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*Harp of Our Dreams...*



# THE NEXT GENERATION

YVONNE LA MOTHE SCHWAGER  
HARP COMPETITION

Organized by  
the Bay Area Chapter  
of the American Harp Society

SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 2013 AT 2PM

# Program



**Petite Etude (from Harp Olympics II)** Van Veachtou Rogers (1864-1937)  
*Carter Williams, Silver Winner, Preliminary Level*

**A Moorish Garden** Nancy Gustavson (1921-1996)  
*Aria Delgado, Bronze Winner, Preliminary Level*

**Concert Etude** Susann McDonald (1935- )  
**Amazing Grace (from Harp Olympics II)**  
*Charis Woo, Gold and MusicWorks Prize Winner*

**Prelude No. 2, tr. Kondonassis** George Gershwin (1898-1937)  
*Danielle Nam, Silver Winner, Level I*

**La Gimblette** Bernard Andrès (1941- )  
*Therese Nguyen, Bronze Winner, Level I*

**Elfentanz (Elfin Dance) from Im Walde (In the Forest)** Johannes Snoer  
(1868-1936)  
*Hannah Ewell, Harpiana Prize, Level I*

**Pavane, from Automates** Bernard Andrès  
*Eileen Gao, Bronze Winner, Level II*

**La Source, op. 44, Etude for harp** Alphonse Hasselmans (1845-1912)  
*Tiffany Wong, Gold Winner, Level I*

**Somewhat Harmonious** Gary Schocker (1959- )  
*Erin Kim, Silver Winner, Level II*

**Impromptu** Reinhold Glière (1875-1956)  
*Elizabeth Vo-Phamhi, Gold Winner, Level II*

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**Russian Toccata**

Nicolas Slonimsky (1894-1995)

*Sunny Wu, Silver Winner, Level III*

**Ballade**

Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)

**Sylphenreigen, from *Zwei Tonbilder*, op. 4**

Alfred Holý (1866-1948)

*Arielle Herman, Bronze and Harpiana Prize Winner, Level III*

**The Colorado Trail**

Marcel Grandjany (1891-1975)

*Jenny Vo-Phamhi, Gold Winner, Level III*

**INTERMISSION**

**Sonata K113**

Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)

*Emily Mader, Silver Winner, Level IV*

**Impromptu, op. 86**

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

*David Ren, Gold Winner, Level IV*



**Rondo on *Zitti-Zitti*, the Trio from *The Barber of Seville***

R. N. C. Bochsa

by Rossini, ed. I. Moretti

(1789-1856)

**Sonata in A Major, K209, ed. McDonald/Wood-Rollo** Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757)

**The Lark, tr. Balakirev, ed. M. Agazarian**

Mikhail Glinka (1804-1857)

**Etude de Concert in E-flat minor, op. 193**


Félix Godefroid (1818-1897)

*Seika Dong, guest artist*

*Reception Following*

## YVONNE LA MOTHE SCHWAGER HARP COMPETITION

*For many years, Bay Area students enjoyed competing for the Inez Stafford Harp Competition. In its current form this regional competition was re-established in 2011 in honor of Yvonne La Mothe Schwager subsequent to her bequest to the Bay Area Chapter of the American Harp Society. Mrs. Schwager was a Berkeley harpist who quietly made things happen on an international level between 1950 and 1966. Under her stewardship, the Northern California Harpists' Association, a precursor of the American Harp Society, gave awards to many composers for new pieces for the harp, or for harp with ensemble, some of which became instant hits. Recognizable composers with whom she worked included Marius Flothuis from the Netherlands, famed American composer and critic Virgil Thomson, Josef Tal from Israel, and Gerardo Gombau from Spain. However the most-performed winning work must be the Petite Suite by English composer and harpist David Watkins, which includes the famous Fire Dance. Yvonne La Mothe Schwager had a truly international and enduring impact on harpists and their music.*



### The Bay Area Chapter of the American Harp Society

The Yvonne La Mothe Schwager harp competition was administrated by the BACAHS Board:

Dominique Piana, President

Mitch Landy, Vice President

Alice Yothers, Secretary

Susie Spiwak, Treasurer

The judges were Drs. Cheryl Ann Fulton of Oakland, Jacquelyn Venter of Folsom and Celia Chan Valerio of Loma Linda.

