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2018/19 SEASON



EPIC
BRUCKNER

May 5, 2019

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2019/20 SEASON

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From top: Alexi Kenney (violin), Annie Wu (flute), and Rachel Calloway (mezzo-soprano) are all featured soloists next season.

Dear Friends,

Wow, what a season. From celebrating Leonard Bernstein's 100th birthday last September, to ringing in the New Year with Concertmaster Jennifer Cho taking center stage for an Argentine tango, to a collaboration with the Blackhawk Chorus that brought John Williams' movie scores to life in March, the 2018/19 season has been epic in many ways. Today closes out this 32nd season with an equally ambitious program in the world premiere of Composer-in-Residence Katherine Balch's violin concerto, her second of three commissions with us, along with one of the most epic works of all in Bruckner's Seventh Symphony, which Donato has been waiting a lifetime to conduct.

Although today marks the close of the main stage season, the music making continues next month in Symphony Surround, an immersive experience where you'll hear the orchestra unlike anywhere else: surrounded by the musicians—the very people the benefit event supports—as you wine and dine. No other professional orchestra engages its patrons this way, and we hope you'll come celebrate because like many of our concerts these days, it's expected to sell out. For now, though, enjoy the conclusion of another California Symphony season, and know that all of us hope to see you again very soon.



Donato Cabrera
Music Director



Aubrey Bergauer
Executive Director



Executive Director
Aubrey Bergauer
and Music Director
Donato Cabrera

Photo: Art Garcia

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Concerts Should Be Fun

Why is it that we ask people to behave completely different at symphony orchestra concerts than we do at just about all other entertainment experiences? The California Symphony is changing that.



Bring your drinks to your seats



Clap when you like what you hear



Phones on and silent allowed



Listen to the season playlist on Spotify

California Symphony

EPIC BRUCKNER

Lesher Center for the Arts, Hofmann Theatre

Sunday, May 5, 2019 | 4PM

Donato Cabrera, Music Director

Robyn Bollinger, violin

Balch (b. 1991) *Artifacts*

23 minutes (World Premiere, Commissioned by California Symphony)

Robyn Bollinger, violin

I. *Prelude* (after Berio)

II. *Aria* (after Paganini)

III. *Intermezzo* (after Ysäye)

IV. *Dance* (after Sciarrino)

INTERMISSION

Bruckner (1824–1896) *Symphony No. 7*

64 minutes I. *Allegro moderato*

II. *Adagio* (Very solemn and slow)

III. *Scherzo* (Very fast - Trio: Slightly slower)

IV. *Finale* (Moving, but not fast)

The total running time for this concert is approximately 2 hours and 5 minutes,
including a 20-minute intermission. Please silence your cell phones.

SEASON PARTNERS



THE ORCHESTRA



Violin I

Jennifer Cho,
Concertmaster
Christina Knudson,
Assistant Concertmaster
Dan Flanagan
Sergi Goldman-Hull
Joseph Fath
Patricia Miner
David Steele
Laurien Jones
Julie Kim
Matt Oshida
Liana Berube
George Hayes

Violin II

Philip Santos, *Principal*
Sarena Hsu-Giarrusso,
Assistant Principal
Sharon Wood
Sheng-Ching Hsu
Xander Abbe
Junghee Lee
Yulee Seo
Rae Ann Goldberg
Katherine Button
Harry Chomsky
Hande Erdem

Viola

Sandy Leem,
Principal
Katy Juneau,
Assistant Principal
Janet Lynch
Chad Kaltinger
Stephanie Ng
Stephanie Railsback
Pauline Metzgar
Betsy London

Cello

Richard Andaya, *Principal*
Leslie Meeks, *Assistant Principal*
Liz Struble
Julie Feldman
Dina Weinshelbaum
Kris Desby
Amy Brodo
Drew Ford

Bass

Andy Butler, *Principal*
Michel Taddei, *Assistant Principal*
Carl Stanley
Stephanie Payne

Schuyler Karr
Steven Hoffman

Flute

Michelle Caimotto,
Principal
Katrina Walter

Oboe

James Moore, *Principal*
Peter Lemberg

Clarinet

Stephen Zielinski, *Principal*
Jeannie Psomas

Bassoon

David Granger, *Principal*
Dan Zimardi

French Horn

Meredith Brown, *Principal*
Nicky Roosevelt
Alicia Mastromonaco
Keith Green
Monika Warchol



Wagner Tuba

Mark Almond, *Principal*
 Alicia Telford
 Eric Achen
 Alex Camphouse

Trumpet

Scott Macomber,
Principal
 William Harvey
 Owen Miyoshi

Trombone

Don Benham, *Principal*
 Tom Hornig
 Dave Ridge

Tuba

Forrest Byram, *Principal*

Timpani

Alex Orfaly, *Principal*

Percussion

Victor Avdienko, *Principal*
 Tim Dent

Victor Avdienko

California Symphony
 percussionist
 Victor Avdienko
 has one thing to
 do in Bruckner's
 Symphony No. 7 and
 that is to play a lone,
 epic cymbal crash.
 It's trickier than you
 might think.

