

CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY PRESENTS
CHOPIN IN PARIS

MUSIC DIRECTOR DONATO CABRERA INTRODUCES MUSIC
BY JOSEPH BOLOGNE AND CÉSAR FRANCK. AUSTRIAN-ROMANIAN
PIANIST MARIA RADUTU RETURNS TO PERFORM FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN
February 4–5, 2023 at the Leshar Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek

WALNUT CREEK, CA (4 January 2023) – **California Symphony** takes audiences on a musical trip to the City of Light with *Chopin in Paris*. Continuing California Symphony’s season featuring all female soloists, Austrian-Romanian pianist **Maria Radutu** returns to perform **Frédéric Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 1 (in E minor, Op. 11)**. The Parisian themed concert opens with French Caribbean **Joseph Bologne’s L’amant anonyme (The Anonymous Lover)**, an overture from one of the six surviving operas by the first prominent composer of African ancestry in Western history. Concluding the concert is the groundbreaking *Symphony in D minor* by **César Franck**, whose work inspired a generation of French composers including Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. The program is conducted by Music Director **Donato Cabrera**, celebrating his 10th year with California Symphony with an entire season of works that are new to the orchestra. Says Cabrera: “There can be many sources of inspiration for programming a concert, and Chopin’s concerto was the starting point for this weekend’s concerts. However, it was the extra-musical component of migration, which played a crucial role in both Chopin’s and our soloist Maria Radutu’s life, that gave me a path in finding the music for the rest of the program.” *Chopin in Paris* will be presented **7:30pm, Saturday, February 4 and 4:00pm, Sunday, February 5, 2023** at the **Hofmann Theatre at Leshar Center for the Arts**, 1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek. A 30-minute pre-concert talk and Q&A led by Cabrera will begin one hour before each performance. Information and tickets (\$49-\$79; \$20 for students 25 and under with valid Student ID) are available at [CaliforniaSymphony.org](https://www.CaliforniaSymphony.org).

The program opens with a work by French Caribbean composer **Joseph Bologne**, also known as Chevalier de Saint-Georges, who was born in 1745 in the French colony of Guadeloupe to a wealthy white plantation owner and enslaved mother. He was sent to Paris at age 13 to be educated, and

went on to become the first prominent composer of African ancestry in Western history. Written in 1780, Bologne's *L'amant anonyme (The Anonymous Lover)* is described by Music Director Donato Cabrera as "vibrant, full of life, and the perfect calling card to reveal one of the great composers and performers of the 18th century." In recent years, there has been an enormous resurgence of interest in Bologne's incredible life, artistic success, and influence.

Internationally-acclaimed pianist **Maria Radutu**, who returns to the California Symphony with **Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1 (in E minor, Op. 11)**, has performed as a soloist with leading orchestras throughout Europe and Asia, and made her US orchestral debut with the California Symphony in January 2017. Known for crossing artistic and musical borders, Radutu combines classical music with storytelling and modern art forms, working with composers, choreographers, and painters. Says California Symphony's Music Director Donato Cabrera, "Radutu reveals emotions and feelings that aren't always brought to the stage – there's no filter between her and the audience." Premiered in Warsaw immediately before Chopin's emigration to Paris, his *Piano Concerto No. 1 (in E minor, Op. 11)* has been described by the composer as having "a romantic, calm, and melancholic character. It is intended to convey the impression one receives when the eye rests on a beloved landscape that calls up in one's soul beautiful memories – for instance, on a fine, moonlit spring night."

The final work featured is **César Franck's Symphony in D minor**, which delighted American audiences and was more popularly programmed than any of Beethoven's nine symphonies for much of the twentieth century. Born in Liège, Belgium, Franck sought his fortune in Paris and achieved renown as an organist, teacher, and composer. Unlike other composers of such importance and reputation, Franck's fame can be attributed to a number of compositions written in his later years – particularly his *Symphony in D minor*, which was highly responsible for reinvigorating the French symphonic tradition after years of decline.

ABOUT CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY

Founded in 1986, **California Symphony** is now in its tenth season under the leadership of Music Director Donato Cabrera. It is distinguished by its vibrant concert programs that combine classics alongside American repertoire and works by living composers and for making the symphony welcoming and accessible. The orchestra includes musicians who perform with the San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Ballet, and others. Committed to the support of new

talent, California Symphony has launched the careers of some of today's most well-known artists, including violinist Anne Akiko Meyers, cellists Alisa Weilerstein and Joshua Roman, pianist Kirill Gerstein and composers such as Mason Bates, Christopher Theofanidis, and Kevin Puts. California Symphony is based in Walnut Creek at the Leshar Center for the Arts, serving audiences in Contra Costa County and the wider Bay Area.

California Symphony's 2022-23 season is sponsored by the Leshar Foundation.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

WHAT: **California Symphony** takes audiences on a musical trip to the City of Light with ***Chopin in Paris***. Continuing California Symphony's season featuring all female soloists, Austrian-Romanian pianist **Maria Radutu** returns to perform **Frédéric Chopin's *Piano Concerto No. 1 (in E minor, Op. 11)***. The Parisian themed concert opens with French Caribbean **Joseph Bologne's *L'amant anonyme (The Anonymous Lover)***, an overture from one of the six surviving operas by the first prominent composer of African ancestry in Western history. Concluding the concert is the groundbreaking ***Symphony in D minor*** by **César Franck**, whose work inspired a generation of French composers including Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. The program is conducted by Music Director **Donato Cabrera**, celebrating his 10th year with California Symphony with an entire season of works that are new to the orchestra.

WHEN: **7:30pm, Saturday, February 4**
4:00pm, Sunday, February 5

WHERE: **Hofmann Theatre at Leshar Center for the Arts**
1601 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek

CONCERT: **CHOPIN IN PARIS**
Donato Cabrera, conductor
California Symphony
Guest Soloist: Maria Radutu, piano

PROGRAM:

Joseph Bologne—*L'amant anonyme (The Anonymous Lover)*
Frédéric Chopin— *Piano Concerto No. 1 (in E minor, Op. 11)*
Maria Radutu, pianist
César Franck— *Symphony in D minor*

TICKETS: \$49-\$79 and \$20 for students 25 and under with valid Student ID.

INFO: For more information or to purchase tickets, the public may visit CaliforniaSymphony.org or call the Lesher Center Ticket Office at (925) 943-7469 (open Wed – Sun, noon to 6pm).

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MEDIA: Contact Sydney Albin, Carla Befera & Co.
sydney@cb-pr.com

PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/chopiniparis>