

CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES HISTORIC 2022-23 SEASON

TEN CONCERTS SEPTEMBER 10, 2022 – MAY 21, 2023

FEATURING A WORLD PREMIERE FROM CURRENT CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY YOUNG
AMERICAN COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE AND ALL-WOMEN LINE-UP OF GUEST ARTISTS

Subscriptions available now. Single tickets go on sale in July.

Season highlights include:

- The 2022-23 season marks Donato Cabrera's tenth year as Music Director of the California Symphony.
- New material: 100% of the works selected for the 2022-23 season have never been performed in California Symphony's 36-year history.
- 31% of the composers programmed are women, living, and/or a person of color, reinforcing a commitment to diverse representation.
- Composer Viet Cuong will complete his final year of residency with California Symphony this season, with applications for the orchestra's next Young American Composer-in-Residence opening by late summer 2022.
- Programming includes composers Anna Clyne, Zoltán Kodály, Grażyna Bacewicz, Alexander Zemlinsky, Joseph Bologne (Chevalier de Saint-Georges), and current Composer-in-Residence Viet Cuong, featured alongside Frédéric Chopin, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Antonín Dvořák, and more.
- California Symphony welcomes an all-women line-up of Guest Artists that includes Bay Area natives pianist Elizabeth Dorman and contralto Sara Couden, Austrian-Romanian pianist Maria Radutu, and New York-based cellist Inbal Segev, who opens the season with Clyne's *DANCE*.

WALNUT CREEK, CA (5 April 2022) – **California Symphony** unveils its 2022-23 season, marking the forward-thinking orchestra's tenth year with Music Director **Donato Cabrera** at the helm. Following its triumphant return to in-person performances in the 2021-22 season, California Symphony has lined up a season of innovative programming, featuring exciting guest artists and music by living composers, women, and people of color – including some of Cabrera's favorite works. None of the music has been performed previously by the orchestra in its 36-year history.

California Symphony's 2022-23 season will feature ten concerts at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek, offering audiences a joyful season that celebrates the orchestra's successful past decade, while looking ahead to its bright future. Subscriptions (for three, four, or five concerts) start at \$99 and

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are available now, while single tickets (\$49-79) go on sale beginning in July 2022. More information is available at CaliforniaSymphony.org.

“My tenth season with the California Symphony represents a milestone on a journey I’ve taken with our incredible musicians and our dedicated, loyal audience,” says Cabrera. “I wanted to mark this achievement of ten years of artistic growth and elevated ambition by performing an entire season of music that the orchestra has never performed before.” Noting the diverse line-up of works slated this season, Cabrera adds, “All of the compositions that I have chosen, while new to our Walnut Creek audience, are celebrated for their unique beauty and groundbreaking nature.” In the same vein, Cabrera has carefully selected remarkable soloists, introducing the Bay Area community to talents who are already shaping our local music scene in profound ways.

Says Executive Director **Lisa Dell**, “The stories that Donato shares this season will shed light on these fascinating pieces, bringing us closer to a fuller, more inclusive history of classical music.”

As California Symphony gears up for a monumental season, Cabrera reflects on 2020-23 California Symphony Young American Composer-in-Residence **Viet Cuong**’s tenure with California Symphony. “Through his first two commissions for California Symphony, Viet has demonstrated his sense of whimsy, incorporating a sense of playfulness that is instantly appealing to audiences,” Cabrera says. “He’ll compose his third and final commission as California Symphony’s Young American Composer-in-Residence, which will be workshopped in the upcoming months and premiered during our final concert of the season.” Cabrera adds, “Like proud parents, we take to heart that the California Symphony family provides a loving environment for our composers, allowing their compositions to grow and mature, finding the confidence necessary to spread their wings and take that first leap.” Part of California Symphony since 1991, the intensely competitive residency provides American composers with once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to create, workshop, premiere, and record three major orchestra compositions (one each season). Each graduate has gone on to win top honors and accolades in the field, with seven of the nine Young American Composer-in-Residence alums going on to win the Rome Prize. Alumnus Mason Bates (2007-10) went on to win a Grammy Award for Contemporary Classical Composition, while Kevin Puts (1996-99) was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for his opera, *Silent Night*.

