

Plenty of classical to go around

By Keith Powers / Correspondent

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Finding classical music programs for North Shore residents used to mean firing up the wagon and making a trip into Boston. Not any more. With vigorous summer festivals in Rockport, Manchester and Newburyport, and the Peabody Essex Museum and a revitalized Cabot Theater joining in with some classical presentations, you can find good music without ever thinking about crossing the Tobin Bridge. The summertime brings a wealth of choices, and that continues into the fall.

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The summertime brings a wealth of choices, and that continues into the fall. At Rockport Music, newly appointed classical artistic director Barry Shiffman makes his first presentations. That season opens Sept. 24 at the Shalin Liu Performance Center, with the esteemed Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. A rotating group of musicians, anchored this time by pianist Gilles Vonsattel, violinist Frank Huang, and clarinetist David Shifrin, they present works for clarinet and ensemble by Weber and Beethoven, as well as Schumann's piano quintet (www.rockportmusic.org).

Later in the fall in Rockport, violinist Jinjoo Cho and pianist Hyun Soo Kim offer sonatas by Beethoven, Fauré, Tchaikovsky and others on Oct. 22; cellist Zuill Bailey joins Shiffman and the Ying Quartet in a major program Nov. 19, featuring a new work by Christopher Theofanidis, as well as string works by Schumann and Brahms. As part of Rockport Music's educational programming, the Bohemian Quartet makes a free appearance on Oct. 11.

Generally Beverly's Cabot Theater features jazz, rock, and world music concerts, but classical music has been making inroads in the past few seasons. This fall's presentations are still being finalized, but the Cabot's resident orchestra, Symphony by the Sea, does bring pianist Pablo Ziegler to the stage on Oct. 22 for a program of nuevo tangos by Piazzolla and others (www.thecabot.org).

Speaking of orchestras, the Cape Ann Symphony expands its reach this season. In addition to its usual home at the Manchester Essex Regional High School, CAS will travel to the Ipswich High School's Performing Arts Center as well (Sept. 23, 24). The season-opening program features Russian music: Stravinsky's "Firebird" suite, Tchaikovsky's "Romeo and Juliet," and Rachmaninov's second piano concerto, with soloist Ya-Fei Chuang. Yoichi Udagawa returns as music director (www.capeannsymphony.org).

Gordon College's music offerings, directed by violinist Sarita Kwok, have grown in recent years. This fall, the Arabella String Quartet starts the school's concert season on Oct. 6 in the Phillips Hall Auditorium, with music by Beethoven, Part and Haydn (www.gordon.edu).

The Newburyport Chamber Music Festival, a staple of summer programming, has a fall concert on Nov. 4, with Ensemble Epomeo giving a concert at the Custom House. The following month the festival's Baroque Orchestra, led by Nurit Pacht, returns to St. Paul's Episcopal Church (www.newburyportchambermusic.org).

To kick off the fall season, the Ocean Alliance Headquarters at the Tarr & Wonson Paint Factory on Rocky Neck will host its second annual open house, gala and fundraiser on the weekend of Sept. 2-4. Ocean Alliance, a marine research non-profit, is in the midst of a years-long restoration of the recognizable red buildings that jut out into Gloucester Harbor.

The weekend activities are a co-production with Trident Gallery. This year they will include a live performance, by the Beauport Chamber Players, featuring a new work, "Down to the Sea in Ships," by Robert Bradshaw, a conducted work (Bradshaw himself will lead) for string quintet, dancers and narrator (Matthew Swift) (www.gloucester.center).

Music at Eden's Edge begins its fall season with concerts in Topsfield and in Peabody on Oct. 14 and 16, with director Maria Benotti joined by fellow violinist Daniel Stepner, cellist Lynn Nowels, and violist Joan Ellersick for works by Haydn, Barber and Teresa Carreño (www.edensedge.org).

Details are still being finalized, but Salem Classical has three programs scheduled for the fall. Concerts at Old Town Hall in East India Square will include the busy violinist Johnny Gandelsman, who performs with Brooklyn Rider and the Silk Road Project, and a Virtual Reality Opera. Both of those dates have yet to be announced. The adventurous Mirror Visions Ensemble, singing a program entitled “When Icicles Hang by the Wall,” will appear Dec. 8 (www.salemclassical.com).

Keith Powers covers music and the arts for GateHouse Media and WBUR’s ARTery. Follow [@PowersKeith](https://twitter.com/PowersKeith), email to keithmichaelpowers@gmail.com

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