

Maestro's Podium

25 years of beautiful music at the Ranch

By Jung-Ho Pak, artistic director and conductor, San Diego Chamber Orchestra

It's hard to believe it, but the internationally-renowned San Diego Chamber Orchestra, born in the heart of the Rancho Santa Fe, is celebrating its Silver Anniversary this season.

From its early days with the founder/conductor Donald Bara, the Orchestra was tailor-made to meet the style and taste of the Ranch. Originated in the most beautiful and elegant of settings, the Orchestra has prided itself on presenting the most beautiful classical music and world-class guest soloists in the backyard of one of the most sophisticated areas of the world.

Over the past 25 years, the San Diego Chamber Orchestra has made dozens of important recordings, visited hundreds of classrooms, given scores of concerts and reached tens of thousands of music lovers all over the county. Today, the Orchestra is experiencing unprecedented growth, exemplified by sold-out concerts in our San Diego and La Jolla locations.

To celebrate this special "birthday" season, the Orchestra has put together an impressive collection of masterpieces and guest artists. With three concerts featuring classical giants Mozart, Mendelssohn, Haydn and Handel, these programs are sure to please the most traditional audiences along with the first-time visitor.

During this anniversary year, it's about getting back to our roots. We're partnering with the Rancho Santa Fe Community Center to present our talk show series For the Love of Music, based on Bravo's Inside



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the Actors Studio, at The Inn at Rancho Santa Fe on Oct. 6, March 10 and May 12. We're also bringing our new education program The Frances Hunter Music Memory program to the Rancho Santa Fe School, thanks to generous underwriting from the Rancho Santa Fe Women's Fund.

Cultural institutions are only as strong as their base of support, and we are blessed to have such strong community involvement from the Ranch. The Inn at Rancho Santa Fe is our Official Host Hotel for the season, Morgan Stanley and The Inn at Rancho Santa Fe are sponsoring our For the Love of Music talk show series and the gracious Del Mar Country Club hosts our Classics Series concerts each month of the season. We have also joined in partnership with the Rancho Santa Fe Community Concerts this season.

We're recommitting ourselves to serve the Rancho Santa Fe community in the most personal way, and we want to hear from you. If you have any suggestions or ideas on how this local treasure can be more meaningful to you, please call 858 350-0290 or email us, ed@sdco.org, to let your voice be heard.

So this year, let the Ranch celebrate one of its own... the San Diego Chamber Orchestra!



Roy Perkins (center) on the medal stand with his Olympic gold and (below) in the pool.



The Bishop's School's Roy Perkins swims to gold-medal status at 2008 Beijing Paralympics

By Lee Schoenbart

Around these parts, the gold medal swimmer of the 2008 Beijing Paralympics is way better known than that guy from the Olympics.

Come Oct. 7, Roy Perkins and eight-time gold medalist Michael Phelps will meet in the Rose Garden of the White House as guests of President Bush, along with the rest of the 2008 U.S. Paralympic and Olympic teams. And all of the members of California's 2008 Paralympic and Olympic teams will join The Governorator for a breakfast and an autograph session in Sacramento.

Perkins, 18, and a recent graduate of The Bishop's School, won a gold medal in the men's 50m butterfly event on Sept. 10 at the National Aquatics Center in Beijing during the 2008 Paralympic Games where he set a new world record with a time of 35.95. He also won a bronze medal, taking third place in the men's 100m freestyle.

"I'm home and I can't really believe that I've been over there already," said Perkins, who spent about a month overseas and 15 of those days in Beijing.

And he's already looking ahead to the 2012 Paralympic Games.

"I want to improve on some of my races, the backstroke and breaststroke, and also win medals in all the freestyles and hopefully pick up some more gold medals," Perkins said.

"I think he will," said his mother Jana Perkins about her son's return to the 2012 Games. "He's 18 right now, so four years from now I think he will have packed on more muscle and to add four more years of experience will make a huge difference.

"He's really only been swimming competitively for the last four years," she said. "It'll be fun to see in four years."

As for having a two-time Paralympic medal winner in the family, Jana Perkins said, "It's so cool; he makes us very proud. He's been training really hard."

About swimming in "The Cube," Perkins said, "It was really amazing. When I got to The Cube to practice the first day we were there it was pretty intimidating, actually, especially after watching it on TV during the Olympics.

"It was kind of hard to believe I was actually there," he said, "but by the end of it though, it kind of felt like a home away from home."

During his time in Beijing, Perkins said, "I swam every day in The Cube, twice a day."

Perkins, who swam the men's 100m freestyle, 50m freestyle, 100m breaststroke, 200m freestyle, 4x50m freestyle relay, 200m individual medley, 50m backstroke and his strongest event, the 50m butterfly, said, "I swam every event that I could enter in."

He said hearing all the spectators in The Cube cheering was "really cool" because he never experienced the adulation of such a large audience. And although winning the gold was incredibly satisfying, Perkins said he was relieved when it was over.

"I was first (in the standings) going in, so I was kind of expecting to win. And then, it being a really tight race, I was relieved to get it out of the way and be able to win," he said.

Perkins could very well do for Paralympic swimmers what Phelps is doing for the Olympic swim movement.

It's a challenge either way and Perkins offered this advice to both Paralympic and Olympic hopefuls when he said, "It probably sounds kind of clichéd but commitment, working really hard, sacrifice and a desire to be at that level are the most important things.

"I've been training for it since before Athens, for about four-and-a-half years," said Perkins, referring to the 2004 Summer Games that he did not attend.

Jana Perkins had some advice of her own for the parents of swimmers with lofty goals of making it to the top competitions.

"Besides commitment, encouragement, not only during successful times, is critical," she said. "Success takes time and there will be many ups and downs. Don't be discouraged and it should be fun. When it stops being fun, it's time to take a better look at what's important.

"Time management is also a big issue with high school students," she said. "You can expect that an elite-level athlete will be tired as the training demands are high and, as the competition level gets higher, so does the stress level."

For Roy Perkins, it's a brief well-earned respite before getting back in the pool. Then next September, it's off to Stanford University.

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