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**Presents**

**A Chamber Concert featuring Soloists  
Of the Temecula Valley Symphony,  
“A TOUCH OF CLASSICAL”**

**RUSLAN BIRYUKOV, Principal Cellist and Artist in Residence,  
STEVE HUBER, Principal Second Violinist and Composer,  
JOHN MARIO, Pianist, Music Director, Conductor & Artistic Director,  
KATE PRESTIA-SCHAUB, Principal Flutist,  
CHELSEA HOWELL, Principal Clarinetist**

**And**

**SAN DIEGO YOUTH CELLO QUARTET:  
JUSTIN WU, ETHAN ZHANG,  
DEBORA OKHOTINA and NAOHIRO “NAO” NADAHARA**

**PROGRAM**

**“Rococo Variations For Cello and Orchestra” by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky,  
“Octet in E Flat Major” by Ludwig van Beethoven,  
“The Master’s Flute for Flute” by Afshin Cohen,  
“Game of Fifths,” A Mashup of “Game of Thrones,” and  
Ludwig von Beethoven’s “Symphony No. 5,”  
“Birds” – Part I “Birdsong” by Herman Beeftink and  
“Sonata For Violin and Cello” by Maurice Ravel**

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Temecula Valley Symphony Presents "A TOUCH OF CLASSICAL" – Page 2 of 6  
**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2022 AT 4:00 P.M.**  
**GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**31143 Nicolas Road, Temecula, CA 92591**

**Temecula, CA (February 20, 2022) – Temecula Valley Symphony will present a Chamber Concert featuring Soloists of the symphony in a program entitled, "A TOUCH OF CLASSICAL," on Saturday, February 26, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. at Grace Presbyterian Church, 31143 Nicolas Road, Temecula, CA 92591.**

**Musicians who will be featured in the concert include: Ruslan Biryukov, Principal Cellist and Artist in Residence; Steve Huber, Principal Second Violinist and Composer; John Mario, Pianist, Music Director, Conductor and Artistic Director; Kate Prestia-Schaub, Principal Flutist; Chelsea Howell, Principal Clarinetist and the San Diego Youth Cello Quartet: Justin Wu, Ethan Zhang, Debora Okhotina and Naohiro "Nao" Nadahara.**

**The program will include: "Rococo Variations For Cello and Orchestra" by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky; "Octet in E Flat Major" by Ludwig van Beethoven; "The Master's Flute for Flute" by Afshin Cohen; "Game of Fifths," A Mashup of "Game of Thrones," and Ludwig van Beethoven's "Symphony No. 5," "Birds" – Part I "Birdsong" by Herman Beeftink and "Sonata For Violin and Cello" by Maurice Ravel.**

**Tickets for the concert are \$25 for Adults, \$15 for Musicians, \$10 for Students and Free for Children 12 and under. Tickets can be purchased by calling the Temecula Valley Symphony at 951-587-1536 or online at <https://temeculavalleysymphony.org> For further information, please visit the symphony's website. Free Parking is available at the church. No vaccination cards are required. Social distancing is recommended. Guests are requested to wear masks. Facebook and Instagram: @TemeculaValleySymphony, Twitter: @TemValleySymphony**

#### **About The Artists:**

**Ruslan Biryukov** (Руслан Бирюков) (Temecula Valley Symphony Principal Cellist and Artist in Residence) was born in Baku, Azerbaijan and now resides in Encino and Temecula, CA. He is the Founder of the Glendale Philharmonic Orchestra, the Los Angeles Cello Quartet and serves as Artistic Director of Positive Motions Concert Series in San Diego, CA.

Biryukov has been lauded in the press for his superb artistry, passion and individuality. He was the only cellist ever invited to perform for 10 consecutive seasons in solo recitals at the Sundays Live Concert Series in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the longest running live radio broadcasted concert series in the United States. He was also the only Russian cellist invited to solo with an orchestra during the inaugural season of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Orange County. (-more-)

Temecula Valley Symphony Presents “*A TOUCH OF CLASSICAL*” – Page 3 of 6

Aside from his prolific career as a performer, Ruslan Biryukov is also a master Cello teacher. Over the past 25 years, his students have won over 300 prizes at various competitions worldwide, including the International Your Tchaikovsky Competition (Nathan Le), Stulberg International Competitions, Music Teachers Association of California Competitions and American String Teachers Association competitions.