Special thanks go to all our volunteers on the day of the competition: Meredith Clark, Daphanie Lin, Joan Mapou, Doug Rioth, Brian Roberts, Jim Ward and Sonya Yu, as well as Jessica Siegel, who designed the winners' certificates and certificates of achievement for all the participants.

## PROGRAM NOTES

by *Dominique Piana*

**Van Veachton Rogers** was a fine East Coast harpist from the turn of the 19th century who composed an array of delightful romantic pieces without pedals for the beginning harpist. A note for curious readers: he is praised highly by Carlos Salzedo in the *Eolus Review*, Vol. VI, No. 1 from 1927.



Bay Area harpist **Nancy Gustavson** composed sophisticated little gems for young harpists. *A Moorish Garden* comes from her collection *The Magic Road*, which transports the player into a diverse, exotic sound world with a few vibrating strings.

In the Harp Solos Series, **Susann McDonald's** *Concert Etude* is the first piece featuring long flowing arpeggios, which are always so uplifting to play. *Amazing Grace* never fails to move the heart, even in this simple arrangement.



Historically, songwriter **George Gershwin** is considered the man who brought jazz into the concert hall. He started his professional life as a song plugger on Tin Pan Alley yet, especially after his success with *Rhapsody in Blue*, he turned more and more to concert music. He was in great demand as a singers' accompanist, and performed his *Preludes* for the first time at a voice recital in 1926.

Among the works of **Bernard Andrès**, the theme and variations set *La Gimblette* represents a big milestone for the young performer. Without lever or pedal changes, all kinds of imaginative musical ideas keep us breathlessly on our toes to the end.



Dutch harpist **Johannes Snoer** made his career in Leipzig, Germany and contributed many enchanting works to the late romantic harp literature. Each pedal change opens a new realm of expression, an invitation to revel with the mythic elves. He became very interested in the possibilities of the chromatic harp, which allowed unhampered modulations like the piano.

French harpist and composer **Bernard Andrès** has composed prolifically for all levels of the highly organized French music education system. He has created

unique pieces that take the non-pedal harp to its utmost limit. In his collection *Automates*, he returns to the baroque French suite of dances with a modern twist. *Pavane* exudes the distinct perfume of modality, so French and sighing.



The Belgian **Alphonse Hasselmans** became the father of the modern French school of harp, as all the famous harpists of the 20th century passed through his Paris Conservatory class, from Renié to Grandjany, and Tournier to Salzedo. *La Source*, the quintessential poetic harp piece, evokes the droplets of water spreading from a spring, weaving an uninterrupted chain of flowing notes and feeling.

Flutist and composer **Gary Schocker** has recently come to the attention of the harp world through harpist Emily Mitchell's advocacy of his music. The title *Somewhat Harmonious* is a play on words recalling the famous Handel piece *The Harmonious Blacksmith*, as it is made up of two sets of variations on Handel.

**Reinhold Glière** was the son of a Belgian wind instrument builder, Maurice Gillier, himself a friend of Félix Godefroid who had settled in Kiev. He composed the famous Concerto for Harp that has become symbolic of the grand Russian way with the harp, as well as this *Impromptu* from 1947 that deserves to become better known. A master orchestrator, he ingeniously combined classical and folk influences in lasting works beloved by performers and audiences. Among his pupils at the Moscow Conservatory were Prokofiev and Khachaturian.



Russian-born **Nicolas Slonimsky** revealed himself to be a one-of-a-kind maverick during a long and adventurous life. The spirited author of the Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians described himself as a failed wunderkind, yet became one of the most renowned American musicologists of the 20th century. A pianist and composer (who also studied with Glière), he gradually turned to writing music articles.

Meanwhile, his advocacy of modern works sank his career as a conductor. In his lapidary style, all he said about himself, as a composer, was that he favored miniature forms.

Doubtlessly inspired by his harpist daughter Jacqueline, the distinguished French composer **Jacques Ibert** composed more than usual for the harp: a collection of

six pieces with poetic titles, among which *Ballade* is found, the famous *Entracte* for flute or violin and harp, a Trio for violin, cello and harp and Two Interludes for flute, violin and harp. His rich harmonic language and coloristic expression are always personal and effective.



**Alfred Holý's** *Sylphenreigen* is named after a famous piece by Franz Liszt, and recreates for the harp the enchanting and slightly threatening fairy world evoked in so many romantic paintings and music works, from miniatures to opera. These imaginary creatures can be quite the drama queens, no softies they! Holý's always tasteful, finely chiseled style epitomizes the apogee of the Austro-Czech-Hungarian musical language, à la Dvořák. Many more similar unconquered beauties await your curiosity...



