

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Piedmont Choirs unveils 3 Spring Concerts – online



Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir Artistic Director Eric Tuan



Ancora, one of Piedmont Choirs' top-performing ensembles.

Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir breaks new ground in replacing their Spring season concerts with YouTube virtual premieres, recorded by the singers from their homes. The season began with *Music of the Pacific Rim: A Virtual Concert*, which premiered on March 20. Two more concerts are in production: *Jazz & Beyond* scheduled on May 16, and *Spring Sing* on June 6. Both will be virtual concerts.

When the shelter-in-place guidelines were received on March 9 from Alameda County, the staff quickly adapted. Under the coordinated effort of Artistic Director Eric Tuan and Concert Choir director Andrew Brown, it scheduled the last rehearsals of the week in the Piedmont Center for the Arts for a recording session. Realizing that their major concert scheduled just four days away, Friday, March 13, would not happen due to the restriction of no group or mass gatherings, the singers from three of the performing choirs were able to perform in front of a GoPro camera and an iPhone.

It turned out to be their last

in-person rehearsal of the season. That footage was compiled into a memorable virtual concert that aired on March 20, only one week after the original concert date. Today more than 2000 people have viewed that concert, whose title is *Music of the Pacific Rim*. Excerpts from the concert are available on the choir's YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/PiedmontChoirs>): *Bells of Rhymney* - "Give us hope for the future"

The amazing fortitude of the human spirit to gather the resources and adjust to adversity is demonstrated through this transition. The following week rehearsals using Zoon technology were in place for the four performing choirs, and by March 30 the eight Kinder and Training choirs had transitioned to online rehearsals.

Accompanists are now theory teachers, conductors are navigating online platforms with technology they never thought to use, office administrators are in rehearsals as assistants, and the singers are not only singing but recording their voices for the

community. Everyone is expanding their knowledge and abilities.

May 16: Jazz and Beyond - A Virtual Concert

Schedule on YouTube for a May 16 concert at 7:00 p.m. this will be an eclectic evening of music presented by the top two performing department choirs. Alongside vocal jazz, light-hearted contemporary works, and the latest a cappella stylings, the talents of individual singers in solos, duets, and small groups will be showcased.

Performing live on stage is a skill, but to record yourself on video takes another type of bravery. The production team has promised to recreate the sound of a hall and microphones to show the voices at their best. A sneak peek can be found on Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir YouTube Channel. One of the top-performing department choirs, Ancora, offers a virtual performance of the jazz classic "*A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square*."

"The recording process for our virtual concerts has made me

See Choir on page 28



ECCO, a performance group with Piedmont East Bay Children's Choir.

SF Ballet releases free weekly streaming from archives

This week: Helgi Tomasson's *Romeo & Juliet*



Joan Boada and Maria Kochetkova perform in *Romeo and Juliet* in a 2012 SF Ballet performance.

By Allyson Aleksey

The San Francisco Ballet has released free weekly streams of complete ballets. The streams will be condensed into a series entitled "*SF Ballet @ Home*."

Starting every Friday, a complete ballet from SF Ballet's archives will be available on social media platforms Facebook, YouTube, and their own website will be brought to viewers directly into their homes as we continue to shelter in place. "*SF Ballet @ Home*" features commissioned works from the 2018 Unbound Festival, and other notable ballets from SF Ballet's repertory.

Over the past few weeks, David Dawson's *Anima Animus*, Trey McIntyre's *Your Flesh Shall Be a Great Poem*, Dwight Rhoden's *Let's Begin at the End*, and Stanton Welch's *Bespoke* were featured in the series.

Artistic Director and Principal Choreographer Helgi Tomasson's

Romeo & Juliet will be streamed this week through May 15. Commentary by SF Ballet dancers and creative teams accompany each stream, offering a behind-the-scenes look into the role of the Company's artists.

Romeo & Juliet is a signature work of San Francisco Ballet, premiered in its 1994 Repertory Season and scheduled to close the 2020 Season this month. Set to Sergei Prokofiev's score, the full-length production features lighting design by Thomas R. Skelton and Italian Renaissance designs by Jens-Jacob Worsaae, marking Worsaae's final collaboration with Tomasson before he passed away shortly after the ballet's premiere.

The Company recently performed the ballet while on tour at the Royal Danish Opera House in Copenhagen, Denmark in the fall of 2019.

You can stream *Romeo & Juliet* for free at <https://www.sfballet.org/sf-ballet-home/>.



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Oh, man...when will this be over?



A sun bear at Oakland Zoo sums up the feelings of a lot of people weathering the lockdown during the Coronavirus pandemic. Though appearing content in her comfortable hammock, she clearly misses regular trips to the nail salon now that everything is closed.

Baringer

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Mike Hamill, the director and lead guide of the company Climbing the Seven Summits gave high praise to Bill.

"I considered Bill to be my rock in 2019. From the moment I shook his hand in Kathmandu I knew that he was a no-nonsense kind of guy and that he would stand on top. It would be nice if we could have ten Bills on our team every year!" Hamill exclaimed.

Hamill has climbed each of the seven summits six times in a 20-year mountaineering career.

