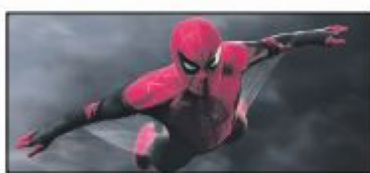


MOVIES » Spidey takes off for Europe after 'Endgame,' with Peter Parker's issues never 'Far From Home.' **D6**



FINDING HIS VOICE » Singer Cohen's improbable career has him on brink of stardom at 25 as countertenor. **D12**

SonomaGo

FRIDAY, JULY 5, 2019 • THE PRESS DEMOCRAT • SECTION D

THE POKE BOWL

Strings virtuoso Shimabukuro discovers surprises in store for himself and Polynesian music enthusiasts at show in Rohnert Park

Rockin' Ukulele

By **MICHAEL SHAPIRO**
FOR THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

Jake Shimabukuro, who now may be the world's best-known touring ukulele player, could barely contain his glee.

"Fiji's gonna be there!" he said of the Poke Bowl, a Polynesian music festival at SOMO Village in Rohnert Park on July 13.

"Fiji is one of the greatest singers to come out of Hawaii. I was a huge, huge fan growing up listening to his music," Shimabukuro said. "He was an inspiration for me."

Born in Fiji, George "Fiji" Veikoso, 49, moved to Hawaii in his early teens. His music can is often described as island reggae.

Shimabukuro had no idea, until the interview for this story, that Fiji would be co-headlining with him. There were more surprises.

"Anuhea's gonna be there too? She has an incredible voice,"

TURN TO UKULELE » PAGE D3



Jake Shimabukuro, right, calls fellow Poke Bowl headliner George "Fiji" Veikoso, above, "one of the greatest singers to come out of Hawaii" and an inspiration to him.



MERRI CYR

SONOMA » WOMEN OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

Valley of the Moon festival continues sonic evolution

By **DIANE PETERSON**
THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

The Valley of the Moon Music Festival, which is celebrating its fifth season from July 14 through 28 at the Hanna Boys Center, continues to evolve with innovative themes and experiences to deepen the listener's appreciation of the context of the music and the rustic setting of the Sonoma Valley.

This year's theme — "Salonnières, Women of Power and Influence" — straddles history, politics and the arts as it examines the role that 19th-century women played as powerful patronesses dictating tastes in fashion, litera-



INSIDE Roundup of summer classical music events / **D3**

ture and music.

The festival's founder and artistic director, Tanya Tomkins, came up with the theme after reading the famous letters exchanged between Tchaikovsky and his eccentric patroness, Nadezhda von Meck, who lent him emotional as well as financial support. They piqued Tomkins' curiosity about other women who served a similar role, such as Winnaretta Singer, heiress to the Singer Sewing Machines founder, who used her fortune to benefit the arts and letters.

"In her salon in Paris was Proust,

TURN TO FESTIVAL » PAGE D3

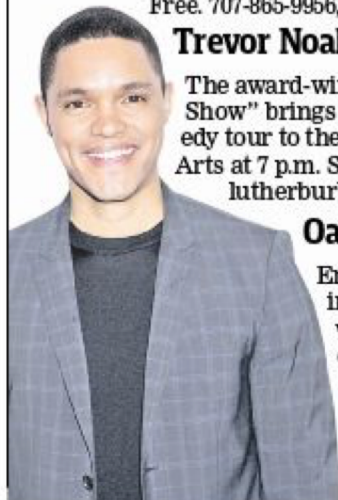
BEST BETS » WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS

Fireworks on the beach in Monte Rio

Extend the Independence Day holiday for one more day, with patriotic images projected on a curtain of water, a boat parade and fireworks, starting at dusk Friday at Monte Rio Beach. Free. 707-865-9956, monterio.org/event-2775243

Trevor Noah visits Santa Rosa

The award-winning host of TV's "The Daily Show" brings his "Loud & Clear" standup comedy tour to the Luther Burbank Center for the Arts at 7 p.m. Saturday. \$65-\$125. 707-546-3600, lutherburbankcenter.org



Oaxaca in Wine Country

Enjoy a cultural festival celebrating the Mexican state of Oaxaca, with dance troupes, food and crafts, from 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday at Courthouse Square in Santa Rosa. Free. facebook.com/events/1038914432946739/

Trevor Noah, left

FESTIVAL

CONTINUED FROM D1

Cole Porter, Stravinsky and Fauré,” Tomkins said. “When we read about history and classical music, it’s so male-dominated with the giants of Bach and Beethoven ... but as promoters and people of influence, these women were giants also.”

