

# Making the music visible



**DOROTHY ANDRIES**

CLASSICAL NOTES

Northbrook Symphony Orchestra music director Lawrence Rapchak opens the orchestra's season at 4 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 28 at the Sheely Center for the Performing Arts at Glenbrook North High School on Shermer Road in Northbrook. As always with Rapchak, the programming is attractive. Titled "The Glory of Vienna," the concert opens with Mozart's Symphony No. 9 and concludes with Haydn's Symphony No. 102.

In between will be Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 ("The Emperor") with soloist George Lepauw.

Rapchak has a penchant for innovation, and he has come up with something new this time too. "Everyone is used to super-titles in the opera house," said the enthusiastic maestro, "so we're going to have some words projected while the orchestra plays the Haydn. I'll talk beforehand about the four movements and then the audience will be alerted when each movement is played."

Haydn is a natural for this, he continued. "He didn't invent the symphony, but he was the guy who codified it," he said. "Haydn is a seminal composer — he developed the four-movement symphony, which everyone followed — Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky.

## Musical aids

"The super-titles will also give people a clue as



**Lawrence Rapchak:** "The super-titles will give people a clue as to the central theme, when it returns, when the coda starts, when the harmonies darken."

to the central theme, when it returns, when the coda starts, when the harmonies darken.

"Attentive listeners sense when the structure changes," he continued. "This will confirm it for them. Those who don't sense it will see it and hopefully, enjoy the concert much more."

Rapchak doesn't believe that any other orchestra has done this, but he doesn't care. "We want to draw a bigger audience," he said. "This might help."

The maestro has another reason for choosing Haydn. "If I want to be transported to the heavens, I listen to Mozart," he said. "But if I want to have a rollicking good time right here on earth, I listen to Haydn."

## The Emperor

Soloist in Beethoven's beloved "Emperor" concerto will be George Lepauw, who has a distinctive bio. He is indeed from Paris, as the program states, but he is also an American, with a master's of music in piano performance from Northwestern University in Evanston. The son of Jane and Didier Lepauw of Northbrook, the young man began studying piano at the age of 3 at the Rachmaninoff Conservatory in Paris. He was the youngest student to be accepted by Madam Aida



**George Lepauw of Northbrook began studying piano at the age of 3 in Paris.**

Barenboim, with the exception of her own son Daniel.

At age 10, Lepauw gave a public concert. "My first program was a series of Beethoven sonatas," he remembered. "Beethoven's music runs through my life."

He studied piano throughout Europe and then experimented in jazz at the Berklee School of Music in Boston. Undergraduate work was at Georgetown University in Washington, D. C., after which he came to Northwestern and studied piano with Ursula Oppens and James Giles. He also studied harpsichord with Stephen Alltop, organ with Margaret Kemper and conducting with Victor Yampolsky.

In the summer of 2006 he played in Finland. "French music," he said, "Ravel, Debussy, Satie."

But in March of 2007 he was back to Beethoven, with two concerts honoring the 180th anniversary of Beethoven's death at the Music Institute of Chicago in Evanston with David Taylor, assistant concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony and mezzo-soprano Aruna Serbanescu.

Last May, he played "The Emperor" in China with the Tianjin Symphony. "It was right after the earthquake," Lepauw said, "so it became a fundraiser for the victims."

Both Rapchak and Lepauw have music on their Web sites. So tune in to [www.TheNSO.com](http://www.TheNSO.com) for a preview of Sunday's concert and [www.georgelepauw.com](http://www.georgelepauw.com) to get acquainted with the soloist.

**Comment:** [pioneerlocal.com](http://pioneerlocal.com)