La Jolla Symphony & Chorus

2015-2016 Season

Soundscape San Diego: exploration and remembrance

October 31-November 1, 2015
Mandeville Auditorium

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Music Director

David Chase
Choral Director



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Steven Schick Music Director



David Chase Choral Director

Saturday, October 31, 2015, 7:30pm Sunday, November 1, 2015, 2:00pm Mandeville Auditorium, UCSD

Steven Schick conducting

EDGARD VARÈSE

Tuning Up (completed by Chou Wen-chung)

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor, Opus 15

Maestoso Adagio Rondo: Allegro non troppo

Aleck Karis, piano

INTERMISSION

JOHN LUTHER ADAMS

Become Ocean

Unauthorized photography and audio/video recording are prohibited during this performance.

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La Jolla Symphony & Chorus

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From the Conductor

Welcome to the 2015-16 Season of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus!

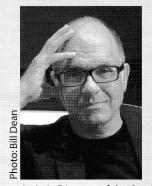
I'm calling our season, "Soundscape San Diego: Exploration and Remembrance," not simply because the professor in me loves a long title that requires a colon, but because it addresses a number of pertinent issues under the same umbrella.

As I devised the programs for this season, I thought about the notion of exploration and considered our home, San Diego, a vibrant and complex city where exploration across a spectrum of technology, business and art is our daily business. I also thought about our perch at the edge of the continent and how the sea has been a highway for exploration throughout history. In response we'll perform John Luther Adams' Become Ocean and Debussy's La Mer this year.

I also know that San Diego is not just a seaside town; it's a military town. That's where remembrance comes in. Copland's *Third Symphony* and the Bartók *Viola Concerto*, music from the end of World War II now exactly 70 years ago, help us honor that and celebrate the men and women of the greatest generation.

At first glance exploration and remembrance seem quite different from each other, the former reaching out to the future and the latter looking back to the past. But in musical terms they comprise a single important idea. They connect us to our lives, and to the place and time we share. This single idea—the synthesis of exploration and remembrance—is what is at stake for us, the musicians of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus as we start our 61st season. We want to play music that reflects both our roots and our aspirations. We demand that music reach out beyond the smallness of the concert hall and consort with the expansiveness of our lives. We want it to be real.

John Luther Adams has long understood this kind of reality. When he moved to Alaska nearly four decades ago and found, as he has said many times, his true home, he came to terms with the seeming contradiction of grand vistas and deep roots. When I visited him there in December of 2001 to ask him to write a percussion solo for me (the piece that eventually became the 85-minute long *Mathematics of Resonant Bodies*) he explained patiently that life in Alaska is fueled by the clash of extremes. It is home to the loudest natural sounds—calving glaciers and charging herds of caribou—but is also the largest remaining



Steven Schick conductor

Percussionist, conductor, and author Steven Schick was born in lowa and raised in a farming family. For forty years he has championed contemporary music by commissioning or premiering more than one hundred-fifty 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 Genève (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 Music Players. In 2012 he became the first Artistin-Residence with the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). Schick founded and is currently Artistic Director of "Roots and Rhizomes," a summer course on contemporary percussion music held at the Banff Centre for the Arts. He maintains a lively schedule of guest conducting including appearances in this season with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Nova Chamber Ensemble and the Asko/Schönberg Ensemble. Schick will be music director of the 2015 Ojai Festival. Among his acclaimed publications are a book, "The Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams," and numerous recordings of contemporary percussion music including a 3 CD set of the complete percussion music of lannis Xenakis (Mode). Mode released a companion recording on DVD of the early percussion music of Karlheinz Stockhausen in September of 2014. Steven Schick is Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego.

reservoir of silence. For this lesson—along with the truly sage advice that my fancy French boots were not suitable footwear for temperatures that plunged to minus 56—I am grateful.

Like much of John's recent music, Become Ocean is vast but not really long. Lots of orchestral works clock in longer, but because they are heavily sign-posted by textural points of arrival and the conventions of large-scale harmonic movement, they act as an assemblage of shorter works strung together to make a long piece. But though the 45 minutes of Become Ocean could easily fit inside the last movement of Mahler's Eighth Symphony, it is less gridded and therefore seems more massive. In fact the work does just one thing: it generates waves. Three groups of instruments—winds, brass and strings, each with a percussion instrument or piano — get louder and then softer in the inexorable patterns of surf that we here know so well. The percussionists and pianist act as guides by activating surface rhythms, while the other instruments play the long arcing shapes of ocean swells. The single moment in the piece in which the three waves culminate at the same time is magisterial and titanic.

