

Briefly

Mondavi hosts Canada's k.d. lang

Canadian chanteuse k.d. lang will perform at 8 p.m. Friday at the UC Davis Mondavi Center's Jackson Hall.

The Wood Brothers, a guitar/bass duo, will open the show with a blend of roots-rock, blues and folk.

Tickets — \$60/\$50/\$30 general \$30/\$25/\$15 students and children — are available at the Mondavi Center Ticket Office, (530) 754-2787.

DHS grad gives benefit performance

Vocalist Lilian Borunda, a 2005 Davis High School graduate, will headline a benefit concert from 2 to 5 p.m. Saturday at Rominger West Winery, 4602 Second St., Davis.

Borunda will be accompanied by jazz pianist Robert Monteleone, and the performance will raise funds for the Yolo County SPCA.

Borunda spent two years at Boston's Berklee College of Music on a vocal scholarship, during which time she began to perform in New York; she eventually recorded with producer Andy Marvel, who has worked with Celine Dion and other artists. Borunda now lives in New York, and is working on an album.

Admission will be \$10 at the door. For additional information, call (530) 747-2044.

Clarksburg show by local photographer

"Plein Air Photography at 50 MPH," an exhibit of works by local photographer Michael Radin, opens Saturday and continues through June 14 at the Bogle Winery Tasting Room, County Road 144, just outside of Clarksburg.

A reception will take place from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

Radin's photos, taken primarily in Yolo County, explore the camera's ability to both detailed and blurred objects when taken from a moving vehicle. For additional information, call (530) 759-8064.

Art Center begins storybook program

The mask and story theater troupe Voice of the Wood — Heidi Bekebrede, narrator; and Dianna Craig, masks — will present a storytime session at 3 p.m. Sunday at the Davis Art Center, 1919 F St., Davis.

Bekebrede and Craig will read and perform "Amazing Grace," by Mary Hoffman, and "The Sea Serpent's Daughter," a Brazilian legend about how the sea serpent's gift of darkness to his daughter brings night to the rain forest.

The event will include hands-on crafts tailored to the theme of the stories. Admission is \$5 per person to the performance, and \$10 per person for the craft project. For additional information, call (530) 756-4100.

Young musicians join Capital Jazz Project

The Davis High School Jazz Band will be joined by Sacramento's Capital Jazz Project for a concert at 7 p.m. Sunday at the DHS Brunelle Performance Hall, 315 W. 14th St., Davis.

The program will feature a tribute to Hank Jones, one of the rare individuals inducted by the National Endowment for the Arts as a "jazz master."

Tickets — \$12 general, \$8 students and seniors, \$5 children — will be available at the door. For additional information, call (530) 757-6454.

New man at the podium

UC Davis announces D. Kern Holoman's replacement as resident conductor

By Jeff Hudson
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

UC Davis has named Christian Baldini as the new conductor of the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra.

As conductors go, Baldini is on the young side: He turned 30 last summer. He also brings an interesting background to the post.

His appointment as conductor at UC Davis is yet another element in what amounts to a nationwide youth movement in the field, including some of the country's most famous orchestras. This fall, Gustavo Dudamel, a 28-year-old conductor from Venezuela, will assume the artistic leadership of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

At the New York Philharmonic, veteran conductor Lorin Maazel — born in 1930, and familiar to Mondavi Center audiences from a 2002 appearance with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra — will pass the baton to Alan Gilbert, born in 1967, the son of two musicians from the orchestra.

Baldini was born in Argentina, in Mar del Plata, which he described in an interview with The Enterprise as "a smaller town, about four hours south of Buenos Aires." His father is of Italian heritage; his mother is part Italian and part Lebanese.

"I started lessons on the piano when I was 5," Baldini said. He also learned to play the viola, and he has done some singing. And at an early age, he began writing songs. "Actually, that's how I started conducting," Baldini said. "I needed someone to conduct my own work."

Along the way, as Baldini got better and better acquainted with music, "I fell in love with the symphonic repertoire, and opera also."