Harpist **Marcel Grandjany** was an immensely talented composer who remained to the end of his life the typical French gentleman, faithful to his French musical upbringing, whether in original compositions or transcriptions. Yet when he heard the tune of the Colorado Trail, he fashioned something that could be called "organically American". One can hear the grandness of the vistas and the breadth of the

far away horizon, an unusual Western streak in his refined production. Finally the immigrant soul melds with the American scenery in sparkly bursts of life energy.

After enjoying various high-level employment opportunities in his native Italy, harpsichordist and composer **Domenico Scarlatti** followed his muse to Portugal, where he taught the Infanta Maria Barbara, subsequently following her to Spain upon her marriage to the Spanish heir to the throne Ferdinando. Scarlatti's single-movement sonatas, named *Essercizi* in their first 1738 publication, are in "free style", an ornamented homophonic style versus the polyphonic one that had been the norm. Their clear texture makes them particularly well suited to the harp, and there is some evidence that his last sonatas were also performed on clavichord and early piano. In the dedication to the King of Portugal, Scarlatti spoke of "ingenious jesting with art by means of which you may attain freedom in harpsichord playing".



**Gabriel Fauré's** *Impromptu* stands simultaneously as the crowning of the French harp repertoire and as a conundrum. In recent years, a controversy about the

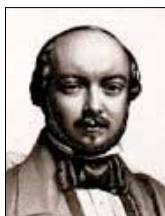


differences in style within the piece have led some to believe that Fauré may have been helped by his mistress Marguerite Hasselmans (Alphonse's daughter) at a time when he was rushing to finish other projects. The Impromptu alternates between typical tender Faurean moments and more virtuoso passages requiring forceful declamation.

**Nicolas Charles Bochsa**, the most prolific harpist of his era, was born the year of the French Revolution and entered the musical scene at the tail end of tumultuous changing times in France. The son of an oboist and music publisher, he knew how to capitalize his gifts and, like many illustrious colleagues, often used famous tunes (by others) as a starting point for his own compositions. Originally the rondo form was used in classical sonatas, symphonies or concertos for the joyful final movement. In early Romanticism, the *rondo* also developed potential as a stand-alone form (see Hummel, for example). In *The Barber of Seville*, the famous trio *Zitti, ziti, piano, piano* (Softly, softly, and in silence) is sung by Count Almaviva, Rosina and Figaro toward the end of the opera, as the lovebirds prepare to elope.



In 1840 **Mikhail Glinka** published a collection of 12 songs entitled "A Farewell to St Petersburg" which includes *The Lark*. This tune must have struck a nerve in the Russian soul, as Mily Balakirev, remembered for his famous piano fantasy *Islamey*, composed not just one but two piano versions on Glinka's song, one in 1869, the other in 1902. For most of the 20th century, it was Xenia Erdeli's arrangement for harp that was popular among harpists, but recently prominent Moscow harp professor Milda Agazarian produced her own new edition of this work.



Belgian-born but Paris-based **Félix Godfreid** was the 19th century's most successful virtuoso touring harpist. His "wizardry" mesmerized people, appealing to both aristocracy and common folk, and in one town (Mulhouse), riots erupted when there were no seats left in the recital hall! In his *Etude de Concert* he creates magic out of a simple finger pattern called cross fingering, while also using the eerie effect of tremolos over synonym notes. He really knew how to make the left hand sing, and allow the heart to soar.



# Performers

## GUEST ARTIST, SEIKA DONG

Nineteen-year-old **Seika Dong** is currently a freshman pursuing a Bachelors of Harp Performance at Indiana University with full merit scholarship under the tutelage of distinguished professor Susann McDonald. Indigenous to California, she started the harp at age four with renowned teacher Linda Wood Rollo while attending public schools. She also began her piano studies at age six. Seika's awards include: First Place in the Japan International Harp Competition in the Junior Division in 2006 and First Prize again in the Advanced Division in 2008; First Prize in the American Harp Society National Competition (Intermediate Division) in 2007; Second Prize in the American Harp Society National Competition (Junior Division) in 2006; top three finalist in the American String Teachers Association National Competition in 2007; and First Prize in the San Francisco Bay Area's Inez Stafford Harp Competition in both 2004 and 2005.




