PRESENTS

2010–2011 HAL AND JEANETTE SEGERSTROM FAMILY FOUNDATION CLASSICAL SERIES

BEETHOVEN’S PIANO CONCERTOS

CARL ST.CLAIR, conductor
ARNALDO COHEN, piano
RAY CHEN, violin

BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Romance No. 1 in G Major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 40
RAY CHEN

Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19
Allegro con brio
Adagio
Rondo: Molto allegro
ARNALDO COHEN

—INTERMISSION—

BEETHOVEN

Romance No. 2 in F Major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 50
RAY CHEN

Concerto No. 3 in C Minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 37
Allegro con brio
Largo
Rondo: Allegro
ARNALDO COHEN

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SEGERSTROM CENTER FOR THE ARTS
Beethoven’s Piano Concertos

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770–1827)

Romance No. 1 in G Major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 40

Instrumentation: flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, strings, solo violin. Performance time: 8 minutes.

Sure, they sound romantic. But why are they called romances?

Toward the end of the Classical period, the term “romance” emerged as a catch-all term for certain works, but especially works like Beethoven’s two romances for violin: relatively short, but long enough to make a serious statement — longer than the typical art song or concert aria. It also usually has a cantabile quality we associate with romance — a smooth, flowing line (cantabile means singable). In addition, a bit of virtuosic display on a solo instrument can’t hurt.

Composed for violin and orchestra, Beethoven’s Romance No. 1 combines stateliness and sentiment in equal measure, though this balance can be affected by the tempo chosen for performance. Some violinists and conductors choose a typical andante, or walking pace; at that rate, the romance usually clocks in at around seven minutes. But others choose a much slower pace that seems to magnify the emotion, extending the piece beyond eight minutes.

The romance is built around a beautiful melody that returns again and again, taking the rondo form that Beethoven also chose for the third movement of his piano concertos. And as in the concertos, each repetition of the main rondo theme adds meaning.

Both of Beethoven’s romances for violin are dedicated to violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh.

Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19

Instrumentation: flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, strings, solo piano. Performance time: 28 minutes.

Even with a scorecard, the chronology of Beethoven’s compositions is difficult to follow. With the piano concertos, as with the romances for violin, he wrote No. 2 earlier than No. 1, though even the opus numbers don’t clarify this fact. Music historians tell us that Beethoven was sketching musical ideas for his concertos while he was still in his teens, and that the first version of his Piano Concerto No. 2 dates from 1795, when he was 25, though he did not finalize it until 1798. It was published three years later.

Many listeners take these dates as guideposts to navigate Beethoven’s stylistic periods, which are generally divided into early, middle and late; they identify his Piano Concerto No. 2 as the earliest of the early concertos, the most reminiscent of Mozart and Haydn. But the delay also reflects the seriousness of his intent regarding the concerto form. Beautiful? Yes, and it met with immediate success after its premiere in 1795. Yet Beethoven expressed dissatisfaction with it, noting that it did not represent his best work and submitting it for publication with reluctance.

Part of its success was surely as a showcase for Beethoven’s impressive technique (he was soloist at the premiere). From the first movement’s triumphant opening statement, the concerto requires dazzling fingerwork in both hands. For the first movement cadenza — an unaccompanied passage that was often improvised in the classical era — most pianists choose the very challenging, almost fugal version that Beethoven wrote much later, in 1809. This is fol-

lowed by a slow (adagio) movement of great tenderness,

Listeners who think they don’t know this concerto may experience a jolt of recognition as soon as the joyful third movement begins, a romp that is melodic and playful. Even during its occasional modulations into minor, it never loses its sunny disposition.
Romance No. 2 in F Major for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 50

Instrumentation: flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, timpani, strings, solo violin. Performance time: 9 minutes.

Beethoven’s two romances for violin are the closest of siblings. No. 2 is in F major, while No. 1 is in G major. Both were dedicated to the same violin virtuoso. No. 2 was published in 1805, two years after No. 1 (although it had been composed in 1798).

Musically, No. 2 shares the stately pace and singing quality of No. 1, as well as its rondo structure, which allows Beethoven to repeat the theme with additional material at each iteration.

Some listeners hear the melancholy of lost love in this romance’s languorous melody, while others hear a more philosophical musing, poetic and contemplative.

Concerto No. 3 in C Minor for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 37

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, strings, solo piano. Performance time: 34 minutes.