As an undergraduate, Bal-

dini studied conducting and composition at the Catholic University of Argentina. He came to the United States in 2003, earning a master's degree in orchestra conducting at Penn State. He's currently finishing up his doctorate at the State University of New York at Buffalo, where he is conductor of that university's orchestra, as well as the Buffalo Contemporary Ensemble and the Slee Sinfonietta, a professional chamber orchestra in residence.

As a conductor, Baldini has worked with orchestras in Chile, Argentina and Brazil. He has served as the assistant conductor of the Britten-Pears Orchestra in Aldeburgh, England. Last year, he was invited to conduct the National Symphony at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., as a participant in the center's National Conducting Institute.

On the composing end, Baldini's works have been performed in Europe, South America, North America and Asia.

UC Davis recruited Baldini through a national search that began when longtime conductor D. Kern Holoman — who has led the orchestra for 30 years — announced plans to retire. Baldini came to Davis in February, and conducted a rehearsal with the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra.

Working with the orchestra in the Mondavi Center's Jackson Hall, Baldini felt that this was an environment in which he'd like to make music.

"It's an amazing hall," he said.

When asked to identify the music on his iPod, Baldini had a surprising answer.

"I don't have an iPod," he said, "but if you look in my CD player, you'd find a lot of tango, lots of Beethoven, Brahms and Schumann. I have a little 4-month-old baby, and he adores Schumann."

Baldini added that he also listens to a lot of German lieder, or art songs.

As a native of Argentina, his fondness for the tango is a natural. But he also listens to a variety of world music, and



COURTESY PHOTO

Christian Baldini has won honors as both conductor and composer, including the 2005 Seoul International Competition for Composers in South Korea, the 2005 UNESCO Tribune of Music, the 2006 São Paulo International Conducting Competition in Brazil, and the 2008 Ossia International Competition in New York.

enjoys the songs recorded by The Beatles in the 1960s.

"When I was a boy, going on car journeys with my family, we would listen to tapes of The Beatles and over. It's like folk music for me, almost."

This eclectic mix informs Baldini's work as a composer.

"Everything I listen to comes through filters into my own music."

Baldini will start his new job as an assistant professor in Davis on July 1. Meanwhile, he's expected to make an appearance as a conductor during the June 4 concert that will close the UC Davis Symphony's current season.

Baldini is working with Holoman on the details of the 2009-10 season. When it comes to programming for the orchestra, Baldini explained, "I like the idea of connecting with our past, which is our heritage, and with our future."

"The orchestra shouldn't be a museum; it should be an institution that makes our future brighter."

— Reach Jeff Hudson at jhudson@davisenterprise.net or (530) 747-8055. Comment on this story at www.davisenterprise.com

Slick Chicks



COURTESY PHOTO

The Chick P's — from left, Cindy Mooney, vocals; Karen McIntyre, bass and vocals; Sara Maitri, drums; and Shannon Alley, guitar and vocals — will perform during this week's Picnic in the Park festivities, taking place from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Davis Farmers' Market, Fourth and C streets, Davis. The band, formerly known as Little Sister, will introduce some new tunes and a fresh approach to its eclectic mix of estrogen-spiced, toe-tappin' blues, pop and contemporary folk music. Children's entertainment will include the Central Park Carousel, the Rocknasium climbing structure, the bouncing bungalows, face-painting, balloon-making and the interactive plaza fountain. Spring fruits and vegetables have arrived — asparagus, snap peas, mushrooms, greens, lettuce, kiwis and strawberries — and the market also is filled with eggs, flowers, dried fruit, nuts, baked goods, honey, olive oil, garden starts and more. Visitors are encouraged to enjoy a variety of barbecued and ethnic dinner items from the International Food Faire and a cool drink from the Soroptimist/Venture Club beer and wine booth. For additional information, call (530) 756-1695 or visit the Web at <http://www.davisfarmersmarket.org>.

Local duo celebrates CD release

SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

Linda Duval and Cathy Speck — joined by their band, The Essentials — will celebrate the release of their new CD, "Thanks for Waiting," with a concert at 7 p.m. Saturday at the Davis Art Center, 1919 F St.

