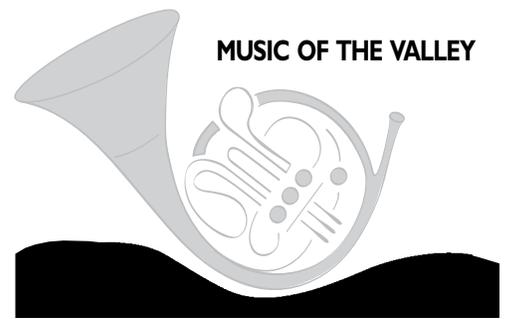


# Livermore-Amador Symphony

Arthur P. Barnes, Music Director & Conductor

December 3, 2011, 8 p.m.

Bankhead Theater, Livermore



## Beethoven, Wagner, and Sibelius

Prelude Talk at 7 p.m. by Arthur P. Barnes, LAS conductor and music director;  
Peter Curzon, LAS percussionist and music committee member; and Alan Frank, LAS Association president

### Overture to *Rienzi*

**Richard Wagner**  
(1813–1883)

### Choral Fantasy

**Ludwig van Beethoven**  
(1770–1827)

- I. Adagio
- II. Finale

Ben Malkevitch, piano  
Pacific Masterworks Chorus (Greg Lyne, director)

### INTERMISSION

### Symphony No. 2

**Jean Sibelius**  
(1865–1957)

- I. Allegretto
- II. Tempo andante, ma rubato
- III. Vivacissimo
- IV. Finale: Allegro moderato

**CONDUCTOR**  
Arthur P. Barnes

**ASSISTANT  
CONDUCTOR**  
Robert Williams

**FIRST VIOLIN**  
Kristina Anderson  
*Concertmaster*  
Norman Back  
Phillida Cheminai  
JoAnn Cox  
Justin Dean  
Judy Eckart  
Amy Lighter  
Nancy Ly\*  
Jackie Maruskin  
Doug Morrison  
Gianni Song  
Tristen Thalhuber\*  
Vanessa Warner

**SECOND VIOLIN**  
Ursula Goldstein  
*Principal*  
Stephanie Black  
Mary Burchett  
Lisa Burkhart  
Jeana Ernst  
Denise Leddon  
Jackie McBride  
Virginia McFann  
Margaret Morrad  
Leslie Stevens  
John Strader  
Beth Wilson

**VIOLA**  
Judy Beck  
*Principal*  
Lynda Alvarez  
Ann Anastasio  
Audrey Horning  
Girish Kowligi\*  
Hazelle Miloradovitch

**CELLO**  
Jim Aikin  
*Principal*  
Naomi Adams  
Ariadna Dang\*  
Kara Holthe  
Hildi Kang  
Andy Ly\*  
Sharon Schumacher  
Joe Swenson  
Eve Tieck  
Aaron Urton

**STRING BASS**  
Nick James  
*Principal*  
Alan Frank  
Ray Hoobler  
Patricia Lay  
Nathaniel Mayne\*  
Dylan Widjaja

**FLUTE**  
Marianne Beeler  
Nan Davies

**PICCOLO**  
Nan Davies

**OBOE**  
Eva Langfeldt  
Jeanne Brown

**CLARINET**  
Lesley Watson  
Kathy Boster

**BASSOON**  
Doug Stark  
Lynn Stasko

**HORN**  
Christine-Ann  
Immesoete  
Jim Hartman  
Bryan Waugh  
Robert Williams

**TRUMPET**  
Michael Portnoff  
Anthony Manuel  
Brian Maddox

**TROMBONE**  
Diane Schildbach  
Mark Hil  
Chuck Smith

**TUBA**  
Betsy Hausburg

**TIMPANI**  
April Nissen

**PERCUSSION**  
Peter Curzon  
Paul Kasameyer  
Walter Nissen  
Beth Wilson

**LIBRARIANS**  
The Horning Family and  
Anne Les

\* Student player—high school or younger

## Overture to *Rienzi*

**Richard Wagner  
(1818–1883)**

The music of Richard Wagner epitomizes the heights of Romanticism, and yet it also progresses beyond the Romantic movement. His musical language overturns all the accepted concepts of harmony, as it points to the beginnings of the post-Romantic period and beyond. Undoubtedly, Wagner is regarded as one of the pillars on which Western music subsequently rests. His music dramas, conceived within the framework of his famed *Gesamtkunstwerk*—loosely meaning the amalgamation of all the art forms into one “art”—are massive works steeped in Teutonic legends, myth, and mythology and a supreme sense of nationalistic fervor.

