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Beethoven by the sea

Eugene Symphony Review

BY CHANDLER DAVIS

The Eugene Symphony Orchestra with conductor Danail Rachev brought its 49th season to a close on Friday, May 15, in Florence with selections from Samuel Barber, Haydn, Beethoven and a stunning featured solo by Principal Cello Anne Ridlington.

The dramatic one-time "Orchestra Showcase" concert was put together especially for the Florence Events Center appearance.

Friday night's show was also the final show in the local

Seacoast Entertainment Association's 35th concert season at the FEC.

Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 (the "Pastoral Symphony") is one of the most played and most popular pieces in the classical repertoire and the orchestra seemed, as in Beethoven's first movement, to be enjoying an "awakening of joyful feelings on arrival in the country."

The orchestra, joined by a group of University of Oregon music students, played the piece's fourth movement thunderstorm and second movement bird calls (nightingale on flute, quail on oboe, cuckoo on two clarinets) for maximum effect.

The full house at the FEC, perhaps resembling Beethoven's "merry gathering of country folk," in the third

movement, responded with appropriate enthusiasm and brought the season to a close with a standing ovation.

The concert opened with a smooth and emotive rendering of Samuel Barber's 1936 Adagio for Strings (once voted the saddest work in classical music, in a BBC poll).

The Adagio is extremely popular among broad audiences and has been featured in dozens of movies. It runs as a theme through the second half of the 1986 movie "Platoon."

Some may remember that it was one of President John F. Kennedy's favorites; Jackie Kennedy had the piece performed to an empty hall shortly after the assassination.

Mary Travers, of Peter Paul and Mary, asked that it be played at her funeral.

The highlight of the concert, however, was Principal Cello Anne Ridlington's performance of Haydn's Cello Concerto in D Major, in her first solo for the orchestra. The 35-year-old said she began playing violin at 3 years old and has been playing the cello since she was 10.

She managed the challenging athletic piece with grace and flair. Without once exposing the effort, she pulled notes from the bottom to the top of the fingerboard — by means of contortionist fingering — that are very rarely heard from this instrument.

Season tickets are now on

sale (seven concerts for the price of five) for the Seacoast Entertainment Association's fall season.

The new series will include Latin, Jazz, Pop and Classical artists, QUARTRO, in October; the Glen Miller Orchestra; SHUFFLE ("a group so multi-talented they let the audience pick the playlist"); and Django Reinhardt style gypsy jazz with The New Hot Club of America.

Call the Florence Events Center box office at 541-997-1994 for tickets.

—Chandler Davis is a Newport freelance writer and musician.

IN BRIEF

Elks Lodge to honor Memorial Day

Florence Elks Lodge #1858 invites the community to a Memorial Day ceremony Monday, May 25.

Doors will open at 9 a.m. for light refreshments.

The Colors will be presented by the Coast Guard with the ceremony at 10 a.m.

American Legion to host Memorial event

The American Legion Post 59 will host a Memorial Day event at the Veterans Memorial Park in Florence on Monday, May 25, at 11 a.m.

Bring a biodegradable wreath between 10:30 and 10:45 a.m. to the park for scattering on the river by the local Coast Guard.

The Veterans Park is located at the corner of Bay and Kingwood streets in Old Town.

LCC campus closed for Memorial Day

Lane Community College will be closed for the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 25.

Classes will not be held and services will not be available, unless otherwise announced by a department or program.

Watershed Council to discuss ethics

The next Siuslaw Watershed

Council general meeting will be Wednesday, May 27, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., at Big Bear Camp, 89480 Nelson Mountain Road in Walton.

For more information, call 541-268-3044, visit www.siuslaw.org or email watershed@siuslaw.org.

FloTones presents 'Glory of Love'

The FloTones will be performing songs from the "Great American Songbook" in its program "The Glory of Love," the last weekend in May.

Performances will be at 7 p.m. on the flat floor of the FEC on Friday and Saturday, May 29 and 30. Singers will be accompanied by Marty Adams, Randy Curtola, Lynette Kristine, Ron Green and Lou Invernon.

Tickets are available now at the FEC box office for \$15.

Car wash fundraiser for Abby Coday

A fundraiser car wash for Abby Coday to help fund her trip to the Junior Gold National Bowling tournament in Chicago will take place at Big Dog Donuts and Deli on May 30 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Van Fans to meet June 3

The next monthly meeting

and luncheon for the Van Fans will be June 3, at The Shorewood, on Spruce Street, at 11:45 a.m.

For more information, contact Karen Lee at 541-997-9669.



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