

Advertisement

**Entertainment**

# Pioneer Valley Symphony readies for 80th season

Updated Jan 29, 2019; Posted Oct 03, 2018



Support local journalism that serves you

By [Clifton Noble Jr. | Special to The Republican](#)

The [Pioneer Valley Symphony](#) launches its 80th season on Saturday, Oct. 13, at with a fascinating concert blending cutting-edge composition with visionary Baroque music that sounds like it was written yesterday!

The concert will take place at Greenfield High School on 21 Barr Ave. at 7:30 p.m.

This season is the first under the leadership of newly appointed PVS Music Director Tianhui Ng. His program ranges from *Les Elements*, written in 1737 by the French Baroque composer Jean-Fery Rebel to *Once I blinked, nothing was the same*, written in 2015 by Israeli-born composer Chaya Czernowin, currently the Walter Bigelow Rosen Professor of Music at Harvard University. To complement these rarities (commissioned by the Bamberg, Germany Symphony, the Czernowin will be given its United States premiere by the PVS), Maestro Ng has selected Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, and Richard Strauss's rollicking tone poem *Don Juan*.

Advertisement

*Les Elements* begins with a movement entitled *Chaos*, a swirling, dissonant texture more at home in the early 20th century than the mid-1700s.

"Isn't it radical" Ng said in a recent interview, "to think that Rebel thought of creating such a sound to represent chaos in the eighteenth century? Now it is standard in almost every action film with a sci-fi or supernatural element!"

Advertisement



It will be interesting to see which piece the audience thinks sounds more *avant-garde*, Rebel's *Chaos*, or Czernowin's *Once I Blinked...* Like many of Czernowin's pieces, this one employs a number of extended techniques for the instrumentalists - methods of making sound with their instrument that are new and perhaps not experienced by either players or listeners.

"I've been very aware of the Orchestra's track record of playing new music," Ng said, "and knew that everyone would at the very least be intrigued by a piece of music that presented something new. I was also keen to work to keep expanding the orchestra's vocabulary of sounds. Many of these techniques have been around for at least 60 years, but they remain new to many of us in orchestras. Our audiences have become accustomed to them via the world of film music. I'm excited about how this creates new possibilities for our sound palette moving forwards."

Ng said there were a few raised eyebrows at the first rehearsal of "Once I blinked..." but that it soon became fun.

Advertisement

"We dove right into investigating how to perform some of the textural colors that are created by aleatory and chance operations that were set up by our composer."

Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* is the only work on the program that Ng has conducted before. "I am young enough that much of this repertoire is new to me," he said. "With the exception of the Schubert all of it is fresh. I was blown away by a performance of *Les Elements* by the Deutsche Symphonie Orchester earlier last year, and have been looking for the perfect opportunity to perform it. I think it's a great pairing with the music of Czernowin! And I'm super excited about *Don Juan*. It's a personal favorite."

Richard Strauss's orchestral music has a reputation for being big, virtuosic and challenging, and *Don Juan* is no exception. Rehearsals proceeded one step at a time, according to Ng.

"It's a little like baking a cake that takes one and a half months to prepare," he said. "We're making sure that each ingredient is well prepared before introducing the next. We can't wait to share it with everyone in the Valley."

It is a program that everyone in the Valley will be excited to hear, as well. Programming repertoire standards side by side with iconoclastic curiosities drives home the point that symphonic music is far from dormant. Rather, it is a new and ever-changing art form, growing and changing along with its audience, guided by the able hands and fertile imagination of gifted conductors like Ng.



The remainder of the PVS's 80th season presents a host of musical delicacies. On Dec. 15 they present "A Harry Potter Holiday."

On Feb.1, 2019 it's "A Symphonic Valentine," featuring the Beethoven Violin Concerto. On March 16 "Jubilant Symphonies" pairs Haydn's 100th with Mahler's 5th, and on May 11 Beethoven's 9th Symphony is featured in "A Call to Peace."

Youth Concerts take place on Nov. 10 and April 6, 2019. Led by Interim Chorus Director Gregory W. Brown, the PVS Chorus and Chamber Choir will perform on Nov. 18.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit the PVS online at [www.pvsoc.org](http://www.pvsoc.org)

Note to readers: if you purchase something through one of our affiliate links we may earn a commission.

---

## Around the web

### If You Like to Play, this City-Building Game is a Must-Have. No Install.

Forge Of Empires | Sponsored

---

### Don't Do It Yourself - Hire a South Hadley Handyman for Your Home Projects

HomeAdvisor | Sponsored

### These Are Probably the Funniest Airport Welcome Signs Ever

TravelerMaster | Sponsored

---

### New Senior Apartments Near South Hadley Are A Dream Come True

Senior Living | Sponsored

---

### Be the First to Know Joe's Running Mate!

Biden Victory Fund | Sponsored



---

## 6 Outrageous Credit Cards If You Have Good Credit

NerdWallet | Sponsored

---

## President Trump is “One Large S.T.D.” and He’s Infected Gary Cohn

Masslive

## Inside Tom Brady and Gisele Bundchen’s Eco-Conscious Los Angeles Estate

Masslive

---

## If You Like to Play, this City-Building Game is Addictive. No Install.

Forge of Empires - Free Online Game | Sponsored

## New Assisted Living Apartments Near South Hadley Are A Dream Come True For Seniors. Research Assisted Living South Hadley

Senior Living/Assisted Living | Sponsored

---

## Don't Do It Yourself - Hire a Handyman for Your Home Projects

HomeAdvisor | Sponsored

---

## Woman and child, struck by vehicle in parking lot of Big Y in Ludlow, injured and taken to hospital

Masslive

## Salem Police Officer Dana Mazola killed in head-on car crash

Masslive

---

---

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#), [Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement](#), and [Your California Privacy Rights](#) (each updated 1/1/20).

© 2020 Advance Local Media LLC. All rights reserved ([About Us](#)).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Advance Local.

[Community Rules](#) apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

**ADVANCE**  
**LOCAL**

[Ad Choices](#)



Support local journalism that covers you