

## MUSIC REVIEW

### Modern approach works for *iPalpiti*

The string orchestra shows polish in its showcase concert at Disney Hall.

By Richard S. Ginell

Special to The Times

July 28, 2008

By the time the Festival of International Laureates' *iPalpiti* string orchestra enters Walt Disney Concert Hall for its annual showcase, it usually sounds ready to take on the world. Such was the case again Saturday night; the young 24-member ensemble played with a ripeness and polish that is easy to take for granted, yet testifies to the fine preparatory work by its conductor-founder Eduard Schmieder.

To Schmieder's additional credit, though, this concert — the 11th in the series — tried to go further. He reached into the contemporary sphere and brought forth a profoundly moving threnody, "Tears of the Angels," by Britain's John Tavener, who started out as a Beatles-sponsored wunderkind and evolved into one of the most popular of the so-called holy minimalists.

With its slowly moving patterns capped by mystic trills for the concertmaster at the very top of the violin's register, "Tears" is dedicated specifically to the suffering of the people of the Balkans. Schmieder aptly expanded that dedication to "all suffering people" everywhere — and at times, the freely phrased performance seemed to penetrate the "extreme breaking point of tenderness" that Tavener was aiming for. This is a difficult thing to do, for the work requires absolute silence and concentration — and the shuffling of feet, coughing and some rogue cellphones made it doubly difficult until the final minutes when everyone in the hall finally fell under the piece's spell.

Tavener was the centerpiece of an English trilogy — again, an enterprising stroke of programming. Britten's edition of Purcell's Chacony in G minor, with some dynamic alterations by Schmieder, set the mood for Tavener; Malcolm Arnold's lushly neo-classical Concerto for Two Violins and Strings was a robust chaser.

Alexandru Tomescu and Catharina Chen displayed contrasting solo styles in Arnold — Tomescu full of extraordinary temperament, Chen more reticent and lyrical. As an encore, they had fun with the Yehudi Menuhin-Stephane Grappelli elaboration on Jacob Gade's "Jalousie."

After tiny Elena Kawazu, all of 10, wowed with her push-button mastery of the violinistic tricks in Sarasate's "Carmen Fantasy," Schmieder rolled out his own string-orchestra transcription of Grieg's String Quartet in G minor (which he calls Serenade for Strings). He made an especially convincing case for this inflation of means in the third and fourth movements, spotlighting solo instruments in the former and producing a satisfying bass end and massive string sound in the latter. This could be a good companion to Grieg's "Holberg" Suite and Two Elegiac Melodies — and *iPalpiti* passionately nailed the Serenade's tough, fast unison runs.

*And, from our Chairman, Jonathan Steinberg:*

Lovely review, which I read with pleasure. Much greater pleasure comes from remembering a superlative concert, though. I felt the eerie rustle of angels' wings in the Tavener. The Grieg was what Grieg should have written; it exceeded my every expectation and hope. Tomescu was in finest form; Catharina, too. The Arnold has probably never been better played. What glorious string playing all around. Elena was not pressing buttons..... The bouquet to Oistrakh [encore dedication, Macdowell *To a Wild Rose*] was unspeakably gentle and sweet.

Bravo,

*Jonathan*



*iPalpiti* "Junior" soloist Elena Kawazu takes applause after performing Sarasate Carmen-Fantasy

Dear Elena,

The *iPalpiti* was amazing. The audience loved your performance as well as my family did. Your dress was beautiful; it was like the Beauty & the Beast except it was in orange. I want to thank you for playing the violin so well for everyone. Everything was lovely and I sometimes wonder, how many times a day you must practice in order to play so beautifully. I also want to thank you for the free tickets we got, wish you luck in any upcoming concerts.

With Much Love,

Edgar Anselmo (6th Grade student, Berendo Middle School, Student Coalition for the Arts member)

This project is supported in part by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission



“With Schlieder conducting, [iPalpiti] achieved a memorable, luminous, deeply moving performance... an astounding demonstration of seamless and beauteous string playing.” — Daniel Cartaga, Los Angeles Times

newsletter  
Open 17

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www.iPalpiti.org



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## Upcoming Season Highlights

**October 26 7pm**

***iPalpiti* alumnus Cameron Carpenter  
Royce Hall, UCLA**

*Dubbed “The Maverick Organist” by the New York Times, Cameron is known for his intensely personal, often flamboyant performances in varied repertoire from original compositions and film scores to pop-and-jazz inspired improvisations.*

A limited number of VIP reserved seats and private post-concert reception are available at \$75.

Call 310.205.0511 to reserve your space.