"In addition to being
 musically and emotionally engaged, the big
 challenge is being able to play a single epic
 crash technically. You don't get a warm up
 crash leading into it. You have to be able to tell
 an epic story with that one note."



Photo: Art Garcia

Donato Cabrera, Music Director

Donato Cabrera is the Music Director of the California Symphony and the Las Vegas Philharmonic, and served as the Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony and the Wattis Foundation Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra from 2009–2016.

Since Cabrera's appointment as Music Director of the California Symphony in 2013, the organization has reached new artistic heights by implementing innovative programming that emphasizes welcoming newcomers and loyalists alike, building on its reputation for championing music by living composers, and committing to programming music by women and people of color. With a recently extended contract through the 2022–23 season, Cabrera continues to advise and oversee the Symphony's music education programs and community engagement activities. Cabrera has also greatly changed the Las Vegas Philharmonic's concert experience by expanding the scope and breadth of its orchestral concerts. Cabrera has also reenergized its Youth Concert Series by creating an engaging and interactive curriculum-based concert experience.

In recent seasons, Cabrera has made impressive debuts with the National Symphony's KC Jukebox at the Kennedy Center, Louisville Orchestra, Hartford Symphony, Orquesta Filarmónica de Jalisco, New West Symphony, Kalamazoo Symphony, and the Reno Philharmonic. In 2016, he led the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in performances with Grammy Award-winning singer Lila Downs. Cabrera made his Carnegie Hall debut leading the world premiere of Mark Grey's *Ātash Sorushan* with soprano, Jessica Rivera.

Awards and fellowships include a Herbert von Karajan Conducting Fellowship at the Salzburg Festival and conducting the Nashville Symphony in the League of American Orchestras's prestigious Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview. Donato Cabrera was recognized by the Consulate-General of Mexico in San Francisco as a Luminary of the Friends of Mexico Honorary Committee, for his contributions to promoting and developing the presence of the Mexican community in the Bay Area.



Photo: Lindsay Hale



Photo: Kristin Hoebermann

Robyn Bollinger, violin

Daring, versatile and passionate, American violinist Robyn Bollinger is recognized for her musical creativity, rich tones, emotional depth, and technical mastery. Having made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut at age twelve, she has since performed with orchestras, in recital and at festivals nationwide and abroad.

A sought-after collaborator, she is a popular figure on the chamber music stage, both as a member of the renowned,

Grammy-nominated ensemble A Far Cry, and for her work at festivals and on chamber music series. Ms. Bollinger records for Crier Records. *The New York Times* reviewed her 2018 debut CD and selected her performance of Biber's *Sequenza VIII* as one of "8 Best Classical Music Moments of the Week on YouTube."

The recipient of a prestigious Fellowship from the Leonore Annenberg Arts Fellowship Fund, as well as other awards, she performs on a beautiful 2017 violin made by the world-renowned luthier Samuel Zygmuntowicz, on loan from a private collection.

"An engaging and original talent."

—The Boston Music Intelligencer

Katherine Balch, Composer

Called "intricate" and an "exquisite sound world" by *icareifyoulisten*, Katherine Balch's music has been commissioned and performed by the Tokyo, Minnesota and Albany Symphony Orchestras, American Composer's Orchestra, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Yale Camerata and Philharmonia, Aspen Contemporary Ensemble, Antico Moderno, FLUX Quartet, International Contemporary Ensemble, New York Youth



Photo: KateL Photography

Symphony, wild Up and Contemporaneous, among others, in such venues as Carnegie Hall, Disney Hall, Wiener Konzerthaus (Vienna), and Suntory Hall (Tokyo). Projects for the 2018–2019 season include new works for NYC-based Bearthoven Trio, International Contemporary Ensemble, Oregon and California Symphony Orchestras, and the Argus Quartet / Concert Artist's Guild.

Balch is currently Composer-in-Residence with the California Symphony, a three-year position she will hold through 2020. She is managed by Young Concert Artists Inc., where she currently holds the William B. Butz Composition Chair. Recent recognitions include fellowships from Aspen, Norfolk, Fontainebleau, Tanglewood, and Santa Fe music festivals, and awards from ASCAP, BMI, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters, among others.

