

Channel Islands Chamber Orchestra

presents

# *Hark! A Chico Holiday Concert*

Season Sponsors

Mark and Janet Goldenson

John Hammer

Fred and Barbara Tomblin Charitable Fund

Vielbig Family Foundation

*KuanFen Liu*

Artistic Director and Conductor

Friday, November 30th at 7:30 pm

Sunday, December 2nd at 3:00 pm

*We are honoring the lives and memories of Miriam Schwab and Helen Yunker and the contributions they have made to our arts community and specifically the musical community in Ventura County. The executors of their estates are announcing generous gifts to multiple local arts organizations and other non-profits, including the Channel Islands Chamber Orchestra.*

*Thank you, Miriam and Helen. We gratefully acknowledge your gifts and your trust in us that we will apply them wisely to continue our mission of local musical excellence and outreach to younger generations.*

*Miriam and Helen both endeavored to raise the awareness and standards of our arts and to awaken young people to the delights of music and performance.*

*- The Musicians and Board of the Channel Islands Chamber Orchestra*

# Program

*Hänsel und Gretel*: Overture

Engelbert Humperdinck  
(1854-1921)

*Nutcracker: Suite No. 1, Op. 71a*

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky  
(1840-1893)

I. Miniature Overture

II. Danses caractéristiques

a. Marche

b. Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy

c. Russian Dance

d. Arabian Dance

e. Chinese Dance

f. Reed Flutes

III. Waltz of the Flowers

## Intermission

Harp Concerto, Op. 4, No. 6, HWV 294 in B-flat Major

George Frideric Handel  
(1685-1759)

1. Allegro moderato

2. Larghetto

3. Allegro moderato

Elaine Litster, harp

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

Gustav Holst  
(1874-1934)

Rubicon Family Christmas Opening Medley

arr. Gerald Sternbach  
and Cavit Celayir-Monezis

"Donkey Carol"

John Rutter

"Jesus Child"

John Rutter

"Shine On"

arr. Cavit Celayir-Monezis

Cassidy Craig, soloist

"Joy to the World"

by K. Jonas, arr. G. Sternbach and C. Celayir-Monezis  
Aliza Barroca, soloist

"St. Nick's Swing"

arr. Cavit Celayir-Monezis

# Program Notes

**Engelbert Humperdinck** (1854-1921), best known for his opera “Hansel and Gretel,” circulated among the most creative and innovative German musicians of his day – including Richard Wagner, Richard Strauss, and Julius Stockhausen. He held significant teaching positions in Barcelona, Cologne and Frankfurt while at the same time composing popular stage works. He collaborated with the distinguished theatrical and film producer Max Reinhardt, writing incidental music for his productions in Berlin.

“Hansel and Gretel” began as a family puppet show in 1890, and then developed into a string of 16 songs with piano accompaniment and connecting dialogue. By 1891 Humperdinck completed the orchestration of a full scale opera, loosely based on a version of the fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm published in 1812. The overture gives some musical indications of the rather scary Medieval plot involving a starving brother and sister left to wander in the woods by their parents, who come across a wicked witch and are lured into her delicious candy cottage. Eventually the children successfully outwit the witch, demonstrating the power of good over evil and find their way home.

Humperdinck’s powerful operatic presentation of the metaphysical theme led to several historic cultural developments: a navigation element called “breadcrumbs” (referencing the trail that the children invented to find their way home) and in 1977 a main belt asteroid 9913 was named Humperdinck after the composer - alluding to intergalactic wayfinding.

Russian composer **Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** (1840 – 1893) was an extraordinarily prolific composer writing, amongst numerous works, 7 symphonies, 11 operas, 3 very popular piano concertos, more than 100 songs and 3 beloved ballets, the *The Nutcracker*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Swan Lake*. The *Nutcracker Suite* is a 20-minute piece extracted from the ballet and at the time of the original production of the ballet in 1892, enjoyed more popularity than the 85-minute dance performance.

The score quickly became one of Tchaikovsky’s most famous compositions, noted among other things for its use of the celesta, the sweet, tinkling accompaniment – “a heavenly sound” according to the composer - to the Sugar Plum Fairy.

The eight “dances caractéristiques” which comprise the Suite - with the Sugar Plum Fairy, the Trepak, (the Russian Dance) the Arabian Dance, The Chinese Dance, the Tarantella, the Marche, the Reed Flutes segment and the Waltz of the Flowers – all have haunting, memorable melodies attributable to their international appeal.

The Suite was first performed in 1892 under the composer’s direction with almost every number encoored at this premiere. The ballet itself became a venerated standard in the ballet repertoire when it was choreographed by George Balanchine for the New York City Ballet in 1954 and has been presented at Christmas every year since then.

