



*march forth to **Mozart***

Silicon Valley Symphony

Jouvanca Jean-Baptiste, soprano

Krassen Karagiozov, baritone

Michael Paul Gibson, music director and conductor

Saturday
3 March 2012
7:30 pm

Holy Trinity
Episcopal Church,
Menlo Park

Sunday
4 March 2012
4:00 pm

Saint Mark's
Episcopal Church,
Palo Alto

Ticket Donation \$20/\$15/Children 12 and under free with adult

PROGRAM

Mozart: Overture to *The Magic Flute*, K. 620

Mozart: 'Der Vogelfanger bin ich ja' from *The Magic Flute*
Krassen Karagiozov, Baritone

Puccini: 'Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore' from *Tosca*
Jouvanca Jean-Baptiste, Soprano

Leoncavallo: 'Silvio! A quest'ora' (duet) from *Pagliacci*
Krassen Karagiozov, Baritone
Jouvanca Jean-Baptiste, Soprano

Sibelius: Karelia Suite, Op. 11
1. Intermezzo 2. Ballade 3. Alla marcia

Mozart: 'D'Oreste, d'Ajace' from *Idomeneo*
Jouvanca Jean-Baptiste, Soprano

Rossini: "Largo al factotum" from *The Barber of Seville*
Krassen Karagiozov, Baritone

INTERMISSION

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92
1. Poco sostenuto - Vivace 2. Allegretto
3. Presto 4. Allegro con brio

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Mozart: Overture to The Magic Flute K. 620 (1791)

While Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart struggled financially for most of his life, he finally had a big hit with *Die Zauberflöte* - *The Magic Flute* - one of his last substantial compositions. Sadly, though, the opportunity to enjoy better times was rudely cut short two months after the first performance in his home town of Vienna by sudden illness and untimely death at age 35. *The Magic Flute*, now the most widely performed opera in the world, is a delightful fairy tale full of wit, magic, and mischief. The overture to this beloved work opens with a grand proclamation: the principal three notes from the key of E flat. What follows is a lively complex sounding fugue cleverly based on a simple theme allegedly “borrowed” from Muzio Clementi, a rival with whom Mozart once sparred in a piano face off in front of Emperor Joseph II.

Mozart: Papageno's Song: Der Vogelfanger bin ich ja from The Magic Flute (1791)


This famous aria from the Magic Flute is sung by birdcatcher, Papageno, who enters covered in bird plumage after saving the prince Tamino from a serpent. He sings comically of catching girls in a manner not unlike that in which he catches birds in his net.

Puccini: Vissi d'arte, vissi d'amore from Tosca (1900)

At a crucial point in the story of Puccini's opera *Tosca*, the central character is presented with a stark choice. Either *Tosca* must accept the amorous advances of Scarpia, chief of the secret police, or she will see her lover Cavaradossi put to death. In this aria she sings “I lived for art, I lived for love, never did I harm a living creature ... why, O Lord, why dost thou repay me thus?” As questions of life go, you don't get much bigger than that.

Leoncavallo: Silvio! A quest'ora..., decidi il mio destin (duet) from Pagliacci (1892)

In the story of *Pagliacci*, life and art become tragically intertwined, as we witness the jealous husband Canio, head of a troupe of actors, confuse his reality with the role of the clown he plays. The clown, *Pagliaccio*, discovers his wife is cheating on him only Canio reads this as evidence his real wife, *Nedda*, is untrue. The



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irony is that he is actually right but for the wrong reasons! She *is* cheating on him in real life too as becomes apparent in this romantic duet between Nedda and her lover Silvio. "Decide my fate" Silvio exclaims to Nedda as he pleads for her love. For those of us who like to get our references from *Seinfeld* rather than grand opera, recall the episode in which Jerry and his friends plan to see the opera Pagliacci. In a subplot "Crazy" Joe Davola is out to put the "kibosh" on Jerry and in a comedic parallel with the plot of Pagliacci, Joe Davola dates Elaine only to develop a jealous obsession when she cools on him. Accusing her of infidelity while confusing her name with Nedda he dresses as a clown, causing consternation for Jerry and Elaine at the performance of Pagliacci when Kramer tells them he sold his ticket to "some nut in a clown suit".

Sibelius Karelia Suite Op 11 (1893)

As the place where he would later spend his honeymoon, Karelia, a province in the south-eastern corner of Finland, had a special place in Jean Sibelius's affections. The *Karelia Suite* consists of three pieces the composer took from a larger score he wrote for a historical pageant performed in Viipuri depicting scenes from Karelian history. The three movements consist of an *Intermezzo* featuring the sounds of a march-like procession with horn calls over *pianissimo* strings, a sombre *Ballade* reflecting the deposed figure of a Swedish king listening to a minstrel (sung by the cor anglais) at Viipuri castle, and the jaunty *Alla Marcia*, featuring the prelude to a battle siege. As one of his early works, the Karelia music shows little evidence for the remarkable and powerful new tonalities he developed as he transitioned into the 20th century but as the great conductor Herbert von Karajan pointed out in the Intermezzo "there is this sense of the "Ur-Wald", the primeval forest, the feeling of some elemental power, that one is dealing with something profound." As such, the music is unmistakably the work of the great Finnish composer and one that remains enduringly popular.

