



CALIFORNIA YOUTH SYMPHONY

# Quarter Notes

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Jim Hogan, Editor



## CYS OPENS 58th SEASON

*The award-winning California Youth Symphony, under the direction of Maestro Leo Eylar, will open its 58<sup>th</sup> season on Sunday, November 15 at 2:30 pm at the Flint Center in Cupertino. The concert will be repeated the following Sunday, also at 2:30 pm, in the San Mateo Performing Arts Center. Excitement is building around the appearance of 10 year old piano prodigy Alex Chien, one of the youngest artists ever to solo with the California Youth Symphony Orchestra. Alex's stunning victory at the CYS Young Artist Competition at Stanford University last spring gives local audiences the chance to hear him perform the Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 1 with the orchestra.*

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*November Soloist, Alex Chien*

## PRODIGY ON PIANO

On April 25 of this year, in Stanford University's Campbell Recital Hall, 10 year old Alex Chien stunned the judges for the annual CYS Young Artist Competition with his powerful rendition of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1. He won first place in a competition that is usually won by 17 or 18 year olds. (18 is the upper age limit). Local audiences will have the chance to experience the same thrill that competition judges felt when Alex performs the Beethoven at the Flint Center on November 15 and at the San Mateo Performing Arts Center on November 22 -- this time with the accompaniment of a full symphony orchestra (CYS) and not just a piano accompanist.

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Alex started taking piano lessons with Ms. Kai Chi Zhu when he was four years old and at the age of 5 he made his TV debut when he performed in the “Maestro Darrell's Music Workshop” TV Program. His most recent awards include the grand prize in the 2009 Mondavi Young Artist Competition, the first place award in the 2009 Marilyn Mindell Piano Competition, the first place award in the Sylvia M. Ghiglieri Piano Competition and the inaugural winner of the Temple Hill Symphony Orchestra's Outstanding Young Pianist award. In 2008, he won the first place award and the “Most Promising Young Talent” special award in the 9<sup>th</sup> International Russian Piano Competition's Young Musician category, the first place award in 2008 MTAC Piano Concerto Competition (Division I), the Menuhin-Dowling Young Musicians Award, the James Denver Gary Piano Award in Pacific Music Society Annual Competition, and the Nafisa Taghioff Prize in the Fremont Symphony's Young Artist Competition. Alex has been the prize winner of many awards in the US Open Music Competitions each year since 2003. In addition, Alex has been the first place award winner of the piano competitions sponsored by the Music Teachers' Association of California In 2004 and 2005, the first place awards and the best Chinese Music performance awards in the Chinese Music Teachers' Association of North California Youth Music Competition in 2004 and 2007, the first place award in the “Kids Play the Darndest Things!” piano competition and the first place award in the “Technic is Fun” piano competition in 2006.

Alex is already a seasoned concert artist. He has played at Carnegie Hall as a winner of the American Fine Arts Festival. He played at the Peninsula Symphony's Family Concert, and at “A Celebration of Young Artists Concert” of the Fremont Symphony Guild in 2009. Last year, he performed in the Junior Bach Festival and in the Steinway Society Young Artists Concert. He also performed at the Piano Fantasia Concert honoring Robert and Margaret Mondavi at Pacific Union College. His other performance events in 2008 included the Listening Hours at San Jose State University, Pacific Music Society Christmas Gala, Beshoff Mercedes-Benz Concert and a benefit concert at the San Francisco Tower. Alex has also performed in master classes by Lang Lang, Jon Nakamatsu, Antonio Pompa-Baldi, Ruth Slenczynska and Pascal Nemirovski.

Alex is currently a 5<sup>th</sup> grade student at Harker School in San Jose. In addition to music, he loves writing and computers.

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## **SOLOIST OPPORTUNITIES**

Once again this year the California Youth Symphony will sponsor competitions to select soloists for our orchestras. The CYS Young Artist Competition is open to any young musician 18 years old or younger. Winners -- one pianist and one other instrumentalist -- will perform with the CYS Orchestra during the 2010-11 season. The competition will be held on April 3, 2010. Additional information will be available on our website shortly. CYS will also hold its Senior Soloist Competition on December 20, 2009. This competition is open to members of the CYS Orchestra who are in their final year of participation. The two winners will each perform on the final concert set, May 16 and 23, 2010. Also on December 20, CYS will hold its Associate Soloist Competition to select a soloist to perform later in the year with the CYS Associate Orchestra.

