

Looking forward is easy ... Music Director Steven Schick



Seeing into the future seems like a hard thing to do. To the contrary! Looking forward is very easy, especially if you are looking back at it.

I grew up with my grandfather's litany: "I could have bought Kodak for a dollar a share!" It turns out that living in the past conditional tense is easy. Actually buying Kodak at a dollar a share at the right time is a completely different matter.

Isn't music the same way? We can marvel at the glorious sounds in a piece like the *Firebird*. And as we look back it seems like just the right thing to do at the time. But true wonder comes when you imagine Stravinsky creating it out of the ether, as what seems to be a completely original thought.

The idea of originality above reveals something important about the way we view classical music. We are deeply in love with the myth that a piece of music comes into the world via virgin birth. We like to believe that a timeless artistic idea is revealed to a composer, as an Annunciation, and behold new music is created. The truth is that a piece of music is constructed not conjured. It is made from the cultural materials of its time. For me it doesn't detract in the slightest from the greatness of Stravinsky that he didn't create *Firebird ex nihilo*. The truth is, that like all of us, the *Firebird* had its parents and grandparents. We see the family tree clearly now: start with the coloristic language of Rimsky-Korsakov, mate it with culturally porous boundaries after the *Exposition Universelle* of 1889 in Paris, add the overripe harmonic language of the late Romantic, and let it come of age in the potent mix of occult and cruelty that lay just below the surface of life in pre-war Europe. All this means that to us, a hundred years after the fact, the *Firebird* is a marvel but not a surprise.

I hope that no one is too disappointed with the idea that music is a cultural construction, not a miracle. Aren't new structures of thought exactly what we expect from our artists: to utter sentiments we barely know we have? To crystallize out of our dark aphasia a bright and elegant language?

The distinction between great music and average music – if you'll permit me to say – lies not in originality but in the orientation of a composer. A composer who looks backward says to himself, "I could have done that." Often he does, and produces, instead of a touchstone for his time, a reheated version of yesterday's meal. Recently a much-fêted young composer created a work for found objects, auto parts and orchestra for the San Francisco Symphony as though such ideas were brand new and had not already been done for the past eighty years by a long string of American experimentalist composers and Dada sound artists. His problem is not a lack of originality, but an overly devoted backward gaze to the past. Not content with wishing he had bought Kodak at a dollar, he's actually trying to go back and do it.

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A composer who faces forward looks into the wind. She must embrace the conundrum of the authentic artistic statement. Music that reflects its time is made from the materials of its day (therefore it cannot be wholly new.) But in order to have impact it cannot be a simple re-treading of ideas (and therefore must be completely new.) This is why I love the *Firebird*. As a contradiction in historical terms it shouldn't exist. Yet it does!

Much the same could be said of Samuel Barber's stunning *Piano Concerto*, this year celebrating the 50th anniversary of its premiere. This piece has been a remarkable object lesson for me. As a music student I rejected most music that didn't have the imprimatur of the avant-garde. Barber, in particular, seemed far too devoted to a traditional harmonic language to pass my oh-so-strict litmus test. But when I realized that forward-looking musical thought is not a question of style, but, again, of orientation, I realized that the Barber concerto is as progressive as the electronic "studies" of Stockhausen, or the indeterminate scores of Cage. Barber assembled his piece from the extant materials of the early 1960's: from the motoric drive of an increasingly mechanized society, and from the illusion of serenity that quickly shatters to show the deep swirling chaos below. As a piece of its time it reminds us of the extraordinary force that relevant music can bring to bear.

The big problem is that it's hard to tell at any moment whether one is looking forward or backward. We're simply too close to the moment to have the necessary perspective. So let's leave it to future listeners to determine where Igor Korneitchouk's *Tintinnabulation* fits into the firmament. Suffice it to say that the actual tintinnabulations of the piece – the real sounding of bells – reach both backward in their allusion to Poe and forward as a signal of alarm. Any future conductor who reads Korneitchouk's marking at rehearsal letter "F" in the score – "Alarming, Brazen (Level: Orange)" will know that this piece too comes from its time. Here the implications of "Looking Ahead" make you long for the day when Kodak still existed, and you could buy its stock for a dollar a share.



