

For Immediate Release
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PACIFIC MUSICAL SOCIETY HOSTS ITS 101ST ANNUAL WINTER GALA

Evening honors Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra's (PBO) Music Director Nicholas McGegan and features 15-year old pianist Hilda Huang – a rising star of baroque music

December 17, 2011 (Auction 5pm, Dinner & Performances 7pm)
The Gold Room, Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco
www.pacificmusical.com

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—November 21, 2011—The Pacific Musical Society, San Francisco's oldest organization committed to supporting the advancement of young musicians, is pleased to present its 101st Annual Winter Gala on December 17.

The gala honors world-renowned conductor and PBO Music Director Nicholas McGegan. The evening's performances feature young talent from around the Bay Area - most notably piano prodigy Hilda Huang – an artist who more than five years ago made her first appearance at Pacific Musical Society's annual competition, taking second prize in Piano for her age group.

After receiving the Society's prestigious prize in 2006, Ms. Huang went on to garner top honors in numerous competitions around the world. As a first prize winner of the Bradshaw and Buono international Piano competition, she played in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in 2007 and 2008. Soon after, she made her concerto and recording debut with the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra.

Last year, Ms. Huang was awarded the top prize in the International J.S. Bach Competition in Würzburg, Germany, becoming the first American and the youngest prize-winner in the competition's twenty year history. She recently performed on the nationally-broadcasted television programs 'From the Top at Carnegie Hall' and 'From the Top' on National Public Radio.

In 2009, she competed again to win Pacific Musical Society's first place James Denver Gary Piano Award. And last season, she soloed with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra under the baton of Nicholas McGegan -- she remains the only youth performer to have soloed with the Orchestra.

On December 17, at the request of Nicholas McGegan, Huang returns to Pacific Musical Society to play on the evening dedicated to him, the 101st annual Winter Gala. Upon hearing McGegan's request, Huang jumped at the opportunity. "Being invited specifically by Mr. McGegan is not just a performance opportunity but also a great experience. It's always incredible to play with someone who is as accomplished as he is." She will perform Bach's concerto in D major, first movement, on the harpsichord. A fan of Baroque music, Ms. Huang has deemed Bach her favorite composer, preferring the complexity of the various 'characters' within the composer's many fugues.

For Ms. Huang, who is now 15 years old, the Winter Gala will be “a good chance to maintain a relationship with the Pacific Musical Society. It’s a wonderful institution, the longest active music organization in the bay area. In these times that seem so short on classical music, the institution is a blessing for everybody.”

It seems fitting that one of Baroque music’s young stars will be performing on an exceptional instrument. Ms. Huang will perform on a single manual harpsichord based on mid-18th century Italian Florentine models. John Phillips, widely regarded as one of the world’s best harpsichord makers, built the instrument in Berkeley and generously furnished it for the celebration. Members of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra will accompany Ms. Huang, and Mr. McGegan will also perform a selected Corelli Trio Sonata with members of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra.

Additional performers include Pacific Musical Society competition winners guitarist Ashwin Krishna, composer Nicholas Carlozzi with tenor Brian Thorsett, and soprano Marcelle Dronkers.

For more information and reservations, visit www.pacificmusical.com.