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In all the times I have attended the Hollywood Bowl I've never seen an artist or even a 90 piece orchestra who could completely

fill the giant stage and make it appear to be the perfect size for their talent. Not until I saw Julie Andrews, who entered the stage wearing a beautiful silver gown with an aura and radiance as bright as a starry night. I was amazed that a being could transcend the overwhelming size of such stage and make it look just perfect. *The Gift Of Music*, with Julie Andrews herself as the host, was a tribute to Rodgers and Hammerstein classics, led by conductor/composer Ian Fraser and featuring Andrews' friends from the Broadway stage: singers Stephen R. Buntrock, Christine Noll, Kevin Oderkirk, and Jubilant Sykes. The second half of the program was a symphonic adaptation of Simeon's Gift, the bestselling children's book by Andrews and

her daughter including exquisite illustrations by Gennady Spirin.

Dorival Caymmi, one of the founders of Brazilian popular music, died at 94. Dorival was my first great musical/poetic influence. I was only four, I remember holding his LP, memorizing one of my favorite songs to this day *Marina*. He will be missed terribly but his poetry, beautiful simplicity will continue to echo in his music and in the hearts of all of us who have been touched and transformed by his music.

Roberto Montero (arranger, guitarist, and composer) has a very successful and busy schedule in LA. He's currently teaching at *The Los Angeles Music Academy* in Pasadena. His credits include performances with Sergio Mendes, Baby Consuelo and other international artists.

Considered "an operatic superstar of the 21st Century" Denyce Graves performed her signature role Carmen at the Hollywood Bowl. Her portrayal of Carmen was passionate and color-

ful, opposite tenor Stuart Skelton, and baritone Mariusz Kwiecien, *The Pacific Chorale and Los Angeles Children's Chorus* completed the ensemble, making it a night to remember.



Pyata G. Penedo along with five other very talented musicians, gave birth to the Beleza Pura band, mixing Brazilian rhythms with American funk and hip-hop. Independent.com selected Beleza Pura as one of the four best bands in Santa Barbara at the West Beach Music Festival in September 12-14, 2008.

My friends joined me to celebrate my birthday at the Pool Lounge at the Beverly Hills Hilton. It was an impromptu gathering, and the staff at the Hilton was fabulous. On a perfect, warm summer night, we had VIP area with a view of the pool, delicious cocktails, and a DJ who played Brazilian music as well. ■

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