In 2011, Seika was an invited performer in the "Young Talents" concert in the Vancouver World Harp Congress. She was also a featured artist in the "Stars of Tomorrow" concert in San Francisco in 2006 and again in the "Stars of Tomorrow" concert at Indiana University during the 2007 USA International Competition. Seika was also a soloist at the San Francisco Opera House in 2007 and the same in New York, 2008.

## COMPETITION WINNERS

**Aria Delgado**, from Sanger, age 9, has studied with Laura Porter for a year and a half. She enjoys art and music. She also loves animals and enjoys collecting stuffed animals. She will commemorate this, her first competition, by adding another stuffed animal to her collection.

**Hannah Ellis Ewell**, from Saratoga, 10, has been taking private lessons with Kristal Schwartz Barlaan for two and a half years. She began the piano at six, but two years later fell in love with the harp and it has become her focus ever since. She won the Gold in her level at the 2011 Yvonne La Mothe Schwager Harp Competition. She enjoys playing hymns on her harp in church with her brother, sometimes arranging her



own part. Her desire is that people will be blessed by her music. You'll find her drawing and doodling in her spare time.

**Eileen Gao**, 14, is from Sunnyvale and has studied harp with Kristal Schwartz Barlaan for one and a half years. She plays clarinet in her high school marching band, and successfully auditioned into the Wind Ensemble at school this year. In her spare time she also enjoys reading and drawing.

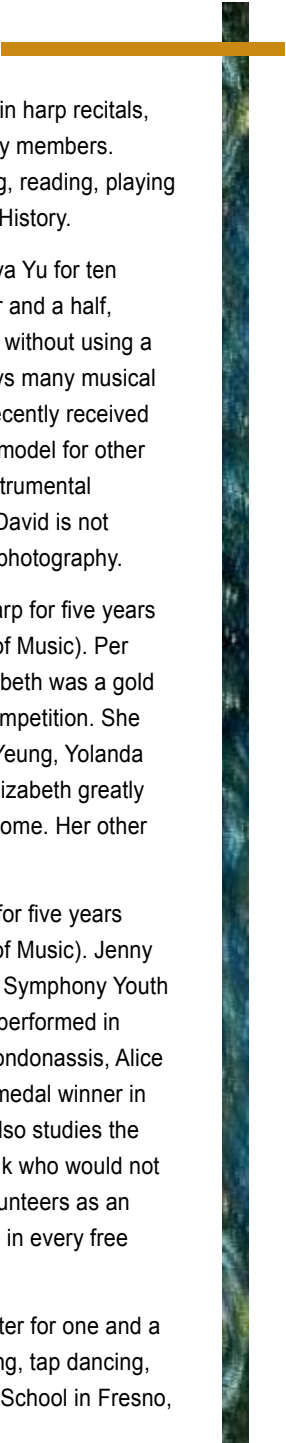
**Arielle Herman**, 16, is a sophomore at Monte Vista High School in Danville. She has played harp for 6 years, first with Bennetta Heaton, and recently with Dominique Piana. Arielle also plays piano and has completed Level 10 (Advanced) of the Music Teachers Association of California Certificate of Merit, qualifying as a convention soloist this year. In addition, she is an accomplished violist for the Young People's Symphony Orchestra in Berkeley, and toured with them last year in Vienna and Prague. During music practice breaks, Arielle dances ballet with the Contra Costa Ballet.

**Erin Kim**, age 13, is from Fresno, and has studied the harp with Laura Porter for three years. She also plays the piano and enjoys math and history in school. In April, Erin played on the Young Artists Spotlight for the Valley Public Radio (KVPR, FM89) and won first prize in the Fresno Chapter of the 2011 American String Teachers Association (ASTA) Competition.

**Emily Mader** is an 18 year old harpist who is passionate about music. A Sacramento resident, she has played the harp for eight years and has studied with her current teacher, Dr. Beverly Wesner-Hoehn, for two years. Emily is the principal harpist of the Auburn Symphony. She was the First Place winner in the 2012 Sacramento American String Teachers Association Competition. When Emily is not practicing harp, she enjoys performing with her siblings and volunteering at various events around her community.

**Danielle Nam**, 11, has studied harp for five years with Sonya Yu, and also plays violin and piano. She has participated in three previous competitions: 2011 Yvonne La Mothe Schwager Harp Competition, US Open Music Competition, and the American Harp Society 20th National Competition. Danielle has many favorites: Food - chicken; Activities - knitting and reading; Books - mythology and fantasy; Animal - sea turtle; Color - pink; and school subject - History. In her spare time she likes to collect special rocks and hang out with her friends. She attends Springer Elementary School in Los Altos.

