SAN DIEGO SYMPHONY
Jahja Ling
Music Director

SAN DIEGO SYMPHONY
JACOBS' MASTERWORKS SERIES
April 28, 29 & 30, 2006

Friday, April 28, 8 pm
Saturday, April 29, 8 pm
Sunday, April 30, 2 pm
Symphony Hall

Jahja Ling, conductor
Desmond Hoebig, cello
Che-Yen Chen, viola

PROGRAM

BERLIOZ — ***BENVENUTO CELLINI*, OVERTURE**

HAYDN — **SYMPHONY NO. 88 IN G MAJOR**

Adagio; Allegro
Allegretto
Menuet: Moderato
Finale: Presto

INTERMISSION

R. STRAUSS — ***DON QUIXOTE*, OPUS 35**

Introduction
Variation I. The Adventure of the Windmills
Variation II. The Battle with the Sheep
Variation III. Dialogue of the Knight and his Squire
Variation IV. The Adventure with the Procession of Penitents
Variation V. Don Quixote's Vigil and Effusions of the Heart
Variation VI. The Enchanted Dulcinea
Variation VII. The Ride Through the Air
Variation VIII. The Adventure of the Enchanted Boat
Variation IX. The Contest with the Imaginary Enchanters
Variation X. Joust with the Knight of the Pale
Finale The Death of Don Quixote

The approximate running time for today's program, including intermission, is 2 hours.

OVERTURE TO *BENVENUTO CELLINI*, OPUS 23
Hector Berlioz
Born December 11, 1803, La Côte-St. André, Grenoble
Died March 8, 1869, Paris

Berlioz based his first opera on the life of Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571). The French composer recognized a kindred spirit in Cellini—a goldsmith, sculptor, musician, soldier, lover, duellist, rogue, adventurer, and autobiographer—but the opera was a crashing failure at its premiere in Paris in September 1838. Burdened with a libretto that manages to be both complex and undramatic at the same time, *Benvenuto Cellini* ran for only three performances. Parisian audiences sneered at it as "Malvenuto Cellini," and Berlioz noted (with typical detachment) that after the overture "the rest was hissed with admirable energy and unanimity." Liszt led a revival at Weimar in 1852, but a further production in London in 1855 was a failure, and *Benvenuto Cellini* has not held the stage.

The only part of *Benvenuto Cellini* to have any success was its rousing overture. Everything after that may have been hissed, but Berlioz observed that the overture drew "exaggerated applause," and it has enjoyed a long life in the concert hall. As well it should—the overture blazes with all the fiery energy of Cellini himself. Berlioz wrote the overture after the opera itself was complete, and he incorporated a certain amount of material from the opera in the overture, but the explosive opening was composed specifically for the overture, and it appears to be a portrait of the hero. Marked *Allegro deciso con impetuo*, this opening rushes forward on a main theme full of rhythmic snap, but quickly this energy subsides and the music slows to a *Larghetto*. Over pizzicato accompaniment, woodwinds sing themes from Cardinal Salviati's "A tous péchés pleine indulgence" and the "Arriete d'Arlequin" from a dumb show that takes place during carnival season in Rome. The opening *Allegro deciso con impetuo* returns, but once again Berlioz interrupts this with more lyric music, this time from the love-duet sung by Cellini and his 17-year-old lover Teresa. Back comes the blazing opening material, and the overture reaches its climax as Berlioz presents several of its themes simultaneously. It is a very exciting (and very loud) moment, and then the overture whips to a grand conclusion.


Hector Berlioz

If only the rest of the opera were as good as this overture!❖

SYMPHONY NO. 88 IN G MAJOR
Franz Joseph Haydn
Born March 31, 1732, Rohrau
Died May 31, 1809, Vienna

Haydn spent thirty years as Kapellmeister to the Esterhazy family at their estates on the plain east of Vienna. If, as Haydn observed, that isolation forced him "to become original," it also had the unfortunate effect of cutting him off from mainstream European musical life. Only gradually did his extraordinary achievement with the symphony and string quartet become known to musicians across Europe. By the 1780s, when Haydn was in his third decade with the Esterhazys, his prince finally allowed him to accept commissions from outside, and suddenly he had many requests for symphonies. For a concert series in Paris, he wrote his Symphonies No. 82-87 (known as the "Paris symphonies"), and for his two trips to England he composed his final twelve symphonies (Nos. 93-104), inevitably known as the "London symphonies."

Between these two great cycles, Haydn composed five individual symphonies, probably all of them written with Parisian audiences in mind. He wrote the first two, Nos. 88 and 89, in 1787, at exactly the same moment Mozart was composing *Don Giovanni* in Vienna. One of the violinists in the Esterhazy orchestra, Johann Tost, was about to visit Paris, and Haydn sent the manuscripts of these two symphonies along with him, asking him to see to their publication. And here things got messy. Apparently Tost began to play fast and loose, throwing in a symphony by another composer and passing all three off as the work of Haydn, arranging deals of his own, and not forwarding any of the receipts. Back in Austria, Haydn got wind of this and fired off letters to friends in France suggesting legal action. The matter appears to have been settled satisfactorily: Tost and Haydn were soon on good enough terms that the composer dedicated three sets of quartets to the violinist.

The first of the symphonies Tost took with him to Paris, the Symphony No. 88 in G Major, has always been one of Haydn's most popular—it was recorded several times in the 1930s, when audiences knew hardly any of Haydn's symphonies, and it remains a favorite today of both performers and listeners. When he wrote this music, Haydn was 55 years old and at the height of his powers. The Symphony No. 88 is compact (only about twenty minutes long), but it manages to be both very sophisticated and very appealing at the same time—there is something utterly infectious about this music. It also appears to have rushed out of Haydn at white heat: his biographer H.C. Robbins Landon reports that the manuscript is a mess, full of blots and mistakes—Haydn was desperately trying to get this music on paper as fast as it was occurring to him.

