

## **Santa Barbara Music Club Hits New Heights**

**Two final soloists cap a peak performance at the Faulkner Gallery.**

By Margo Kline, Noozhawk Contributor | Published on 10.20.2008

The [Santa Barbara Music Club](#), in Saturday's opening concert of its 39th season, reaffirmed its place in the top echelon of the South Coast's serious music groups.

While Santa Barbara's opera company, its symphony, chamber groups and [UCSB](#) visiting luminaries are all shining stars, the Music Club has a special luster of its own. Concertizing in the [Santa Barbara Public Library's](#) Faulkner Gallery, it delivers consistently excellent performances. And there is no admission charge for its regular concerts.

Saturday's matinee presented artists from the very young to the richly mature. They played works that were equally as varied, some old favorites, some that are heard less often than they should be.

Beginning at the end of the program, the two final soloists are very young and clearly destined for brilliant futures. They both are also recipients of Music Club scholarships. Baritone Andre Shillo of Ukraine, still speaking with a slight Slavic accent, was the final soloist. He was accompanied by pianist Betty Oberacker, whose long teaching and performance careers have left her festooned with honors.

Shillo sang "Sei vuol ballare" from Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, expressively, then launched into Onegin's Aria from Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. Here, he conveyed the character's slightly condescending reaction to a letter from a naïve girl.

After a lyrical rendering of "Questa amor, vergogna mia" from Puccini's *Edgar*, he introduced his final offering, the Prologue from *I Pagliacci* by Leoncavallo. This, the young singer told the audience, "was written with all the 'feeling, sobbing, tears,' and this is how to sing it." He was rewarded with bravos.

The program's other young artist was violinist Camille Miller, accompanied at the piano by Renee Hamaty. The petite Miller produced a powerful effect with Wieniawski's Romance from the Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 22, and La Capricieuse, Op. 17 by Elgar. She earned bravas for her eloquence.

The concert began with Franz Joseph Haydn's Sonata in E-flat major, Hob. XVI:52, beautifully played by Oberacker. The pianist noted before playing that Haydn's symphonies have been given

names like “The Clock” and “The Surprise,” and declared, “I’ve decided to call this piece ‘The Chicken’ because the last movement is like a chicken pecking.”

After the Haydn, there were charming chamber selections performed by Mary Jo Hartle, flute; Elaine Schott, violin; and Allen Bishop, piano. The first of these were the Five Pieces, Op. 56 by Cui. Hartle, in her introduction, pointed out that Cui was one of “The Five” in Russia, although he is heard from less frequently than the others: Balakirev, Borodin, Moussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. The trio played with a kind of nostalgic delicacy.

The three then performed Andriessen’s lovely “Pastorale,” and Ibert’s “Deux interludes.” Ibert is counted among France’s musical Impressionists, but this work is more robust than that.

The club will present another concert at 11 a.m. Nov. 12, with music by Beethoven and the San Marcos High Madrigal Singers performing romantic choral music.

*Noozhawk contributor Margo Kline can be reached at [news@noozhawk.com](mailto:news@noozhawk.com).*