Mozart: D'Oreste, d'Ajace from Idomeneo (1781)

Based on Greek mythology and set in the Island of Crete after the Trojan War, *Idomeneo* was composed by Mozart 10 years before *The Magic Flute*. Unlike the later comic opera which was sung in German, *Idomeneo* is a more serious affair sung in Italian. While most of the

characters toward the conclusion come out all smiles and smelling of roses, the one exception is Electra, the daughter of the Greek King Agamemnon, who is furious that her beloved Prince Idamante, son of Idomeneo, has fallen into the arms of her arch rival. In this aria she exclaims against the injustice of her fate as she contemplates following her doomed brother Orestes into the infernal abyss.

Rossini: Largo al factotum from the Barber of Seville (1816)

This aria, much parodied in animated cartoons from *Tom and Jerry* to *Bugs Bunny*, gives Figaro, the central character of this opera (and also of Mozart's earlier work *The Marriage of Figaro*), a chance to explain exactly why he's the most famous barber in Seville. Requiring the utmost skill to encompass its rapid 6/8 tempo and tricky lyrics laden with Italian superlatives, it's the perfect exemplar of bragging at its most bravissimo.

Beethoven Symphony No. 7 in A major Op. 92 (1813)

Imagine time warping back to Vienna, 200 years ago except by some mishap we arrive in the year 1813, one year late! It's been more than two decades since Mozart's death but there's a new player in town, Ludwig van B. Fast cut to the local university where there's an important concert about to take place: a charity event held to honor soldiers wounded in battle against the armies of Napoleon at Hanau. In the orchestra, some of the leading musical luminaries of the day are powdering their wigs: among them on violin, Louis Spohr, and on timpani, the court composer Antonio Salieri (the central character who plots against Mozart in the movie *Amadeus*). At the helm is the composer himself, who despite near total deafness conducts with maniacal fire and energy. Suddenly we realize we are witnessing the premier performance of Beethoven's seventh symphony.

The concert is a resounding success not least because of the overwhelming reaction to the symphony's gloriously inspired second movement. On first hearing of this movement, the audience are in uproar demanding an immediate encore. For a composer, you don't get much better than that, and Beethoven knows it, remarking that this is indeed one his most successful compositions.

The first movement starts with an unusually long introduction featuring ascending scales - a characteristic touch for the man who

somehow managed to breath life into a bunch of scales creating the world's most spiritually sublime violin concerto. The introduction leads by way of a series of 61 repeated E notes into a lively *Vivace* sprinkled with dance-like rhythms and unexpected key changes.

The famous second movement, marked *Allegretto*, is the slowest of the four movements, but its quiet opening melody, which sounds like a funeral march, pulses with brooding energy. The theme starts in violas, cellos, and basses, and gradually builds as we hear a second powerful theme enter, played simultaneously with the first. The two themes spiral around one another as they pass through different layers of the orchestra reaching a magisterial climax that launches us into a set of variations heralding periods of great tranquillity alternating with stark moments of ominous foreboding. In modern times the emotionally charged music from the *Allegretto* has been used in numerous movies and even formed the basis of an entire set of variations by the French jazz pianist, Jacques Loussier, otherwise famous for his unique take on the works of JS Bach.

The movement that follows the *Allegretto* completely blows the sombre mood out of the water. We are suddenly presented with a joyfully bucolic scherzo that the British conductor Sir Thomas Beecham jokingly compared to a bunch of yaks jumping about. But it's in the irrepressibly celebratory finale where we hear what Richard Wagner had meant when he described this symphony as the "apotheosis of the dance". Beethoven spins the rhythmic swirling figure that powers this movement with relentless abandon. Yet always on the look out for the unexpected, towards the end of the movement the composer introduces a dramatic passage where E and D sharp alternate and D sharp is played in unison with D natural. As Hector Berlioz later wrote admiringly "One might imagine that the result would be a dreadful dissonance, or at least a lack of harmonic clarity; yet this is not the case... Beethoven did not write music for the eyes. The coda, launched by this threatening pedal, has extraordinary brilliance, and is fully worthy of bringing this work to its conclusion – a masterpiece of technical skill, taste, imagination, craftsmanship and inspiration."

So the show is over and the audience, dazzled and delighted, leave. It's time to head back, as we say goodbye to Ludwig van B and his fellow musicians, to the 21st century

Program notes by Julian Brown, SVS concertmaster



Haitian-American soprano **Jouvancia Jean-Baptiste** is fast emerging as a true talent in the opera world, a lush lirico-spinto soprano well-suited to the roles of Puccini, Verdi, Strauss, Mozart, and the operas of the verismo genre. In her second season as a Principal Resident Artist with Opera San Jose, Ms Jean-Baptiste will perform the roles of Violetta Valery in a co-production with Opera Santa Barbara of *La traviata*, and as Marguerite in Gonoud's *Faust*.