News from the Executive Director ... Diane Salisbury

Carnegie Hall: I write this note fresh from the once-in-a-lifetime experience of hearing our chorus perform Britten's "Spring Symphony" at Carnegie Hall under David Chase's baton. What a wonderful experience and showcase for our entire organization. The Chorus was invited to perform as part of MidAmerica Productions' Choral Spotlight Series at Carnegie. The first half of the program was filled by two other choruses, performing mostly a cappella. Our performance of the Britten was accompanied by the Hall's resident New England Symphonic Ensemble. The trip and performance were self-funded by participating chorus members and chorus alumni. (See "Article Watch")

Hitting the Airwaves: LJS&C is getting some air time in two excellent publicity opportunities. KUSC, the classical music station based at USC's Thornton School of Music, will be interviewing Steve Schick as prelude to our final concert of the season. We will also be working with KPBS radio again, after a one-year hiatus, in a 6-part summer series based on the Stravinsky Circus! season with commentary by Maestro Schick. Air dates to will be announced later.

Our season finale on June 9-10 not only includes one of Stravinsky's most exciting works, "The Firebird," but an original composition by one of our own – La Jolla Symphony violinist Igor Korneitchouk. Igor's "Tintinnabulation" is inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's "The Bells," and is described as a percussion concerto. Aleck Karis also joins us to solo in Barber's "Piano Concerto," a work that was so well-received upon its premiere 50 years ago that it received 30 additional performances in an 18-month period and received the Pulitzer Prize. This concert is going to be a rousing conclusion to a spectacular season. Tell a friend! [e-postcard](#).



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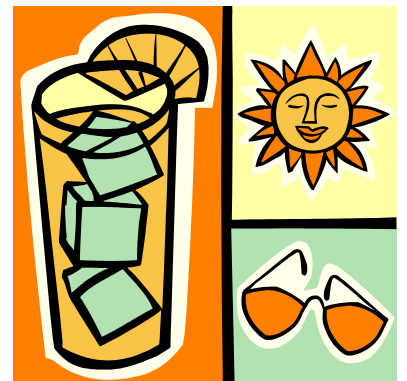
Jean Lowerison

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Diane Salisbury

Steven Schick

Susan Taggart



A new face behind *Tutti*... Barbara Peisch

You may have noticed a big improvement in the content of *Tutti* starting with the April issue. This is thanks to my new Assistant Editor, Evon Carpenter. As you can imagine, after eight years, it can be a challenge for me to keep things fresh and interesting. Evon is doing a fantastic job of providing articles that do just that! So the next time you see Evon, be sure to give her a big "Thanks!"



Meet Rod Contreras ... Evon Carpenter



Rod Contreras, who is completing his first season singing in the bass section of the chorus, brings a wealth of musical experience, as well as Latin flair, to the ensemble. When asked how he feels about being part of the chorus he says that he really enjoys the repertoire and professionalism of the ensemble, as well as the diversity of its members.

Rod, a native of Mexico, lived in Mexico City until he was ten years old. After leaving Mexico he lived in Cupertino, California, spent some time in Iowa and Illinois, and returned to California eleven years later, this time to San Diego. He is a private piano instructor with a studio in Encinitas. Music became a part of his life

when he began playing the piano at age six. He was part of an extensive choral program in high school, which provided him the opportunity to travel with the program and sing in Washington DC, Florida and Hawaii. He continued singing in both classical and jazz choral groups at De Anza Community College in Cupertino, where he earned an AA degree in music, and studied both genres under Phil Mattson in Iowa. Rod spent time at a small vocational music school in the middle of the corn fields of Iowa, in Creston, a tiny town of eight thousand. There he continued to study classical and jazz voice, piano and arranging. He spent two years studying composition at the University of Illinois in Champagne-Urbana and earned his BA in music at Cal State San Marcos.

Travelling is included among Rod's diverse interests. He visits his family in Mexico City, and enjoys other parts of Mexico, at least once a year. He travelled to Bali and spent two months studying its music and plans to fulfill a life-long dream of spending time in India with a five week trip in December.