Become Ocean, reminds us of the sonic beauty of waves, and of the sea. Take a short detour on your way home after this concert and listen for yourselves. But the reassuring crash of the waves also reminds us of the risks of taking the natural world and its sounds for granted. The seas are rising; the climate is changing. And the natural sounds we hear as the background noise of our daily lives may not be as permanent as we would like to believe.

These same themes—the sounds we take for granted and the acoustical shapes of the natural world—play out in the other two works on today's concert. Edgard Varèse, the stern godfather of experimental noise art, was not known for his lighter side, but this is precisely what his *Tuning Up* showcases. His love of massed, noisy sonorities finds a loving home in that orchestral sound we all take for granted: "tuning up." Think about the tuning note before a concert: the pitch "A," given by the oboist, is followed by billowing clouds of sound as the instruments tune and then warm up on brief figurations. We hear it, but we don't think of it as music. This "un-music" fascinated Varèse, and by adding a few of his typical touches—marching percussion figures, and the inevitably low siren—he takes the sounds that we have learned *not* to hear as music and creates a whimsical and often evocative piece.

Johannes Brahms's youthful first *Piano Concerto* might seem like the outlier in this concert until you listen attentively to its shapes and connections. People often call the first movement of this piece "stormy." Gusts of musical energy, surging in large wave-like shapes with the piano figures as wind-blown foam paint the picture. The Brahms is glorious music. That and the chance to work again with the wonderful pianist, Aleck Karis, were reasons enough to play it. But it also satisfied a tricky program demand: how to contextualize the ocean sounds of Adams and the massed sonorities of Varèse in the guise of a piece from the traditional repertoire.

You'll be the judge: close your eyes and open your ears and you can hear the natural world everywhere. ■

Program Notes by Eric Bromberger

Tuning Up (completed by Chou Wen-chung) **EDGARD VARÈSE Born December 22, 1883, Le Villars, Burgundy Died November 6, 1965, New York City**



In 1946 the producer Boris Morros began plans for a film that would eventually be titled *Carnegie Hall*. Its storyline was very thin: a mother has high hopes for her musicallytalented son and takes him repeatedly to Carnegie Hall in the hope that he will become a classical musician. He is taken backstage, where he meets Bruno Walter and many other famous musicians, and eventually the boy's own music is performed in that famous

hall. That storyline furnished the opportunity to include filmed performances by some of the great performers of the era: Bruno Walter led the New York Philharmonic in the *Meistersinger Prelude*, Fritz Reiner led the Tchaikovsky *Violin Concerto* with Jascha Heifetz, and there were appearances by Leopold Stokowski, Jan Peerce, Lily Pons, and others.

An extremely colorful figure, Morros had an imaginative idea for the first musical excerpt in the film: he persuaded Edgard Varèse to

compose a short work that would parody the sound of an orchestra tuning up, and this would be led in the film by Stokowski, a champion of Varèse's music. Varèse was intrigued by the idea and made some sketches, but then Morros decided to drop that introductory sequence, and Varèse filed his sketches away. There they stayed for over fifty years, until 1998, when Varèse's student, colleague, and friend Chou Wenchung took them up and "completed" the piece that Varèse had set out to write many years before. The sketches consisted of two brief sequences that centered around the note A as an orchestra tuned, and those sketches included brief quotations from Varèse's own music and faint hints of music by other composers. Chou Wen-chung had to make a number of creative decisions of his own as he assembled these fragments, and these include his use of sirens (which Varèse had used in Ionisation), his use of further quotations from the music of Varèse, and a number of decisions about dynamics. It might be most useful to quote Chou Wen-chung's own description of the result:

As completed, *Tuning Up* is an interplay of flashes of orchestral sonorities, rainbow-like colors of percussion, spatial trajectories of sirens, and the undulating sound of "tuning." On another level, Varèse clearly had fun with the pitch A—teasing and flirting with it, juxtaposing or building upon it, and often resorting to his favorite scheme of intercepting cycles of intervals, frequently the fifth. *Tuning Up* is a perfect overture to Varèse's music, and an equally fascinating opening for any symphonic concert.