2022-23 SEASON

INTERSECTIONS

September 10–11, 2022

California Symphony celebrates its tenth season with Music Director Donato Cabrera at the helm by kicking off with ***Intersections***, a program full of jubilant works, including some of Cabrera’s favorite pieces. Israeli American cellist **Inbal Segev** headlines the evening with **Anna Clyne**’s vivid ***DANCE***. Drawing inspiration from a poem by the 13th-century Persian writer Rumi, *DANCE* was written for Segev, and performed for the first time in 2019. *NPR Music* hailed it one of Clyne’s “most ambitious and appealing works,” while *The Classic Review* called it “soulfully rich, gently melancholic, deeply reflective.” California Symphony’s relationship with Segev dates back to 2017, when Segev gave the World Premiere of Dan Visconti’s folk-inspired concerto, *Tangle Eye*, commissioned by the orchestra and written with Segev in mind. A prodigy who first played for the Israeli president at eight years old,

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Segev came to international attention 10 years later when she made concerto debuts with both the Berlin Philharmoniker and Israel Philharmonic, under the baton of Zubin Mehta. Since then, she has made solo appearances at leading international venues with preeminent orchestras and conductors worldwide.

Zoltán Kodály's masterful *Dances of Galánta* is highlighted, showcasing the composer's exquisite musical coloring, alternating moods, and mixed tempos. Patterned after *verbunkos*, the typical Hungarian military recruiting dance, this work was deeply personal to Kodály, who was commemorating the town of Galánta, where he had grown up. One of Cabrera's favorite works by **Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** will be featured, giving audiences a rare opportunity to hear Tchaikovsky's imaginative *Symphony No. 2 (in C minor, Op. 17, TH .25)*. Bursting with an abundance of Ukrainian folk song motifs, this charming piece is one of Tchaikovsky's most joyful works. During Tchaikovsky's lifetime, the symphony was originally nicknamed "Little Russian." California Symphony stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and has made the decision to use the subtitle "Ukrainian" instead. Also featured is Ukrainian composer **Myroslav Skoryk's** timeless *Melody for Symphony Orchestra*, which has become a rallying cry for his homeland. Although contemporary in its vocabulary and means of expression, his music often draws from the rich well of Ukrainian folklore.

ALL THINGS STRINGS

November 5–6, 2022

California Symphony continues the season with a line-up of distinguished works for *All Things Strings*, including **Grażyna Bacewicz's** powerful *Concerto for String Orchestra*, exhibiting a number of the composer's characteristic techniques – from relentless rhythm to neoclassicism and more. Often referred to as Bacewicz's opus magnum, *Concerto for String Orchestra* was written with great panache, full of smooth invention and brilliant instrumentation ideas. Stefan Kisielewski, a friend of the composer, called it "a 'red-blooded piece' of wholesome and delicious music written by a creative power that is truly virile." Bacewicz not only earned a spot as a distinguished Polish composer of the 20th century; she has been described as one of the foremost women composers of all time. Radiant joy blends with wistful nostalgia in **Antonín Dvořák's** exulting *Serenade for Strings (in E major)* – another work featured in the concert. Composed in just 12 days, *Serenade for Strings* is bursting with shimmering melodies and the infectious rhythms of Czech folk music. Also on the program is **Edward Elgar's** exhilarating *Introduction and Allegro, Op. 47*. Scored for strings, this work was composed to show off the virtuosity of the performers. One of the preeminent musical figures of his time, Elgar bridged the 19th and 20th centuries as the finest English composer since George Frideric Handel and Henry Purcell.

Also featured on the program is pianist **Elizabeth Dorman's** performance of **Gerald Finzi's** *Eclogue for Piano and Strings*. Praised by the *San Francisco Chronicle* for her "elegance and verve," Dorman has been presented as a soloist and chamber musician at venues including The Kennedy Center, Louise M. Davies Symphony Hall, Herbst Theater, Merkin Concert Hall, Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, and Leipzig's Hochschule für Musik and Theater. Her live solo performances have been nationally broadcast on NPR and public radio. A native of San Francisco, Dorman began her training in piano and double bass at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, under Paul Hersh and Stephen Tramontozzi. Seldom programmed

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today, the joyful *Eclogue for Piano and Strings* is a quintessential British work full of nostalgia and serenity.

