



SAN JOSE  
YOUTH  
SYMPHONY

# Clef Notes



Issue 58.2 | 3.8.10

*Fnoch Matsumura Alan Hwang  
Grace Yang Jonathan Ho  
Audrey Chou*

## Upbeats

March 13  
**Philharmonic Orchestra Concert**  
California Theatre, 2:30 pm

March 20  
**Prelude & Intermezzo Concert**  
Jewish Community Center (Los  
Gatos), 2:30 pm

March 27  
**Young Artists Competition**  
DeAnza College Recital Hall  
1:00 pm

April 10 & 24  
**SJYS General Auditions**  
Archbishop Mitty High School  
9:00 am

April 11  
**Concert Orchestra & Avant Flute  
Choir Concert**  
Archbishop Mitty High School  
4:00 pm

April 21 & 28  
**SJYS Percussion Auditions**  
Valley Christian High School  
5:30 pm

April 26  
**Concerto Competition**  
LGUMC, time TBA

## SJYS 2008-9 YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION WINNERS

### Alan Hwang

**Philharmonic Young Artist  
Competition Winner**

#### **Wieniawski - Violin Concerto No.2**



Alan Hwang is a very busy but talented sophomore from Monta Vista High School. He has been playing the violin since second grade and currently studies under Mr. Davis Law of the esteemed San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

#### **How has music played a role in your life?**

When I was very young, I began learning the piano by myself and actually learned to play with both hands in a short time. My parents noticed that I really enjoyed making music, so they took me to piano lessons. In second grade I started taking violin lessons, and I eventually chose the violin over the piano because I had a greater predilection for it. Nowadays, I still practice the violin whenever I have time away from studying and doing homework. Music is a major influence in my life, and it has shaped me to be the hard-working person who I am now.

#### **Is there any professional musician you look up to?**

Yes. His name is Gil Shaham, and to me, he's by far the best living violinist I've heard. All of my teachers have said he's a wonderful player, and no one I've met has said he's a bad violinist. He has a wonderful intonation and I only aspire to become as great as him at the violin.

#### **What do you do outside of SJYS?**

At my school, I am part of the Tri-M Music Honor Society, where my friends and I frequently volunteer to perform around the community to spread our love of music. I am also working hard for future violin competitions. In addition, I work on math contest problems as a hobby and am involved in the American Mathematics Contests (AMC). I also like to spend free time hanging out with friends and playing Modern Warfare 2.

#### **Who inspires you or pressures you to play better?**

It's my parents who push me the hardest to improve at the violin and become successful at it. And ultimately it's myself, since my perfect pitch really makes me work towards perfection.

*(Read more interviews on pages 2 and 3...)*

# COMPETITION WINNERS

## **Justin Li**

### **Philharmonic Young Artist Competition Winner**

#### **Fauré - Élégie**



Having played the cello for almost ten years, Justin Li has invested many hours into music and is now a senior at Cupertino High School. A student of Cheryl Fippen, Justin is a passionate cellist and one of the top cellists in the San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra. Although Justin is dedicated to music, he is active in his school and community as well. He is the founder of Kenya Dream, which is a non-profit organization that is raising \$100,000 for a school in Kenya. Furthermore, Justin has been the president of his high school class for the past four years. Thus, Justin's compassion has inspired many students to reach out and make a difference in their community.

The San Jose Youth Symphony has nurtured students like Justin to grow musically talented and socially confident. By being a part of the San Jose Youth Symphony, Justin says, "I was able to develop social skills with my section, which has helped me break out of my shell and interact with more people."

Additionally, Justin is ever grateful for his first cello teacher, Adrienne Johnson, who passed away from breast cancer. Since then, whenever Justin plays the cello, Ms. Johnson's passion for music reverberates in Justin's performances as well. Overall, Justin is thankful for the gift of music itself: "Music has helped to shape my dreams and aspirations by teaching me invaluable tools that make me who I am today."

*(More on page 3...)*

## *GUESS WHAT?*

*The SJYS Board has decided to dedicate the Philharmonic Concert on March 13 to our Chilean friends.*

*ALL net proceeds made from the concert will be donated to help Chile, whose inhabitants suffered during the massive earthquake last month.*

*So hurry up and sell those tickets!*



## **Nathan Han**

### **Korea Times Music Competition Winner**

#### **Saint-Saens - Piano Concerto No.2**

Starring as the piano soloist with the San Jose Philharmonic Orchestra, nineteen-year-old Nathan Han is a phenomenal pianist who currently attends Rice University in Houston, Texas. He has played the piano since he was three years old and has studied with Kristen Lee, Su-Mi Park and Professor Mack McCray of the San Francisco Conservatory. Nathan is a gifted musician who has been involved in many competitions, including the Korean TV Network Piano Competition, Korean Times Youth Music Competition, and U.S. Open Showcase Solo Competition. He enjoys playing basketball and pool with his friends as well as going out for sushi. After playing the piano for sixteen years, Nathan notes that music has been a gateway to meeting and socializing with myriad people; but more importantly it has brought him joy and relief from stress. "I felt happy when I played piano," says Nathan, "and I was able to carry this happiness with me throughout my life."