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Mission Statement

Rooted in San Diego for over 60 years, the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus enriches our lives through affordable concerts of ground-breaking, traditional and contemporary classical music.

Piano Concerto No. 1 in D Minor, Opus 15 JOHANNES BRAHMS Born May 7, 1833, Hamburg Died April 3, 1897, Vienna



Robert Schumann met Brahms when the latter was still just a rosy-cheeked boy of 20 but immediately recognized his talent and became his enthusiastic champion. In a review that must have seemed overpowering to the young man, Schumann proclaimed Brahms "a young eagle" and said: "When he holds his magic wand over the massed resources of chorus and orchestra, we shall be granted marvelous insights into spiritual secrets." And almost immediately came disaster: Schumann went into steep mental decline, attempted suicide by throwing himself into the Rhine, and died two years later in a mental asylum.

It was natural for the young composer to try to register his feelings in music (and at a subconscious level to try to justify Schumann's faith in him) and in March 1854, only weeks after Robert's suicide attempt, Brahms set out to create that most dramatic and challenging of forms, a symphony. He was not even 21 at this time and had never written anything for orchestra, so he first sketched this symphony as a sonata for two pianos. Brahms soon realized that he was not yet ready to compose a symphony. He abandoned the project but salvaged a great deal of music from his sketches:ten years later the symphony's projected slow scherzo became the second movement — Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras — of his German Requiem. Brahms saw more immediate possibilities in the pianistic brilliance of the sketches and decided to transform the first movement into the opening movement of a piano concerto. Once this was completed, he composed a new slow movement and a new rondo-finale. Still desperately uncertain of his abilities, Brahms worked on this concerto for four years before he was willing to try it out in a private performance in March 1858. The first public performance did not take place until January 1859, nearly five years after he had set out to write his symphony.

Brahms marks the first movement *Maestoso*, but it hardly feels majestic. Instead, it feels catastrophic. Brahms told Joseph Joachim that this violent opening was a depiction of his feelings when he learned of Schumann's suicide attempt. At well over twenty minutes, this is a huge movement, and Malcolm MacDonald has described it as "nearly the longest, and probably the most dramatic, symphonic movement since Beethoven." After the opening sound and fury, the piano makes a deceptively understated entrance, and this in turn points to a remarkable feature of this movement: in general, the orchestra has the more aggressive material, the piano the friendlier music. While the piano part is extremely difficult, this is not an ostentatiously virtuoso concerto in the manner of Liszt and other pianist-composers at mid-century (this massive first movement has no cadenza, in fact). To call this a "symphony-concerto," as some have done, goes too far, but such a description does point toward the unusually dramatic character of this music and its refusal to treat the piano as a display instrument. The huge exposition leads to a relatively brief development that includes a shimmering, dancing episode in D major, but the recapitulation



Aleck Karis piano

Aleck Karis has performed recitals, chamber music, and concertos across the Americas, Europe and in China. As the pianist of the new music ensemble Speculum Musicae he has participated in over a hundred premieres and performed at major American and European festivals. His appearances with orchestra have ranged from concertos by Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin to those of Stravinsky, Messiaen and Carter. His five solo discs on Bridge Records include Aleck Karis performs Schumann, Carter, Chopin; Aleck Karis: Mozart Recital;

Stravinsky: Music for Piano 1911-1942; John Cage: Sonatas and Interludes; and Karis Plays Webern, Wolpe & Feldman. His two discs on Romeo Records are Piano Music of Philip Glass and Late Piano Music of Frederic Chopin. Last month, Bridge released Karis' most recent disc, Feldman's haunting last work Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello. Karis has studied with William Daghlian, Artur Balsam and Beveridge Webster. He is a Distinguished Professor of Music at UC San Diego, and Associate Dean of the Division of Arts and Humanities.

is long and fairly literal. It offers no emotional release, no modulation into a major key, and the movement drives unrelentingly to its close in the mood of the very opening.

Relief arrives with the *Adagio*. In the early stages of its composition, Brahms had written in the manuscript "Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini": "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." The young Brahms had playfully addressed the older Schumann as "Domini," and some have felt that this must be a tribute to that composer, but in a letter from December 1856 Brahms wrote to Clara: "I am also painting a lovely portrait of you; it is to be the Adagio." When this music was published, however, Brahms had removed the Latin inscription and any hint of larger reference. In D major, this movement has a quiet expressiveness, an almost consoling quality after the furies of the opening movement. It rises to a gentle climax before a brief cadenza leads to a quiet close.