CHOPIN IN PARIS

February 4–5, 2023

California Symphony launches 2023 with **Chopin in Paris**. Austrian-Romanian pianist **Maria Radutu** headlines the evening with **Frédéric Chopin's beautiful *Piano Concerto No. 1 (in E minor, Op. 11)***, allowing the rich sounds of the piano to be cushioned by some gloriously rich string accompaniment. Radutu's solo career has taken her throughout Europe, Asia, and the US at venues including Carnegie Hall, Vienna State Opera, Auditorio Nacional (Madrid), and the National Theater and Concert Hall (Taipei). She has also performed as a soloist with numerous orchestras – from the Vienna Radio Symphony to the Zagreb Philharmonic, Las Vegas Philharmonic, Orquesta Clásica Santa Cecilia, and the Vienna Chamber Orchestra. Chopin, who composed this work when he was only 20, suggested that conceiving this work was not an easy task. In letters to his friends, he wrote, "I feel like a novice, just like I felt before I knew anything of the keyboard. It's far too original, and I probably won't be able to learn it."

The evening begins with **Chevalier de Saint Georges's *L'amant anonyme (The Anonymous Lover)***. The prolific composer was born in the French-ruled Caribbean island of Guadalupe to his plantation owner father, George Bologne de Saint-Georges, and his enslaved African mother, Nanon. Despite being constrained by racial attitudes and traditions of Royal France, Chevalier de Saint Georges went on to become the first major composer of African ancestry in Western history. He was a favorite of Marie Antoinette, with whom he'd play duets for violin and piano. His late 18th-century Parisian style provides a particular lightness and elegance, departing from most brass transcriptions from similar eras. Also on the program is **César Franck's *Symphony (in D minor)*** – the Belgian born French composer's only symphony. Full of irresistible sincerity and sheer humanism, *Symphony's* brilliant orchestration melds German richness and full tonal volume with characteristic French coloring and a distinctive grouping of instrumental voices. Hungarian-American musicologist and music critic Paul Henry Lang notes, "Franck's activity not only gave French music new vitality, but largely determined its future course."

MAHLER'S INNER CIRCLE

March 25–26, 2023

California Symphony celebrates the works of brilliant Austrian composers in **Mahler's Inner Circle**, headlined by contralto **Sara Couden**, who will be performing **Alma Mahler's *Fünf Lieder (orchestrated by Jorma Panula)***. Praised by *Opera News* for her "unusually rich and resonant voice," Walnut Creek-based Couden is a premiere interpreter of operatic, chamber, and song repertoire. She has appeared at major opera companies including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Winter Opera St. Louis, Heartbeat Opera, Opera Lafayette, as well as Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Seattle Symphony, Portland Baroque Orchestra, and the Santa Cruz Symphony, among others. The 22-year-old Alma Mahler stopped composing at the request of her husband Gustav Mahler after they married in 1902. This ultimately created insurmountable problems for Alma Mahler later on. "I sit down at the piano, dying to play, but musical notation no longer means

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anything to me,” she wrote. “My eyes have forgotten how to read it. I have been firmly taken by the arm and led away from myself. And I long to return to where I was.”

Alexander Zemlinsky’s charming *Lustspiel-Ouvertüre*, which has been described as a forgotten work, will also be featured. The composer, who was a former tutor and suitor of Alma Mahler, used the abrupt ending of this passionate love affair as motivation, transforming his talent into mastery. Zemlinsky’s music was central to the musical life of Vienna and Central Europe, but didn’t receive its due until long after his death. **Hans Rott’s *Symphony No. 1 (in E major)*** will be the final work showcased this evening. Known as “the greatest symphonist who never was,” Rott was a pupil of the great Anton Brucker, and fellow student of Gustav Mahler. At the age of 20, the brilliantly gifted composer wrote his highly ambitious *Symphony No. 1* that would later serve as an important source of inspiration for Mahler himself. Tragically, Rott died in an asylum at age 25. “It is completely impossible to estimate what music has lost in him,” said Gustav Mahler about his former classmate. “His genius soars to such heights even in this first symphony, written at the age of twenty. It makes him – without exaggeration – the founder of the new symphony as I understand it.”