In 1837 Wagner read Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s novel *Rienzi, Last of the Roman Tribunes*, which had been published in 1835. Wagner immediately recognized the potential for an opera based on the story of the last Roman tribune. That same year, Wagner was named music director of the newly built theater in Riga, Latvia. Wagner felt that Riga lacked adequate resources to stage an opera on the grand scale he envisioned for *Rienzi*. He hoped that the premiere of his *Rienzi* would take place in Paris. He enlisted the aid of Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791–1864), then the leading opera composer in Paris. Meyerbeer wrote letters of recommendation to the manager and conductor of the Paris Opéra, but without success. Instead, the opera was first performed at the Dresden Court Theater, in October 1842, after Wagner had moved from Riga to Dresden.

Although it is rarely performed today and regularly regarded with scorn, *Rienzi* was the greatest popular success of Wagner’s career and the work that made him famous almost literally overnight. *Rienzi* is the only so-called grand opera Wagner ever wrote, and although he may well have succeeded in his attempt “to outdo all previous examples with sumptuous extravagance,” even he eventually admitted that the work gave no hint of his ultimate significance as a composer—“in it there is not yet evident any important instance of the view of art that I later came to assert.”

*Rienzi* would ultimately be eclipsed by Wagner’s later works. The opera’s rousing overture, a marvelous orchestral showpiece, and the tenor aria that provides its principal melody—*Rienzi*’s moving prayer, “Allmächt’ger Vater, blick herab!” (“Almighty Father, look down upon me!”)—are the only pieces from Wagner’s first success that are still performed with regularity.

## Choral Fantasy

**Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770–1827)**

After having contributed both as composer and performer to a series of charity concerts in 1807 and 1808, Beethoven received permission to use Vienna’s Theater-an-der-Wien for a concert for his own benefit on December 22, 1808. He chose this opportunity to reveal to the world some of his major new compositions in a program that consisted entirely of his own works in their first performances. Among the new works were such major pieces as the Piano Concerto No. 4 (Beethoven himself was the soloist) and the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, as well as the concert aria “Ah! Perfido” and several movements from the Mass in C, Opus 86. That list would seem to be enough to exhaust an audience (not to mention the orchestra!), especially when all the works were utterly unfamiliar, difficult, and performed with little rehearsal.

Incredibly, Beethoven decided that it wasn’t enough; he

wanted a closing piece. He felt that it would not be fair to either the work or the audience to put the Fifth Symphony at the end of such a long program—although it would make a rousing conclusion—because people would simply be too tired to pay much attention to it. So he put the Fifth at the beginning of the second half (the Sixth—the *Pastoral* Symphony—opened the evening) and quickly composed a work designed specifically as a concert-closer, employing all the forces he had gathered for the event (chorus, orchestra, and piano soloist), arranged in a variation form designed for maximum variety of color and for “easy listening.”

He went back to a song, “Gegenliebe” (“Requited Love”), that he had composed more than a dozen years previously but never published; ordered a new text written in a hurry by the poet Christoph Kuffner; and set to work.

When the time came for the performance, just about everything that could possibly go wrong did. The concert ran four hours, the hall was unheated and bitterly cold, and the soprano had already ruined the aria out of nervousness. To top it all off, the *Choral Fantasy* fell apart, and Beethoven stopped the performance to begin it again. The financial outcome of the evening is unknown, but it certainly had a psychological effect on him: He never played the piano in public again.

The *Choral Fantasy* is one of Beethoven’s most original and challenging works, and, according to Barry Cooper, a noted Beethoven scholar, it has “a Romantic wildness that easily obscures its ingeniously created design.” The melodic shape and harmony of the choral theme—taken from “Gegenliebe”—foreshadow the “Ode to Joy” theme Beethoven used in his Ninth Symphony. The piano writing in the *Fantasy* resembles that of Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 4. In form, the *Fantasy* consists of a rambling piano solo, a set of variations on a march for piano and orchestra, and the final choral section.