**Therese Nguyen**, a 12-year-old from San Jose, has studied harp for almost



three years with Kristal Schwartz Barlaan. Therese has played in harp recitals, church, ASTA CAP, ACSI, ACSI Honor Symphony, and for family members. Besides playing the harp, she enjoys playing the piano, drawing, reading, playing volleyball and singing. Her favorite subject in school is Ancient History.

**David Ren**, from San Jose, age 20, has studied harp with Sonya Yu for ten years. David Ren was diagnosed with autism when he was four and a half, suffering from poor fine motor skills and unable to hold a pencil without using a special grip. Since then, he has come a long way, and now plays many musical instruments, including harp, piano and Chinese guzheng. He recently received the Youth Focus Award of Commendation for serving as a role model for other youth. He also received three awards from the Youth Focus Instrumental Adjudication for his achievements in harp performance. When David is not practicing music, he enjoys playing videogames and exploring photography.

**Elizabeth Vo-Phamhi**, from San Bruno, age 13, has studied harp for five years with Doug Riotth (harp professor, San Francisco Conservatory of Music). Per his advice, she also undertakes concurrent piano studies. Elizabeth was a gold medal winner in the 2011 Yvonne La Mothe Schwager Harp Competition. She has performed in master classes with Susann McDonald, Ann Yeung, Yolanda Kondonassis, Alice Giles, Elizabeth Hainen and Paula Page. Elizabeth greatly enjoys sharing her beautiful harp music with the local nursing home. Her other activities include archery, ballet, origami and drawing.

**Jenny Vo-Phamhi**, from San Bruno, age 16, has studied harp for five years with Doug Riotth (harp professor, San Francisco Conservatory of Music). Jenny believes that her hard work every week with the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra significantly raises her level as a harpist. Jenny has performed in master classes with Susann McDonald, Ann Yeung, Yolanda Kondonassis, Alice Giles, Elizabeth Hainen and Paula Page. Jenny was a bronze medal winner in the 2011 Yvonne La Mothe Schwager Harp Competition. She also studies the piano. Jenny loves performing her harp for elderly and ailing folk who would not have the opportunity to hear live music otherwise. She also volunteers as an archery instructor, and enjoys writing fiction and folding origami in every free moment.

**Carter Williams** is 9 years old, and has studied with Laura Porter for one and a half years. In her spare time she enjoys playing her harp, singing, tap dancing, drawing and reading. Carter attends Bullard Talent Elementary School in Fresno, where her favorite subject is math.

**Tiffany Wong**, 12, is a 6th grader at The Harker School in San Jose. She began studying piano at age five, and started harp three years later, studying with Linda Wood Rollo. She won the Silver in her level in the 2011 Yvonne La Mothe Schwager Harp Competition and was a finalist in the 2012 American Harp Society National Competition. Tiffany's piano awards include Third Prize in the 2013 US Open Competition in the Instrumental Concerto event (Handel Harp Concerto); Solo Winner in the US Open Music Competition Showcase, and First Alternate in the CAPMT Bartok and Contemporary Music Festival. Besides harp and piano, Tiffany enjoys reading, singing and dancing.

**Charis Woo**, from Orinda, age 7, has studied harp with Jessica Siegel of Harps Etc. for two and a half years. She enjoyed her first recital at age five, playing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star". Most recently, she performed at the Certificate of Merit honors recital in Pleasant Hill. In her spare time she also enjoys ice skating, swimming and reading, and playing with friends, of course!

**Sunny Wu**, 16, is American-born Chinese from San Jose, residing there with her parents, who are from Taiwan, R.O.C. She has been playing harp for seven years, beginning at age nine with Sonya Yu, and currently studying with Linda Wood Rollo. She is a second-time winner in the Yvonne La Mothe Schwager Harp Competition, winning silver in her level in 2011. She won second prize in the 2012 Young Artist's Harp Competition in the Emerging Artist Division, and first prize in the 2010 Young Artist's Harp Competition in the New Artist Division. She also performed in the Focus on Youth Concerts at the 2011 World Harp Congress in Vancouver, Canada. Sunny plays the harp in her high school's Chamber Orchestra. She has also played the piano for eleven years and is an Advanced Level pianist. She enjoys giving back to her community through her music and is currently President-Elect for her school's Music for Community club. Her favorite school subject is English.

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