What sets this particular music festival apart, Tomkins said, is that it strives to give new life to classical and Romantic chamber works by presenting them on the instruments for which they were composed, including fortepianos and gut-string violins. This year, for the first time, the festival is widening its timespan from Bach all the way up to a 1910 work by Stravinsky.

“From the steel strings on — after World War II — the tone of everything started to have a formulaic quality,” Tomkins explained. “The steel strings and modern pianos have given playing a certain ease that makes everything sound a little bit the same ... but on the other (period) instruments, it allows you to stretch your choices of sound much farther in any direction — quieter, more percussive, or more spoken rather than sung.”

The festival will address its theme during a series of pre-concert lectures on July 14, 21 and 28, which are free this year for the first time. Kate van Orden, a bassoonist and professor of music history at Harvard University, has organized the lectures around the most interesting Salonnieres featured on the programs.

“We have a great audience that cares about history through their interest in the earlier repertoire,” van Orden said. “It’s a total package, and you really get a feel for the cultural moment and the immediacy of the music ... plus the kinds of people who would have been listening, what the vibe was socially and all

WELCOME TO THE SALON

What: Valley of the Moon Music Festival featuring guest lecturer series and winery dinners

When: 4 p.m. July 14, with pre-concert lecture at 2:30 p.m.; 4 p.m. July 20; 4 p.m. July 21, with pre-concert lecture at 2:30 p.m.; free apprentice concert 2:30 p.m. July 27; 4 p.m. July 27; 11 a.m. July 28 and 4 p.m. July 28, with pre-concert lecture at 2:30 p.m.

Where: Hanna Boys Center Auditorium, 17000 Arnold Drive, Sonoma.

Tickets: \$25 to \$45, or \$240 for all six concerts.

Post-concert dinners: July 14 and 21 at the Valley of the Moon Winery; tickets are \$75.

Reservations: 800-595-4849 or valleyofthemoonmusicfestival.org/2019-summer-festival

the things surrounding the music.”

This year, for the first time, the young apprentices in the program will be presenting a free concert at 2:30 p.m. July 27 that features a piano quartet composed by Fanny Mendelssohn, the sister of the famous composer Felix Mendelssohn. One of the missions of the festival is to educate the next generation of early music performers, with four faculty artists serving as mentors.

“When the apprentices leave, they will have a new sense of drama that they can apply to earlier music,” Tomkins said. “They’ve grown up with the Baroque music, so they’ve heard the difference.”

Along with lesser known works, Tomkins said the festival also offers many of the beloved warhorses of the repertoire. As a festival cellist as well, Tomkins is looking forward to playing the Chausson Concerto for Violin, Piano and String

Quartet in D Major on July 21. The piece will feature early music star Rachel Barton Pine on violin and Eric Zivian, music director of the festival, on fortepiano.

“I can’t wait for that,” Tomkins said. “Everybody plays it, but they don’t play it like this.”

She is also excited about the return of former apprentices — the “Tank Laureates” — who are still launching their careers but invited to participate at the next level of the festival.

“We’ve got lots of pianists coming back,” she said. “A wonderful violinist, Andrew Gonzales, is going to do Schumann pieces with piano, and Ana Kim, a returning cellist, will be featured on July 27 (in a program of works by the Mendelssohn siblings.)”

After every afternoon concert, the festival invites the audience to a reception showcasing a local winery where they can get to know each other and chat with the musicians.

The festival will also host two, post-concert winery dinners on the patio of the Valley of the Moon Winery Madrone Estate on July 14 and 21. The intimate, family-style meal will be accompanied by a splash of wine and live music.

“We want people to have a more complete Sonoma experience,” Tomkins said. “It’s so beautiful there, to eat in this lovely place and enhance that with the music in a grace note kind of way.”

For the first time this past May, the organizers launched a pre-festival concert at Valley of the Moon Winery as a sneak preview of the summer festival. The short performance included one piece by Tchaikovsky and a reading of the composer’s letters to his patroness.

“It was sweet,” Tomkins said. “We’re going to do that more often, throughout the season, so we don’t just disappear.”