In 1979, a sleeper-hit movie about coming of age in a college town transformed a specialized sports term into an everyday household phrase: breaking away. And in his Piano Concerto No. 3, completed in 1800, we hear Beethoven breaking away from the classical era, like a bicycle racer making his move. With this concerto Beethoven signals a new kind of thinking about the concerto form, expanding its scope and force.

Marked C-minor, this was Beethoven’s first piano concerto in a minor key, and it shifts direction from his first two concertos: there is less attention to formal elegance and decorative ornamentation of line, and more emphasis on sheer expressiveness. The dynamics have more contrast, the emotions are more turbulent, and the overall impression is less lapidary and more deeply passionate.

The opening movement, marked allegro con brio, exposes a powerful, solemn theme in the orchestra, allowing it to modulate from minor to major and then introducing a second, more lyrical theme before settling back into minor. Thus the stakes are high before the piano even makes its entrance; and throughout the movement, it is left to the piano soloist to reconcile the emotions contested in the development of these two themes.

The second movement, a meditative largo, is poetic and contemplative, with the piano at times so deeply embedded in the ensemble that the orchestra takes the melodic line for extended periods.

The gorgeous, zesty closing rondo is often described as joyful or jubilant despite its minor key — despite modulations into major, it remains at home in the key of C minor. The movement’s energy and exuberance come not only from the beauty of melody, but also from the sense of the concerto’s successful reconciliation of contending melodic forces. The movement’s conclusion brings a sense of drama and completion that is almost operatic.

Michael Clive is a cultural reporter and critic who lives in the Litchfield hills of Connecticut.
In 2010–11, Music Director Carl St. Clair celebrates his 21st season with Pacific Symphony. During his tenure, St. Clair has become widely recognized for his musically distinguished performances, his commitment to building outstanding educational programs and his innovative approaches to programming. St. Clair’s lengthy history with the Symphony solidifies the strong relationship he has forged with the musicians and the community. His continued role also lends stability to the organization and continuity to his vision for the Symphony's future. Few orchestras can claim such rapid artistic development as Pacific Symphony—the largest orchestra formed in the United States in the last 40 years—due in large part to St. Clair’s leadership.

The 2010–11 season, the “Year of the Piano,” features numerous masterworks for keyboard performed by a slate of internationally renowned artists. The season also features three “Music Unwound” concerts highlighted by multimedia elements and innovative formats, two world premieres, and the 11th annual American Composers Festival, featuring the music of Philip Glass.

In 2008–2009, St. Clair celebrated the milestone 30th anniversary of Pacific Symphony. In 2006–07, he led the orchestra’s historic move into its home in the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall at the Orange County Performing Arts Center. The move came on the heels of the landmark 2005–06 season that included St. Clair leading the Symphony on its first European tour—nine cities in three countries playing before capacity houses and receiving extraordinary responses. The Symphony received rave reviews from Europe’s classical music critics—22 reviews in total. He recently concluded his tenure as general music director and chief conductor of the German National Theater and Staatskapelle (GNTS) in Weimar, Germany, where he recently led Wagner’s “Ring Cycle” to great critical acclaim.

St. Clair's commitment to the development and performance of new works by American composers is evident in the wealth of commissions and recordings by Pacific Symphony. St. Clair has led the orchestra in numerous critically acclaimed albums including two piano concertos of Lukas Foss on the harmonia mundi label. Under his guidance, the orchestra has commissioned works which later became recordings, including Richard Danielpour’s An American Requiem on Reference Recordings and Elliot Goldenthal’s Fire Water Paper: A Vietnam Oratorio on Sony Classical with cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Other composers commissioned by St. Clair and Pacific Symphony include William Bolcom, Philip Glass, Zhou Long, Tobias Picker, Frank Ticheli and Chen Yi, Curt Cacioppo, Stephen Scott, Jim Self (the Symphony's principal tubist), Christopher Theofanidis and James Newton Howard.

In North America, St. Clair has led the Boston Symphony Orchestra, (where he served as assistant conductor for several years), New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the San Francisco, Seattle, Detroit, Atlanta, Houston, Indianapolis, Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver symphonies, among many.

