

# Rossmoor's Golden Anniversary!

We'll open our celebration concert for **Rossmoor's 50th Anniversary** with "Celebrate Today!" an original composition by American contemporary composer and past conductor of the Diablo Symphony **Joyce Johnson Hamilton**. This work was first written in honor of the Diablo Symphony Orchestra's 50th anniversary season and debuted in 2013. We will share it again on this very significant occasion for Rossmoor!

Our soloist, the critically acclaimed pianist **Gwendolyn Mok**, will be performing Spanish composer **Manuel de Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain***. This work was influenced by the music of de Falla's homeland (he collected and arranged Spanish folk songs) as well as by that of French Impressionist composers Debussy and Ravel. In 1907 de Falla moved to Paris, and he considered his best periods as an artist to be the ones that he spent in the City of Lights. In fact, this is where the idea for *Nights in*

*the Gardens of Spain* was first conceived.

This three-movement nocturne has been described as "vividly atmospheric" as well as "rich, dark, and mysterious." In the composer's own words, "If these 'symphonic impressions' have achieved their object, the mere enumeration of their titles should be a sufficient guide to the hearer.

Although in this work—as in all that have a legitimate claim to be considered as music—the composer has allowed a definite design...the end for which it was written is no other than to evoke places, sensations, and sentiments. The music has no pretensions to being descriptive; it is merely expressive. But something more than the sound of festivals and dances has inspired these 'evocations in sound,' for melancholy and mystery have their part also." Shortly after World War I broke out and Germany declared war in 1914, de Falla moved back

to Madrid, where he completed this inspired work in 1915.

Also included in this evening's performance is another of de Falla's compositions, "**Dance No. 1**" from *La Vida Breve*.

You will also experience the rich and varied works of three other celebrated composers from around the world, completing this evening

of musical magic. We present American contemporary

composer **James Beckel's "Overture for a New Age,"** a piece commissioned by the Diablo Symphony and debuted in February 2001. By

alternating a driving dissonant theme with that of a more melodic one that is both festive and joyful in nature, Beckel illustrates his uncertainty as he contemplates the future of our society. Drink in the stunning melodies of French composer **Maurice Ravel's "Alborada del Gracioso,"** heavily influenced by Spanish themes. Delight your senses with Russian composer **Anatoly Liadov's** rarely performed work "**The Enchanted Lake**," his favorite among his own compositions. The concert takes place **Thursday, September 18, at the Rossmoor Event Center (reception 7 p.m., concert 8 p.m.).** ↗

*Celebrate 50 Years with Beautiful Music*

## UPCOMING CONCERTS...

- **Chamber Music Concert** November 8, 2:00 p.m. Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette, CA 94549, featuring members of the DSO
- **"Home for the Holidays" Concert** December 18, 8:00 p.m., and December 22, 7:30 p.m.
- **Annual Gala** January 24, 2015, time TBA

## OUR NEW WEBSITE!...

Please check out our newly renovated Website at: [diablosymphony.org](http://diablosymphony.org)

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NOTEWORTHY NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2014

52nd Season | 2014-2015

*Our 52nd Season of Musical Excellence Is All About "Celebrating Community!"*



**President's Corner**

**Concert celebrating Rossmoor.** If you were lucky enough to get tickets to this gala event, we'll see you on September 18 at the Rossmoor Event Center. **Happy Golden Anniversary, Rossmoor!**

Plenty of tickets are still available for our repeat performance on **October 5, at the Lesher Center.** Of course, there is a whole new season of wonderful classical music for you to enjoy. It's not too late to **get your season ticket subscription to our Lesher Center concert series** at the box office or by calling 925-943-SHOW (7469).

**I JUST LOVE THE FALL!** In my family, this season brings a fresh start and new challenges—and also a couple of birthdays. Your DSO family has several exciting new things to share with you and a golden birthday celebration as well.

