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WEEKEND EDITION

# THE VANCOUVER SUN

## VSO doubly special at this year's Lovers' Ball

**TOWN TALK** | Bramwell Tovey gets ready for the Grammys as the symphony performs at the ball



MALCOLM PARRY  
VANCOUVER SUN

COLUMNIST

**GRAMMY FOR BRAMMY?** Vancouver Symphony Orchestra's music director **Bramwell Tovey** opened the orchestra-benefiting Lovers' Ball Thursday by conducting **Maurice Ravel's Bolero**. Fortunately for diners, Hotel Vancouver executive chef **Robert LeCrom's** calamars encebollados and costilla de cordero con ruto secos (lamb with dried fruit) didn't repeat like the composer's theme.

But there was a welcome repetition for Tovey before he and wife **Lana Penner Tovey** left for Sunday's Grammy Awards ceremony in L.A. The orchestra and violinist **James Ehnes** are nominated for their CBC recording of concertos by **Samuel Barber**, **Erich Korngold** and **William Walton**. As he packed,



Rhythmic gymnast **Christy Cheng** has **Thomas Fung** sponsor her through the **Growing Champions** program.

Tovey learned the same CD has netted a Juno nomination.

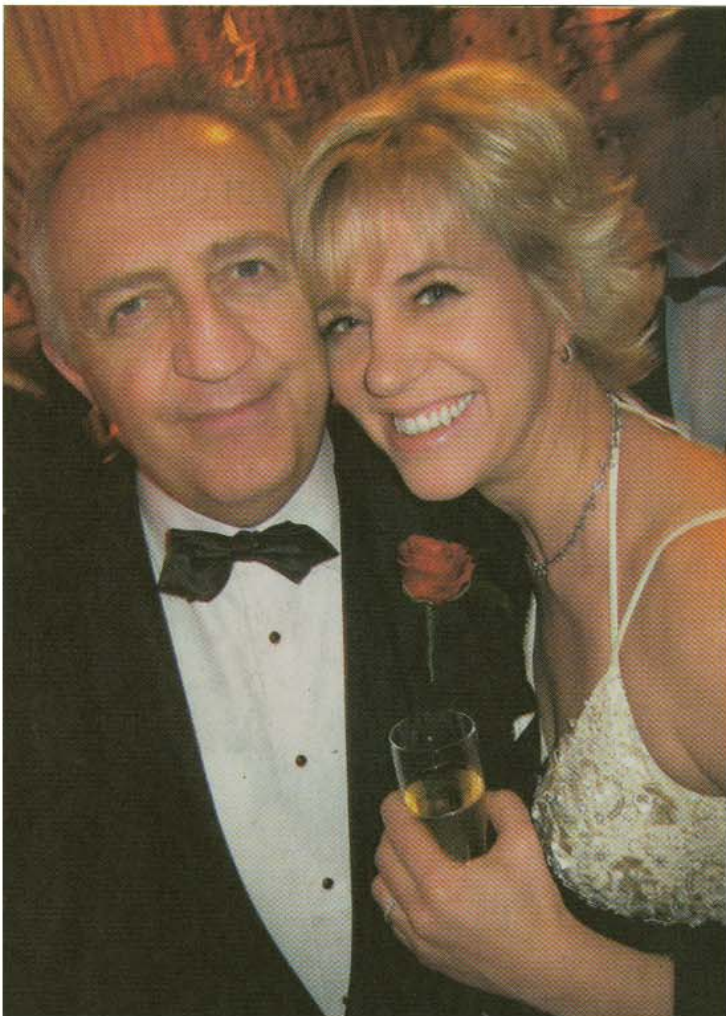
A Grammy win would boost the VSO's clout in choosing recording repertoire. Tovey wants to wax a CD of Beethoven works "to go into every school in Canada."