Under St. Clair’s dynamic leadership, the Symphony has built a relationship with the Southern California community by understanding and responding to its cultural needs. A strong advocate of music education for all ages, St. Clair has been essential to the creation and implementation of the symphony education programs including Classical Connections, arts-X-press and Class Act.
Arnaldo Cohen
Piano

Brazilian-born pianist Arnaldo Cohen has a reputation for astonishing his audiences with the musical authority and blistering virtuosity of his performances. His graceful and unaffected platform manner belies playing of white-hot intensity, intellectual probity and glittering bravura technique bordering on sheer wizardry. He has performed with the Royal Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande and the Santa Cecilia Orchestra of Rome under such leading conductors as Kurt Masur, Yehudi Menuhin and Wolfgang Sawallish.

Long in demand internationally, Cohen has entered a rarefied echelon among performers in America as well. Highlights include engagements with the Cleveland Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. In the 2009-10 season, Cohen performed all of the Beethoven Concerti and the Triple Concerto with Carlos Kalmar and the Oregon Symphony and returned to the Seattle Symphony to perform Rachmaninoff’s fourth concerto. He performed Rachmaninoff’s third concerto with the Jacksonville Symphony and returned to London for performances of Liszt’s second concerto with the London Philharmonic. Summer festival appearances in 2010 included Blossom, where he performed Tchaikovsky’s first concerto with the Cleveland Orchestra and Jahja Ling.

Cohen’s enthusiastically heralded interpretations of Beethoven’s concerti continue in the 2010-11 season with performances of the fourth concerto with the St. Louis Symphony, of the fifth concerto (Emperor) with the Des Moines Symphony, and all five concerti with Carl St.Clair and Pacific Symphony. Cohen’s demand as a recitalist is evidenced by many performances in North America including a critically acclaimed concert at New York’s Town Hall, as well as those in San Francisco and Philadelphia, and last season in Toronto, Richmond, and Denver. The highlight of Cohen’s 2010-11 season will be his debut at Chicago’s Symphony Center as a part of the Chicago Symphony’s recital series. Cohen will also perform in duo recitals with Romanian pianist Mihaela Ursuleasa in Philadelphia, San Francisco, Quebec, and at Duke University. International engagements include performances in Malaysia, Singapore, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and visits to the U.K. and Canada.

Cohen came to prominence after winning first prize at the 1972 Busoni International Piano Competition and making his debut at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. For five years, he was a member of the acclaimed Amadeus Trio and has performed with many string quartets, including the Lindsay and Chilingirian Quarts. He began his musical studies at age 5, graduating from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro with an honors degree in both piano and violin, while also studying for an engineering degree. He became a professional violinist in the Rio de Janeiro Opera House Orchestra while continuing piano studies with Jacques Klein, a disciple of the legendary American pianist William Kapell. Cohen pursued further training in Vienna with Bruno Seidlohofer and Dieter Weber.

Cohen is the recipient of an honorary fellowship awarded by the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, and until recently held a professorship at the Royal Academy of Music in London. After living in London for 23 years, he relocated to the United States in 2004, where he holds a full professorship at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University.

Ray Chen
Violin

Winner of the Queen Elisabeth Menuhin Competition (2009) and the Yehudi Menuhin Competition (2008), Ray Chen is among the most compelling young violinists today. His recent performances, including debut recitals at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. and the Merkin Hall in New York, have enraptured both the audiences and the critics.

Born in Taiwan and raised in Australia, Chen was accepted to the Curtis Institute of Music at the age of 15, where he continues to work with Aaron Rosand on expanding his repertoire. Chen plays the “Huggins” Stradivarius, on loan from The Nippon Music Foundation, and the 1721 Stradivarius known as “The Macmillan,” provided as part of the award for winning the 2008-09 Young Concert Artists International Auditions in New York.

Chen’s performance of Bach’s Double Violin Concerto became the much-discussed highlight of the 2009 Aspen Music Festival. Maestro Vengerov, who met Chen while serving on the jury of the Menuhin Competition in Cardiff, immediately engaged him to perform with the Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra in St. Petersburg as well as at the opening concert of the following Menuhin Competition, in April 2010 in Oslo.

Chen’s upcoming engagements include a performance with the Taipei Symphony at this year’s World Expo in Shanghai, a North American orchestral debut with the New Jersey Symphony as well as concerts with the Orchestre National de Lille, Deutsche Symphonie Berlin and Sydney Symphony. Chen will also be the featured soloist of the Rostropovich Festival in Moscow.
Pacific Symphony, celebrating its 32nd season in 2010–11, is led by Music Director Carl St.Clair, who marked his 20th anniversary with the orchestra during 2009–2010. The largest orchestra formed in the U.S. in the last 40 years, the Symphony is recognized as an outstanding ensemble making strides on both the national and international scene, as well as in its own burgeoning community of Orange County.

