



El Camino *Youth Symphony Association*

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(images of Dr. Jindong Cai, Music Director, and Sandra Shen, piano are available for download at ecys.org)

ECYS ANNOUNCES FIFTY-SECOND SEASON WITH NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR OF THE SENIOR SYMPHONY DR. JINDONG CAI.

SEASON PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE MAHLER'S SYMPHONY NO.1, RAVEL'S DAPHNIS ET CHLOE, COPLAND'S APPALACHIAN SPRING, AND RIMSKY-KORSAKOV'S SCHEHERAZADE.

THE ANNUAL BENEFIT CONCERT WILL INCLUDE SPECIAL GUEST PERFORMANCES FROM CHEN ZHAO, VIOLIN AND SANDRA SHEN, PIANO!

ECYS SENIOR SYMPHONY EMBARKS ON TOUR ESPAÑA IN SUMMER 2015!

(Palo Alto, CA - August 15, 2014) The El Camino Youth Symphony's fifty-second season of excellence marks the beginning of a new era in artistic leadership when **Dr. Jindong Cai** lifts the baton as Conductor of the Senior Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of ECYS. The upcoming season will be full of fantastic works and collaborations all culminating in an exciting tour of Spain in Summer 2015.

The first highlight of Dr. Cai's inaugural season is the **Season Opener Concert**, November 2 at Flint Center in Cupertino. The impressive program will feature Gustav Mahler's stunning Symphony No. 1, Samuel Barber's haunting *Adagio for Strings*, and Edward Elgar's Cello Concerto in E Minor, Mvt. IV with soloist Cassandra Chum. The performance will begin at 4pm and tickets (\$15 General/\$8 Student-Senior) will be available through Ticketmaster.com.

The beautiful California Theatre in Downtown San Jose is the site of the December 14 **Holiday Concert**, which will feature two young artists: Young Hye Lee performing Saint-Saen's *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* and Linus Lu performing Walton's Viola Concerto, Mvt. I. Filling out the rest of the program is Tchaikovsky's stirring *Swan Lake Suite*, Suppe's *Light Calvary Overture*, and two whimsical Leroy Anderson pieces: *Christmas Festival* and audience favorite *Sleigh Ride*. Tickets (\$15 General/\$8 Student-Senior) for the 2:30pm performance are available for purchase at the California Theatre Box Office on the day of only.

The Year of the Sheep takes center-stage on February 7, 2015 at Flint Center for the Fourth Annual **Lunar New Year Concert**. The 4:00pm performance will begin with a dragon dance and feature the Senior Symphony and Sinfonietta Orchestras as well as Concerto Competition winner Jonathan Lin, *violin*. ECYS is also thrilled to present special guests the California Youth Chinese Symphony. The highlight of the concert will be Chen Gang and He Zhanhao's *Butterfly Lovers Concerto* with erhu soloist [Jiebing Chen](#). Tickets (\$25 General/\$15 Student-Senior) can be purchased at Ticketmaster.com or through ECYS.org.

ECYS continues to make music education and musical excellence a priority. The March 14, 2015 **Annual Benefit Concert** will feature a very special collaboration between San Francisco Symphony violinist Chen Zhao and the Concertmaster of ECYS on Sarasate's *Navarra for Two Violins*. In addition, Chen Zhao will sit with the orchestra and share solos with the ECYS concertmaster on Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. It will be a truly unique mentoring performance. Rounding out the program is De Falla's *Noches en los jardines de Espana* ("Nights in the Gardens of Spain") with special guest Sandra Shen, piano. Tickets (\$38 General/\$28 Student-Senior) are available at ECYS.org and through Ticketmaster.com

[Chen Zhao](#) gave his first public performance at the Shanghai Children's Palace at age six, and at ten he entered the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. In 1987 he moved to the US with his parents and became a scholarship student at Crossroads School for Arts and Sciences in Santa

Monica, studying with Heiichiro Ohyama. He went on to attend the Curtis Institute of Music, where he worked with Felix Galimir, and he moved to San Francisco in 1996 to study with Camilla Wicks at the San Francisco Conservatory. In 1999 he joined the New World Symphony in Miami; the following year he appeared as concertmaster with that orchestra in a performance at Davies Symphony Hall, just months before joining the San Francisco Symphony in 2000.