The last movement, a vigorous rondo, returns to the mood—and D-minor tonality—of the opening. Solo piano leads the way here, and all the movement's thematic material seems to grow out of this opening theme. The theme itself makes few literal returns but is skillfully transformed on each reappearance, including one use as the subject for a brief but lithe fugue. Brahms offers two cadenzas in this movement, the first almost Bachian in its keyboard writing, and at the very end the rising shape of the rondo theme helps propel the movement—finally in D major—to a heroic close.

Initial reaction to this concerto was harsh. After a performance in Leipzig, Brahms wrote to Clara: "You have probably already heard that it was a complete fiasco; at the rehearsal it met with total silence, and at the performance (where hardly three people raised their hands to clap) it was actually hissed." A Leipzig critic described the concerto as "a composition dragged to its grave. This work cannot give pleasure...it has nothing to offer but hopeless desolation and aridity...for more than three quarters of an hour one must endure this rooting and rummaging, this straining and tugging, this tearing and patching of phrases and flourishes! Not only must one take in this fermenting mass; one must also swallow a dessert of the shrillest dissonances and most unpleasant sounds."

It must have given Brahms particular pleasure when —thirty-five years later, in 1894 — he conducted a program in Leipzig that included both his piano concertos and heard this product of his youth cheered in the same hall where it had been reviled so many years before. ■



In Memory of Arthur Wagner

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus lost a valued friend, supporter, and member of its Board of Directors on September 21 with the passing of Arthur Wagner, pictured above with his wife Molli. We will dedicate our December 5-6 concert — a program of remembrance and the triumph of the human spirit — in memory of Arthur.



[']san diego NEW MUSIC

Pierre Boulez's **Le Marteau sans maître**

November 4, 2015 7:30p.m.

Simone Mancuso, conductor Stephanie Aston, soprano Rachel Beetz, flute Colin McAllister, guitar Mark Menzies, viola Dustin Donahue, Steve Solook, and Jason Ginter, percussion

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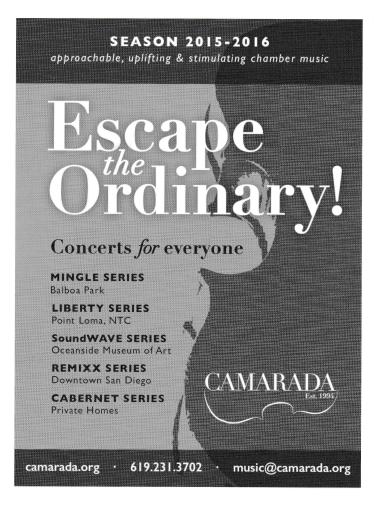
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A Message from Endowment Chair Amee Wood



Dear Friends,

Before I give you an update on our endowment campaign, let me tell you what a wonderful time 39 choristers, 12 string players and an assortment of friends and family, led intrepidly by David Chase, had in Spain this summer. In two weeks, we performed a program of *Music From the Americas* in Toledo, Seville, Granada, Cordoba and Barcelona. Our audiences were full houses and they loved us! We reveled in Spanish culture despite every day being over 100 degrees; we saw beautiful sights, sweated, ate yummy ethnic food, sweated, practiced our Spanish, sweated—and had a glorious time!

Good Endowment News: this summer the *Sostenuto* campaign came into a windfall. A new endowment of approximately \$59,000, held at the Rancho Santa Fe Foundation,

was established to benefit La Jolla Symphony & Chorus. This is a much-needed boost to our campaign, and we thank the Rancho Santa Fe Foundation for facilitating this gift.

We now have about \$810,000 in the Rancho Santa Fe and San Diego Foundations busily earning interest. Thank you for your contributions! This amount allows us to begin paying Steven Schick and David Chase the salaries outlined in our initial budget three years ago: each year we pay them increasing amounts until our endowment reaches \$1.5 million, earning enough interest so that we can pay them full salaries. We hope to reach this goal by June 2017, the final year of this five-year campaign.

