

Latina lilt
Vocalist spices up
Stockton Symphony's

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It's pops with a Latina lilt

Vocalist Juanita Newland-Ulloa adds a touch of spice to the Stockton Symphony's Pops and Picnic event

By Brian McCoy
Record Staff Writer

In choosing a Latin theme for the 10th annual Pops and Picnic concert, Stockton Symphony conductor Peter Jaffe wanted to expose his audience to different rhythms and composers.

That dovetails nicely with the aims of Juanita Newland-Ulloa, the mezzo-soprano joining the orchestra tonight at the Stockton Civic Auditorium.

Raised in Panama and Mexico, the Oakland-based vocalist champions female Latin composers. Some of their work will be featured through the symphony's "Latin Music from Around the World" theme.

"I felt that women had been long recognized as great

Preview

Stockton Symphony with Juanita Newland-Ulloa, mezzo-soprano
What — 10th annual Pops and Picnic
When — 8 p.m. today
Where — Stockton Civic Auditorium, 525 N. Center St., Stockton
Tickets — \$10-\$20
Information — 951-0196

singers, but I wanted to know if they have the recognition (as composers)," Newland-Ulloa said. "I haven't seen a whole lot of that."

Newland-Ulloa has spotlighted two Mexican composers — Maria Grever and Consuelo Velasquez — on her latest album, "Mujeres" ("Women"). The disc was recorded in Stockton through Imperial Productions and will be released at Pops and Picnic.

Newland-Ulloa noted. "But they adapted her work for the other sex and ever since then that's the way they think it was (intended)."

Newland-Ulloa was born in New Jersey — her parents met on a blind date while attending Princeton — but was barely a year old before her family moved. She earned her undergraduate degree at Yale and her master's at UC-Berkeley. She went on to further studies at France's Nice Conservatory.

Newland-Ulloa has pursued a varied career since moving to Northern California. In addition to symphony performances and concert dates with her Picante Ensemble, Newland-Ulloa has recorded two albums of children's music.

Designed to help youngsters learn Spanish, the discs are distributed by Rounder Records. They have brought her and the band in-school appearances across the coun-

try.

JUANITA NEWLAND-ULLOA

Jaffe has produced orchestral arrangements for two songs from the album — Velasquez's "Besame Mucho" and the Newland-Ulloa original "Amame" — the vocalist will perform with the symphony.

"This will be very unique," Newland-Ulloa said. "It is an all-Latin evening and they really are trying to present things from all over the Latin globe."

"People have always been fascinated with Spanish or Latin rhythms," Jaffe said. "We have a lot of colorful rhythms and a lot of colorful music from different places — we've got a tango from Argentina, we've got a Jamaican rumba, we've got some pieces by a famous Cuban composer.

There are so many different styles of Latin music covered."

Indeed, it includes Latin music from such decidedly non-Latin composers as Bizet ("Carmen"), Bernstein ("West Side Story"), and Gottschalk ("A Night in the Tropics"). Among the Latins represented are Jose Pablo Moncayo, Ernesto Lecuona, A.G. Villoldo and Elpidio Ramirez.

"Latin and Spanish are very much a part of the symphonic tradition," Jaffe said.

Newland-Ulloa notes, however, few Mexican women have made an impact. Grever and Velasquez are exceptions but, then, their stories are exceptional.

"They were able to receive

musical training because their families were very well off," she said. "They were raised internationally, not just in Mexico. They got quite a bit of training in classical music in Paris, in Spain, and in New York, ultimately. That forced them to have a more universal view of life."

Grever proved the most prolific, composing such standards as "What A Difference A Day Makes." Enrico Caruso said, "It gives me pleasure to sing her songs because they are so unique in their intensity and immense sincerity."

"She originally wrote a lot of these pieces for women,"

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