Balch received her B.A. / B.M. in the Tufts / New England Conservatory double degree program, where she studied history and political science at Tufts (summa cum laude) and composition at NEC. Her research has been published in the *History of European Ideas*. Explorations of political philosophy, history, and the relationship of the artist to society remain an important part of her musical identity. She completed her M.M. at Yale School of Music as a Charles H. Ditson Fellow, where she studied with Aaron Jay Kernis, Chris Theofanidis, and David Lang, and is currently pursuing her D.M.A. as a Dean's Fellow at Columbia University, studying with Georg Haas and Fred Lerdahl.

Passionate about education at all levels, she is a faculty member of the Walden School in Dublin, New Hampshire and formerly at Bard College-Conservatory preparatory in the Hudson Valley. When not making or listening to music, Balch enjoys cooking, playing with her cat, Zarathustra, various combinations of espresso and steamed milk, and the outdoors.

BEEP BEEP

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PROGRAM NOTES

Katherine Balch (b. 1991)

***Artifacts* Concerto for
Violin and Orchestra
(world premiere)**

One particularly pleasant corner of the repertoire is occupied by works that composers have written for good friends, often with that friend's input and contributions.

The Brahms Violin Concerto comes first to mind: Brahms wrote it for Joseph Joachim, one of Brahms's earliest boosters and a faithful collaborator down the years, and it was the result of so much give-and-take between the two artists that one rather wonders if it might warrant a hyphenated attribution of Brahms-Joachim. Felix Mendelssohn wrote his genre-changing Violin Concerto for his close colleague Ferdinand David; Bartók composed his warm and lyrical Third Piano Concerto for his wife Ditta. It's a sizeable list of terrific stuff, a testimony to the role that friendships have played in shaping music history.

Katherine Balch joins that select company in writing *Artifacts*, a violin concerto for Robyn Bollinger. "Robyn and I have been friends since our undergraduate years at New England Conservatory, and I've been wanting to write her a piece for a long time," says Balch. "I wanted to take the repertoire Robyn and I love and have shared conversations over, and turn it into something not only in my own voice, but also into something I hope elevates/highlights the incredible personality Robyn brings to her performative practice."

As a result, *Artifacts* takes as the departure point for each of its four movements a particular piece in the solo violin repertoire—Berio's 'Sequenza', the Paganini Sixth Caprice, the Sarabande from Ysaÿe's fourth violin sonata, and Sciarrino's *sei capricci*. Balch tells us that "while there are not really direct 'quotes', there is often the illusion of quotation, or referencing the pieces in some personal way." But it's not necessary to recognize the pieces being referenced in order to enjoy the concerto. "I want to capture and try to share a bit of the magic I experienced listening to the music I love," says Balch. Then she adds an altogether critical proviso: "filtered through my own voice."



Image: Bollinger and Balch enjoying a concert at Tanglewood Music Center last summer.

Anton Bruckner Symphony No. 7 in E Major (1883)

Nowadays it's easy to get to Ansfelden, Austria. Just take the A1 westbound out of Vienna and after a while Ansfelden will be on your left, immediately following the exit for central Linz. Ansfelden turns out to be an altogether nice little place. There's a budget motel that offers a passable complimentary breakfast. There's a good Chinese restaurant with a popular lunch buffet. There's a McDonald's.



Image: Organ of St. Florian Abbey Church, Sankt Florian, Upper Austria

And just a short walk away is the house where Anton Bruckner was born in an Ansfelden that was a world removed from today's pretty suburb. Bruckner's Ansfelden was an impoverished rural hamlet with more cows than people and shortages both of food and decent jobs. It must have seemed like the end of nowhere to a talented young chap like Anton Bruckner, son of a village schoolmaster. His father got him started in music, then in his early teens he was sent off to the nearby Augustinian monastery of Sankt Florian, which would play a critical role throughout his life. (And posthumously as well: he's buried in the monastery's crypt.) The sound of the mighty Saint Florian organ runs throughout Bruckner's works, as does the monastery's reverent, timeless atmosphere.

As an organist at Sankt Florian and in nearby Linz, it was a quiet, unassuming life. He studied mostly via correspondence with the renowned music theorist Simon Sechter, and when Sechter died in 1868 Bruckner (reluctantly) moved to the Imperial City and took over his beloved teacher's theory classes at the Vienna Conservatory. The shy and unsophisticated Bruckner, a village and monastery man down to his toes, was a poor fit for Vienna's toxic musical politics. He had a rough time of it with both the Viennese intelligentsia and the critics. Brahms referred to him as "that bumpkin" and arch critic Eduard Hanslick skewered one of his works as a "symphonic anaconda." But he persisted amidst a steady shower of brickbats,

continued on page 15

FRESH LOOK

> The Symphony Exposed

In English with
live Spanish
translation
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traducción en
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Adult Music Education Classes at Walnut Creek Library this Summer

Have you ever wondered...