## Christine Liu

**Concert  
Orchestra  
Concerto  
Competition  
Winner**



### **De Beriot - Scene de Ballet**

Christine Liu is a junior at Leland High School who studies with Tina Minn. Even though she moved here all the way from Massachusetts, she has already asserted her musical talent in the Philharmonic.

#### **What's your favorite memory in SJYS?**

Unfortunately, it's very hard for me to answer this question because of all the great times I have had with SJYS! From the interesting and fun rehearsals to summer

camp, there is just no way to choose my favorite part of SJYS. I enjoy playing music with other dedicated musicians and it is satisfying to spend my Mondays playing great music together.

#### **How has music played a role in your life?**

As a child, I have always tinkered on the piano, or have wanted to be musically inclined like my older sister. Throughout the years, I eventually learned to play the piano first, then the violin, then the flute in fifth grade. In middle school, I switched to the bassoon, and also played bass guitar in jazz band because my teacher recommended that I try it because I played a string instrument. Currently, I cannot play all of these instruments because of school, but I have never stopped playing the violin. Music has simply been a major part of my childhood and shaped me into a person who has an interest and passion for it.

#### **What's a piece you haven't learned yet that you want to play?**

In the future, I want to play the Violin Concerto in D Major by Tchaikovsky. I have always loved Tchaikovsky's style of music because of its grand orchestral sounds or peaceful melodies.

# SJYS Concertmasters - Past and Present

Konzertmeister. The conductor's third hand. Leader. Whatever you call it, there is no doubt that the concertmaster has the most prestigious role in an orchestra (next to the conductor, of course). The concertmaster gets to do so many things the other musicians can't – standing up and pretending like he actually has an important role in tuning, changing the bowing patterns to satisfy his latest whim, and, of course, playing all the fancy solos. But these privileges aren't all taken for granted. According to Wikipedia, "It is usually required that the concertmaster be the most skilled musician in the section, good at learning music quickly, counting and observing the conductor for the rest of the section to follow." Not everybody can be concertmaster, but boy, does everybody want to. We interviewed SJYS concertmasters, male and female, past and present, young and (cough) old, so that those musicians aspiring for the lucky seat can see what these concertmasters had to do.

#### **What was your reaction when you were appointed to this chair?**

**Peter Hwang (former Philharmonic concertmaster):** VICTORY. I emerged out of the gruesome dogfight between amazing violinists alive and on top. I was also very excited that I had fulfilled my dream of shaking Yair Samed's hand before every concert (that was a reward in itself). Honestly,

I was honored to have been appointed concertmaster alongside Lizzie Choi. It was an experience that kept me accountable for the music we played, allowed me to build strong friendships with many of my fellow musicians, and led me to take more ownership for my role in the orchestra.

**Hayoung Kim (Intermezzo concertmistress):** I was excited at the news but also very nervous because I thought a concertmaster has an important role in orchestra.

**Dennis Huang (Concert Orchestra concertmaster):** I was actually quite surprised when I was appointed to the chair.

#### **Can you recount what you did during and before the audition to prepare?**

**Dennis Huang:** I simply practiced my piece a lot, making sure I had it down. But I was still pretty nervous during my audition.

**Jamie Pak (former Philharmonic concertmaster):** The first thing I always did was bring the music to my teacher so we could go over fingerings, bowings, style, etc. Since YouTube wasn't what it is now, my teacher gave me CD's and I listened to them all the time, whether driving or studying or watching TV...I just tried(*continued on page 4*)



what (almost) every musician wants to do

(Concertmasters, continued)

to forget that Yair was there. One of the worst things you can do is worry about what he thinks about your playing, because that shifts your focus away from the music and onto a very attractive man. Playing requires not only listening to yourself, but hearing and anticipating where the music is leading, and you can't do that when your attention is divided.

**What do you think your role as concertmaster is (or was)?**

**Jamie Pak:** The concertmaster is an extension of the conductor. A lot of it has to do with body language, and you have to develop a consistent way to lead your section into an entrance, to show dynamics and articulation, etc. You're basically a leader for all the divas in the orchestra so you have to somehow convince them to follow you. It's a fine line between being a people-pleaser and an assertive jerk.