## German Text

Schmeichelnd hold und lieblich klingen  
unseres Lebens Harmonien,  
und dem Schönheitssinn entschwingen  
Blumen sich, die ewig blühen.  
Fried und Freude gleiten freundlich  
wie der Wellen Wechselspiel.  
Was sich drängte rau und feindlich,  
ordnet sich zu Hochgefühl.

Wenn der Töne Zauber walten  
und des Wortes Weihe spricht,  
muss sich Herrliches gestalten,  
Nacht und Stürme werden Licht.  
Äuss’re Ruhe, inn’re Wonne  
herrschen für den Glücklichen.  
Doch der Künste Frühlingssonne  
lässt aus beiden Licht entstehn.

Großes, das ins Herz gedungen,  
blüht dann neu und schön empor.  
Hat ein Geist sich aufgeschwungen,  
hallt ihm stets ein Geisterchor.  
Nehmt denn hin, ihr schönen Seelen,  
fro die Gaben schöner Kunst  
Wenn sich Lieb und Kraft vermählen,  
lohnt den Menschen Göttergunst.

## English Translation

Graceful, charming, and sweet is the sound  
Of our life’s harmonies,  
And from a sense of beauty arise  
Flowers that eternally bloom.  
Peace and joy advance in perfect concord,  
Like the changing play of the waves.  
All that was harsh and hostile,  
Has turned into sublime delight.

When music’s enchantment reigns,  
Speaking of the sacred word,  
Magnificence takes form,  
Night and the tempest turn to light:  
In outward peace and inward bliss  
Reign the fortunate ones.  
All art in the spring’s sun  
Lets light flow from both.

Greatness, once it has pierced the heart,  
Then blooms anew in all its beauty.  
Once one’s being has taken flight,  
A choir of spirits resounds in response.  
Accept then, you beautiful souls,  
Joyously the gifts of high art.  
When love and strength are united,  
God’s grace is bestowed upon Man.

## Symphony No. 2

**Jean Sibelius  
(1865–1957)**

Jean Sibelius was born to a middle-class family in a small town less than a hundred miles north of Helsinki. As was considered proper at that time, the family spoke Swedish (Jean

learned Finnish later in school) but was definitely Finnish in its outlook. His father died when Jean was 2, and almost all influences on him after that were female. At that time, Finland was theoretically an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire. In practice, however, the Russians were exerting more and more control over Finland.

Although not exactly a child prodigy in the sense of a Mozart or a Mendelssohn (his first composition was at age 10, and he began violin at 14), Sibelius was nevertheless an accomplished musician, with prospects of becoming a violin virtuoso, and transferred from Helsinki University Law School to the Academy of Music when he could no longer repress the urge to devote his life to music. After graduating, he traveled to Berlin and Vienna before returning and building a house in the country, where he lived for the rest of his very long life. Nature was always a strong influence on him and, to many, his music forcefully evokes the grandeur and wildness of the Finnish countryside.

A year after he wrote his famously nationalistic tone poem “Finlandia,” Sibelius, while on vacation in Italy, began creating the musical ideas that would eventually become his Second Symphony. He premiered the work in Helsinki on March 8, 1902, to widespread acclaim. This symphony quickly found conductors in other nations who boosted it to its rightful place as one of the top-10 most performed symphonies.

The Finnish conductor Robert Kajanus, for years one of Sibelius’ most ardent proponents, immediately suggested a fairly explicit nationalistic programmatic reasoning for the second symphony. To him, the andante section was a “protest against all the injustice,” the scherzo a “picture of frenzied preparation,” and the finale “lighter and confident prospects for the future.” With “Finlandia” so fresh in the Finnish public’s mind, it’s no surprise that Kajanus’ ideas sat rather well with the Finns. Sibelius denied any such associations, however. He wanted the symphony to be taken at face value—as absolute music, without any meaning beyond the notes on the page and in the ear.

And in fact, there is nothing anywhere in the recorded history of Sibelius’ work on the Second Symphony that supports any of Kajanus’ ideas. Indeed, one could make as much of a case—which is to say a weak one—for the Second Symphony’s representing Italy, thanks to Sibelius’ holiday there. We know for certain that Sibelius was sketching a motive that ended up in the slow movement while he was in Rapallo, Italy, in February 1901. In his sketches, he associated it with the encounter between Don Juan (the central figure of Mozart’s opera *Don Giovanni*) and Death. Another sketch is entitled “Christus.” This theme also ended up in the slow movement of the symphony.