What does the conductor do besides wave the baton?

*Why do the violins sit half on the left and half on the right?
(Except when they don't?)*

What's a clarinet and where do they sit in the orchestra?

Scott Foglesong of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music returns for this introductory course that will uncover these questions plus provide expert tips and info to enhance your enjoyment of all things orchestra, for a fresh look at the Symphony, exposed.

WHO: From beginners to experienced music lovers alike, all are welcome.

WHEN: Tuesdays July 9, 16, 23, and 30, from 6:30 to 8 PM

WHERE: Walnut Creek Library | Oak View Room, 1644 N Broadway, Walnut Creek

Pre-register at californiasymphony.org/freshlook

This program is supported by a generous grant from the American Orchestras' Futures Fund, a program of the League of American Orchestras made possible by funding from the Ann & Gordon Getty Foundation.

continued to produce luxuriantly epic symphonies, and eventually found a certain measure of success with Viennese musicians and their notoriously fickle public. He stayed unmarried—not for lack of trying—and died in his humble but comfortable Vienna apartment at the age of 72. It took a while for posterity to catch on, but catch on it did and nowadays Bruckner enjoys an enviable reputation as a supreme master of the late Romantic symphony. His music even survived being appropriated by the Nazis, a tribute indeed to its fundamental nobility and goodness.

Time is the essential element in a Bruckner symphony. It is not our time; it is Bruckner's time; it is the time of the unruffled pastures of Sankt Florian; it is the time of nature and the gradual unfolding of the seasons. To expect otherwise from a Bruckner symphony is to wind up with the white knuckles and cracked tooth enamel of a seething driver stuck in rush-hour traffic. Far better to forget about the freeway and think instead of carriages on sun-dappled country roads, where other travellers are rarely encountered and our time of arrival is mostly up to the horse.

The Bruckner Seventh Symphony stands apart from its predecessors as having been accepted as a repertory item almost from the get-go. Bruckner finished it in September 1883, and two now-legendary conductors—Arthur Nikisch and Hermann Levi—set it on its way in 1884 and 1885, respectively. Amazingly enough, it had made its way to Chicago by 1886 thanks to that enterprising American conductor Theodore Thomas. Its immediate and lasting popularity isn't at all difficult to understand. It's not quite as lengthy as most of its brethren, but most importantly, it has a special sweep and a compelling inner urgency. Even if it might seem silly to describe an hour-plus symphony as economical, the word is actually quite apt. Impressively grand, majestic, and passionate, the Bruckner Seventh propels itself firmly along its destined journey. It isn't just that it comes off as good. It comes off as *right*.



Program Annotator Scott Foglesong, Chair of Musicianship and Music Theory at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, is a Contributing Writer and Lecturer for the San Francisco Symphony as well as lecturer for California Symphony's adult music education series Fresh Look: The Symphony Exposed.

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The Who's Who

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Duane and Helen Carroll	Birgit Karlsson	Marlys Siegel
Sandra Maria Cavallo	Robert King	Diana Smith
Noel Danto	Zuva Pat Kriletich	Sara Soltan
Leslie deGiere	Barbara Langerman	Chris Spanos
Debra Deitch	Pam Lindner	Shari Ward
Art and Ardy Dreshfield	Catherine Locke	Janet Welter
Ellen Duffy	Bev Louie	Lynn Whitson
Jane Durie	Carole Lyons	Shirley Wilsen
Joseph Ficurelli	Richard Perry	Hal and Marcia Wilson
Judy French	Marty Pigeon	Heide-Marie Woolf
Chuck Fung	Jean Poulsen	
Jimmy Gahl	Elaine Reisert	

What people are saying about the California Symphony

"It couldn't be clearer that...this orchestra has exploded in terms of enthusiasm, audience engagement, and ambition."

— *San Francisco Classical Voice*

"These days in the Bay Area, the California Symphony may be the most forward-looking music organization around."

— *Mercury News*

"They take the stuffy edge out of the symphony. The marketing makes it look exciting and moving, and it's fun."

— *Mike Elmore (patron and donor)*

"As orchestras around the country deal with aging audiences and search for ways to stay relevant...the California Symphony has succeeded by taking bold risks without compromising its musical integrity."

— *Southwest Airlines In-flight Magazine*

"anybody who has anything to do with a fine arts organization would do well to pay a visit to [California Symphony]. It points the way to a new style of audience outreach."

— *Wall Street Journal*

"This was as persuasive an advertisement as one could wish for the orchestra's rejuvenated future."

— *San Francisco Chronicle*

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