

San Bernardino Symphony to present a variety of musical 'flavors'

SAN BERNARDINO >> Although the San Bernardino Symphony has long been known for performing more than just the standard classical fare, Maestro Frank Fetta and the symphony's Artistic Committee have created their 87th season with an ever wider menu of beautiful orchestral music.

Themed "Orchestral Accents: Celebrating the Diverse Flavors of Symphonic Music," the season will guide audiences through a veritable banquet of selections, according to a symphony news release.

"Our goal is to pay homage to composers whose work evokes emotion... joy, sorrow, introspection, pride, love... we want people to realize orchestral music is foundational to the classics, but not limited to them," said Fetta beginning his third season as the symphony's music director and conductor.

"We hope the audience will recognize the concept of musical flavors as more than clever marketing. You may love a certain food, but you need a variety of foods to stay healthy. The same can be said for music. If you enjoy a healthy diet containing a variety of music and you will surely live a healthier life!"

The schedule:

- Oct. 3: "Mosaico Latino" featuring renowned violinist Will Hagen, a recent top finisher in the Queen Elisabeth International Violin Competition. Widely known as possessing a talent that belies his 22 years, Hagen will play Edward Lalo's spicy "Symphonie Espagnol." Also at that concert, Mateo Oliva's "Mosaico Suite," Mozart Camargo Guarnieri's "Danza Brasileira," and Rodrigo de Ceballos's "Suite de Lara."

A special addition to the October playbill is the Mariachi Youth Academy, part of Sinfonia Mexicana, a San Bernardino Symphony offshoot which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year.

- Dec. 12: The symphony will present its second annual "Home for the Holidays" concert, this year including selections from Rimsky-Korsakov, Tchaikovsky, Berlin, Leontovych, Williams, and Regney and Baker. Like the inaugural holiday concert which included carolers and a finale shower of snow, this special evening will also hold some surprises.

"We've essentially designed a trip around the world for lovers of seasonal music," said Fetta. "There is something for everyone and we hope, as occurred last year, there will be many, many families in attendance."

In fact, families are always welcome at the symphony.

"People think children won't like the orchestra, or they will get bored, or they won't know how to behave, but that is in no way the case," said symphony Executive Director Dr. Anne Viricel. "If you watch the mesmerized expression on the face of a child experiencing their orchestral first concert, you will see the blossoming of a love of art and culture that is possible in few other media. It is an extremely fortunate child whose parents or grandparents share this gift with them."

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- Feb. 6: The symphony will perform its first all-patriotic concert, "Echoes of America." Inclusive of music from Grofe's "Grand Canyon Suite," Rodgers and Bennett's "Victory at Sea," Still's "The American Scene," and several stirring

Sousa marches from the symphony's extensive Guthrie Music Library, this concert is dedicated to the many veterans who reside in the Inland Empire. The day before, two one-hour versions of this concert will also be performed back to back at no charge for the local schools as part of the symphony's student enrichment program.

Said Viricel, "Our colleagues at the districts asked for a concert that was supportive of the students' course of studies. 'Echoes of America' gives a musical voice to the concept of patriotism, both supporting and broadening what students are learning in history and social studies classes." As in years past, the symphony will provide participating schools with corresponding level-specific teaching materials developed in line with California's Common Core Standards.

Both the December and February concerts are sponsored by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians.

- March 25: The symphony will present "Masterwork Melange," a buffet of both whimsical and sublime selections featuring Humperdink's "Hansel and Gretel Overture," Shostakovich's "Symphony No. 3," and Rachmaninoff's "Piano Concerto No. 2" as interpreted by gifted young pianist Rufus Choi. A recent addition to the distinguished roster of Steinway artists, Choi has performed worldwide and his recent debut album, "A Musical Journey," was released to critical acclaim.

- May 28: Wrapping the year will be "Finale Bravura!" The concert will include Mozart's "Magic Flute Overture," Tchaikovsky's "Rococo Variation," Popper's "Hungarian Rhapsody," and Dvorak's "Symphony No. 8." Charismatic cellist Ruslan Biryukov will perform.

"As you see," added Fetta, "We have selected all young featured performers to join us this season. We tend to forget that most of the great composers wrote their most well-known works under age 30. But these outstanding young professionals are all under that age and their contributions to the world of music are already notable. We hope everyone will come and experience the quality of symphonic music available right here in the Inland Empire."

The concerts will be performed at 7:30 p.m. at the historic California Theatre, 562 W. 4th Street, San Bernardino. A pre-concert lecture, free with a paid ticket, begins at 6:30 in the concert hall.

This year, the symphony is offering both three- and five-concert season tickets, available by calling 909-381-5388, on line at sanbernardinosymphony.org, or by visiting the symphony box office at 198 N. Arrowhead Ave., San Bernardino Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.