

New Jersey Symphony/Sharon Roffman

## Spotlight's on teen violinist



By MICHAEL REDMOND

It's a very big deal for Sharon Roffman, the Tenafly teen who won the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra's 1995 Young Artists Auditions. Like, really and truly big

Sharon, 17, is playing Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, a musical equivalent of a fireworks display, all over the state with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Zdenek Macal conducting.

It's one of the rewards of having won the symphony's auditions. So far as Sharon is concerned, it's the one that really matters.

"My goal was to make the finals, that's all, because then you get to play the finals concert with the orchestra. I didn't really expect to win. Now I have the opportunity to play with a great orchestra not only once, but five times. It's a great feeling."

Sharon, who is studying with Robert Lincett at the University of

Southern California in Los Angeles, is no stranger to the solo spotlight.

Most recently she performed during the Manhattan School of Music's 75th Anniversary Gala.

She has also appeared on NBC's "Today" show, on "Sesame Street" and on WQXR-FM's "The Listening Room."

Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, which dates from 1878, was scorned as "unplayable" by Leopold Auer, the famous violinist for whom the work was composed.

This turned out to be one of the epic "wrong numbers" in the history of music, as Auer himself afterwards admitted.

"The decision to play the Tchaikovsky stemmed from participating in the competition itself. All three of my teachers (Robert Lipsett, Peter Winograd, Patinka Koppec) have a strong philosophy that what you compete with is what you've played before," said Sharon, who learned the Tchaikovsky concerto at age 14.

"What's fun for a musician my age is that two years after you learn a piece, it becomes a whole new piece. As you grow, you keep finding new things reflected in the music."

There's another side to Sharon Roffman's musicality.

In 1992 she received the Composer's Apprentice Award of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center

**NJ WHO:** Sharon Roffman, violin, top winner of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra's 1995 Young Artists Auditions, performing Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto

**WHAT:** New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Zdenek Macal conducting. Also: Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 ("Pastorale")

**WHEN & WHERE:** Tonight at 8:30, Richardson Auditorium at Princeton University; tomorrow at 8 p.m., the State Theatre, New Brunswick; Sunday at 3 p.m. in the John Harms Center for the Arts, Englewood; Jan. 13 at 8 p.m. in the Community Theatre, Morristown

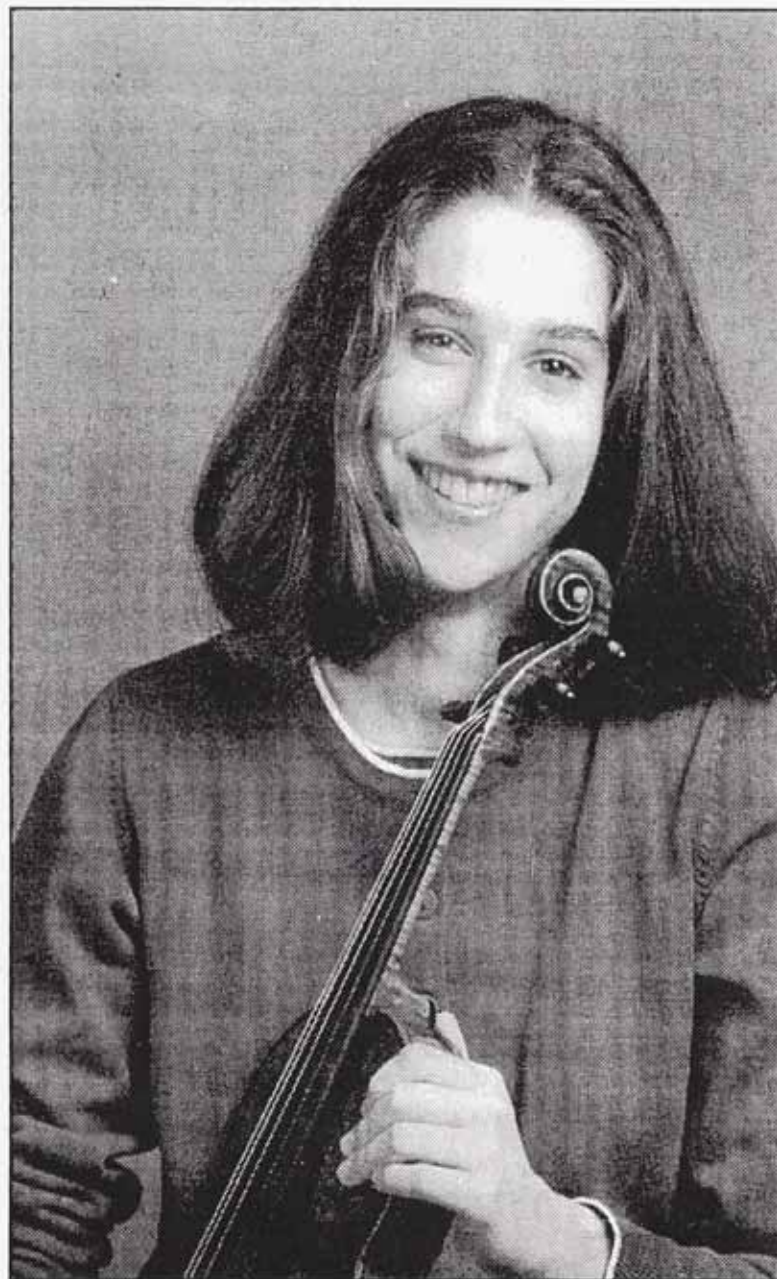
**HOW MUCH:** \$10, \$16, \$26, \$32, 18001 ALLEGRO

Composer Bruce Adolphe concentrated on teaching Sharon the joys of improvisation, a cornerstone of music-making.

"(Adolphe)'s so great. We would just start playing something and hear it grow. It was amazing. It was really fun."

Sharon does serious "desk" composing, too. She has written a string quartet, some piano pieces, and a work for mixed forces that was performed by the Chelsea Chamber Ensemble at Lincoln Center.

Among the violinist's non-classical interests are what she referred to as "classic Beatles," Simon & Garfunkel, and jazz, which she is just beginning to discover through her admiration for Wynton Marsalis



Violinist Sharon Roffman performs Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with the