

Reading Bi-Weekly Update

November 13, 2014



HOLIDAY LIGHTING FESTIVAL

SUNDAY ~ NOVEMBER 30TH

**Downtown Reading
Activities begin at 2:00 PM
Tree Lighting begins at 4:30**

Visit and have your photo taken with Santa Claus... Ride the Hay Wagon... Take a Trolley Ride... Have fun with the Characters... All the activities take place at the Festival prior to the lighting ceremony. Bring your family down early to enjoy all the activities!

Check the Chamber's web site for more details:

www.readingreadingchamber.org or call 978-664-5060



**Please Join Us for Cookies and Cocoa ~ All are Welcome!
After the Tree Lighting on November 30th!**

First Congregational Church

Serving hot cocoa, fresh cookies, carol singing, and visiting...

Santa just called and said make sure you see

The RMHS Marching Band & Color Guard

Performing at the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony!



Come See the Living Nativity at the Old South Church!

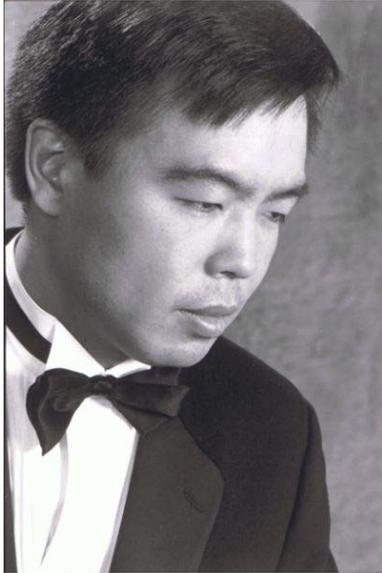
During the town tree lighting festivities

Live animals! Live people! Free!

Then come inside for cocoa and a craft

George Ogata to Lead the Reading Symphony Orchestra

George Ogata will lead the Reading Symphony Orchestra at their concert on Sunday, November 23, 2014 at 3:30 P.M. This concert will be held at the William E. Endsloew Performing Arts Center at Reading Memorial High School (62 Oakdale Rd., Reading). The program will include Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*, *Carmen Suite #1* by Georges Bizet, and Dvorak's *Symphony #8 in G Major*.



Appointing a New Music Director and Conductor

The Reading Symphony Orchestra formed in 1931 with then Reading High School music teacher Samuel Peck leading the ensemble. In the decades since then, the RSO has had only six conductors, including the beloved Jim Roth, and Dan Abbott. Maestro Roland Vazquez, who led the orchestra for the past 18 seasons, announced that he would be retiring at the end of last season. The RSO organization formed a search committee and they began the process of finding the next Music Director and Conductor of the orchestra.

This process began a year ago, and included interviewing 17 candidates last spring to determine a field of three semi-finalists, which included conductors Ray McDaniels, George Ogata, and Ben Vickers. Auditions were held during the first 6 weeks of this season with each candidate conducting the orchestra for a two-week interval.

The final selection process was very difficult, as all of the candidates were well qualified and well liked by the orchestra musicians. "The final decision was an extremely tough one as (the candidates) were very evenly matched musically, which showed in all the evaluations by the orchestra members" adds Jim Dolham, chairman of the Music Director Search Committee. "It

came down to several intangible items that swayed the Committee in favor of George Ogata. The primary item being his energetic approach and what we felt was his ability to grow the orchestra musically as well as physically. Living in Wakefield he has fairly strong ties to the local community and connections with many other ensembles including the MIT Summer Philharmonic." On October 23, 2014, the RSO Board of Directors was proud to appoint George Ogata as the seventh music director and conductor in the history of the orchestra.

Passing the Baton

The November 23 performance by the Reading Symphony Orchestra will mark this ensemble's transition to a new era of music making. George Ogata will begin the concert by leading the orchestra in Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*. Inspired by the beauty of Scotland's Hebrides Islands, Mendelssohn crafted a piece in which "the opening ten measures included the opening, pervading motive suggesting the rollicking ocean waves, lingering sea mist, cavernous echoes and all" according to Ogata in his program notes.

Roland Vazquez, *Conductor Emeritus*, will then take the podium before the musicians for the final time, leading them in selections from Bizet's grand opera *Carmen*. This suite captures the Spanish sounding music that characterizes the opera, including the instantly recognizable *March of the Toreadors*. The final piece of the program, Dvorak's *Symphony #8 in G Major*, will bring Vazquez's RSO experience to full circle as it was the first piece in which he conducted the orchestra 18 years ago.

Get Your Tickets

Tickets for this concert are available at the door. Adult tickets are \$15, Senior/Student tickets are \$10, and children, 12 and under, are free. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Reading Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

We invite you to visit our website www.readingsymphonyorchestra.org, friend us on Facebook (The Reading Symphony Orchestra), or follow us on Twitter @Reading Symphony.

Questions: If you have any questions about all the activity going on around town... just ask and we will find you the answer!

To subscribe to this Bi-Weekly Update: Send an email request to mknight@ci.reading.ma.us requesting that you be added to the Bi-Weekly Update.