

## San Bernardino Symphony will close season with May 28 concert featuring cellist Ruslan Biryukov

Ruslan Biryukov COURTESY PHOTO

The San Bernardino Symphony Orchestra, directed by Frank Fetta, will close its season with “Finale Bravura!,” a concert featuring music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Antonin Dvorak and David Popper.

The concert is at 7:30 p.m. May 28 in the California Theatre, 562 W. Fourth St., San Bernardino.

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

“We have been likening the selections this season to a celebration of the diverse flavors of symphonic music. So in this final course of the symphonic feast, we will serve up four of the most beautiful symphonic pieces ever written,” Fetta said.

Cellist Ruslan Biryukov will solo in Tchaikovsky’s “Variations on a Rococo Theme” and David Popper’s Hungarian Rhapsody, Op. 68.



The concert will open with what Fetta describes as a “wonderful and delightful masterpiece,” Mozart’s “Magic Flute” Overture from the opera of the same name, which premiered Sept. 30, 1791, about months before the composer’s death at the age of 35.

Although ill at the time, Mozart conducted the premiere, writing to his wife shortly thereafter about his excitement with the growing crowds attending the two-act opera.

“Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s romantic interpretation of the Rococo period and then David Popper’s virtuosic fantasy complete the first half of this repast, which will be served by a good friend of the symphony, cellist Ruslan Biryukov,” Fetta said.

The “Variations on a Rococo Theme,” considered the closest Tchaikovsky ever came to writing a full concerto for cello and orchestra, was completed in 1877. Part of the difficulty in performing the piece lies in the fact that each of the seven variations follows each other without a break to allow the soloist to rest for a few moments.

Popper’s Hungarian Rhapsody, Op. 68, was written to highlight the sound and style native to the cello.

Fetta said Biryukov is well prepared to address the challenges of both pieces.

Biryukov is a graduate of the Baku Music Academy, Tchaikovsky Moscow Conservatory and the USC Thornton School of Music. He is the founder of the Glendale Philharmonic and the Los Angeles Cello Quartet and artistic

director of the Positive Motions Concert Series in Los Angeles.

He has performed throughout the world and, in 2003, was awarded permanent residency by the U.S. government as an “extraordinary ability artist.”

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He last performed with the San Bernardino Symphony in the 2013-14 season, and he regularly collaborates with Fetta on other local projects.

The concert will end with what Fetta described as “the dessert to this symphonic meal,” the Symphony No. 8 in G major by Antonin Dvorak.

Composed in 1889 and conducted by the composer at its premiere in Prague on Fe. 2, 1890, the symphony is different from Dvorak’s previous works in that it is much more cheerful and lyrical, according to Fetta.

There will be a pre-concert talk by several of the “composers” as portrayed by members of the Inland Valley Repertory Theatre Company at 6:30 p.m.

Audience members are also invited to stay for a post-concert reception to meet the musicians.

#### **Pre-concert musicale**

Cellist Ruslan Biryukov will also perform at a pre-concert musicale sponsored by the San Bernardino Symphony Guild at 7 p.m. May 27 at the San Bernardino Garcia Center for the Arts on the corner of E and 11th streets in San Bernardino.

Tickets for the May 27 musicale are \$40 and may be obtained by calling 909-496-6022.

#### **San Bernardino Symphony at the Redlands Bowl**

Although the San Bernardino Symphony’s 2015-16 symphony season concludes with the May 28 concert, the orchestra will perform twice this summer on the Redlands Bowl Summer Music Festival. Fetta will conduct the orchestra in a Gershwin spectacular to open the Summer Music Festival on June 24, and the San Bernardino Symphony will also perform at the Redlands Bowl July 8 in a concert of music by Bernstein and Sondheim.

*Source: San Bernardino Symphony*