

GENEVA CONCERTS

presents

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra
Christopher Seaman, conductor



Los Angeles Guitar Quartet

Friday, February 13, 2009 • 8:15 p.m.
Smith Opera House

GENEVA CONCERTS, INC.

2008-2009 SEASON

Saturday, 20 September 2008, 8:15 p.m.

Paul Taylor Dance Company

Sunday, 19 October 2008, 3:00 p.m.

Syracuse Symphony Orchestra

Daniel Hege, conductor

Jon Nakamatsu, piano

Music of Johnson, Ives, and Rachmaninoff

Thursday, 20 November 2008, 8:15 p.m.

Hungarian Virtuosi Orchestra

Music of Vivaldi, Liszt, and Tchaikovsky

Friday, 13 February 2009, 8:15 p.m.

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra

Christopher Seaman, conductor

Los Angeles Guitar Quartet

Music of Vaughan Williams, Assad, Bizet, and Prokofiev

Thursday, 2 April 2009, 8:15 p.m.

Syracuse Symphony Orchestra

Peter Bay, conductor

Deborah Coble, flute

Music of Elgar, Jacob, and Holst

Performed at the Smith Opera House, 82 Seneca Street, Geneva, NY

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GENEVA CONCERTS, INC.

Friday, February 13, 2009 at 8:15 p.m.

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra

Christopher Seaman, conductor

Los Angeles Guitar Quartet

RALPH VAUGHN WILLIAMS Fantasia on *Greensleeves*
ARR. RALPH GREAVES

SÉRGIO ASSAD *Interchange* for Guitar Quartet and Orchestra
(East Coast Premiere)
I. Sephardic Passages
II. Gypsy Slopes
III. Pacific Overlook
IV. Forroblues Detour
V. Crossings

Los Angeles Guitar Quartet

Intermission

GEORGES BIZET Suites Nos. 1 and 2 from *Carmen*
1. Prélude
2. Intermezzo
3. Les Toréadors
4. La garde montante
5. Danse Bohème

SERGEI PROKOFIEV Suite Nos. 1 and 2 from *Romeo and Juliet*, Op. 64
1. Montagues and Capulets
2. The Young Girl Juliet
3. Dance of the Antillian Girls
4. Romeo at the Tomb of Juliet
5. Masks
6. The Death of Tybalt

The use of ALL electronic devices – including cellular phones, cameras, and recording devices – is strictly prohibited while in the hall. Please completely turn off all hand-held electronics as well as any pagers or watch alarms that may sound during the performances.

Christopher Seaman, Music Director

2008-2009 marks Music Director Christopher Seaman's eleventh season with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. This internationally renowned British conductor has become an integral part of the RPO and the greater Rochester community, and is recognized as having raised the artistic level of the Orchestra to its present excellence.

Recognized worldwide as one of today's leading conductors, he completed a highly successful tenure as conductor-in-residence at the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, where he had worked with former RPO Music Director David Zinman since 1987. Other tenures have included Principal Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony and of the Northern Sinfonia.

Highly sought-after as a guest conductor throughout the world and noted for his strong command of a broad repertoire, Seaman has had regular engagements in North America, Israel, Eastern Europe, the Far East, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as in Great Britain.

Recent guest conducting engagements in the U.S.—many of them return engagements—have included the orchestras of San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Houston, Detroit, Columbus, Seattle, and Utah, as well as at Chicago's Grant Park Festival. He has previously conducted the orchestras of Saint Louis, New Jersey, Minnesota, Cincinnati, Colorado, Louisville, and Atlanta. In the summer of 2003, he taught at the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen.

Abroad, his schedule has included concerts with all of the London orchestras; the major United Kingdom orchestras including the City of Birmingham Symphony, the Bournemouth Symphony, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Ulster Orchestra and the various BBC orchestras. He also has led the symphony orchestras of Budapest, Prague, Warsaw, Trondheim, and the North German Philharmonic, among others, and will make return visits this season as well as conducting in Holland and Portugal.

He visits Australia annually, conducting the major orchestras there (often including concerts in the Sydney Opera House) and also leading masterclasses for young Australian conductors.