After dinner Thursday, Evan Mitchell conducted the orchestra for waltzing, and the Lover's Ball — chaired by **Maria Menten** and **Heidi von Pfetten** and oft-repeated honorary chair **Nezhat Khosrowshahi** — rolled on in graceful three-four and six-eight time.

**READY TO RISE:** Fairchild Group chairman-CEO **Thomas Fung** received the Spirit of Vancouver Leadership Award at the Vancouver Board of Trade's Chinese New Year gala in the Hyatt Regency hotel recently. Accepting, he said: "If the 19th century was the age of empire, and the 20th one of war, the 21st, to date, is an age of finance."

He meant the likes of Fairchild's broadcasting, manufacturing, retailing and property development interests. But, to 11-year-old rhythmic gymnast **Christy Cheng**, who performed at the gala, finance means Fung's three annual cheques for \$5,000 received under the Growing Champions — [www.growingchampions.ca](http://www.growingchampions.ca) — scheme to develop Olympic and other athletes.

"Expression, flexibility, smile, she is the whole package," said coach and former Serbian national gymnast **Diana Kosarac**, who is readying the Canadian novice champion for her share of a century of challenge.



**Bramwell Tovey** and wife **Lana Penner Tovey** may see the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra win a Grammy on Sunday.

**WIN-LOSE:** Marathon-running U.S. Consul-General **Lewis Lukens** sponsored the Lovers' Ball wine selections, aided by Select Wine Merchants and Townline Homes. Asked about the Chinese consulate's mass entry in the Vancouver Sun Run on April 20, Lukens replied diplomatically: "I'm looking forward to the friendly competition."

Wife **Lucy Lukens**, who'll also participate in the 10-kilometre event, was more forthright: "He wants to kick butt, and I want a smaller butt."

**DING DONG BELLE:** City fashion designer **Jason Matlo** provided just the incentive for Lovers' Ball attendees who shared Lucy Lukens's personal aspiration. It was a blue jersey gown that fitted **Angela Case's** hips like a second skin while staying well clear of the donated Tiffany diamond necklace and earrings she modelled for raffling.

An accomplished Beethoven pianist on her own century-old Heintzman, Case has been featured in Kokanee beer commercials since 2003. In the first, her appearance as a potential glacier saviour inspired — like Matlo's dresses — the much-repeated response: "Ding, dong!"

**THEY DID:** Vancouver Symphony Society chair **Art Wilms** and **Mary Ann Clark** sure put the "lover" in Lovers' Ball. Their first official date was at the 2003 event — a year after Wilms had given the orchestra \$500,000. This year, following a May 8 ceremony, they greeted guests as a married couple.



**Angela Case** modelled **Tiffany** and **Jason Matlo** creations for Transportation Minister **Kevin Falcon**.



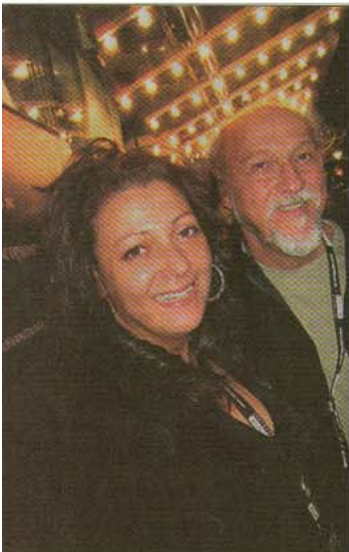
Chopin pianist **Olivia Lam** and five-year squeeze **Terry Hui** attended the Vancouver Symphony's Lovers' Ball.



Vancouver Symphony Society's **Art Wilms** and wife **Mary Ann Clark** met Lovers' Ball guests at the Hotel Vancouver.



**Art Phillips** joined wife and retiring Finance Minister **Carole Taylor** at the Lovers' Ball Thursday.



Movie-maker **Murielle Freoa** at the rendez-vous du Cinema Quebecois et francophone with director **Regis Pouchaud**.