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The Magazine of
the East Bay



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Speak of the Devil

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meet the maestro

THE CALIFORNIA Symphony turns 20 this month, and after two decades of racking up accolades and making a name for itself, the Symphony wanted to celebrate its anniversary in a big way. So, come October 15, the 2006–2007 season starts with *Celebration!*, which will feature two child prodigies performing a Mozart concerto. Expect lots of other big surprises during the rest of the season, such as founder and music director Barry Jekowsky performing as a percussionist with the Symphony for the first time. We caught up with Jekowsky to talk about the thriving musical institution's past, present, and future.

The California Symphony has had many successes, both nationally and internationally. Which are you the most proud of?

There are so many moments; it's like asking which one of your kids you love more. If I have to pick one accolade that sums up what we've done, it would be being chosen as *Reader's Digest's* [2005] Best Symphony Orchestra in America. They took into consideration all of the principles that we thought were important: support of American music, support of young composers, support of gifted young musicians. It was a national pat on the back for all the important work we've done. >>>

Speak of the devil

>>> MEET THE MAESTRO

When you were asked to put together a symphony, did you expect it to become world-renowned?

When I presented the name and said I wanted to call it the California Symphony, the board kind of gave me a strange look. But I said, "Don't worry. Ten years from now, people will be listening to our CD all over the world." It was just my natural reaction to say that. But 10 years later, they were listening to our CD, *Lou Harrison: A Portrait*, all over the world.

What do you hope to see in the future for the California Symphony?

In the next 20 years, it's to make people aware of what a jewel, what a gem they have in their own backyard.

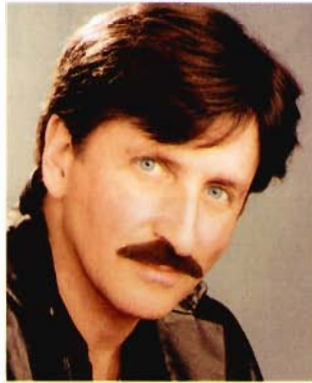
If you could have any wish granted for the California Symphony, what would it be?

A new concert hall. That opens the door, I believe, in bringing in more kids and more children's concerts. We have to build the house that will help to complete the dream of the California Symphony.

What can people expect from this anniversary season?

The unexpected. That's always been part of the California Symphony. First, it will be by hearing two of, I would say, the most gifted young artists I've ever encountered, and what better way to open the season?

California Symphony's Celebration!, October 15 and 17, Dean Leshner Regional Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek. For tickets, call (925) 943-7469, or go to www.dlrca.org. For information, go to www.californiasymphony.org. —Lindsey Gill



BY THE NUMBERS

unfair weather

ALTHOUGH recent weather patterns are not an official "consequence of global warming," torrential spring storms and scorching summer temperatures are raising questions, breaking records, and making headlines across the country. A look at the soaring statistics reveals how the East Bay withstood the weather.

21 Number of days of rain in Oakland in March 2006, beating the previous record, set in 1983, of 20 days

7.22 Number of inches of rain the Oakland International Airport received in March, breaking the 1958 record of 5.69 inches

5 Number of consecutive days during the nearly two-week-long 2006 heat wave that the temperature exceeded 110 degrees, making it the longest hot spell ever

1972 Year of the Bay Area's last 110-plus-degree hot spell, which lasted two days

116 Peak temperature in Pleasanton on July 22 (and Danville on July 23), 15 degrees hotter than the temperature reached on the same day the year before

562,910 Number of Bay Area PG&E customers who lost power due to the heat July 22–23
—Elyce Petker

Sources: *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Contra Costa Times*

latest pole

POLE DANCING has become a trendy way for women of all ages to get a great workout. That's right, pole dancing—it's not just for "Destiny" at Club Déjà Vu anymore.

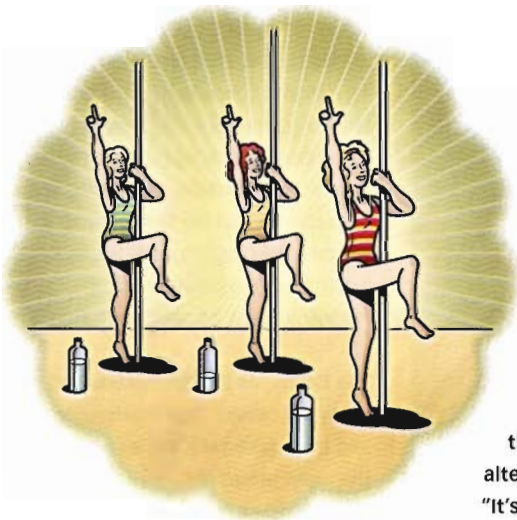
Classes have sprung up everywhere, including at Danville's Fit Studio, where Belmera Jeremiah, a 54-year-old grandmother from Castro Valley, recently started teaching.

Pole dancing requires strength and flexibility, and the hour-long classes provide women with a sexy alternative to the treadmill.

"It's a fun way to go out and feel sexy and get some exercise," says a 31-year-old first-grade teacher from San Ramon who just started taking Jeremiah's class. "It's an excellent workout. After three minutes, I felt like I'd done a 30-minute workout."

One more thing, before you guys get too excited: Classes are female only—no spectators allowed.

Fit Studio, 294-B Railroad Ave., Danville, (925) 362-8001. Classes Mon. and Wed. at 5:30, 6:30, and 7:30 p.m., and Tues. at 10 a.m. —Justin Goldman



TOP TO BOTTOM: COURTESY OF CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY; PETER HOEY