



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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69th Annual “Stairway of the Stars” Concerts Set for March

For 69 years, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District has presented an annual musical extravaganza, showcasing the talents of students from every school in the district and sharing its outstanding music education programs with parents and the community.

Nearly 1,000 elementary, middle, and high school students will star in three separate “Stairway of the Stars” concerts at Santa Monica High School’s historic Barnum Hall auditorium. All three concerts will begin at 7 PM. Parking will be available in the Civic Center parking structure on 4th Street at Civic Center Drive.

Tickets are available online on a first-come, first-served basis until noon on the day of each concert. Remaining tickets for each concert will be on sale at the Barnum Hall box office from 6 to 7 PM. There will be assigned seating. Proceeds from the ticket sales go right back into the district’s award-winning music programs. All SMMUSD staff members can attend for free by showing an official school or district photo badge at the box office the night of any concert. Concert schedule:

Choir Concert – Monday, March 12, 2018

<https://stairwaychoir18.brownpapertickets.com/>

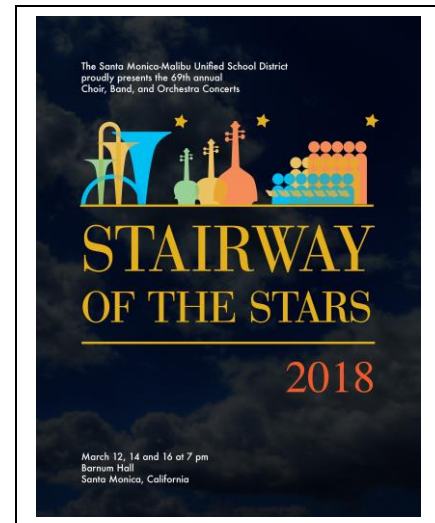
Band Concert – Wednesday, March 14, 2018

<https://stairwayband18.brownpapertickets.com/>

Orchestra Concert – Friday, March 16, 2018

<https://stairway2018orch.brownpapertickets.com/>

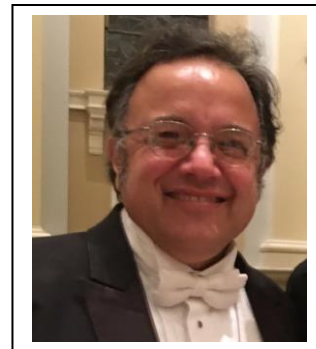
“These three concerts are the culmination of hard work and dedication by our students and music instructors, and we look forward to exceptional performances again this year,” said Superintendent Ben Drati. “We appreciate the support of our community through attending events and through direct donations, as well as through donations to our Education



Foundation, which contributes to many of our successful visual and performing arts programs.”

There will be a different guest conductor for each of the three Stairway concerts.

Choir Concert Guest Conductor -- Lou De La Rosa is the Director of Choral and Vocal Studies and Chairman of the Department of Music & Dance at West Valley College in Saratoga, California, and his choirs have performed at the Kennedy Center and at Carnegie Hall. The choir concert will feature music by Handel, Beethoven, Rossini, Schumann, Smetana, Aaron Copland, and Maria Eugenia Leon.



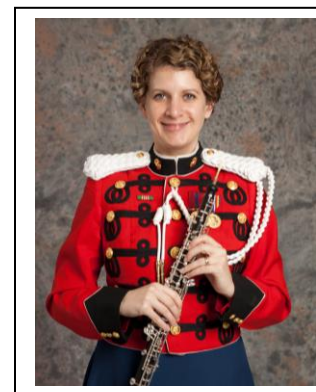
Band Concert Guest Conductor -- Dr. Emily A. Moss is the Director of Bands and Director of Instrumental Music Education at California State University, Los Angeles. She is also a member of the Advisory Board of the Center for Effective Teaching and Learning at Cal State LA. The band concert will feature music by John Philip Sousa, Gustav Holst, Dmitri Shostakovich, film composer James Newton Howard, and Grammy Award-winning jazz band leader Gordon Goodwin.



Orchestra Concert Guest Conductor -- Thomas Loewenheim is Professor of Cello and Director of Orchestras at California State University, Fresno, as well as Music Director of the Youth Orchestras of Fresno. He earned his bachelor's degree at the Rubin Academy of Music and Dance in Jerusalem, his master's degree at the University of Michigan, and his doctorate at Indiana University. The orchestra concert will feature music by Franz Joseph Haydn, Johannes Brahms, Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Leonard Bernstein, and Astor Piazzolla.



The **2018 Stairway Honor Award** will be presented to **Tessa Vinson**, a member of “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band. After graduating from Santa Monica High School, she attended UC Santa Barbara, earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, and joined the “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in 2008. On January 20, 2009, Tessa participated in the inaugural ceremony and parade for President Barack Obama before an estimated crowd of 1.4 million people.



Contact: Tom Whaley, SMMUSD Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator, at twhaley@smmusd.org.

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