**George Frederick Handel** (1685 – 1759), born the same year at Johann Sebastian Bach and Domenico Scarlatti, moved from his German domicile at the age of 27 to settle in London, eventually to become court composer to King George 1, and a British citizen.

Handel’s compositions include 42 operas, 29 oratorios, more than 120 cantata, 16 organ concerti, and four coronation anthems which are still performed centuries later at such royal events. His most famous work, the oratorio “Messiah” with its “Hallelujah” chorus, is among the all-time popular works in choral music.

In 1717 the “Water Music” was performed on the River Thames for the King and his guests – a royal tradition that was repeated during the present Queen Elizabeth’s 90th birthday salute. London’s reverence for Handel was notable at the 2012 Olympic Games in London when

"The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba." was performed at the opening ceremony. An inventive composer, Handel often introduced previously uncommon musical instruments to his orchestral works, including the harp for which he wrote the Concerto in B-flat major. In this joyful piece, the orchestra is somewhat subdued to allow the harp to take center stage in the three movements.

The British composer **Gustav Holst** (1874-1934), most noted for his dramatic orchestral suite "The Planets," and the British poet Christina Rossetti (1830 – 1894) came from very different cultural backgrounds. Holst had Nordic ancestors and Rossetti's parents were immigrants from Italy.

It is not clear whether they met in England, (Holst would have been 20 in 1874 the year Rossetti died) but their families certainly moved in similar artistic circles of writers, painters and musicians. Christina's brother Dante Gabriel Rossetti was a significant painter and illustrated the covers of some of his sister's books. Holst was a music teacher at several prestigious academies, including St. Paul's Girls' School in London. He studied music with fellow contemporary Ralph Vaughan Williams who introduced him to Ravel redirecting him away from Romantic German masters Wagner, Strauss and Mahler.

Christina Rossetti wrote "In the Bleak Midwinter" in 1872 and its five verses were published as a poem in "Scribner's Monthly." It wasn't until 1906 that it appeared, set to music, by Holst in the English Hymnal, where it was named "Cranham" referring to a country cottage in Devon, where the piece was composed.

The poem itself is a recreation of the nativity story, in a northern climate. Some people consider it a literary interpretation of the Creation. Whatever the analysis, it has become a staple in the Christmas carol repertoire ever since.

Choir Director and noted pianist **Miriam Arichea** conducted the Rubicon vocal troupe Harmonix – aka the Broadway Juniors - from 2011 to 2017 and has chosen familiar Harmonix songs orchestrated by CHICO bassoonist Cavit Celayr-Monezi. Rubicon aficionados will recognize holiday tunes such as, "Shine On" a Chanukah inspired number, featuring soloist Cassidy Craig, "Joy to the World", "St. Nicks" from past productions of the Rubicon Family Christmas. Arichea has selected two groups of youthful singers – one composed of school age students from 12 – 15 (4 boys and 6 girls) - and a second group of five local college students from Ventura College, UCLA and CSUCI. The seasonal selection includes two carols arranged by the most successful internationally recognized choral composer and conductor John Rutter.

Program notes by Beverly Ward

**KuanFen Liu** is the Assistant Professor at CSU Channel Islands and the Artistic Director/Conductor of Channel Islands Chamber Orchestra and Channel Islands Choral Association. Originally from Taiwan, KuanFen began her piano study at the age of five and pursued piano, violin and singing throughout her childhood. She earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Voice Performance from Tunghai University in Taiwan. After coming to the United States in 1995, she has attended graduate schools at the prestigious Eastman School of Music (M.M.) and the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California (D.M.A.).

KuanFen was the assistant conductor of the USC Chamber Choir (an international award winning collegiate choir) and taught conducting classes at both undergraduate

and graduate levels during her residency as a doctoral student at USC. She received an honorary award at the Honors Convocation during graduation in May 2003. KuanFen was one of the 12 conductors selected internationally to participate at the Oregon Bach Festival where she conducted concerts with the Festival Chorus and Orchestra in 2006.

KuanFen has studied choral conducting with Helmuth Rilling (German), William Dehning, and William Weinert; orchestral conducting with Helmuth Rilling, Mark Gibson and David Effron. She also participated in master classes and workshops with Robert Shaw, Charles Dutoit, Helmuth Rilling, Joseph Flummerfelt, James Jordan and Dale Warland. KuanFen currently lives in Ventura, California with her family.

KuanFen was the recipient of one of the 2016 Ventura Mayor's Arts Awards in the "Artist in the Community" category.