The first movement begins with a gentle song for the strings, in D major. Whereas in the First Symphony, important thematic materials can be heard in the clarinet introduction, the very first chords in the Second Symphony, with their rising three-note progression, form a kind of motive for the whole symphony. The thematic material of the beginning is given a dramatic manifestation, and finally the musical motives of the movement are presented in a grand, masterly metamorphosis. Despite moments of excitement, the movement ends with the pastoral idyllic quality of the opening.

In the second movement, Scandinavian coldness is most apparent, starting with the roll of timpani and pizzicato strings. The bassoons enter with a somber theme representing Death’s visit to Don Juan. After a strident climax and silence, there is a moment of total peace that builds to another climax with a

haunting motive from the lower half of the orchestra. After a rather Mediterranean conversation between the trumpet and flute, we hear a passage with hurrying strings, heavy falling figures, and piercing woodwinds. Apparently this was inspired by an experience Sibelius had had while staying in a mountain hut one night, when he heard a mysterious repeated knocking on the door even though no one was there and there were no tracks in the snow. This is all subjected to what Sibelius referred to as “a spiritualized development,” with the movement ending fortissimo.

The exuberant third movement is a scherzo with much scurrying of strings and a poignant folksong-like melody from the oboe invoking the patriotic spirit of the Finns. After the trio has been repeated twice, a bridge passage builds seamlessly to the finale.

The finale starts like a great journey across the Finnish wasteland, with the melody being accompanied by a persistent two-note rising figure from the tuba and basses. This is interrupted twice by an elegiac expression by the woodwinds, over heaving strings. These passages were in memory of Sibelius’ sister-in-law, who had tragically committed suicide. The sorrow is overcome, however, and the symphony builds momentum with trumpet fanfares and ends majestically and exultantly in deliverance from tyranny.

*Program notes compiled by Jeff Pelletier*

*Program booklet edited by Eva Langfeldt*

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## **BEN MALKEVITCH**

### **Piano Soloist**

Pianist Ben Malkevitch graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Music with a master’s degree in Collaborative Piano.

## **PACIFIC MASTERWORKS CHORUS**

### **and DR. GREG LYNE, Artistic Director**

Founded in 2010, the Pacific Masterworks Chorus is devoted to providing great choral music throughout the Bay Area. The chorus, directed by Dr. Greg Lyne, embraces a wide repertoire, ranging from works both a cappella and accompanied, from ancient to modern.

Lyne holds a doctorate in choral conducting from the University of Northern Colorado. He works full-time as a coach for choruses and quartets throughout the country and as a clinician for musical ensembles of all types. Lyne is also the musical director San Jose-based Voices in Harmony, a competitive top-10 chorus in the Barbershop Harmony Society. His reputation in choral directing, of all types of music, extends around the world. He has conducted over 300 festival and all-state choirs throughout the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii, and in Canada, England, Scotland, and Russia. In Russia he presented master classes at the St. Petersburg Conservatory of Music to European musicians. He has also served as guest conductor of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

The Pacific Masterworks Chorus will present its own concert on December 16 at the Firehouse Arts Center in Pleasanton. The performance will feature the enchanting *Carols and Lullabies: Christmas in the Southwest* by the contemporary composer Conrad Susa.

## GRANTS and MATCHING GIFTS

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and Livermore-Amador Symphony Guild  
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## NEXT CONCERT

**February 11, 2012**

***Something for Everyone***

### **Smetana**

Vltava (The Moldau)

### **Saint-Saëns**

Danse macabre

### **Dvořák**

Wind Serenade

### **Davies**

Orkney Wedding, with Sunrise

*plus solos by winners of the  
2011–2012 Competition for Young Musicians:*

### **Debussy**

Première Rhapsodie

Clifford Tam, clarinet

### **Rachmaninoff**

Concerto No. 2 in C minor

Opus 18 (1st movement)

Christine Xu, piano



## PACIFIC MASTERWORKS CHORUS

### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Greg Lyne

### ACCOMPANISTS

Danielle Naler (*on leave*)

Ben Malkevitch

Bruce Olstad

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