

Cabrillo Music Festival announces 1994 season

By JIM JOHNSON
STAFF WRITER

Focusing on the innovative and the unconventional, the Cabrillo Music Festival announced its 1994 season program at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium yesterday.

Festival music director and conductor Marin Alsop introduced the new program by pointing out the intentional lack of a theme for its 32nd season, which stretches over two weekends in early August.

"Instead of going for the usual theme-park approach, we think the strength, the hook, of the Cabrillo Music Festival is the depth of the talent we present," Alsop said.

To that end, in lieu of featuring a composer-in-residence the festival will present the works of seven living composers in its program, with all seven in attendance.

The festival will also present seven West Coast premieres of new works.

In addition, the festival is employing the unorthodox strategy of offering a sliding scale of ticket prices this season, in hopes of building a larger audience. Instead of the usual \$18 to \$20 fixed ticket price, the festival will offer tickets ranging from \$6 to \$22.

Though the festival's performances are again limited to the Civic Auditorium and Mission San Juan Bautista, Alsop said talk has been circulating about including a performance at the new Henry J. Mello Center in Watsonville.

The festival also announced that Alsop has had her contract extended for three more seasons, and the Hewlett Foundation has awarded the festival a grant of \$105,000 over the next three years.

Opening its season Aug. 5 at 8 p.m. in the Civic Auditorium, the festival will waste little time introducing its unusual musical lineup. The Opening Night Orchestra Concert titled "Fiddle Fire" features guest artist Mark O'Connor, a violinist who has been named the Country Music Association's "Musician of the Year" for the past three years.

O'Connor will conclude the opening concert with his own piece titled "Fiddle Concerto for Violin and Orchestra."

The Aug. 5 opener will begin with William Kraft's "Gossamer Glances" and Stravinsky's "Firebird."

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On Aug. 6, the festival will offer its "Lunch with the Composers," a chance for locals to meet composers O'Connor, Kraft, Greg Smith and Libby Larsen, as well as Alsop, during an informal brown bag lunch at 12:30 p.m. in the City Hall Courtyard.

That night, the festival will present "Wild Nights," an Orchestra concert with the Cabrillo Chorus, under the direction of Cheryl Anderson.

"Wild Nights" will feature the West Coast premiere of Donald Grantham's "Fantasy on Mr. Hyde's Song," Larsen's "Marimba Concerto," with guest artist William Moersch on marimba, and John Adams' "Harmonium," with the Cabrillo Chorus.

Grantham, Larsen and Adams will all attend the concert, which will begin at 8 p.m. in the Civic Auditorium.

Aug. 7, the festival will present its Free Family Concert at 2 p.m. in the Civic Auditorium. The concert will feature Greg Smith's "Mr. Smith's Composition," with the composer as narrator, a performance by a yet-to-be-named local youth soloist, and will include an up-close tour of the different instrument sections of the orchestra.

On the evening of Aug. 7, the festival will wrap up the weekend with "No Strings Attached," a solo recital featuring O'Connor. The performer will play violin, guitar and mandolin as he runs the gamut of American musical styles from classical, jazz and blues to country, bluegrass, Appalachian folk songs and Texas swing.

O'Connor will perform at 8 p.m. in the Civic Auditorium.

In addition, the first weekend of the music festival will include the Cabrillo Music Art and Wine Festival on Aug. 6 and 7 from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Church Street, outside the Civic Auditorium. An outdoor

stage will showcase a World Latin Music program Aug. 6 and a World Music program Aug. 7, as well as several food and wine booths. Admission is free.

Beginning its second weekend Aug. 12, the festival will present a benefit concert titled "Music in the Mountains" at 6 p.m. in the Glen at Lemon Yellow Farm on Vine Hill Road. The concert will feature guest artist Sharon Isbin on guitar performing solo works, and members of the Festival Orchestra, with concertmaster Kay Stern, performing chamber works.

The evening will also include a food and wine tasting.

On Aug. 13, the festival will present "Wind Songs," featuring Isbin as guest artist. Featured works will include the West Coast premieres of George Tsontakis' "Perpetual Angelus" and John Corigliano's "Troubadours," as well as Stravinsky's Symphonies of Wind Instruments and Barber's Symphony No. 1.

Concluding with its San Juan Day Aug. 14, the festival will present "Mission Fantasia," a pair of concerts at Mission San Juan Bautista.

At 4 p.m., the festival will present its chamber music concert featuring Tsontakis' "Three Sighs, Three Variations," Hindemith's Septet, Corigliano's "Scherzo for Oboe and Percussion" and the West Coast premiere of Christopher Rouse's "Rotae Passionis."

At 7:30 p.m., the festival will present its Grand Finale Orchestra Concert featuring guest artist Joe Alessi on trombone. Featured works will include the West Coast premieres of Corigliano's "Fanfare for Brass Quintet," Rouse's Trombone Concerto and Tsontakis' "Fantasia Habanera," as well as Hindemith's "Mathis der Maler."

For tickets, call the Civic Auditorium box office at 429-3444.