He also has a small Mexican Talavera Ceramics business, www.mximports.com, started about seven years ago. Spanish is his native language and he considers himself blessed to be bilingual. He is very much into meditation and enjoys going to the beach, jamming with other musicians, and listening to live music.



You can view *Tutti* online!

You can download this and previous issues of *Tutti* from:

www.peisch.com/tutti





The passing of Nora La Corte ...

David Chase

It is with deep sadness that I share the news of the passing of Dr. Nora La Corte, who passed away on May 11 at her home. Many of you have known her well, as she was the long-time wife of tenor Bill Ziefle, and she was an avid fan of the chorus. She brought a vibrant spirit and lively interest to her faithful participation in chorus activities.



Where are they now? ... Ann Chase

The La Jolla Symphony and Chorus Young Artists Competition committee members would like to keep readers informed of the whereabouts and successes of past Young Artists Competition winners.

Bridget Dolkas, violin, winner from 1991, is Principal Second Violin with the Pacific Symphony Orchestra. She is founder and first violinist of the California Quartet.

Martha Jane Howe, contralto, winner from 1978, has had a distinguished operatic career performing with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the San Francisco Opera, the Canadian Opera and others. She has returned to San Diego where she has an active teaching and performing career in addition to administering various professional organizations. She was featured in LJS&C's *Oedipus Rex*.

Nicholas Grant, violinist, winner from 1968, is Principal Associate Concertmaster, San Diego Symphony.



Did you know? ... Evon Carpenter

- On the Wednesday before our concert weekend, the 7:00 P.M. program on XLNC1 (FM 104.9) advertises our concerts, and plays the music audiences will hear at our concerts on the weekend.
- A Bulgarian conductor, Peter Nicoloff, was chased out of China by the Communist Revolution and in 1954 found himself in La Jolla. He assembled a group of non-professional musicians from La Jolla and conducted them in open rehearsals. Over the next fifty years, that orchestra gave over 700 concerts, grew in size to 100 players, made recordings, commissioned new music, gave premieres, and played concerts throughout San Diego County. It eventually became the La Jolla Symphony. Nicoloff directed the La Jolla Symphony for eleven seasons before resigning.
- La Jolla Symphony and Chorus' mission and vision statement is: *Rooted in San Diego for over 50 years, the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus enriches our lives through affordable concerts of ground-breaking, traditional and contemporary classical music.*



Need to contact the LJS&C?

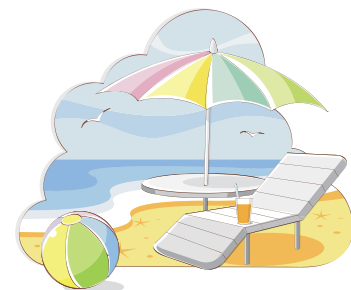
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- Music has the ability to ease the perception of chronic pain. In fact, according to a paper in the Journal of Advanced Nursing, music can reduce chronic pain by up to 21%. The paper reports that 60 patients participated in a controlled clinical trial and were subdivided into two groups -- music and no music. The results revealed that people who listened to music for an hour each day for a week had improved physical and psychological symptoms compared to those who were deprived of music.
- Oliver Sacks explores the place music occupies in the brain and how it affects the human condition in *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain*. In the book, he shows us a variety of what he calls "musical misalignments." Among them: a man struck by lightning who suddenly desires to become a pianist at the age of forty-two; an entire group of children with Williams syndrome, who are hypermusical from birth; people with "amusia," to whom a symphony sounds like the clattering of pots and pans; and a man whose memory spans only seven seconds-for everything but music. It is an illuminating, inspiring, and utterly unforgettable read.



Thank you, Sing! ... Evon Carpenter

This week Sing! visited Del Mar Heights school, where I teach fifth grade. Sing! is an educational choral outreach program by LJSC. The quintet was composed of wonderful singers from the chorus: Ken Bell, Michael Blinco, Connie Lawthers, Tony Leonard, and Marianne Schamp. The program was presented to the fifth and sixth grade students and included elements of choral music history, voicing, rhythm, and listening. Our students were fully engaged and very interested in the program. The repertoire included a snappy and rhythmic song about basketball, which our basketball-crazed children particularly enjoyed.

