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PCO performs 'Schubert - The Sublime' at LLLC

Submitted by Lawrence Kohl



Lawrence Kohl Photo provided

Pacific Chamber Orchestra, under the direction of Conductor Lawrence Kohl, will perform Schubert's Octet, Ravel's Introduction and Allegro, and Francaix's Dixtuor, at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 23 in the Community Hall at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center.

Maurice Ravel's Introduction and Allegro flows like a delightful afternoon conversation between the harp, flute, clarinet and strings from the dreamy opening to the lively and buoyant conclusion. The Erard piano company, inspired by Debussy's Dances Sacree et Profane, commissioned Maurice Ravel to write a piece for its new double-action pedal harp to display the harp's extensive range, encourage more works to be written and, of course, sell harps! The new harp's range, subtle colors and textures are displayed throughout from the dreamy opening to the buoyant conclusion.

Ravel's musical ideas, often stemming from his love of childhood fairy tales and stories of faraway lands, flowed during his solitary excursions through the countryside or while roaming the streets of Paris, oblivious to the hubbub around him. Featuring Dan

Levitan, his "impeccable virtuosity" has made him the most sought after solo and orchestral harpist throughout Northern California from the Santa Rosa and Napa Symphonies, to the San Francisco Opera Orchestra to San Jose's Symphony Silicon Valley.

Early on Jean Francaix caught the society's attention. Ravel pronounced, "Among the child's gifts I observe above all the most fruitful an artist can possess, that of curiosity." Francaix's Dixtuor for wind quintet and string quintet begins in the French countryside - tranquil, calm, relaxing and closes, it's as if bird calls wake us for a brisk walk back to the city. Indeed, as one musical genius recognizes another Francaix went on to become one of France's most celebrated composers.

The exuberant opening in Franz Shubert's Octet for Clarinet, Bassoon, French

Horn and Strings moves into a silver-lined melody for the clarinet and continues through a walking-bass which lightens your heart; it ends on notes of jubilant delight. Schubert's genius lay in translating the direct experience of nature's breathtaking beauty into music. One is whisked away into the sublime. Franz Schubert passed away at age of 31, officially due to typhoid fever. However, some have said it was actually syphilis. Still, Schubert managed to write over one thousand pieces in his short lifespan. Schubert idolized Beethoven. Influenced by his work, he built on it as he struggled to further develop the Romantic spirit in music. Such was they kindred spirit that they are buried next to each other in Vienna.

The members of the Pacific Chamber Orchestra also appear in such prestigious groups as the San Francisco Symphony, Opera and Ballet Orchestras, touring Broadway shows, and feature films recorded at Skywalker Ranch. They are touring soloists and chamber musicians.

PCO will also perform at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 24 in the Bankhead Theatre, 2400 First Street in Livermore. Tickets may be purchased for "Schubert - The Sublime" online at www.pacificchamberorchestra.org and additionally for the Livermore performance by calling or visiting the Bankhead box office (925) 373-6800 or www.bankheadtheater.org.

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