His recordings include performances with the Royal Philharmonic, the Philharmonia Orchestra, and the National Youth Orchestra of Britain. Seaman has recorded two CDs with the RPO, one with pianist Jon Nakamatsu which was released in September 2001, and one with pianist Olga Kern, which was released in the fall of 2003 and hailed by the *Democrat and Chronicle* as "sensational."



Los Angeles Guitar Quartet



John Dearman, Matthew Greif, William Kanengiser, Scott Tennant

Recognized as one of America's premier instrumental ensembles, the Grammy Award-winning Los Angeles Guitar Quartet is one of the most charismatic groups performing today. Popularly known as LAGQ, these four virtuosos bring a new energy to the concert stage with their eclectic programs and dynamic musical interplay. Their critically acclaimed transcriptions of concert masterworks provide a fresh look at the music of the past, while their interpretations of works from the contemporary and world-music realms continually break new ground. LAGQ has set new standards for the guitar quartet medium.

LAGQ's 2008-09 season features two exciting additions to its repertoire. *Interchange* is a new concerto written for LAGQ by Brazilian composer and guitar master Sergio Assad. This work will be premiered by the San Antonio Symphony in February 2009. Subsequent performances this season include the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and the Seattle, New Jersey, Delaware, and Santa Barbara symphonies.

LAGQ's appearance in Santa Barbara is part of the second week-long guitar celebration that the quartet helped to curate. In addition to the concerto, LAGQ will premiere *Don Quixote y Su Musica*, a musical adaptation of the Cervantes classic, in collaboration with British actor John Cleese. In addition, LAGQ performs the vibrant Rodrigo *Concierto Andaluz* with the North Carolina, Virginia, and Grand Rapids symphonies, and brings their popular solo performances and residencies to venues throughout the United States and Europe.

The Los Angeles Guitar Quartet's latest CD on the Telarc label is *LAGQ Brazil*.

Program Notes

Fantasia on *Greensleeves*

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

b. Down Ampney, England / October 12, 1872

d. London, England / August 26, 1958

Vaughan Williams is arguably the greatest composer Britain has seen since the days of Henry Purcell. In a long and extensive career, he composed music notable for its power, nobility, and expressiveness, representing, perhaps, the essence of “Englishness.” He wrote symphonies, chamber music, opera, choral music, and film scores and was also a collector of English folk music and song. His *Fantasia on Greensleeves* was written in 1934 and is adapted from his opera *Sir John in Love* and arranged by Ralph Greaves for strings and harp with optional flute(s).

Interchange, for Guitar Quartet and Chamber Orchestra

SÉRGIO ASSAD

b. Mococa, São Paulo, Brazil / December 26, 1952

Sérgio Assad began creating music for the guitar not long after he began playing the instrument. By age 14, he was arranging and writing original compositions for the guitar duo he had formed with his brother, Odair. He went on to study conducting and composition at the Escola Nacional de Música in Rio de Janeiro.

Over the last 20 years, he has concentrated most of his efforts on building a repertoire for the guitar duo. He has extended the possibilities of the two-guitar combination through his arrangements of Latin American music by composers such as Piazzolla, Villa-Lobos, and Ginastera, as well as baroque to modern music by Scarlatti, Rameau, Soler, Bach, Mompou, Ravel, Debussy, and Gershwin among others.

As a composer, he has completed more than 50 works for guitar, many of which have become standards in the repertoire. As of September 2008, Assad is a faculty member in guitar at the prestigious San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

The composer has provided the following introduction to his new composition, *Interchange*.

It was an old dream of mine to write a substantial piece for the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet (LAGQ) with orchestra. A few years ago, Bill Kanengiser, a member of the LAGQ, encouraged me to sketch a piece that was later commissioned by Matthew Dune, Director of the Southwest Guitar Festival, to be premiered by the San Antonio Symphony during the 2008-2009 season.

Interchange grew out of my view of the quartet's great ability to blend different music styles into a unique and novel interpretation. I used their individual taste in music as starting points for the first four movements and I end the piece with the coalescence of these four different pieces forming an Interchange.

Since I have known Bill Kanengiser, Scott Tennant, and John Dearman for over two decades as great musicians and friends, I had many good memories to choose from for inspiration. Matthew Greif is their new partner, having recently joined the quartet. Each of the first four movements highlights one member of the quartet with a specific blend of music styles and a short solo cadenza. A larger cadenza involving the four guitars announces the final movement.