## Benefactor Concert Series

*Presented throughout the year in private residences and exclusive salons by invitation only.*

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**Tuesday, October 14, 7 pm**

**Legendary violinist Ida Haendel, CBE**  
Home of Charles Avery & Susan Fisher  
New York

**Saturday, November 22, 5pm**

**SOTHEBY's Beverly Hills**  
**6th annual Tribute to Leo Frankel**  
Nathan Frankel & Friends

**December 13-15, 2008**

***iPalpiti* retreat and concert**  
Vevey, Switzerland

**February 23 - March 5, 2009**  
Temple University, Philadelphia  
***iPalpiti* ensemble-in-residence**

**March 2, 2009**

***iPalpiti* concert**  
Kimmel Center, Perelman Theatre, Philadelphia

**March 5, 2009**

***iPalpiti* concert**  
Carnegie Zankel Hall, New York

For information call 310.205.0511 or visit [www.iPalpiti.org](http://www.iPalpiti.org)



# *iPalpiti Artists International, Inc.*

Dedicated to the continuity of the great tradition of classical music through artistic promotion and career advancement of exceptionally gifted young professional musicians

## Opus 21

October, 2008

Semi-Annual Newsletter published in the Spring and Fall

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*Dear Friends, Benefactors, Colleagues:*

With much pride I present to you our report on 11th annual *iPalpiti* Festival of International Laureates. We hope you don't mind to hear it again - IT WAS SUCCESSFUL! 28 selected artists came to Los Angeles from 22 countries for a two-week residency and performed in 9 concerts, including a sold-out grand finale at the Walt Disney Concert Hall on July 26.

It is impossible to give the live account of the excitement, camaraderie, music-making, and friendships these extraordinary young artists brought with them. This year's program was marked by a number of premieres, and the audiences, as well as musicians themselves, were very enthusiastic about the new offerings. Festival, being very successful artistically, also brought new wonderful contacts and friends. The great review in the Los Angeles Times was a nice touch to end the festival.



*iPalpiti* at Disney Hall concert with soloists Alexandru Tomescu and Catharina Chen, after performing Malcolm Arnold Concerto for two violins and orchestra

Looking forward to greeting all of you at our events!

*Laura Schmieder, Director*

*\*If you missed the Festival, and would like to receive a 2008 Festival brochure, please email [info@ipalpiti.org](mailto:info@ipalpiti.org) or call 310.2050511.*



Catharina and Alexandru at the *iPalpiti* poster on the music Center Plaza — ready for the performance



*iPalpiti* shows off City Proclamations

### **From the Audience**

...The concert was magnificent in every respect — as usual. The programming was imaginative, the playing inspired, cohesive and sensitive, and the Grieg transcription a gem. Even the program books were elegant, and, of course, the seats were terrific. What a tribute to you and Maestro and the young artists, including the extraordinary protégé.

Truly, I look forward to this concert more than any other each year. Congratulations again.

— Gerald S. Spear, M.D.

*continues on page two*



[ee-PAHL-pit-ee is Italian for "heartbeats"]

*iPalpiti 2008 members came to Los Angeles from 19 countries*

### Violin

Peter Rainer /Germany\*  
Lawrence Chrysler Concertmaster Chair  
Catharina Chen/Norway  
Conrad Chow/Canada  
Azer Damirov/Azerbaijan-Russia  
Aisha Dossumova/Kazakhstan  
Vladimir Dyo/Kazakhstan-Korea\*\*  
Nora Hapca/Romania  
Ellen Jung/Canada  
Nobuko Kawamura/Japan  
Robert Kowalski/Poland  
Mari-Liis Pakk/Estonia  
Marie-Stephanie Radauer-Plank/Austria  
Deniz Toygür/Turkey  
Daniel Turcina/Slovakia  
Alexandre Tomescu, alumnus soloist

### Viola

Karel Coninx/Belgium  
Rumen Cvetkov/Bulgaria  
Juan-Miguel Hernandez/Canada  
Thomas Weilbach/Germany

### Cello

Yves Dharamraj/France-USA  
Evgeny-Eliah Sakakushev/Bulgaria-Spain

Julie Jung/Canada  
Laszlo Mezo/Hungary

### Bass

Kristoffer Saebø/USA  
Theodore Chen/Canada

### Piano

Steven Vanhauwaert/Belgium

### Clarinet

Tibi Cziger/Israel

### *iPalpiti* "Junior"

Elena Kawazu, violin soloist/USA

\*concertmaster

\*\* violinist-violist

Dear Laura,

I just want to let you know that we enjoyed every minute of the iPalpiti concert. We were thrilled and amazed by the musical achievement of the young performers. Maestro Eduard Schmieder is absolutely unique. Bravo for your exceptional commitment and for the quality of the young musicians you provide at iPalpiti concerts. Best wishes and success in the future.

— Janine Bobin

Presidente, Alliance Francaise de Los Angeles

*...it was a great concert-loved every bit of it.*

— Becka Frankel

Thanks again to you and to Eduard for all of the wonderful music; I feel privileged that we could present two events of such quality on Sundays Live, and I am always grateful for the opportunity to enjoy the Walt Disney Concert Hall performance. I send my best wishes for the future of iPalpiti.

Bravi tutti!