The orchestra paid tribute to St.Clair’s milestone in 2009–10 with a celebratory season featuring inventive, forward-thinking projects. These included the launch of a new series of multimedia concerts called “Music Unwound,” featuring new visual elements, varied formats and more to highlight great masterworks.

The Symphony also offers a popular Pops season led by Principal Pops Conductor Richard Kaufman, celebrating 20 years with the orchestra in 2010–11. The Pops series stars some of the world’s leading entertainers and is enhanced by state-of-the-art video and sound. Each Pacific Symphony season also includes Café Ludwig, a three-concert chamber music series, and “Classical Connections,” an orchestral series on Sunday afternoons offering rich explorations of selected works led by St.Clair. Assistant Conductor Maxim Shklyarenko brings a passionate commitment to building the next generation of audience and performer through his leadership of the Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra as well as the highly regarded Family Musical Mornings series.

Since 2006–07, the Symphony has performed in the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, with striking architecture by Cesar Pelli and acoustics by the late Russell Johnson. In September 2008, the Symphony debuted the hall’s critically acclaimed 4,322-pipe William J. Gillespie Concert Organ.

In 2006, the Symphony embarked on its first European tour, performing in nine cities (including Vienna, Munich and Lucerne) in three countries — receiving an unprecedented 22 highly favorable reviews.

Later that same season, the Symphony also performed, by special invitation from the League of American Orchestras, at its 2006 National Conference in Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles.

Founded in 1979 by Keith Clark with a $2,000 grant, the Symphony made its debut in December 1979 at the Plummer Auditorium in Fullerton, with Clark conducting. By 1983, the orchestra had moved its concerts to the Santa Ana High School auditorium, made its first recording and begun to build a subscriber base. Through Clark’s leadership, the Symphony took residency at the new Orange County Performing Arts Center in 1986, which greatly expanded its audience. Clark served in his role of music director until 1990.

Today, the Symphony offers moving musical experiences with repertoire ranging from the great orchestral masterworks to music from today’s most prominent composers, highlighted by the annual American Composers Festival. The Wall Street Journal said, “Carl St.Clair, the Pacific Symphony’s dynamic music director, has devoted 19 years to building not only the orchestra’s skills but also the audience’s trust and musical sophistication — so successfully that they can now present some of the most innovative programming in American classical music to its fast-growing, rapidly diversifying community.”

The Symphony is dedicated to developing and promoting today’s composers and expanding the orchestral repertoire through commissions, recordings, and in-depth explorations of American artists and themes at its American Composers Festival. For this work, the Symphony received the prestigious ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming in 2005 and 2010. In 2010, a study by the League of American Orchestras, “Fearless Journeys,” included the Symphony as one of the country’s five most innovative orchestras. The orchestra has commissioned such leading composers as Michael Daugherty, James Newton Howard, Paul Chihara, Philip Glass, William Bolcom, Daniel Catán, William Kraft, Tobias Picker, Frank Ticheli, and Chen Yi, who composed a cello concerto in 2004 for Yo-Yo Ma. The Symphony has also commissioned and recorded An American Requiem, by Richard Danielpour, and Elliot Goldenthal’s Fire Water Paper: A Vietnam Oratorio with Yo-Yo Ma.

The Symphony’s award-winning education programs are designed to integrate the Symphony and its music into the community in ways that stimulate all ages and form meaningful connections between students and the organization. St.Clair actively participates in the development and execution of these programs. The orchestra’s Class Act residency program has been honored as one of nine exemplary orchestra education programs in the nation by the National Endowment for the Arts and the League of American Orchestras. Added to Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra on the list of instrumental training initiatives since the 2007-08 season are Pacific Symphony Youth Wind Ensemble and Pacific Symphony Santiago Strings.

In addition to its winter home, the Symphony presents a summer outdoor series at Irvine’s Verizon Wireless Amphitheater, the organization’s summer residence since 1987.
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William J. Gillespie Music Director Chair

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Marlay Weisshaar
Robin Sandusky
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** Assistant Principal
+ On Leave

The musicians of Pacific Symphony are members of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 7.