The first movement opens with a slow introduction full of grand and solemn chords. The music pauses, then steps out briskly at the *Allegro* as violins present a tune that seems almost childlike in its simplicity. But the wonder is what Haydn then does with this "simple" little tune. The entire movement grows out of this theme, and—rather than introducing new ideas—Haydn builds the entire structure here out of intervals, bits, and rhythms of this spirited opening idea.

The *Largo* takes us into an entirely different world. Not only is the tempo slow, but the gestures are broad and dignified, the sound unique: the main

melody, for instance, is first presented as a duet between solo oboe and solo cello. The movement unfolds as a series of repetitions of this noble theme, and Haydn gives it a subtly different color on each reappearance. There are surprises along the way, including huge outbursts from the entire orchestra, full of the sound of timpani and trumpets, instruments that (strangely) had sat silent throughout the first movement. This Largo has attracted many admirers, including Brahms, who is reported to have said that he wanted his Ninth Symphony to sound like this movement.

The third movement brings another sharp change: after the poised dignity of the second movement, this is a rollicking minuet. The most striking feature here comes in the trio section, where oboes and violins sing an agreeable little melody over a drone from bassoons and violas. This effect has led to a nickname for this symphony in German-speaking countries: Mit dem Dudelsack ("with the bagpipe").

Haydn marks the finale *Allegro con spirito*, and spirited it certainly is. The principal theme feels like a first cousin to the main theme of the first movement, and this movement is just as infectious as the first, with its happy main theme used as the basis for a *rondo*. But once again Haydn slips in surprises. He separates reappearances of the *rondo* theme with some really brilliant passages for the violins, with both first and second violins playing in unsion. And along the way he throws in some deft canonic extension of his main theme. That sounds cerebral, but—at the movement's breathless tempo—it's all part of the fun.

In fact, this whole symphony is fun. It is no surprise at all that over the last two centuries audiences all over the world have loved this music.❖

DON QUIXOTE, OPUS 35
Richard Strauss
Born June 11, 1864, Munich
Died September 8, 1949, Garmisch-Partenkirchen

In 1896, just after finishing *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, Richard Strauss set to work on a new project, one that would take him in entirely new directions. Strauss at first planned to write a tone poem based on events from Miguel de Cervantes' Don Quixote. But rather than writing a straightforward tone poem, Strauss made his task more complicated by casting his new work as a set of variations based on a collection of themes associated with Don Quixote, his sidekick Sancho Panza, and his idealized love Dulcinea. And then—to bring yet one more dimension to this music—Strauss conceived it as a virtuoso work for cello and orchestra, with the solo cellist cast in the role of Don Quixote. Strauss completed the score in December 1897, and the premiere took place on March 6, 1898, in Cologne, with Friedrich Grützmacher as soloist and Franz Wüllner conducting.

Strauss had originally thought of *Don Quixote* as tone poem rather than a cello concerto, and he intended that the solo cello part would be played by an orchestra's principal cellist seated in his or her normal position at the front of the cello section. But the solo part is so spectacular that the piece soon became a favorite of the great cellists, who naturally preferred to be positioned in front of the orchestra, like a soloist in a concerto; Strauss himself eventually came to conduct *Don Quixote* with the cellist placed in front of the orchestra. But though *Don Quixote* has become one of the greatest works in the cello literature, we should not overlook the other players Strauss assigns important solo roles in this music. The part of Sancho Panza is first announced by bass clarinet and tenor tuba and thereafter undertaken mostly by the solo viola, which plays a very important (and very difficult) part as the Don's long-suffering squire; at key moments the solo violin contributes to the portrait of *Don Quixote*.

Don Quixote consists of an introduction, a statement of the principal themes, ten variations, and a finale. Strauss made careful use of Cervantes' masterpiece: he depicted only a few of the many incidents in the novel and felt free to alter their order in his own presentation. Curiously, Strauss left few indications in the orchestra score as to what each variation depicts–he always claimed to wish that audiences would listen to his works as pure music first and only then approach them as pictorial music. But Strauss left a lengthy description in the piano score, outlining each variation in great detail, and so it is possible to follow exactly what is "happening" at every moment of this music.

The Introduction presents most of the important themes that will evolve across the span of *Don Quixote*. The soloists all remain silent here, and it is the orchestra that presents these themes. At the very beginning comes the little flute tune that will reappear in many forms, followed by a lilting idea for second violins that Strauss marks *grazioso* and a clarinet swirl followed by a three-chord cadence—all of these will be associated with Don Quixote himself. Soon the solo oboe sings a gentle melody depicting the Don's idealized lady-love and patroness, the fair Dulcinea. Trumpets mark his resolve to defend her, but quickly this noble beginning turns complex and dissonant as Quixote loses himself in dreams of knight-errantry—in Cervantes' words, "through his little sleep and much reading, he dried up his brains in such sort, as he wholly lost his judgment." The music reaches a point of shrieking dissonance—*Don Quixote's* mind has snapped and gone delusional—and heroic fanfares break off in silence.

Out of that silence, the solo cello is heard for the first time in the section titled *Don Quixote, the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance*: here the cello presents the Don's themes, now in a minor key. Quickly we meet Sancho Panza, and it is no accident that we move to a major key for the genial sidekick: bass clarinet and tenor tuba sing a rustic duet that introduces the squire, and the viola quickly takes this up, going on and on like Sancho himself. With the