We're starting the 2014–15 season early with a special **50th Anniversary**

We're also bringing back our very popular **Instrument Petting Zoo and Family Concert in October at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Lafayette.** Come try out real instruments with our DSO musicians and enjoy a free family-friendly concert! Finally, we're just thrilled to announce a new DSO arrival, **our beautiful new DSO Website.** The address is the same ([www.diablosymphony.org](http://www.diablosymphony.org)), but we think you'll be thrilled with the new design and ease of use. You can even make a donation online!

See you at the Symphony!

Melissa Ward  
President  
Diablo Symphony Association

**Gracing Our Concerts on September 18 and October 5  
Our Soloist, Pianist Gwendolyn Mok**

Currently the coordinator of Keyboard Studies at San Jose State University School of Music and Dance, **Dr. Gwendolyn Mok** began her career in piano at the Juilliard School of Music. She later attended Yale University, where she completed her undergraduate studies, and then State University of New York at Stony Brook, where she earned a doctorate. Mok went on to win several piano competitions.

A native New Yorker, Mok has appeared in many of the world's leading concert halls, including the Barbican, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and the Lincoln Center of the Performing Arts. She is frequently invited to play and record with major international orchestras, most notably the London Symphony, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, and the Residentie Orkest of The Hague.

Mok is considered one of the leading experts in the piano music of French composer Maurice Ravel. In 1994 the French Ministry of Culture awarded her a grant to study with French pianist Vlado Perlemuter for one year. He was a student of

Ravel's and, in his 90th year, Perlemuter chose Mok to be the last student on whom he would bestow his knowledge of Ravel. In 1927 Perlemuter sat at the keyboard of Ravel's Erard grand piano and worked his way through Ravel's entire oeuvre alongside the composer. Since 1995 Mok has been performing Ravel's works in recital and was invited to teach these works at the Royal College of Music, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, the Dartington International Summer School in Devon, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Her highly acclaimed debut CD (2001) with the Philharmonia Orchestra of



Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G Major* (released on the Cala label) was nominated for an Alternative Edison award in the concerto category. For another CD, *Ravel Revealed* (released in 2002, the same year Perlemuter passed away), Mok was recorded playing the complete solo piano works of Ravel on an 1875 Erard piano. This CD received critical acclaim and is regularly broadcast in the United States, and in England on the BBC.

Mok is also a recording artist for Nonesuch/Elektra, Musical Heritage Society, Cala Records, and EMI. She has performed and recorded with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the Group for Contemporary Music, and the Empyrean Ensemble and can be heard on several movie soundtrack recordings of music by French composer Maurice Jarre. Her CD (released in 2001) of Saint Saëns's "Africa-Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra" with the London Philharmonic garnered much attention and is broadcast frequently.

Mok was also the director of INFORMANCE!, a music program that benefited 400 children in East London's public schools. ↻

**An Afternoon of Enchantment**

In our Lesher Center concert entitled *Enchantment*, our guest soloist, celebrated pianist **Gwendolyn Mok**, will perform **de Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain***. For some detail on this piece and others in this concert, please refer to the article on Rossmoor's 50th anniversary concert.

You will fall under a musical spell with excerpts from Hungarian composer **Béla Bartók's *Hungarian Pictures***, **Liadov's "The Enchanted Lake," Ravel's "Alborada del Gracioso,"** and **de Falla's "Dance No. 1"** from *La Vida Breve*. This concert takes place **Sunday, October 5, 2 p.m. at the Lesher Center for the Arts** (tickets available online at [www.lesherartscenter.org](http://www.lesherartscenter.org)).

**Feel the Music**

Sure, you may have roared like a lion or laughed like a hyena, but have you ever trumpeted like an elephant or trilled like a bird? Well, now you'll have a chance to do just that!

This year the popular **Instrument Petting Zoo and Family Concert** returns! Family members of all ages are encouraged to come to try out various instruments from the orchestra and see which they like the best! The Family Concert, following immediately after the Petting Zoo, will feature family-friendly selections by illustrious composers **Bartók, Liadov, de Falla, and Ravel.** The events take place **Saturday, October 4 (Instrument Petting Zoo, 2 p.m., Family Concert, 3 p.m.)**, both at **Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Lafayette.**

*Free admission to both the Instrument Petting Zoo and the Family Concert.*



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