The program was very professionally presented and I was proud to be associated with it. Not only was it very educational for the audience, but the students were encouraged to attend the Friday dress rehearsals with their parents, which potentially builds a continuing audience for our ensembles. Great job, Sing!



Ken and the cow horn



Photo by Tom Peisch

Ken blows the cow horn, Spring Symphony concert in Mandeville, May 6, 2012

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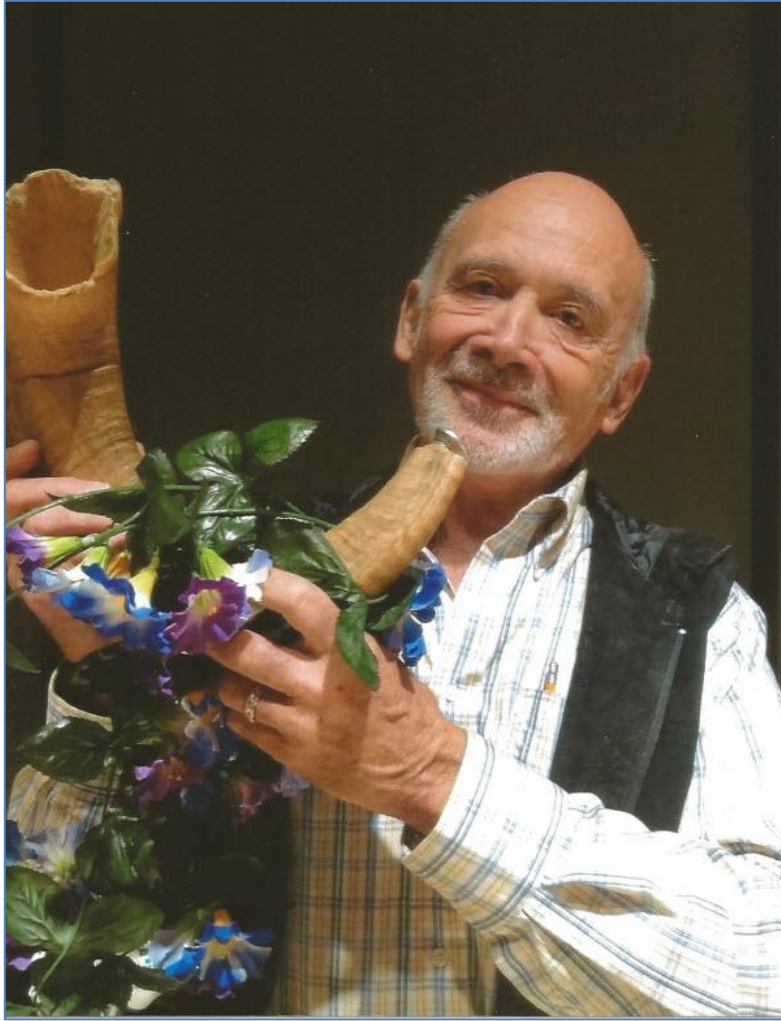


Photo by Gisela Linde

As featured *Cow Horn Virtuoso* in Britten's "Spring Symphony," Kenneth Bell will next appear on the stage of Carnegie Hall, May 27, 2012, with David Chase and the La Jolla Symphony Chorus.

<http://www.carnegiehall.org/Calendar/2012/5/27/0830/PM/MidAmerica-Productions-Concert-Series/>



Tasting among the vineyards ... Diane Salisbury

This year's wine tasting – "The Grapes of Bordeaux" – was held at the estate of Fallbrook Winery set among the vineyards. The beautiful home served as gracious backdrop for the affair, which had as its highlight a blind tasting of seven Bordeaux wines and varietals directed by syndicated wine columnist Robert Whitley. The raffle saw many winners and the single auction item – a case of Bordeaux and Bordeaux varietals – went for \$1400. Thank you to Robert Whitley for his generous donation of wines and talent. Thanks also to Sue and Mark Taggart for donating to the raffle. And thanks to Chefs du Cuisine and Whole Foods La Jolla Catering for their donation of fabulous – and plentiful – appetizers. Volunteers Marianne and Dennis Schamp, and Margie Julsonnet deserve a big hug for their flawless prep (and clean-up) of the event, and thank you to our string trio, Loie Flood, Marit Chrislock-Lauterbach, and Andy Helgerson for setting the perfect musical mood.



