



Music Academy Mariposa Series

Alumni All-Star Cello Choir - The Eight Immortals

Review by Daniel Kepl / VOICE

THE NUMBER EIGHT IS POWERFUL. Throughout folkloric history it has been considered a symbol for luck and prosperity. Aside from the infinity of its design, eight (8) also represents organization, perseverance, and control of energy. The Eight Immortals, of Chinese legend had extraordinary powers that could be transferred to each of their “power tools.”

Not that the cello is a power tool (cellists would disagree), but the imagery was appropriate last Saturday at the Music Academy. A conflation of marketing genius and artistic purpose brought eight cellists, all Music Academy alums, together for the first time in years to play a big program together in an intimate salon (Lehmann Hall in the main house) which was packed to the wainscoting with a sold-out crowd of a hundred or more eager Music Academy patrons.



Katrina Agate with Chenoa Orne-Stone and a young cellist

The third and last recital of the 2022 season for the new Music Academy Mariposa Series, featured the Music Academy Alumni All-Star Cello Choir, gathered from hither and yon a couple days earlier to rehearse and perform a program of mostly transcriptions (Grieg, J.S. Bach, Johann/Joseph Strauss, Wagner, Piazzolla) together with cellist Paul Wiancko's 2017 *Cello Quartet, Op. 1 "When the Night."*

Opening the program with a transcription for eight cellos of three movements from Edvard Grieg's *Holberg Suite, Op. 40* (1884), the All-Stars - Katrina Agate, Chas Barnard, Shirley Kim, Jennifer Kloetzel, Noah Seng-hui Koh, Marcie Kolacki, Maki Kubota, and Emma Lee - brought the *Praeludium* into satisfying simile with the string orchestra original, including the replication, high on the cello fingerboard, of the violin tunes. Nice. The *Sarabande* transcription for eight cellos, perfectly suited the rich timbre of the combined choir. Lovely. The last and trickiest of the three transcriptions, *Gavotte*, gave the cellists opportunity to levitate a bit.

Colin Hampton's arrangement for cello quartet (Agate, Kloetzel, Kubota, Lee) of two movements from Bach's unaccompanied *Cello Suite No. 6 in D Major, BWV 1012* gave this listener a “puzzle me this” moment. How could it be? The first movement, *Sarabande*, found the brain remembering decades of solo cello performances, while the ears heard harmony and counterpoint - the arrangement's magic. Fabulous! The *Gavotte I & II* was also a delight in this clever transcription. Little wonder, Colin Hampton (1911-1996) was a world-famous cellist and founder of the California Cello Club (1950) the oldest in the nation.

American composer/cellist Paul Wiancko's *Cello Quartet Op. 1 "When the Night" (2017)* - Barnard, Kim, Koh, Kolacki - transported the listener through eight minutes, yes, eight minutes of vaporous cello quartet intoxication; a rich while also transparent palette of colors, a rhythmic pulse that waxed and waned with sometimes ecstatic frenzy, pizzicato and col legno effects to enhance moments of leisurely magic, then away softly into the night, like a dream. A splendid performance.

The last three programmed pieces, all transcriptions for the gang of eight to play together, included a fun *Pizzicato Polka* by the father/son team of Johann and Joseph Strauss, conducted discreetly as needed for rubato, by one of the team; Friedrich Grützmacher's brilliant arrangement of *Feierliches Stück* from Wagner's *Lohengrin*; and a dynamite arrangement by James Barralet of two movements from Astor Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires - Winter (1969) and Summer (1965)*.

For encore, a simply beautiful arrangement of Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah*. A good time was had by all.

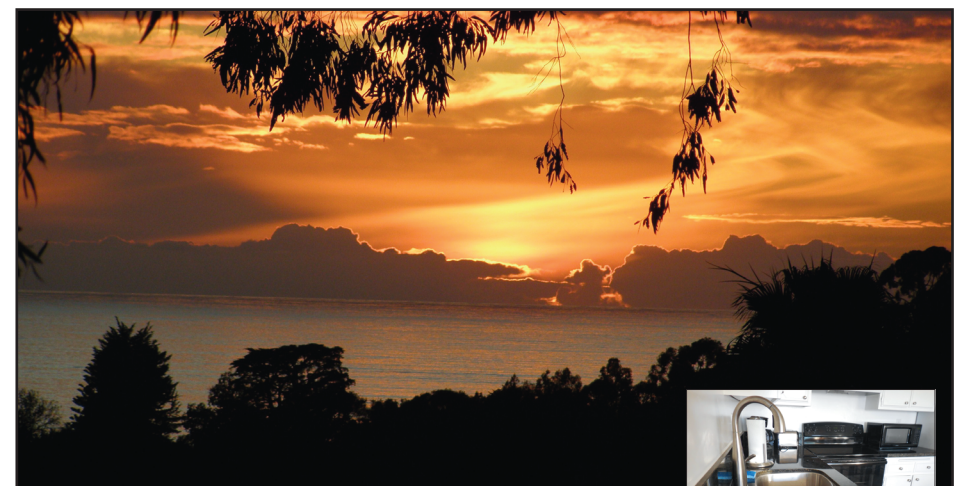


Post-Concert Artists Reception

Photos by Zach Mendez

Daniel Kepl has been writing music, theatre, and dance reviews or Santa Barbara publications since he was a teenager. His professional expertise is as an orchestra conductor.

For more reviews by Daniel Kepl visit: www.performingartsreview.net



Eagles Nest Ocean Views

Santa Barbara's Premiere Ocean View Apartments

- Every apartment has outstanding ocean views with the very best island and sunset views in town.
- 31 one bedroom apartments, each with granite counter tops and a magnificent view.
- Recently updated on a dead end street with a reserved parking spot for each unit.
- Only six blocks to the ocean and on a bluff top with mild ocean breezes year round. All the top floor units have high beamed ceilings and no steps, so easy access for all ages.
- With 10 furnished apartments, there is short term as well as long term flexibility in rental agreements.
- See the best of Santa Barbara from this park-like setting.

For more information or to schedule an appointment
call John at 805-451-4551.

JOHN R. WHITEHURST

Property Manager/Owner

805-451-4551 • www.SBOceanViewRentals.com
Home Realty & Investment DRE#01050144

