PERCUSSION

Ryan Nestor, *Principal*
Stephen Solook

HARP

Laura Vaughan



STEVEN CASSEDY
guest lecturer

Steven Cassedy, Professor of Literature and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies at UCSD, is a classically trained pianist who studied at the Juilliard School's Pre-College Division and at the University of Michigan's School of Music. He received his undergraduate degree in comparative literature at the University of Michigan in 1974 and his Ph.D. in comparative literature at Princeton University in 1979. Mr. Cassedy will be giving the pre-concert lecture at this weekend's concerts.

SAVE THE DATE

Wines of Italy

Annual Wine Tasting & Fundraiser

Saturday, April 27, 2-5 PM

Join syndicated wine columnist Robert Whitley on a tasting journey through Tuscany and beyond in this must-attend event!

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- "Blind" tasting of wines of Italy
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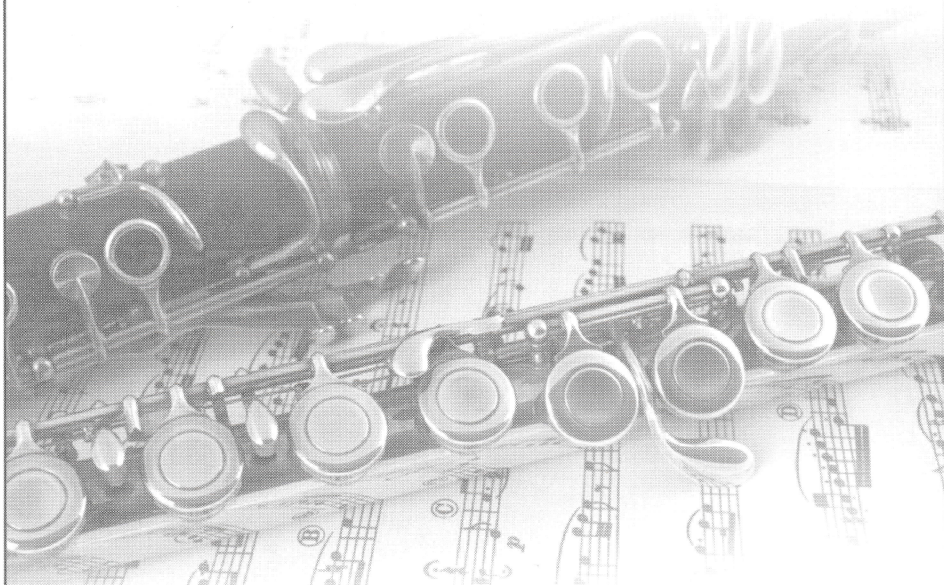
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Angle of Repose

2012-2013 Season

REPEAT / MOVE ON

Saturday, March 16 at 7:30pm

Sunday, March 17 at 2:00pm

Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

Steven Schick conducts

PHILIP GLASS

Overture to "La Belle et La Bête"

PAUL DRESHER

Concerto for Quadrachord & Orchestra

YIHENG YVONNE WU

Transcriptions of Place

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AARON COPLAND

Appalachian Spring

GUEST ARTIST:

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