

MUSIC; A Banquet For Lovers Of Violins

By ROBERT SHERMAN
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OLD KING COLE had to make do with his fiddlers three, but in one short weekend next month Connecticut orchestras will be displaying the artistry of four violinists.

The youngest is Stephanie Jeong, who just turned 14 earlier this month, but brings substantial credentials to her debut with the Ridgefield Symphony, including an appearance at the White House, and solo performances with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Chicago Symphony. On April 21 at 8 p.m. in Ridgefield High School, she will take on the D Major Paganini Concerto. The program includes John Adam's "Short Ride in a Fast Machine" and Rodion Shchedrin's "Carmen -- a Symphonic Synthesis," which the music director, Sidney Rothstein, calls "a ravishing arrangement of themes from the Bizet opera." Reservations: (203) 438-3889.

Ani Kavafian, renowned for ensemble performances with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, moves into the solo spotlight, playing the ever-popular Mendelssohn Violin Concerto with the Hartford Symphony on April 17 and 18 at 8 p.m. in the Bushnell. Enrique Arturo Diemecke, music director of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México, is the guest conductor. The program also includes a lesser-known Mendelssohn work, he "Ruy Blas" Overture, and the Mahler Fifth Symphony. Box office: (860) 244-2999.

Writing for The New York Times, a reviewer said that Reiko Watanabe plays with "formidable technique, luxurious sound and dramatic flair." All those qualities are prime requisites for the Violin Concerto of Erich Wolfgang Korngold, which Ms. Watanabe has chosen for her debut with the Greenwich Symphony. Jascha Heifetz commissioned the concerto and presented its premiere in 1947, at which point Korngold was far more famous for scoring such Hollywood swashbucklers as "The Sea Hawk," "Robin Hood" and "Captain Blood." The symphony's music director, David Gilbert, will also conduct Berlioz' "Roman Carnival Overture" and the Schubert Ninth Symphony for the program that will be presented April 21 at 8 p.m. and April 22 at 4 p.m. in the Greenwich High School auditorium. Tickets: (203) 869-2664.

The weekend's fourth violinist is Vadim Gluzman, who came to the United States from Ukraine via Israel, and has been increasingly busy as an international soloist and duo partner with his pianist-wife, Angela Yoffe. He will visit the Waterbury Symphony under Leif Bjaland on April 21 and 22, at 8:15 and 3 p.m., respectively. His concerto choice will be the Prokofiev Second on an all-Russian program with Glinka's "Russlan and Ludmilla" Overture and the rarely encountered Orchestral Suite #3 by Tchaikovsky. Reservations: (203) 574-4283.

Opportunities are also at hand to enjoy the violin (and other string instruments) in chamber configurations. Today at 2:30 p.m., the Chamber Music from Yale series at the Pequot Library in Southport has the violin-piano team of Netta Hadari and Elaine Hou offering the three Brahms Sonatas. Also today, at 3, two Yale professors, Ole Akahoshi and Elizabeth Sawyer Parisot, play cello and piano works for Newtown Friends of Music at Edmond Town Hall.

Expect Beethoven plus at 8 next Saturday when the Miró String Quartet (winner of the Coleman, Fischhoff and Naumburg Chamber Music Awards), plays the opus 132 Quartet in Westport's Christ and Holy Trinity Church. Before the full performance, Bill Selden, himself an active chamber musician and lecturer, will discuss what he calls "Beethoven's fiery gifts of composition" while the Quartet provides appropriate illustrations. The evening is sponsored by the Westport Arts Center. Information: (203) 226-1806.

The Armstrong Chamber Concerts resume after a five-month winter hiatus. The violinist Helen Armstrong, the clarinetist Paul Green, the cellist Warren Lash and the pianist Kazuko Hayami will be collaborating on music of Beethoven, Smetana and Ingolf Dahl. A salon recital, including dinner and a wine reception, will be held April 20 at 7 p.m. in a private home in Greenwich; the regular subscription concert starts at 5 the following afternoon in First Congregational Church of Washington. Information and reservations: (860) 868-0522.

To hear the violin in its original baroque form (with gut strings, lower tunings and an earlier form of the bow,), join the Hanoverian Ensemble April 22 at 4 p.m. in St. Stephens Episcopal Church, Ridgefield. Mary Hoyt is the violinist, with Monica Gerard on viola, Arthur Fiacco at the cello, Linda Skernick playing harpsichord and the ensemble's co-directors, John Solum and Richard Wyton, using baroque flutes. Admission is free, though donations will be accepted. Information: (203) 438-3789.