**Alan Hwang (Philharmonic concertmaster):** I think the role of the concertmaster is to lead the symphony and also to make sure everyone is doing their part in practice. They also have to be able to play the entire repertoire as well as any difficult solos.

**Hayoung Kim:** I think a concertmaster needs to be the leader of an orchestra and needs to have better than others technically. I tried my best but I'm not satisfied with what I have done. If I have another chance, I'll do my best again.

**What is your favorite memory about being in SJYS?**

**Peter Hwang:** I have two to share because I can't really decide between them. My first one is the Young Artist Competition Solo that I was blessed to win and perform in 2004. Playing "The Butterfly Lovers" violin concerto was the reason why I decided to learn violin. I remember watching my cousin play that concerto with his orchestra in Santa Barbara, CA, and I told my parents that I wanted to do the exact same thing but better. So, years later, I had the privilege of playing the same violin concerto with

SJYS in front of my cousin.

My second memory was when Yair got fed up a couple of the section leaders and asked us to play Gershwin's "Girl Crazy" without our music. We all surprised him by playing the entire piece with our music binders closed. That not only showed the talent and skills of the musicians I played with in 2005, but also the respect we all had for Yair by showing that we were so committed to playing the pieces well, that we actually memorized them front to back.

**What are some of the privileges?**

**Alan Hwang:** I get to lead tuning, bow in front of the audience, play the solos in the repertoire, and be able to lead others during rehearsals and concerts.

**Peter Hwang:** You get to see the whites of Yair's eyes. Privileges of being a concertmaster are one of things that are never really understood until you look at them in hindsight....As a concertmaster, you have the privilege of being held to a higher standard of musicianship. You are expected to come prepared, on time, and ready to prove to everyone at every rehearsal that you deserve this spot, day in and day out. You have everything to prove, and also everything to lose, because there are about 12 musicians behind you who are also hungry for the shot of sitting in the hot seat. Personally, I enjoyed the privilege of always knowing what the bowings were because Lizzie and I were the ones who wrote and changed them as we pleased....For those in my section, I sincerely apologize.

**Jamie Pak:** Depending on how well you lead the tuning, you get all the ladies.



Peter Hwang and Lizzie Choi



Dennis Huang

Jamie Pak



Hayoung Kim



**This issue is dedicated to *Richard Sim*, a former concertmaster of the  
SJYS Philharmonic who passed away two years ago.**



***Richard Sim***

***December 29, 1988 - June 28, 2008***

It is a great honor to be appointed concertmaster of SJYS. There have been many great ones like Kay Yang, Ceron Rhee, Emma Heffernan, and Lizzie Choi who all epitomized the position. They worked hard and played great and brought joy to many people through their musical talents. Rich was among the few who were given this honor and it came with great work. He practiced everyday and went to lessons every week and even ended up teaching in-between. He had a way of taking a piece and making it his own which is really pretty hard to do with classical music. Within the confines of the notes, he put his own spin on the phrasing and feeling to make a piece alive with his own touch.

He was born Dec. 29, 1988. I don't remember that night, but I do remember the next 19 years of his life. When we were growing up we were inseparable. We did everything together.

He had to be the best at everything he did and would do anything to make that happen. Even at this young age he was developing into the man that he would become. As we grew in the church he also grew in his compassion for others. Instead of going out with friends on Fridays and Saturdays, he would go to church to baby-sit the kids of the choir members for free. He played with them and mentored them at a young age and gave them someone to play with and talk to. He was able to reach many people's lives through this and quickly became a favorite kid in the church. Parents would always compliment him and were impressed by his aptitude for leadership even at such a young age.

Basketball was another thing that we had together. We both played at the YMCA. He excelled at basketball until his sophomore year when the doctor didn't clear him for his physical because of the heart problem that would later cut his life so short of what it should have been. When the doctor told him that he couldn't play basketball anymore he was devastated. It was his passion for so long that the first months were really hard on him. He tried not to let it show but it did to those closest to him.

That's when his musical talent started to blossom. He took the same passion and love for basketball and used it in his music. He would practice every day, sometimes for 4 hours a day, sometimes more. He had to be the best. He studied from a past concertmaster in the San Jose Symphony and from there it was on. He grew so much musically playing pieces that kids 4 years older than him were playing. We would do duets for recitals and even then I knew that he was better than me at violin than I was at cello. He continued to impress his teacher so much that he gave Rich students of his own to teach. His love for music and his love for kids made him the perfect teacher. He was able to somehow reach the kids who hated playing and were only playing for their parents. He was able to relate to them as that was how we both felt when we first began as our mom forced us to start. However he was also able to tell them that even though they hated it now that someday they would grow into it and would one day even like playing. He was the kind of guy that everyone was lucky to have in their life.