— Dennis Bade

*You gave me the greatest gift with this most beautiful Concert.*

*It was extremely moving. Eduard is so right, saying that classical music can lift us when nothing else can...* — Ulrika

... The concert was absolutely wonderful and the musicians really gave their hearts to the music. We were astounded by the little girl soloist and her confidence and presence. Also, the two soloists who performed Malcolm Arnold's concerto were incredibly sensitive to each other. Their tone quality was so warm and beautiful to listen to. Quite remarkable. The quality and sound of each musician and the sound that they produce as an orchestra was as good as it gets. Our compliments to Eduard for bringing this group of fine, young men and women to the highest level of performance.

— Gayle and John Levant

*... My neighbor took me to the orchestra and it was a lot better than I expected. I would totally go again! Thank you,*

— Matthew B. (12 years old)

## From the Artists:

It was very special occasion to be back in Los Angeles after 4 years.

I felt re-connected to the iPalpiti "body" and the world of Dr. Schmieder.

So many memories came back from my first years and so much inspiration awoke...

Thank you so much for inviting me back! Please consider me again!

— Evgeny-Eliah Sakakushev, cellist (Bulgaria)

Dear Mrs. Schmieder,

I would like to thank you for inviting me to the 2008 iPalpiti festival.

Making music with gifted colleagues was truly an inspiring experience! and I made many more friends.

— Steven Vanhauwaert, pianist (Belgium)

Dear Mrs. Schmieder,

I wanted to write to you personally to say thank you so much for all your help and hard work throughout the iPalpiti festival, and for including me in such a wonderful group this summer. Although I love my home town of Toronto, coming to LA and working at a world-class level with other musicians, and especially under the direction of Dr. Schmieder, gave me a much-needed boost of inspiration. I feel as if my 'artistic reservoir' has been replenished, and I have found new excitement in all aspects of my musical work. Most of all, I greatly appreciated your trust in allowing me to lead the Mendelssohn Quintet on relatively short notice, and I hope that I was able to meet the high standards that you and Dr. Schmieder have come to expect.

— Conrad Chow, violinist (Canada)

## Alumni News

**Kazuhiro Takagi (Japan)** – assumed post of Concertmaster of the Tokyo Philharmonic.

**Cellist Kristaps Bergs (Latvia)** – 1st prize in 15th International Johannes Brahms Competition (Austria).

**Violinist Isabelle Lambelet (Switzerland)** invited to play in the Lucerne Festival Orchestra in Musikverein in Vienna under Claudio Abbado.

**Pianist Steven Vanhauwaert (Belgium)** appearances this season include a concert on Sundays Live! at LACMA, a series of concerts in Belgium, a tour in Northern California with the Auburn Symphony and the Eastern Sierra Chamber Orchestra in Beethoven's Triple Concerto, a tour in Hungary with iPalpiti (2008) cellist Laszlo Mezo, concerts in Arizona, and solo recitals and performances on the Jacaranda Festival.

**Alexandru Tomescu (Romania)**, after his spectacular solo concert (attended by droves of LA violinists!), Alexandru left for more concerts in France, Italy, and the Philippines. He will return for another round of Arnold's Concerto for two violins – together with Catharina Chen – for iPalpiti' concerts at Kimmel Center (March 2) and Carnegie Zankel Hall (March 5), 2009.

# MEMENTOS FROM THE FESTIVAL

## *iPalpiti At Work...*

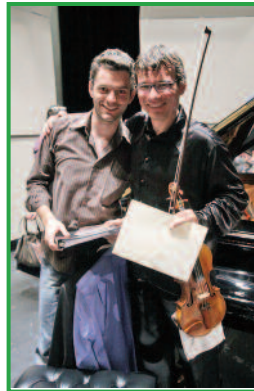


Rehearsing Sarasate Carmen-Fantasy with *iPalpiti*  
"Junior" Elena Kawazu at Salter Theatre in Beverly Hills



...& interrupted by frequent fire alarms

Alex, well after midnight,  
gives us a tour  
of his Strad.  
It actually holds  
much more water  
than you might expect.



Someone finally catches our  
dedicated volunteer photographer  
Dana Ross on film!  
(with Tomescu after his solo  
concert at the Bing Theatre)



Alex Tomescu after his solo  
concert at the Bing Theatre  
with pianist Steven Vanhauvaert

## *... and At Leisure*



*iPalpiti* cellos (without!)



*iPalpiti* shopping at the Grove



*iPalpiti* pyramid (the beach)



Hon. Nancy Krasne (Councilmember, City of Beverly Hills, center) hosted a relaxing evening for *iPalpiti* artists before grand finale at her home and fab outdoors. Left of Nancy are Advisory board members, Anna Volkoff CPA, and Margarita Stanislavskaya, East Coast. Maestro is behind Nancy, and the Benefactor Judge Harold Shabo is on the right.



Distinguished guests and benefactors at the post-Disney concert reception.  
Left to Right: front row: Yana Shukman, Trudy Bogert, Ada Sands, Darlene Friedman & friend, Joan Sherwood, Bill Blanks, Margarita Stanislavskaya, Anna Volkoff.  
2nd row: Aubrey Chernick, Catharina Chen, Bob Bogert, Sally & Bill Feathers.

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*Artistic success bears tremendous financial challenges and new and your continued support always welcome.*

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November 2007 - September 2008

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