Recently, she sang a successful run as Nedda in *Pagliacci* as part of the Principal Resident Ensemble with Opera San Jose. During her first season with the company, Ms Jean-Baptiste bowed as Mimi in *La Boheme*, as the passionate and fiery title role in *Tosca*, and as Tolstoy's doomed heroine in David Carlson's *Anna Karenina*, her professional leading role debut in the West Coast Premiere of the opera, under the baton of Stewart Robertson, director of Atlantic Classical Orchestra and former Artistic Director of Florida Grand Opera.

Ms. Jean-Baptiste has also appeared in the role of The Abbess in *Suor Angelica* with Florida Grand Opera, and previously she sang with West Bay Opera, understudying the role of Cio-cio-san in *Madama Butterfly*. She has also performed the title role in *Suor Angelica*, under the baton of Elaine Rinaldi, Music Director of Orchestra Miami. Ms. Jean-Baptiste has participated in the Intermezzo Young Artist Program, and she was a finalist and the 2011 Wagner Society of Northern California Winner in the Irene Dalis Vocal Competition. Born in New York City, she has made her home in South Florida for the last twenty years, and studies voice with Oscar Diaz, Jr., Music Director of Performers Music Institute in Miami.

Ms Jean-Baptiste is appearing courtesy of Opera San Jose.

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Baritone **Krassen Karagiozov** was born in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria, where he began his musical studies as a pianist. He participated in and won international competitions in both piano and voice, including the "Tz. Diakovich" in Sofia. In addition to concert work as a collaborative pianist in Bulgaria, Turkey, and USA he appeared as baritone soloist for a recital and recordings for the Bulgarian National Radio. During the 2008 - 2009 season, he made his debut as a member of Opera San José's resident

principal artists, appearing in the title role of Eugene Onegin, Sgt. Belcore (The Elixir of Love), Guglielmo (Così fan tutte) and Escamillo (Carmen). Roles performed recently by Mr. Karagiozov include Gianni Schicchi for Hawaii Performing Arts Festival, Silvio in I Pagliacci, Marcello in La Bohème, Figaro in Barbiere di Siviglia, Angelotti in Tosca, Vronsky in Anna Karenina, Count Almaviva in Le Nozze di Figaro, Dandini in La Cenerentola, Lescaut in Manon for OSJ.

Among the roles that he has performed are Masetto, Germont, Sharpless, Don Giovanni, Tarquinius, Silvio, Schaunard, Harlequin, Peter, Raoul de Gardefeu and Prometheus. Mr. Karagiozov has appeared with opera companies such as Opera Carolina, Opera San José, Lake George Opera Festival, Spoleto Opera Festival, Aspen Opera Theater, The Opera Company of North Carolina, Opera Roanoke, Piedmont Opera Theater and Capital Opera Raleigh. He has also appeared as a soloist for the Symphony Silicon Valley, the Bulgarian Radio-Symphony Orchestra, the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra, Carolina Chamber Symphony, Winston-Salem Symphony Orchestra, and Enid Symphony Orchestra in a concert featuring the world-renowned soprano Leona Mitchell. Mr. Karagiozov is a North Carolina district winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and First Prize winner of the Charlotte Opera Guild Competition as well as a finalist of the Irene Dalis Vocal Competition and Heinz Rehfuss Vocal Competition. Future engagements include Henry in The Gift of the Magi for Hidden Valley and debut for NYCO as Marquis D'Obigny in La Traviata.

Mr Karagiozov is appearing courtesy of Opera San Jose.



Michael Paul Gibson is one of the most versatile and experienced conductors in the Bay Area since 1975. Gibson founded the Silicon Valley Symphony in 2001 and is Music Director and Conductor. Maestro Michael Paul served as Conductor and Founding Music Director of the Foothill Orchestra (1999), Menlo Park Chorus

(1998), and Colorado Springs Chamber Music Society (1971). His experience includes conducting Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, Concert Chorus, Church Choir, Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Musical Theater and Ballet Pit Orchestra. Michael's charismatic energy garners respect and reviews from critics, audiences and musicians. Maestro Gibson conducts the Nutcracker Ballet at the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts in December for the third straight year, in collaboration with the San Jose Dance Theatre. In addition to conducting, he has expertise in recording and editing audio and video of concerts and performances, and he makes the recordings of the Silicon Valley Symphony available on its website (siliconvalleysymphony.net).

Maestro Gibson has had master classes with Georg Solti and Carlo Maria Giulini working with the Chicago Symphony, Neville Marriner with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Pinchas Zukerman at San Francisco State University, and Peter Schickele (PDQ Bach) with the Denver Symphony. He studied orchestral conducting with Bernard Rubenstein (NU), John Miller (Denver Sym.), and Laszlo Varga (SFSU); instrumental conducting from John Paynter (NU); and choral conducting with Margaret Hillis (Chicago Symphony Chorus) at Northwestern University from which he holds Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting degrees. He played trombone in the Denver Symphony, Bohemian Club Orchestra, and the San Francisco 49ers Band. Gibson is also Music Director and CEO of the Bay Area Music Foundation, a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation, fiscal sponsor of the SVS. He offers expertise in business, operating his own company, BACH to Music. For details and resume, please visit www.bach2music.com.



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