This "big bash" will be a celebration of life and making music for so many years, because Speck has been diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), and it's not known how much longer she'll be able to sing and perform.

Duval and Speck — generally known, simply, as Duval Speck — have made music in the Sacramento region since 1993. The duo's first CD, "Greeneye Blueeye," was released a decade ago. Over the years, Duval Speck has toured throughout California, from Holly's Place in South Lake Tahoe to The Palms in Davis/Winters, with stops along the way in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Speck learned to sing by listening to her mother, Dorothy Speck, who died of ALS in 1972, and is the namesake of Davis High School's Dorothy Speck Memorial Basketball Tournament. Dorothy Speck had the foresight to address the inequality between girls and boys sports funding, seeing it firsthand in her own family of eight athletic children.

She asked that memorial donations be made to girls' athletics, and the Davis community responded with such strength that the tournament was established and has continued ever since.



COURTESY PHOTO

Duval Speck concerts have supported numerous causes: justice and equality, animal protection and breast cancer awareness, to name a few. Their music is played often on local radio stations KDRT and KDVS.

While still in school, Cathy Speck was able to play basketball in three of the tournaments held in her mother's honor.

Duval started singing and playing guitar as a young child in her grandparents' band, and over the years has enjoyed the challenge of teaching herself to play a diverse mix of musical styles. While living in Zurich, Switzerland, she collaborated on a project of original material, and that band was awarded third place in the National Band Contest of Switzerland.

"Thanks for Waiting" features a selection of new material by Duval Speck, along with two classic covers that

have been longtime audience favorites.

For this celebratory performance, Duval Speck will be joined by Tami Talle (drums), Mel Burton (bass), Rick Zamora (guitar), Oliver Camilo (percussion) and Bryon Kunz (saxophone).

A \$10 donation will be requested at the door, and children under 12 will be admitted at no cost. The donation will include a copy of the new CD, along with free snacks and dessert. Wine, beer and soda will be available for purchase, along with commemorative T-shirts.

For additional information, call (530) 756-8260 or visit <http://www.duvalspeck.com>.



FRED GLADDIS/ENTERPRISE PHOTO

Vocalist Nadine Salonites, left, will be accompanied by keyboardist Kathleen Olander during her tribute concert to Kate Smith, taking place at the Woodland Opera House.

Kate Smith tribute on Woodland stage

SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

Woodland soprano Nadine Salonites will present an overview of the life and 50-year career of Kate Smith at 2 p.m. Saturday at the Woodland Opera House, 340 Second St.

The performance take the form of a first-person narrative and collection of songs. All proceeds will benefit the Woodland Opera House endowment fund.

Kathleen Olander will accompany on piano.

"Kate Smith, known as the 'Song Bird of the South,' was an unbelievably versatile song stylist, having sung ballads, sacred, folk, musical comedy, blues, jazz, novelty, western, sentimental, pop, patriotic and classical," Salonites said.

The program will feature many of Smith's most memorable hits — "The Woodpecker Song," "White Cliffs of Dover," "I'll Be Seeing You," "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree" and "Ave Maria" — along with Broadway hits such as "You'll Never Walk Alone" and "Almost Like Being In Love," and the singer's most famous piece, "God Bless America."

Salonites' vocal career has spanned more than 60 years. She graduated from the University of the Pacific with a bachelor of arts degree, majoring in music. Three years of vocal, dramatic and language study were spent in England and Germany. When she returned to the United States, Salonites was a three-time winner of the San Francisco Opera auditions.

She was in the first group of operatic aspirants to participate in the San Francisco Opera Merola Training Programs. Salonites and her husband, Carl, were instrumental in the founding of the Sacramento Civic Opera Company, and in the restoration of the historic Woodland Opera House.

Olander, a graduate of the New England Conservatory of Music, has given recitals in Boston, Portland, the Bay Area and Sacramento.

Tickets, at \$12, are available at the WOH Box Office, (530) 666-9617.

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