[Sandra Shen](#) has been described as a classical “pianist of the first order” and a “heart-stopping beauty.” Sandra has appeared at the Kennedy Music Center, the Chicago Cultural Center, Monte Carlo Opera House, the Frankfurt Cultural Center in Germany, and the Taiwan National Concert Hall. Ms. Shen, who recently won first prize in the 2013 International Piano Competition of France, received her BM and MM in Piano Performance from the Peabody Conservatory under Ann Schein. Sandra last performed with ECYS during the spectacular 50th Anniversary Season.

The **Season Finale Concert**, May 31, 2015, 7:30pm at Flint Center will feature two dynamic student soloists: Emma Cockerell performing Saint-Saens’ Violin Concerto No.3, Mvt. I and Bennet Huang performing Tchaikovsky’s beloved solo for cello *Variations on a Rococo Theme*. The full program will also include Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloe: Suite No. 2*. Tickets (\$15 General/\$8 Student-Senior) will be available at Ticketmaster.com.

In the summer of 2015, ECYS will embark on **Tour España** with performances in Barcelona, Granada, Valencia, and Seville. As is custom, ECYS will spotlight a fabulous guest artist – pianist Sandra Shen. She will perform De Falla’s *Noches en los jardines de Espana* (“Nights in the Gardens of Spain”). The full program will also include Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloe: Suite No. 2* and Copland’s *Appalachian Spring*. Preview the tour repertoire at the **Bon Voyage Concerts**, June 20, 2015 at Woodside High School in Woodside and June 21, 2015 at the Menlo-Atherton Performing Arts Center in Atherton, 7:30pm both nights. Tickets (\$15 General/\$8 Student-Senior) available at the box office and on ECYS.org.

Born in Beijing, Music Director and Conductor **Dr. Jindong Cai** received his early musical training in China, where he learned to play the violin and the piano. He came to the United States for his graduate studies at the New England Conservatory and the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. In 1989, he was selected to study with famed conductor Leonard Bernstein at the Tanglewood Music Center, and won the Conducting Fellowship Award at the Aspen Music Festival in 1990 and 1992.

Professor Cai served on the faculties at the Louisiana State University, the University of Arizona, the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, and the University of California at Berkeley. He held assistant conducting positions with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, and the Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra, working closely with conductors Jesus Lopez-Cobos, Erich Kunzel, and Keith Lockhart. Dr. Cai joined the Stanford University faculty in 2004 as the first holder of the Gretchen B. Kimball Director of Orchestral Studies' Chair and Associate Professor in Music Performance. He is currently the Music Director and Conductor of the Stanford Symphony Orchestra, the Stanford Philharmonia Orchestra, and the Stanford New Ensemble. He is also the Artistic Director of the Stanford Pan-Asian Music Festival, which he founded in 2005. Read Dr. Cai's full biography [here](#).

Two core principles underlie the **ECYS** mission: **Music Education**, to nurture, train and develop young musicians from culturally diverse backgrounds and encourage a lasting appreciation of music, and **Musical Excellence**, to provide high-quality performance opportunities for young people and outstanding musical events for the wider community. The Senior Symphony, El Camino Youth Symphony's preeminent orchestra, is comprised of over 120 talented young musicians from all over the Bay Area who perform professional repertoire and travel internationally. ECYS offers its students the opportunity to learn from and perform with world-renowned musicians, recent guest artists include pianists Ilya Yakushev and Naomi Kudo, violinists Philippe Quint and David Kim, cellist Zuill Bailey, and Brandon Ridenour, trumpet. The orchestra has been honored to perform at Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, most recently in January 2014 at the Bay Area Youth Orchestra Festival. Previous Music Directors include Dr. Camilla Kolchinsky, Melissa McBride, and Dr. Arthur Barnes. Grace Lai is the current President of the Board of Directors.