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Night & Day | THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE | THURSDAY • OCTOBER 14, 2010

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The French-based Ensemble 415 is on an American tour.

Ensemble 415: 'Armonico Tributo'

8 p.m. Friday. Neurosciences Institute Auditorium, 10640 John Jay Hopkins Drive, La Jolla. \$20 and \$25. (619) 291-8246 or sdems.org

One of the city's hidden treasures is the San Diego Early Music Society, which, year after year, quietly brings to town some of the major names in Early Music (generally considered classical music up through the Baroque period).

The organization's season opens Friday with a program by the highly regarded Ensemble 415 (the name is taken from one of the pitches used for the note A during the Baroque period).

The French-based string ensemble is on an American tour that also includes performances at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the Frick Collection in New York and the Da Camera Society in Los Angeles. In San Diego, its program will include Vivaldi's La Follia and the music of Albinoni, Muffat, Albicastro and J.S. Bach.

JAMES CHUTE • U-T

Aiming for the stars

Leader of the progressive Orchestra Nova sees more room for growth, transformation

JAMES CHUTE • U-T

With Orchestra Nova's 2010-11 season set to begin Friday, its music director, Jung-Ho Pak, sat down to discuss a few topics regarding his ensemble and what makes it Nova.

The progress the orchestra has made during his tenure:

"I would say we're probably on the 30-yard line (the orchestra's 30-yard line), and you would think after five years and with the enormous amount of changes we made we'd be further. But I just see much, much more ahead. I see much more growth, I see much more expansion of product. I see much more transformation of product, and that's because I see no end to how society is changing."

The orchestra's reaction to that changing society/audience:

"What we've done is take a look at the customer experience a lot more. ... We're tapping into the psyche of a consumer market, which sounds like dangerous talk, but if the arts aren't going to put themselves on the continuum of consumerism, where do we belong?"

The distance the group is willing to go on that continuum of consumerism:

"It has to do with the

Orchestra Nova

When and where:

7:30 p.m. Friday, St. Paul's Cathedral, 2728 Sixth Ave.
7:30 p.m. Saturday, Irwin M. Jacobs Qualcomm Hall, 5775 Morehouse Drive;
7:30 p.m. Monday, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego's Sherwood Auditorium, 700 Prospect St.

Tickets: \$22-\$99

Phone: (858) 350-0290

Online: orchestranova.org

positioning of the orchestra not as an orchestra — because fundamentally, people don't understand what an orchestra is — it's positioning ourselves as individual personalities. ... And each of our concerts aren't concerts, but rather shows, and experiences."

The ensemble's frequent use of the word "stars" on its website and brochures:

"It's very tactical; it's very, very strategic. And what it is, is to awaken the dream of each individual musician who perhaps when they were 15 years old believed they were a star ... and then the harsh reality that there was no tooth fairy, and basically that orchestra life is essentially being subservient to another person. ... If I can unlock that inner child into believing they can dance in the living room and



Jung-Ho Pak, music director of Orchestra Nova, says the ensemble is "tapping into the psyche of a consumer market." DAVID BROOKS • U-T

can be everything they've dreamed of being, it can be extremely powerful."

"Stars" implies individuality, while "chamber music" implies a collective identity:

"If you've ever seen Yo-Yo (Ma) play in a chamber music group, he's still Yo-Yo; he just happens to inspire other people to play like him. There is totally a way to play gonzo,

pedal to the metal with great personality and still play with other people."

Then what happens?

"Our primary mission is to create an experience that every single person — every single person, not just the 2 percent who go to classical music concerts — every single person discovers the joy of their humanity through classical music."

ONLINE

U-T classical music critic James Chute covers classical music online at uniontrib.com/classical-music/. You can follow him on Twitter, @sdutchute, or e-mail him at jim.chute@uniontrib.com.