Biryukov’s students have performed with major orchestras worldwide, including San Diego Symphony, Redlands Bowl Symphony, La Jolla Symphony, New West Symphony, Armenian State Orchestra and Moscow State Philharmonic, to name a few. Four of Biryukov’s current Cello students, Justin Wu, Ethan Zhang, Debora Okhotina and Naohiro “Nao” Nadahara are featured in “*A Touch of Classical*.” **Learn more at [www.celloart.com](http://www.celloart.com), [www.ruslanconservatory.com](http://www.ruslanconservatory.com), Facebook: @ruslanbiryukov, Instagram: @ruslanmusicart**

**Steve Huber** (Temecula Valley Symphony Principal Second Violinist and Composer) is a resident of Murrieta, CA, a Juilliard graduate and former student of world-renowned violin pedagogues Dorothy DeLay and Sally Thomas. After a successful career as a full-time member of such orchestras as Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfonica do Estado de São Paulo, and, as Concertmaster, Orquestra Filarmonica de Lima, Huber relocated to Los Angeles to pursue a more diverse career.

**John Mario** (Temecula Valley Symphony Pianist, Music Director, Conductor and Artistic Director) is a resident of Murrieta, CA. He has served as the Principal Tour Conductor for singer Jackie Evancho’s “Dream With Me” and “Songs of the Silver Screen” tours, including appearances with the Atlanta Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Colorado Symphony, Naples Philharmonic and Thousand Oaks Symphony, among many others. Mario is a veteran opera conductor and has served as Music Director of the legendary Tri Cities Opera of Binghamton, NY, former training grounds for opera stars such as tenors Richard Leech and Plácido Domingo. Mario also performs in recital and has also served as a judge for several major vocal competitions, including the Liederkrantz International Opera Competition and The Metropolitan International Opera Festival Competition both in New York City, as well as the Belvedere International Opera Competition of Vienna. He has also served as the Italian Language Coach for New York City Opera’s production of Gioachino Rossini’s “Mosè in Egitto.”

**Kate Prestia-Schaub** (Temecula Valley Symphony Principal Flutist) is an active performing artist, holds degrees from the University of Southern California (MM) and Indiana University (BM), and studied with Jim Walker, Tom Robertello, Kate Lukas, and Maralyn Prestia. The winner of many competitions, Prestia-Schaub currently performs as Principal Flute with the Temecula Valley Symphony, Ekatra, and the West Coast Wind Quintet. She coaches orchestral and chamber music at Idyllwild Arts Academy, and privately at her “K&trills” studio. She was president of MTAC – Temecula Valley, and San Diego Flute Guild; and has served on advisory boards for California Chamber Orchestra and National Flute Association. Her acclaimed recording “Timeless,” was released in 2013.

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**Chelsea Howell** (Temecula Valley Symphony Principal Clarinetist) is a versatile clarinetist and educator in the areas of Orange County and Temecula. She is currently Principal Clarinet of the Temecula Valley Symphony Orchestra and has played in orchestras such as the Los Angeles Lyric Opera Orchestra, Golden State Pops Orchestra, and Brentwood Symphony. She has won competitions such as the MTNA Woodwind Competition and the UCLA Atwater/Kent All-Stars Concerto Competition. Howell also has a passion for teaching with her own successful studio in Irvine, CA. Her students have made the All-State Honor Band and Orchestra, the Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra and Wind Ensemble, the All-Southern Honor Band, and the Orange County Youth Symphony. Howell was also a teaching artist for the Los Angeles Philharmonic for 11 years where she worked with a diverse student population in a workshop series about Classical composers and their musical works. Howell received her Bachelor’s degree from Indiana University, her Master’s degree at the University of Michigan, and her Doctorate degree from UCLA. She has also participated at both the Aspen and Kent/Blossom Music Festivals.

**San Diego Youth Cello Quartet** consists of accomplished young cellists from San Diego County, **Justin Wu, Ethan Zhang, Debora Okhotina and Naohiro “Nao” Nadahara**. The Quartet was formed in 2019 by Master Cellist, Ruslan Biryukov, and has won 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize in the 2020 MTAC Voce Competition, toured Italy and released recordings.

**Justin Wu**, a 17-year-old, whose parents are from Taiwan, is a resident of San Diego, CA. He studies Cello with Ruslan Biryukov and is the Principal Cellist of the San Diego Youth Symphony and a Junior student at the Westview High School in San Diego, CA. Wu started his musical journey with the Violin at the age of five, and then he switched to the Cello in fifth grade and has been in love with the instrument ever since. Wu was recently invited to the International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians, the largest music competition in the world for pre-college students. He is the recipient of first prize awards in the MTAC Concerto Competition, MTAC VOCE Competition, and the Satori Strings Festival. In his spare time, Wu enjoys competitive coding, reading, and hanging out with friends.