Have some news
to report?

Let the editor
know!

barbara@peisch.com

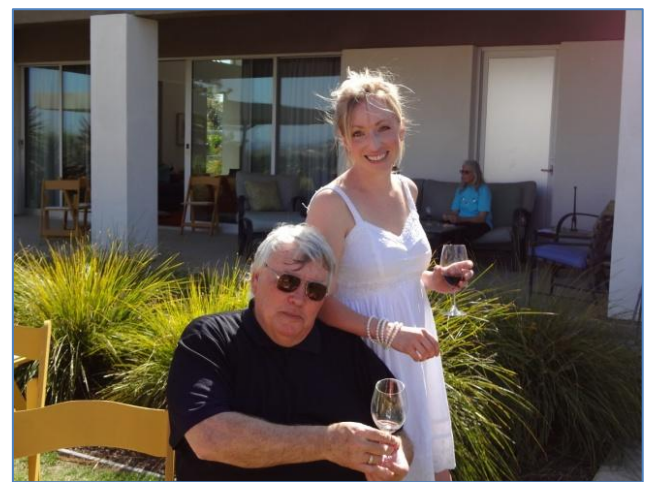
(Be sure to mention *Tutti* in
the subject so I know it's not
spam!)



Honorary co-chair Bob Engler with Marilyn Huff



Robert preps the crowd at the start of the blind tasting



Robert Whitley with staff member Beth Julsonnet



Article watch

From Susan Taggart:
60 Minutes, April 8, 2012

"Joy in the Congo: A musical miracle"

By Bob Simon

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18560_162-57410920/joy-in-the-congo-a-musical-miracle/

and

CBS This Morning, April 18, 2012

"Musical duo brings fun twist to classical music"

By Elaine Quijano

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505270_162-57415686/musical-duo-brings-fun-twist-to-classical-music/



From Jean Lowerison:

Charlene and Brenda in the Blogosphere, May 8, 2012

"Spring has sprung, or so it appears at Mandeville Auditorium"

A review of our previous concert. Scroll just beyond halfway down to see the review.

<http://charleneandbrendaintheblogosphere.blogspot.com/2012/05/scottsboro-boysmainly-mozart-lj.html#!1/2012/05/scottsboro-boysmainly-mozart-lj.html>



From Tom Peisch:

La Jolla Light, May 3, 2012

"La Jolla Symphony & Chorus heads to Carnegie Hall"

<http://www.lajollalight.com/2012/05/03/la-jolla-symphony-chorus-heads-to-carnegie-hall/>



From Beda Farrell:

The San Francisco Chronicle, May 21, 2012

"Golden Gate Bridge sounds inspire musical works"

By Carl Nolte

The most famous bridge in America is actually a musical instrument. On its 75th Anniversary "A Day in the Life of the Golden Gate Bridge" will be performed on a 23-foot-long stainless steel model of the Golden Gate Bridge, built by engineers at the Exploratorium and accompanied by recorded sounds of the bridge itself.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2012/05/21/BAV51OGTD9.DTL>



From Walt Desmond:

La Jolla Light, April 3, 2012

"Symphony & Chorus announces a season of contracts for 2012-13"

A recap of what is already on our web site.

<http://www.lajollalight.com/2012/04/03/symphony-chorus-announces-a-season-of-contracts-for-2012-13/>



From Tom Peisch:

San Diego Union-Tribune, May 26, 2012

"North County singers set to perform at Carnegie Hall"

By Patty McCormac

<http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2012/may/26/north-county-singers-set-perform-carnegie-hall/>



If you find an interesting, music-related article or Web site, send the information about it to me at barbara@peisch.com. For Web sites, send me a link to the site and include "Tutti" in the subject. For articles, you may either send a link to the article or just the name and date of the publication, along with the title of the article, and I can find it online. Bring it to rehearsal or mail it to me at:

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