## *Chico Holiday Singers*

Cassidy Craig, freshman at Ventura College  
Gus Graham, freshman at Ventura College  
Miriam Larson, sophomore at Ventura College  
Jacob Mizrahi, UCLA  
Caressa Suarez, senior at CSUCI

Aliza Barroca, 9th at Ventura High School  
Abigail Block, 8th at Balboa Middle School, Ventura  
Troy Braun, 9th at El Camino High School, Ventura  
Gael Fernandez, 8th at Ventura Missionary  
Samantha Hirschhorn, 10th at Ventura High School  
Elise Paul, 10th at Foothill Technology High School, Ventura  
Mason Rothermel, 6th at Mupu School, Ojai  
Emma Safier, 7th at Sycamore Canyon Middle School, Newbury Park  
Riley Stork, 9th at Ventura High School  
Andilyn Ziegler, 9th at Rancho Campana High School



Performances at Newbury Park High School PAC  
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# *Channel Islands Chamber Orchestra*

KuanFen Liu, Artistic Director and Conductor

## Violin I

Steven Chang  
Co-concertmaster  
Sharon Cooper  
Co-concertmaster

Barbara Poehls  
Karen Darnall  
Gary Chandler  
Vera Dragicevich  
Paul Kerstein

## Flute

Mariana Smith  
Ann Erwin

## Oboe

Fred Beerstein  
Paula Dublinski

## English Horn

Paula Dublinski

## Trombone

Cathy Sanders  
Ed Hufschmidt  
Michael Vaughn

## Timpani

Angel Velez

## Percussion

Clinton Cody

## Violin II

Cyndi Hall  
Karen Nelson  
Katie Helms Banday  
Ruth Kay  
Christine Snipes

Kathie Kottler

## Clarinet

David Singer  
Karen Gatchel  
Steve Marsh

## Bassoon

Cavit Celayir-Monezis  
John Marston

## Harp

Elaine Lister

## Piano and Celeste

Miriam Arichea

Librarian: Cyndi Hall

## Viola

Karen Goulding  
Natalie Spevak  
Bill Hamilton  
James Rumennapp

## French Horn

Lynne Doherty  
Julie Gross  
Margaret Henrikson  
Kathy Eisner

Stage Manager:  
Tom Hundley

Program Design:  
Laura Mihalka

## Cello

John Fare  
Celine Gietzen  
Ervin Klinkon  
Chris Dimond

## Trumpet

Randy Jones  
Linda Rhymes

Video Engineer: Mark  
Smith and Renata  
Hundley

Audio Engineer:  
David Atkins

## Double Bass

Hal Onserud  
Paul Sharp

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# *Chico 2018-2019 Season*

## *Opening Gala - New World Symphony*

Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 and music by Bernstein, Strauss, and Shostakovich  
Friday, Oct 12th at 7:30pm - St. Mary Magdalen Church  
Sunday, Oct 14th at 3pm - First United Methodist Church of Ventura

## *Hark! A CHICO Holiday Concert*

Featuring fresh, contemporary arrangements of carols and holiday songs.  
Directed by Miriam Arichea, the cast will include  
local professionals and a youth ensemble.  
Friday, Nov 30th at 7:30pm - Rancho Campana High School  
Sunday, Dec 2nd at 3pm - First United Methodist Church of Ventura

## *Young Artists Series*

Daniel Newman-Lessler, guest conductor; Stephen Saw, violin;  
David Shiang, piano; Noah Laber, oboe  
Friday, Jan 25th at 7:30pm - St. Mary Magdalen Church  
Sunday, Jan 27th at 3pm - First United Methodist Church of Ventura

## *World Music Gala - Music of the Orient*

Award winning Double Erhu Concerto by the young Chinese composer,  
Bo-Chan Li, performed by internationally renowned Taiwanese erhu masters,  
Dr. Ming-Yen Lee and Dr. Hsin-Chih Lin. Rhapsody in Kuan Du for  
Piano and Orchestra featuring Miriam Arichea on piano.  
Friday, March 1st at 7:30pm - St. Mary Magdalen Church  
Sunday, March 3rd at 3pm - First United Methodist Church of Ventura

## *Choral Spectacular 2019 - Opera Choruses*

CHICO, joined by Channel Islands Choral Association and outstanding soloists,  
will present some of the best and most beloved opera choruses.  
Pieces by Wagner, Bellini, Puccini and Verdi.  
Fri, April 26th at 7:30pm - Rancho Campana High School  
Sunday, April 28th at 3pm - Rancho Campana High School

St. Mary Magdalen Church - 25 N. Las Posas Rd, Camarillo  
First United Methodist Church of Ventura - 1338 E. Santa Clara St, Ventura  
Rancho Campana High School Performing Arts Center  
4235 Mar Vista Dr, Camarillo  
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