We have our work cut out for us. Here is a table of the number and size of gifts we still need:

\$ Amount	# of Gifts Needed	\$ Amount	# of Gifts Needed
\$50,000	2	\$5,000	9
\$25,000	3	\$2,500	10
\$20,000	4	\$2,000	12
\$15,000	5	\$1,500	15
\$10,000	6	\$1,000	20
\$7,500	7	Up to \$999	32
		TOTAL GIFTS	125

Thanks to those who have donated and those who are on the cusp of donating—your money is doing a good job growing in our endowment fund. Right now, giving to the fund has plateaued. We are making small, steady steps, but we need to reach further to meet our goal. Here are some ways you may be able to help us:

- Do you know anyone in our audience who has not given but who may be able to contribute?
- Do you know of, or are involved with, any businesses, corporations or foundations we could apply to for support?
- Do you have any close friends or relatives who may live out of town, or who may not attend our concerts, but would like to support you by supporting this organization you love (as my mother has done)?

If you are able to help out in any of these ways or are ready to make a first-time gift, Executive Director Diane Salisbury and I will be grateful and eager to follow-up.

Many thanks for being part of our musical community! Sincerely,

Amee Wood

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For more information about ways to give to the "Sostenuto" endowment campaign, or to receive a brochure,

John Luther Adams composer

John Luther Adams is a composer whose life and work are deeply rooted in the natural world.

Adams was awarded the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Music for his symphonic work *Become Ocean*, and a 2015 Grammy Award for "Best Contemporary Classical Composition". *Inuksuit*, his outdoor work for up to 99 percussionists, is regularly performed all over the world.

Columbia University has honored Adams with the William Schuman Award "to recognize the lifetime achievement of an American composer whose works have been widely performed and generally acknowledged to be of lasting significance."

A recipient of the Heinz Award for his contributions to raising environmental awareness, Adams has also been honored with the Nemmers Prize from Northwestern University "for melding the physical and musical worlds into a unique artistic vision that transcends stylistic boundaries."

Adams grew up in the South and in the suburbs of New York City. He studied composition with James Tenney at the California Institute of the Arts, where he was in the first graduating class (in 1973). In the mid-1970s he became active in the campaign for the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, and subsequently served as executive director of the Northern Alaska Environmental Center.

Adams has taught at Harvard University, the Oberlin Conservatory, Bennington College, and the University of Alaska. He has also served as composer in residence with the Anchorage Symphony, Anchorage Opera, Fairbanks Symphony, Arctic Chamber Orchestra, and the Alaska Public Radio Network.

The music of John Luther Adams is recorded on Cantaloupe, Cold Blue, New World, Mode, and New Albion, and his books are published by Wesleyan University Press.

LJS&C Graduate Student Chair Announced

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus (LJS&C) is pleased to announce that UCSD graduate student in piano performance, Kyle Blair, is the recipient of the first LJS&C Graduate Student Chair—given annually to a UCSD graduate student to underwrite participation with LJS&C. The award, sponsored this year by Pat Finn and Walt Burkhard, supports Mr. Blair's position as orchestral piano with LJS&C on four concerts during the 2015-2016 season. Mr. Blair currently studies under UCSD Distinguished Professor of Music Aleck Karis.

Become Ocean (2013) JOHN LUTHER ADAMS Born January 23, 1953, Meridian, Mississippi



The following note has been provided by the composer.

Over the years my orchestral music has gradually become simpler and more expansive.

Clouds of Forgetting, Clouds of Unknowing (1991-95) contains four different musical textures. In the White Silence (1998) has three. For Lou Harrison (2002) reduces this to only two.

In *Dark Waves* (2007), I finally got to one. When I first heard that piece I began to wonder if I could sustain a similar sound for a longer span of time. The result is *Become Ocean*.

The title is borrowed from a mesostic poem that John Cage wrote in honor of Lou Harrison's birthday. Likening Harrison's music to a river in delta, Cage writes:

LiStening to it we becOme oceaN.

Become Ocean is a meditation on the deep and mysterious tides of existence. All life on this earth emerged from the sea. And as the polarice melts and sea level rises, we humans find ourselves facing the prospect that we may once again quite literally become ocean. ■

By working together, members achieve what one person cannot accomplish alone.



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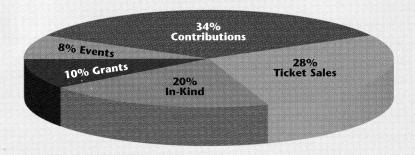
About La Jolla Symphony & Chorus

MISSION:

Rooted in San Diego for over 60 years, the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus enriches our lives through affordable concerts of ground-breaking, traditional and contemporary classical music.

