



## **Longtime Cape Symphony violinist to head west after retirement**

**By Keith Powers / Contributing writer**

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Martha Potter Kim, widow of composer Earl Kim, to move to California.

Musicians can't retire. What would they do?

Playing music is one of those professions that emanate from love – and that love never ends.

Of course, it certainly is a career – “and you expect to be paid for it, even though you could never get rich,” says violinist Martha Potter Kim, who is retiring from the Cape Symphony this month after performing in its “Broadway Rocks!” concerts.

“But I couldn't live without it, and wouldn't want to,” she quickly adds.

Potter Kim is leaving the orchestra after “something like 25 years,” as she says, to move to California to be with her daughter.

“I'm happy to be moving to California, and sad to leave the symphony,” she says. “Those are two things that really don't intersect. But it's time for me to accept that I don't like being that far apart from her.”

Like almost all the stories behind the Cape Symphony musicians – who they are and how they came to the orchestra – Potter Kim's is a fascinating one. She is the widow of the late composer Earl Kim, a beloved educator at Harvard and Princeton, and a composer whose work, not nearly performed often enough, has always engendered deep devotion among musicians.

“His music hasn't been played that much lately,” she says, “but his 100th anniversary is in 2020, so there will probably be more performances then.”

After Earl Kim died in 1998, Potter Kim gradually gave up their large Cambridge residence and moved to the Cape.

“I had started to play in the symphony when Earl was still alive,” she says, “and I used to drive down from Cambridge all the time. But eventually I sold the big house and moved here.”

“I actually got started in the symphony because my mother, Marianne Potter, was playing in it. I sat in with her, and eventually we shared a violin desk together – we called it the Potter desk. Before that she had helped to found another orchestra, and I grew up playing there. It’s always been a thread in my life.”

Potter Kim began with the Cape Symphony under longtime director Royston Nash, and remembers those years and his conducting fondly. But she acknowledges that the symphony has changed considerably under the directorship of Jung-Ho Pak.

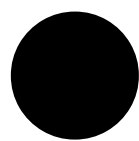
“It’s much more professional, for one,” she says. “In all ways – administratively, onstage, and in the community. Royston gets a huge amount of credit for the orchestra’s beginnings, and the commitment he got from the players. But Jung-Ho has attracted people of caliber. It’s become much more competitive – in a good way. People try harder. They’ve always been committed – I don’t know any musicians that aren’t. But now the playing, and the sense of the orchestra in the community, is much better.”

The music will continue for Potter Kim, in one fashion or another. “I play chamber music with my friends all the time – not professionally,” she says. “And when I move to (Southern) California, I’ll be in limbo a little. I’m sure there be other people there, people like me, who can’t live without music.”

Already, this “retirement” has thrown the unexpected her way.

“I was supposed to be moving right now,” she says, “but for certain reasons, it’s been put off for a year. When I found that out I told the symphony that if they needed a sub, to put me on the list. And they already did – I’m going to be playing the Strauss” – Richard Strauss’ “Don Quixote” – “in April.

“It’s a good thing,” she says about the delay. “I have a lot to move, and even more to throw away. The Potters were pack rats.”



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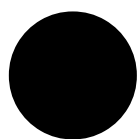
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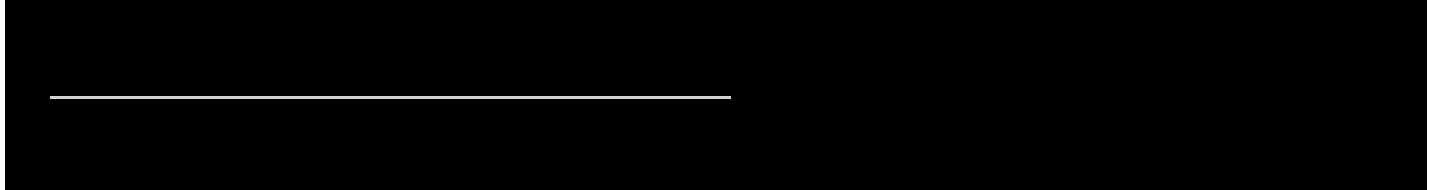
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