

## 'Echoes of America' resound through San Bernardino

By Michel Nolan , The Sun

Candace Bogan

"Echoes of America" will resonate through San Bernardino on Saturday evening as the city's extraordinary symphony performs music to lift our spirits.

The patriotic concert, at 7:30 p.m. at the California Theatre, emphasizes the Southwest and brings home beautiful music that tells the story of America.

" 'Echoes of America' is stunningly beautiful and will resonate well with our audience and school kids as well," said symphony music director and conductor Frank Fetta.

A champion of the San Bernardino Symphony, as well as the city it represents, Fetta remembered renowned violin professor Robert Lipsett attending a concert last year and commenting that the San Bernardino Symphony is "one fantastic orchestra."

"I just hope that city council members, the community and the county board of supervisors know that this symphony has been in the heart of San Bernardino for 83 years," Fetta said.

"Yes, I'm bullish on San Bernardino."

Anne Viricel, executive director of the symphony, said the San Bernardino Symphony has made a commitment to the community.

"The commitment is to play orchestral music — all sorts of wonderful musicians playing all sorts of wonderful 'flavors' of diverse music for the community," she said.

The San Bernardino Symphony has long been known for performing more than just the standard classical fare.

"Classical music is not always from old German guys in white wigs — even though at the time their music was pivotal to their era," she added.

The program will feature the rousing John Philip Sousa march "Semper Fidelis"; then from Charles Ives' "Variations on America," an arrangement of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee"; Carlisle Floyd's "Ain't It a Pretty Night" from the opera "Susannah," featuring soprano Candace Bogen; and completing the first half, "Victory at Sea: A Symphonic Scenario," by Richard Rodgers and Robert Russell.

After intermission, the symphony will perform the "Far West" movement from William Grant Still's "The American Scene," one of 150 compositions written by the African-American composer; and Bogen returns to the stage singing George Gershwin's "My Man's Gone Now," from the 1935 opera "Porgy and Bess."



The concert concludes with two excerpts from Ferde Grofe's "Grand Canyon Suite," "On the Trail" and "Cloudburst."

Arrive early for a pre-concert lecture to "Meet the Composers," with a little help from the Inland Valley Repertory Theatre, beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the theater's California Room.

The symphony has a long-standing tradition with local school districts, providing students the opportunity to enjoy orchestral music at no cost to them.

Thanks to a major sponsorship by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, two back-to-back abbreviated versions of this concert also will be performed for local schools on Friday morning at the California Theatre as part of the symphony's award-winning student enrichment program.

According to Viricel, 3,400 students will attend the concerts.

The Saturday concert is the third in the symphony's 87th season, themed "Orchestral Accents: Celebrating the Diverse Flavors of Symphonic Music."

The remaining concerts are "Masterwork Melange" on March 25 and "Finale Bravura" on May 28.

Concert tickets start at \$20; veterans, active military and students are \$10.

For tickets or more information, call 909-381-5388, or go to [sanbernardinosymphony.org](http://sanbernardinosymphony.org).

The California Theatre of the Performing Arts is at 562 W. Fourth St., San Bernardino.

Says Viricel, "It's more expensive to go next door to see a movie. You get a full evening of beautiful music in a historic building — it's even next to sbX," she said.

"Good music is accessible to all."