

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**California Symphony to perform
at free outdoor concerts in
Concord and San Ramon
on September 16-17, 2006**



WALNUT CREEK, CA (8-9-06) – In what has become an annual tradition, the California Symphony – which was named the “Best Symphony Orchestra in America” by *Reader’s Digest* magazine in 2005 – will perform two free outdoor concerts for East Bay music lovers during the weekend of September 16-17, 2006.

On Saturday (9/16) at 6 pm, the Symphony returns to Concord for the 7th annual “A&E Pops on the Plaza” concert at Todos Santos Plaza, hosted by the City of Concord. The event has grown substantially since its debut in 1999, drawing 3500 people last year. *(See details below.)*

The next day, **on Sunday (9/17) at 5:30 pm, the 100-piece orchestra performs at the 2nd annual “Bishop Ranch Symphony in the Park,”** hosted by the City of Ramon and Bishop Ranch. This year’s concert takes place at the San Ramon Central Park. *(See details below.)*

Maestro Barry Jekowsky has planned a special two-hour program, called “Serious Fun,” which includes both classical and pops favorites. Among the selections will be

theme music from the movie blockbusters, “Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back,” “Superman,” and “Mission Impossible”; Haydn’s “Toy Symphony”; PDQ Bach’s “1712 Overture”; and patriotic favorites, including a sing-a-long and Armed Services medley. This year’s emcees will be local ABC-7 News Anchor Dan Ashley (Concord) and Classical 102.1 KDFC-FM on-air host Dianne Nicolini (San Ramon).

Admission and parking are free at both events. Concert-goers are encouraged to bring folding chairs or blankets and picnic on the lawn during the performance. (Limited seating is available in the Seniors section on a first-come basis). A free raffle will be held at each concert (one ticket per family) for a range of prizes donated by local restaurants and other businesses. To sign up, visit the California Symphony booth on the grounds at each event.

The Concord and San Ramon concerts are just part of California Symphony’s ongoing commitment to the communities of Contra Costa County, which has been home to the internationally-acclaimed orchestra since its founding in 1986. Its ***Music-in-the-Schools*** program – supported through grants and private donations – has provided 51,000 elementary school children with in-classroom interaction with professional musicians from the Symphony since its inception in 1992. Another 3700 young people in seven county schools will be visited three times during the upcoming academic year. For more information, please visit <http://www.californiasymphony.org/content/education.asp>.

Among the Symphony’s other popular annual programs, it provides a popular participatory **Family Concert and Instrument Petting Zoo**; a **Children’s Art Competition** for elementary school children to express their thoughts and feelings about music through drawings, short stories and poetry; and the **Artist Outreach and Composer Outreach** programs, in which well-known visiting guest musicians or resident composers visit local schools.

Led by Barry Jekowsky, the award-winning former Associate Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C., the Walnut Creek-based California Symphony has received world-wide recognition for its unparalleled commitment to American music in particular. In 1991, Jekowsky introduced the one-of-a-kind **Young American Composer-In-Residence Program** to nurture talented, emerging young composers through three-year residencies and commissions of new works. Four past

participants have since distinguished themselves by winning such prestigious world competitions as the Rome Prize and the BBC International Masterprize. The Symphony also features the debut premieres of young musicians each season, thereby assisting in the advancement of their careers.

To learn more about California Symphony's programs or its upcoming season performances, please visit www.CaliforniaSymphony.org.

Concord details:

- What:** 7th Annual "A&E Pops on the Plaza Concert" by the California Symphony; conducted by Maestro Barry Jekowsky
- Date:** Saturday, September 16, 2006
- Time:** 6 pm
- Place:** Todos Santos Plaza (Willow Pass Road between Grant and Mt. Diablo Streets in downtown Concord)
- Cost:** Free
- Sponsors:** City of Concord, *Contra Costa Times*, the Leshner Foundation, Discovery Homes, Seeno Homes, Signature Properties, Classical 102.1 KDFC, 92.1 KKDV, Comcast and Trumark Companies.

For more information: (925) 280-2490 or www.CaliforniaSymphony.org

San Ramon details:

- What:** 2nd Annual "Bishop Ranch Symphony in the Park" by the California Symphony, conducted by Maestro Barry Jekowsky
- Date:** Sunday, September 17, 2006
- Time:** 5:30 pm
- Place:** San Ramon Central Park (Alcosta Blvd. and Bollinger Canyon Road)
- Cost:** Free

Sponsors: City of San Ramon, Bishop Ranch, AT&T, Chevron, Centex Homes, Irwin Home Equity, Old Republic Home Protection, Pacific Eagle Holding Company, Rosendin Electric, San Ramon Regional Medical Center, C&L Women's Fashions, Armanino McKenna, Interform Commercial Interiors, Toyota Motor Credit Company.

For more information: (925) 280-2490 or
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