Baringer returned from Everest knowing that he had climbed

the highest peak on six of seven continents.

Back home in Piedmont he reflected, "I am very grateful that I was able to summit – primarily so that I don't have to visit Everest again."

Epilogue: *In December 2019 Baringer attempted the seventh and final summit, Carstensz Pyramid in Indonesia, the highest peak on the Indo-Australian plate. After training and flying there, the trip was called off due to political instability with terrorists targeting tourists for ransom. He and the readers of the Post will just have to wait for the grand finale.*



Bill Baringer summited Mt. Everest at the end of a two-month journey, proudly holding the Piedmont Post.

Choir

Continued from page 16

appreciate the little imperfections in my voice," noted longtime PEBCC member Mia Atkinson, who is a soloist in the Jazz & Beyond concert. "It's frustrating to have recordings that aren't completely perfect, but artistry isn't about perfection – it's about passion."

Senior Kyle McDonald, who is a featured singer and trumpet player, said, "The main thing that challenged me was knowing that whatever we did would be permanent. So, I ended up practicing a lot more than normal."

June 6: Spring Sing – Season Finale

Spring Sing, the most poignant concert of the season, takes place on Friday, June 6 at 3:00 p.m. Ten choirs featuring singers from ages 6 to 18 will come together to celebrate the year of accomplishments and acknowledge the graduating seniors. This will be the most technically challenging virtual concert to assemble due to the sheer number of singers. Parents will join the PEBCC team by helping to video record their children (ages 5-18 years) singing alone with a backup track on headphones. The production team will layer the tracks together to form

one cohesive choir. Each choir will showcase one song and they will come together to sing the traditional song *Homeward Bound*.

"During these unprecedented times, I have been amazed by the flexibility, creativity, and resilience of our students," said Artistic Director Eric Tuan. "They have risen to the challenge of creating music together online with grace, good humor, and joy, offering their voices and talents in new and surprising ways. Through all the difficulties they have reminded us that, as Chorus America has put it, we should focus not on what we can't do but what we **can**."

Pandemic Diaries

Continued from page 2

and that not "every compromise is the harbinger of tyranny," I would argue that this softly voiced caveat does not explain the Confederate/Nazi/Don't Tread on Me flags, nor does it address the guns.

Something else is at play here

that transcends the virus. There's a thread of rage that uses the pandemic as a rationale to voice long-held convictions and ideology, which are completely detached from this unanticipated moment that represents, so manifestly, our country's hurt locker.

Museums

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Yevsky Island, built to the order of the first governor of St Petersburg. Visit the Hermitage Museum online by following its [webpage](#).

Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

The Art Institute of Chicago is one of the oldest and most popular museums in the United States. It has over one million visitors annually.

The Institute's collection is stewarded by 11 curatorial departments, and its permanent collection of nearly 300,000 works of art is augmented by more than 30 special exhibitions yearly. Some of the most famous pieces it houses are Pablo Picasso's "The Old Guitarist" and Grant Wood's "American Gothic." Visitors can explore 572 artworks on the Institute's virtual tour, which includes Edward Hopper's "Nighthawks," and Georges Seurat's Post-Impressionist "A Sunday on La Grande Jatte."

Explore the collection at <https://www.artic.edu/visit-us-virtually>.

The Broad Museum, Los Angeles, California

You may have seen Yayoi Kusama's *Infinity Mirrored Room – The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away*; it was one of 2017's "most photographed art displays" according to *Time Out Magazine*.

Normally, visitors have about one minute to spend in the display room. The Broad Museum has released a "Broad from Home" virtual experience where you can view the exhibit for however long you'd like.

You can view more of what the contemporary museum has to offer beyond Kusama's now iconic exhibit. The Broad is the public home for Eli and Edythe Broad's collection of over 2,000 post-war artworks and installations, though only about 250 of those pieces of art are on display at one time.

The Broad at Home features family workshops, poetry and art series, curator talks, and interactive experiences for contemporary art lovers. Visit The Broad at <https://www.thebroad.org/broadfromhome>.



A lion at the entrance of The Art Institute of Chicago sports a mask with the city's official flag.

Where in the World Are We?



In 1998 a young, dashing couple from Piedmont ventured half-way around the world to see Australia and its fabled kangaroos. In a grove of eucalyptus trees, away from the main pack of tourists (background) but under the watchful eye of two kangaroos. Tom and Sue Smegal carefully unfolded the first editions of the fledgling Piedmont Post for a quick peek at some news back home.

Send your photos of the Post in the far corners of the world, or of other communities named Piedmont, to: WITWAW, 1139 Oakland Ave., Piedmont, 94611.

2020 Calendar of Events

May 13 - May 28

Meetings will be conducted by ZOOM and should be viewable on KCOM (Channel 27) and on the City's website: piedmont.ca.gov.

Wednesday, May 13

7 p.m. School Board meeting Virtual meeting via Zoom

Monday, May 18

7:30 p.m. City Council meeting Virtual meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, May 20

7:30 p.m. Recreation Commission meeting CANCELED

Wednesday, May 27

7 p.m. School Board meeting Virtual meeting via Zoom

Thursday, May 28

5:30 p.m. Public Safety Committee meeting CANCELED