To honor Bill in the first movement, I crossed some Renaissance-type of dances with the Jewish scale following the idea that Bill has a vast interest in different types of music while remaining the most classical of all four members. To portray Scott, a big fan and excellent performer of flamenco style, I offered a mix of Spanish buleria with another area of his interest that is Balkan music. For Matt, who added to the group his great skills in jazz improvisation, I wrote a slow movement reminiscent of a jazz ballad with an open section for his inventive melody lines. For John, who lately became passionate about Brazilian music, I mixed baião and blues. Baião is a rhythm from the northeast of Brazil and I had lots of fun submitting some blues phrasing to the peculiar syncopation of the Baião. The fifth and last movement crosses all four themes and that is what inspired the name Interchange. The word Interchange represents my intentions in using traditional music styles of the world blended as a whole organic unit. At the same time Interchange also suggests a casual meeting of different people on the L.A. turnpike.

Selections from *Carmen*

GEORGES BIZET

b. Paris, France / October 25, 1838

d. Bougival, France / June 3, 1875

The path to *Carmen*, Bizet's masterpiece, involved numerous other operas, through which he developed the profound understanding of musical theater which *Carmen* so clearly displays. It premiered in Paris on March 3, 1875. The savagely negative reviews ensured that it gradually dropped from sight. Its ascent to worldwide popularity began in the autumn of that year, with the triumphant success of the first production in Vienna. Alas for Bizet, since by then he had died, just 37.

Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy based their libretto on the story by Prosper Mérimée. The action takes place in and around Seville, Spain, during the 1820s. Carmen is a heartless gypsy who seduces and abandons Don José, a

weak-willed soldier. In a fit of jealous rage, he kills her. The brilliantly scored orchestral selections you will hear at this concert vividly evoke the opera's sultry setting, dramatic events, and vibrant characters, who include gypsies, treadors, soldiers, and street urchins.

Suite from *Romeo and Juliet*

SERGEI PROKOFIEV

b. Sontsovka, Ukraine / April 27, 1891

d. Moscow, Russia / March 5, 1953

In 1934, the Leningrad Opera and Ballet Company (later the Kirov Ballet) commissioned Prokofiev to compose a ballet based on Shakespeare's immortal love drama, *Romeo and Juliet*. He and the company's director, Sergei Radlov, spent months working on the scenario. Meanwhile a newly installed company management decided to withdraw from the project. Undaunted, Prokofiev struck a deal to have it staged by Moscow's Bolshoi Theater. He then proceeded to complete his score, which he did in five months' worth of concentrated, inspired effort. Alas, history repeated itself and the Bolshoi decided to pass on it, too. In order to have the music heard, Prokofiev drew upon it for a set of 10 piano transcriptions and two concert suites. *Romeo and Juliet* finally saw the stage in December 1938 in Brno, Czechoslovakia. That production was successful enough. More than a year passed before the appearance of the first staging to do the score justice, once the Kirov agreed to mount the premiere production within the Soviet Union. It scored an unqualified triumph on January 11, 1940.

Romeo and Juliet may well be Prokofiev's masterpiece. None of his other scores display with equal consistency the same degree of passion, or a comparable variety of color and mood. The selections that Maestro Seaman has chosen include the menacing dance performed at a grand ball by the members of the lovers' rival families (Montagues and Capulets), the mischievous and wistful portrait of the young Juliet, and the terrifying scene in which Romeo avenges the death of his friend Mercutio by killing Juliet's cousin, Tybalt.

Interchange, Carmen, and Romeo and Juliet

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Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra

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Michael Butterman, *Principal Conductor for Education and Outreach*

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2008-2009 Season

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& Clayla Ward Chair
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Shannon Nance,
Assistant
Concertmaster
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Tigran Vardanyan
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Janice Macisak
William Hunt
Sabina Slepceki
Kenneth Langley
Lise Stoddard
Joanna Owen
Christine Hauptly Annin *
An-Chi OuYang
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Principal
Daryl Perlo,
Assistant Principal
Patricia Sunwoo
John Sullivan
Lara Sipols
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Boris Zapesochny
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Fang-yu Liu
James Dumm

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Michael Larco,
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Robert DiLutis

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Charles Bailey

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