DID YOU KNOW?

- LJS&C is a volunteer ensemble comprised of community members from all walks of life: doctors, scientists, lawyers, engineers, homemakers, students, and teachers, as well as professional musicians.
- LJS&C was founded in 1954 in the village of La Jolla by Peter Nicoloff, a conductor who assembled a small group of non-professional musicians "just for fun" and conducted them in what was modestly called an open rehearsal. Over the next half century, the organization grew to over 200 orchestra and chorus members.
- LJS&C became an affiliate of the UCSD Music Department under the direction of Thomas Nee in 1967 when the new campus opened. Concerts were split between Sherwood Auditorium and Revelle cafeteria on campus until Mandeville Auditorium opened in 1975.
- The Chorus has toured and performed in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Austria, Italy, France, Canada, Mexico, Ireland, and Spain, and was proclaimed official cultural ambassador of San Diego in 2003 when it was the first Western chorus to perform in Bhutan.
- LJS&C has performed over 900 concerts in San Diego County and Baja California, premiered new works, commissioned pieces and made recordings.
- LJS&C is not University funded but a separate 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, relying on private donations, fundraising activities, grants, and ticket sales for its support.



We Rely On Your Support. Thank You!

Contributors

The La Jolla Symphony & Chorus Association is deeply grateful to the Department of Music at UC San Diego for its generous support and assistance.

The association would also like to acknowledge the generosity of its chief benefactress Therese Hurst,

who upon her death in 1985 left her estate to the association providing an endowment.

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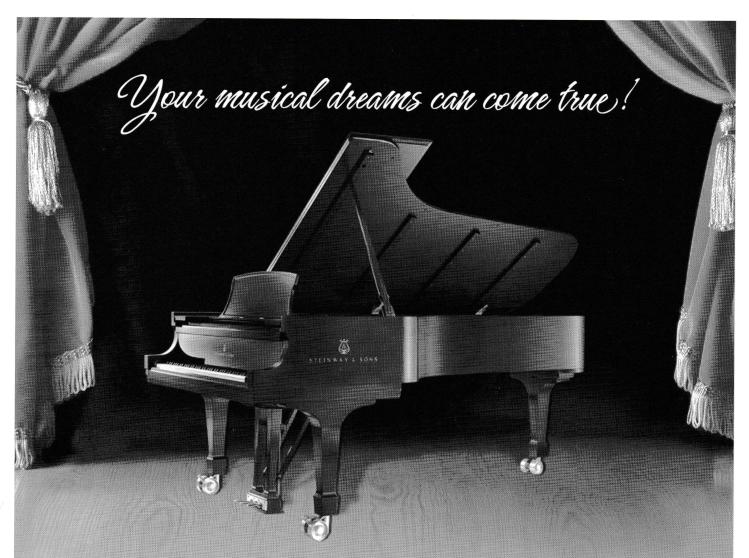
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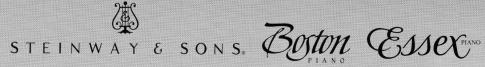
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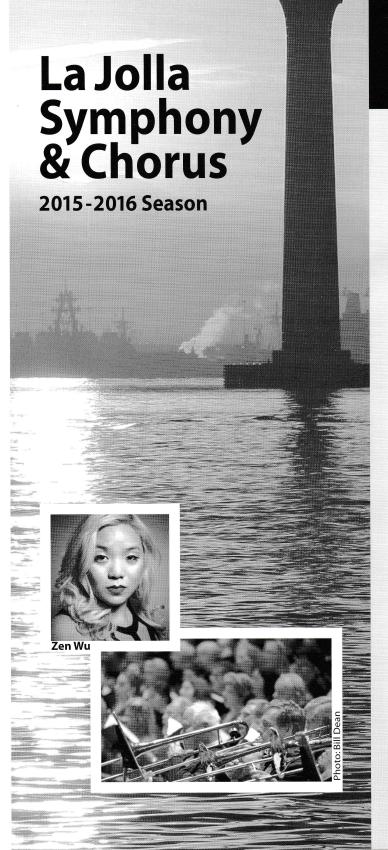




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