**Ethan Zhang**, a 17-year-old, whose parents are Chinese, was born in the United States and currently resides in San Diego, CA. A Cello student of Ruslan Biryukov, Zhang performs both as a soloist and chamber musician. In 2018, Zhang was featured as a Soloist in New York’s Carnegie Hall and at the International Academy of Music in Italy. He has captured prizes in international competitions, including the 2017 International Lansum Festival Strings Competition in Los Angeles, CA, the 2018 American Protégé Competition, and the 2019 International Academy of Music Competition in Castelnuovo di Garfagnana. Zhang has also won major prizes in numerous local competitions, including the 2019 MTAC VOCE Competition and the 2019 Satori Strings Contest. In the summer of 2021, Zhang was accepted into the XI

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International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians, the world’s largest competition for pre-college musicians, and will compete in the live rounds in Europe during May 2022. Outside of playing the Cello, Zhang’s interests include biomedical research, playing badminton, and reading

**Debora Okhotina** is of Russian heritage. Okhotina is a 15-year-old at Scripps Ranch High School in San Diego, CA. She began playing cello at the age of nine and has been a student of Ruslan Birykov for the past five years. Okhotina has been part of the San Diego Youth Symphony for the past five years and has recently been a Finalist in their Ovation Concerto Competition. She has also performed internationally at the 2018 International Academy of Music in Tuscany, Italy. Additionally, she is scheduled to play at Carnegie Hall in New York City soon. She is part of numerous chamber ensembles and orchestras and has performed at senior centers multiple times. In her spare time, Okhotina enjoys reading and running.

**Naohiro “Nao” Nadahara** is a 17-year-old high school student of Japanese descent. He lives in San Diego, CA where he studies chamber music with Ruslan Biryukov. In 2019 Nadahara appeared on world-class stages, including Disney Hall and the Mozarteum, as well as a pit musician for numerous ballet productions on the West Coast, including “The Nutcracker” and “Swan Lake.” Also in 2019, Nadahara was invited to play as a soloist on tour across Austria, where he eventually performed at the International Cantus Music Festival. Following his Austria tour, he joined the Winecreek Ensemble under one of the tour’s violists, whom he accompanied as they supported a local screening of *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* hosted by the Reuben H. Fleet Center. Additionally, he has played with the San Diego-based Youth Philharmonic Orchestra and the International Youth Symphony with conductors Alyze Dreiling and Jeff Edmons, respectively. Nadahara also enjoys both classical composition — where he was fortunate enough to have one of his string quartets performed live by the Hausmann Quartet in 2019 — as well as electronic music production, which he started this year as a hobby project. He is currently under the tutelage of Andrew Hayhurst, whom he has been studying with for the past three years, and a co-principal with the San Diego Youth Symphony.

**About The Temecula Valley Symphony:**

Now in its 26<sup>th</sup> Season the Temecula Valley Symphony has been hailed as a leading cultural attraction in the region. Temecula Valley Symphony (formerly known as Inland Valley Symphony) has grown in size and artistic achievement. In 2015 the Symphony was renamed TEMECULA VALLEY SYMPHONY. Temecula Valley Symphony is a 60 member regional symphony that attracts musicians from throughout the Southland and is a mix of professionals and accomplished volunteers who dedicate their time and talent to the Symphony. The majority of the orchestra’s musicians live and work in the Temecula Valley. Additional musicians come from various regions of

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Temecula Valley Symphony Presents “A TOUCH OF CLASSICAL” – Page 6 of 6  
Southern California including the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles,  
Orange and San Diego. To learn more, please visit the website,

<https://temeculavalleysymphony.org>, Facebook and Instagram:

@TemeculaValleySymphony, Twitter: @TemValleySymphony

Music Calendar Listing:



Presents

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**WHO &  
WHAT:**

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**WHERE &  
WHEN:**

Saturday, February 26, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. at Grace Presbyterian Church, 31143 Nicolas Road, Temecula, CA 92591.

**HOW:**

Tickets for the concert are \$25 for Adults, \$15 for Musicians, \$10 for Students and Free for Children 12 and under. Tickets can be purchased by calling the Temecula Valley Symphony at 951-587-1536 or online at <https://temeculavalleysymphony.org> For further information, please visit the symphony’s website. Free Parking is available at the church. No vaccination cards are required. Social distancing is recommended. Guests are requested to wear masks.

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