His music wasn't the only thing that made him great. He was one of the most compassionate and loving people I have ever known. He always helped out our mom with laundry and dishes and cleaning the house. He always helped our dad with whatever work he needed done and was always there to watch a Warriors game. He made life so much easier for our parents. There's no truer thing that I've heard than "you don't know what you have until it's gone." In this case it was you don't know who you had until they're gone. It is so easy to be mad about everything that has happened because of the severity of it. It's just not right for such an amazing person at 19 years old to be taken from this world. Rich wouldn't want people to still be grieving over him. Instead in his loving memory, he would want us all to move on and to make our lives better with everyday. It won't be easy. Life never is. His life has shown us that tomorrow is never promised no matter how invincible we think we are. So remember to live everyday as if it's your last. It sounds cliché but it is so true. Before you go to sleep at night you should ask yourself if you did everything you could today to the best of your abilities so that you would have no regrets tomorrow.

When I get sad over his passing I think of what he would do. He would do a stupid dance or make an outrageous face to make me laugh and smile. And that's what he would want. He would want us to smile in his memory and to love others everyday as he did. There are so many things in life that can go wrong, but the only thing that you can control is you. Make sure that you live, laugh, and love everyday and you can't go wrong. I love my brother very much and I miss him every day, and I hope it doesn't take you a loss like this to recognize that those in your life mean the world to you.

To those aspiring to be amazing musicians, go for it! It won't be easy. In fact sometimes it will be hard. But nothing good comes easy. Whatever you do in life, make sure that you do it with everything that you have. It will be much easier to sleep at night. I hope that all of your dreams come true and with your hard work and Rich looking over you, anything is possible.

***~ Steve Sim***

EXTENDED PROGRAM NOTE

# “The Cat Concerto”

(aka Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2)



Franz Liszt was born in Sopron, Hungary in 1811. At six, he was found to be an exceptional pianist and began to learn from his father, who was also a musician. When he was eight, he began to compose pieces based on the gypsy music that he heard around him. As his talent grew, a number of wealthy Hungarians offered Liszt the chance to study abroad, and he moved to Vienna to study piano with Carl Czerny, who many modern musicians know for his tedious piano exercises.

In 1823, he began to travel around Europe to perform. His abilities at the piano created many jubilant crowds who desired to hear him play. However, in 1847, Liszt decided to step off the stage of glory and focus his time on composition. He moved to Weimar, Germany and spent his time composing, conducting, and teaching a small group of students. Liszt later moved to Rome to become a part of the Franciscan order. He spent his time roaming back and forth between Weimar to teach students and Rome to keep his place at the church. He later died in 1886.

Liszt spent most of his life outside of Hungary, but he still considered himself a Hungarian. His nineteen Hungarian Rhapsodies were composed with the gypsy music that he heard as a child. The most famous of the rhapsodies is the Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2, which was composed for Count László Teleski in 1847. It was originally written for solo piano, but due to its popularity, Liszt composed an orchestra and a piano duet version of the rhapsody. Its technical challenges hold the Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 as the standard for high-level piano playing.

The Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 consists of two distinctive sections, both based on the tunes of gypsy music. The first section is the *Lassan*, which has a relatively somber mood and tone, but contains a few moments of lighter areas. The second section is the *Friska*, which has a jubilant tone imitating the music of a Hungarian dance. The Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 has been displayed in popular culture through cartoons from Disney, Warner Brothers, and MGM. One of the most popular representations of the rhapsody is “The Cat Concerto” from *Tom and Jerry*, which earned an Academy Award for Best Animated Short Film in 1946.

For the upcoming concert in March, the Philharmonic Orchestra, under the direction of Maestro Yair Samet, will perform the orchestral version of the Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2.





# SAN JOSE YOUTH SYMPHONY PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

## *Young Artist Extravaganza*



YAIR SAMET  
MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

### Music of Strauss, Faure, Liszt, Wieniawsky and Saint-Saëns

Saturday, March 13, 2010 2:30 pm  
California Theatre, 345 South First Street, San Jose

Tickets can be purchased in advance online at <http://www.sjys.org/concerts/tickets.html> or at the box office before the concert. Admission is \$15 for adults, \$10 for students and seniors, and \$5 for children under 13. For further information, contact SJYS offices at (408) 885-9220 or [sjys@sjys.org](mailto:sjys@sjys.org).



Alan Hwang\*

### CHILE EARTHQUAKE RELIEF CONCERT

SJYS Wishes To Dedicate This Concert  
To Our Friends in Chile



Justin Li\*



ByoungJun (Nathan) Han\*\*

\*Winner of the 2009 Young Artist Competition, sponsored by the San Jose Symphony Foundation

\*\* Winner of the KoreaTimes Youth Music Competition



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