### ***58th Season***, continued from page 1

The concerts will also feature the Cuban Overture by America's best loved composer, George Gershwin. This brilliant orchestral travelogue brims with Latin rhythms and Gershwin's characteristic blending of jazz and classical styles. Completing the program will be Rachmaninov's Symphonic Dances, his last major work written in 1940. In many ways this work sums up the work of this brilliant composer, revealing him at the peak of his powers.

Tickets will be available at the door for both performances. The Flint Center is on the campus of DeAnza College, near the intersection of Highway 85 and Stevens Creek Blvd. in Cupertino. The San Mateo Performing Arts is on the campus of San Mateo High School at 600 N. Delaware, San Mateo.

## CYS TO VISIT SOUTH AMERICA

After considerable investigation and discussion, the California Youth Symphony Board of Directors has selected Argentina and Uruguay as the destinations for the June 2010 tour. For those of you who aren't up on your CYS history, in 1963 CYS became the first youth orchestra ever to tour overseas when it accepted an invitation from Japan's Asahi Simbun Press to tour that country. The resulting tour was an a national and international sensation and paved the way for what has now become commonplace -- international youth tours. Over the following 47 years CYS has mounted 16 additional international tours, returning to Japan twice, most recently in 2008. We've also visited many countries in Europe, as well as China, Australia and Mexico. However, this will be CYS' first tour to South America.



The six concert tour will begin in Montevideo, capital of Uruguay, cross the border to Rosario, Argentina and conclude in Buenos Aires. The fact that it will be concert season there during June and July will add to both the excitement and the attendance as CYS performs in some of the finest venues. It will also allow us to experience the cultural life of this fascinating area. Keep your eyes on our website for further tour updates as our plans develop.

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## CYS HOLIDAY CONCERTS

In December, the California Youth Symphony will continue its long tradition of free holiday concerts for the community with performances by the CYS Orchestra, the Associate Orchestra, and the String and Wind Prep ensembles. The CYS Orchestra and Associate Orchestra will perform on Sunday, December 13 at 2:30 p.m. in Smithwick Theatre on the campus of Foothill College in Los Altos Hills.

Highlighting this year's Holiday Concert will be a performance of the Liszt Piano Concerto No. 1 by internationally renowned pianist Lino Rivera. Born in the Philippines, Rivera is an associate professor at Saint Mary's College in Moraga. He has performed as a soloist and accompanist on three continents and been featured on radio and television broadcasts, including live concerto performances with the Manila Symphony Orchestra and the

Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra. Rivera has won many musical competitions, such as the Music Teachers' National Association Competition and the Elizabeth Davis Competition. The program will offer additional selections of classical and seasonal favorites featuring both the CYS Orchestra and the Associate Orchestra, both conducted by Leo Eylar.

On December 6 at 2pm in the Mayer Theatre at Santa Clara University the CYS String Prep Ensemble, under the direction of Kati Kyme, and the CYS Wind Prep Ensemble, under the direction of Rosita Amador, will present their annual Holiday Concert, featuring a variety of classical and seasonal favorites. As a Holiday gift to the community there will be no admission charge for either the December 6 or the December 13 concerts.



Once again this Holiday Season, CYS will team up with Sunday Friends for a toy drive to help disadvantaged kids. Bring a new toy to our Holiday Concert at Foothill College on December 13. See our website for more details.

# CALIFORNIA YOUTH SYMPHONY

Leo Eylar, Conductor

For senior citizen ticket  
information contact  
Deanna Gerner  
dgerner@gmail.com



## 58th Season

“The [CYS] orchestra played brilliantly and with a keen feeling for the composer’s style. This I consider semimiraculous. Hats off to conductor Eylar”

Renowned critic Heuwell Tircuit in “San Francisco Classical Voice”, on CYS’ performance at the first Bay Area Youth Orchestra Festival at Davies Symphony Hall, January 2009

*Cuban Overture* .....Gershwin

*Piano Concerto No. 1* .....Beethoven

Alex Chien, soloist

*Symphonic Dances*.....Rachmaninov

**Sunday, Nov 15, 2:30pm**

Flint Center, DeAnza College  
Stevens Creek at Highway 85, Cupertino

**Sunday, Nov. 22, 2:30pm**

San Mateo Performing Arts Center  
600 N. Delaware, San Mateo

TICKETS; Adults \$15, Students and Seniors \$10

Available at the door or from any CYS member

CYS, 441 California Av. #5 Palo Alto, CA 94306 phone 650/325-6666 [www.cys.org](http://www.cys.org)

No children under five, please