

# SKIP SHEFFIELD'S FLIX, MUZIK, SHOWZ, TRAVEL & MORE BLOG

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## Boca Symphonia Grows Stronger Each Year



Boca Symphonia Grows and Grows

By Skip Sheffield

Slowly, surely and quietly a world-class orchestra has been growing in Boca Raton.

The second concert of the tenth season of the Symphonia of Boca Raton Jan. 11 was simply superb. Guest director Gerard Schwartz led the Symphonia through an exquisite rendition of Richard Strauss's Selections from Divertimento for Small Orchestra, op. 86. Accentuating the composition was the fine oboe work by Jeffrey Apanana and Erika Yamada.

The biggest treat came when Gerard Schwarz introduced the guest soloist: his son Julian Schwartz. Schwartz junior is simply one of the finest cellists in the world today. His playing on Camille Saint-Saens' Cello Concerto No. 1 was heavenly, transporting the audience to a higher plane. A note on the Boca Symphonia audience; they are the most knowledgeable and well-behaved group of music lovers I have seen in South Florida. This audience knows quality. After a standing ovation they wouldn't let Julian Schwartz leave the stage. After three curtain calls Schwartz returned with his instrument, sat down, and ripped off a cello solo that explored every possibility of that wonderful, sonorous instrument.

After intermission we were treated to a beautiful performance of Gustav Mahler's "What the Wild Flowers Tell Me," arranged by Benjamin Britten.

The concert's climax was Beethoven's mighty Symphony No. 1 in four movements, building and receding, building and receding until the crescendo of the Adagio climax.

There were a number of younger people, mostly from Lynn University's Conservatory of Music, at the first Symphonia concert. This time the audience was overwhelmingly senior citizen. I hope some younger music lovers get hip to the fact classical musical can really be cool.

The next Boca Symphonia concert is Sunday, Feb. 22 in the Roberts Theatre of St. Andrew's School. On the podium will be former resident conductor Alexander Platt for a program of Prokofiev, Mozart, Glass and Bizet. Call 866-MUSIC-01 (866-687-4201) or go to

[www.thesymphonia.org](http://www.thesymphonia.org).