

Tuned In: Menuhin-medal-winning violinist Chad Hoopes to headline a California Symphony concert

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CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY adds another page to its fat scrapbook of sponsored prodigies Sunday afternoon when a chubby-cheeked, tousle-haired wunderkind from Shaker Heights, Ohio, walks onto the Hofmann Theatre stage with his Stradivarius to give his all to Bruch's popular Violin Concerto No. 1.

At the tender age of 15, Chad Hoopes is among the older child virtuosos conductor Barry Jekowsky has presented at the beginning of what have turned out to be stellar careers. Violinists Sarah Chang and Leila Josefowicz were but 9 and 12, respectively, when they soloed with the Walnut Creek ensemble; pianist Helen Huang was 10, cellist Alisa Weilerstein 14, and incredibly gifted Hilary Hahn was 18.

But there is every indication Jekowsky has chosen wisely once again. This young Eagle Scout, who occasionally tours with his two elder sisters as the Playing Hoopes Trio and has starred in an Emmy-winning TV commercial for his hometown Cleveland Indians, has a shiny trophy in his showcase already. In 2008, at age 13, he captured the top junior-division prize in the Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition in Oslo, Norway.

Hoopes has been to Northern California on violin business before — he played at the Festival del Sole in the Napa Valley last summer and was a featured artist for the San Francisco Symphony's most recent New Year's celebration as well. He has another S.F. Symphony gig lined up for this summer

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and is learning the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto he will play under conductor Donato Cabrera in July in Davies Hall.

Sunday, however, it's the concerto by Max Bruch, a richly romantic and melodic heart-tugger with a particularly fiery final movement that takes a lot of guts to pull off. Also on the 4 p.m. program, which repeats at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, are John Adams' "The Chairman Dances" and Dvorak's Symphony No. 8. Tickets, at \$20-\$64, are available at 925-943-7469 or www.lesherartscenter.org.

SAVALL ALL OVER: Estimable and charismatic Jordi Savall, one of the world's preeminent artists on the viola da gamba, is in the Bay Area for multiple engagements with Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Cal Performances in the coming two weeks, so there is precious little excuse for missing him. He takes the conductor's podium at the Herbst Theatre tonight for the kickoff performance of Philharmonia Baroque's March series, themed "The French Suite in Europe."

Music on the bill is Dumanoir's "Ballet de Stockholm," Jean-Baptiste Lully's suite from the opera "Alceste,"

Handel's famed "Water Music Suite" and Telemann's Suite for Viola da gamba and Strings, which will afford Savall a rare opportunity to strut his stuff on his instrument in a full orchestral setting. Today's performance is at 8 p.m. at 401 Van Ness Ave. in San Francisco. The program repeats at 8 p.m. Saturday and 7:30 p.m. Sunday at Berkeley's First Congregational Church. A Palo Alto repeat takes place at 8 p.m. March 12 in First United Methodist Church, and the final program is in the Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church at 8 p.m. March 13.

Tickets, at \$25-\$72, are available at 415-392-4400 or www.cityboxoffice.com.

A brief pause in the midst of all the above is taken for an unusual "first" — Philharmonia Baroque presents Savall in a one-hour family program called "Music from the Sun King's iPod," hosted by KQED Radio's Rachael Myrow, at 3 p.m. Sunday in the Berkeley FCC, 2345 Channing Way.

OK, Louis XIV of France did not really have an iPod, but he surely had the command-performance thing down pat, and this cheerily educational program will offer up what might have been on the Baroque monarch's on-demand play list. General admission tickets are \$7.50 for children, \$15 for adults, and there will be questions answered and instrument demonstrations afterward. Tickets are available at the contacts listed above.

For his next gig, Savall moves back from the Baroque to the Renaissance and earlier periods, teaming with his wife, vocalist Montserrat Figueras, and the Hesperion XXI early music ensemble they cofounded for a program called "Lux Feminae (900-1600)" in Berkeley's First Congregational Church at 8 p.m. March 16. Subtitled "Seven Portraits of the Woman in Ancient Hesperia," the program is a collection of secular and sacred poems and songs that explore aspects of womanhood on the Iberian Peninsula across the centuries and in several linguistic traditions — Basque, Hebrew and Arabic included.

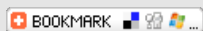
Barcelona-born Savall is a treasured regular with Cal Performances, and tickets to this program already have been snapped up. But the program is intriguing enough to warrant vigilance for last-minute returns. Tickets are \$52 and the number to call is 510-642-9988. Hot tip: Call three hours before the performance and press 2 to see if there are any \$20 rush tickets, one per person and cash only at the box office. And good luck!

ALSO OF NOTE: Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and her fine New Century Chamber Orchestra are in the midst of their "Serenades and Dances" program for March, featuring music by Wolf, Dvorak, Bartok and Britten, and soloists Kevin Rivard on horn and tenor Brian Thorsett, both well-connected to San Francisco Opera. Today's concert is at 8 p.m. in Palo Alto's First United Methodist Church. It repeats at 8 p.m. Saturday at the Herbst Theatre in San Francisco and at 5 p.m. Sunday at the Osher Marin JCC in San Rafael. Tickets, at \$32-\$54, are at 415-357-1111 and www.ncco.org.

The London Quintet — all five of whose members are longtime Bay Area musicians with ties to many other professional ensembles and orchestras here — play the Mozart Quintet for Clarinet and Strings and the heavenly Brahms Clarinet Quintet at 7:30 p.m. Sunday at Crowden School, 1475 Rose St., Berkeley. For tickets, at \$10-\$15, call 510-409-2416.

Valley Concert Chorale performs the masterful Mozart Requiem at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore at 7:30 p.m. Sunday. Artistic director John Emory Bush has chosen the version completed by renowned Mozart scholar Robert Levin of Harvard University in 1991. Tickets, at \$12-\$33, are at 925-373-6800 or www.bankheadtheater.org. The theater is at 2400 First St. in downtown Livermore.

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