FRESH INSPIRATIONS

May 20–21, 2023

California Symphony concludes its historic season with ***Fresh Inspirations***, kicking off the concert with **Hector Berlioz’s** dashing *Le carnaval romain (Roman Carnival)*. Full of rich drama, this exhilarating work is one of Berlioz’s most popular pieces. Orchestrated in the French composer’s brightest colors, *Le carnaval romain (Roman Carnival)* vividly distinguishes the distinct instrumental voices – from the soulful English horn solo to the powerful trombones and more. Richard Strauss applauded this work, noting Berlioz’s orchestration was “full of ingenious visions, whose realizations by Richard Wagner is obvious to every connoisseur.” Young American Composer-in-Residence **Viet Cuong (2020-2023)** headlines the evening with the World Premiere of his third and final commission for California Symphony. *The New York Times* has called his work “Alluring. Wildly inventive” while *San Francisco Chronicle* described it as “irresistible.” Cuong was also featured in *The Washington Post’s* “21 for ’21: Composers and performers who sound like tomorrow.” The evening rounds out with **William Walton’s** awe-inspiring *Symphony No. 1*. Composed during the tumultuous 1930s, this work remains timeless in its appeal, reminding listeners of the hope that great music can provide. Known as one of England’s most eminent and best composers, Walton’s music ranged greatly – from gritty, complex symphonies to hugely popular film scores.

California Symphony’s 2022-23 season is sponsored by the Leshner Foundation.

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

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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.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **California Symphony** unveils its 2022-23 season, marking the forward-thinking orchestra's tenth year with Music Director **Donato Cabrera** at the helm. Following its triumphant return to in-person performances in the 2021-22 season, California Symphony has lined up a season of innovative programming, featuring exciting guest artists and music by living composers, women, and people of color – including some of Cabrera's favorite works. None of the music has been performed previously by the orchestra in its 36-year history. The opening program will also pay tribute to the people of Ukraine. California Symphony's 2022-23 season will feature ten concerts at the Leshar Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek, offering audiences a joyful season that celebrates the orchestra's successful past decade, while looking ahead to its bright future.

WHEN: **September 10, 2022 – May 21, 2023**

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

CONCERTS:

INTERSECTIONS (22-23

Season Opener)

7:30pm, Saturday, Sept. 10

4:00pm, Sunday, Sept. 11

Donato Cabrera, conductor

California Symphony

Inbal Segev, cellist

PROGRAM:

Zoltán Kodály—*Dances of Galánta*

Anna Clynes—*DANCE*

Inbal Segev, cellist

Myroslav Skoryk—*Melody for Symphony Orchestra*

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky—*Symphony No. 2 (in C minor, Op. 17, TH .25)*

7:30pm, Saturday, Nov. 5

4:00pm, Sunday, Nov. 6

Donato Cabrera, conductor

California Symphony

ALL THINGS STRINGS

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Elizabeth Dorman, piano

PROGRAM:
Edward Elgar—*Introduction
and Allegro, Op. 47*

CHOPIN IN PARIS

7:30pm, Saturday, Feb. 4

4:00pm, Sunday, Feb. 5

Donato Cabrera, conductor
California Symphony
Maria Radutu, piano

MAHLER'S INNER

CIRCLE

7:30pm, Saturday, March 25

4:00pm, Sunday, March 26

Donato Cabrera, conductor
California Symphony
Sara Couden, contralto

FRESH INSPIRATIONS

7:30pm, Saturday, May 20

4:00pm, Sunday, May 21

Donato Cabrera, conductor
California Symphony
Viet Cuong, composer

Grażyna Bacewicz—*Concerto
for String Orchestra*
Gerald Finzi—*Eclogue for Piano
and Strings*

Elizabeth Dorman, piano
Antonín Dvořák—*Serenade for
Strings (in E major)*

PROGRAM:

Chevalier de Saint Georges—
*L'amant anonyme (The
Anonymous Lover)*
Frédéric Chopin—*Piano
Concerto No. 1 (in E minor, Op.
11)*

Maria Rudutu, piano
César Franck—*Symphony (in D
minor)*

PROGRAM:

Alexander Zemlinsky—
Lustspiel-Ouvertüre
Alma Mahler—*Fünf Lieder*
(orchd. Jorma Panula)

Sara Couden, contralto
Hans Rott—*Symphony No. 1 (in
E major)*

PROGRAM:

Hector Berlioz—*Le carnaval
romain (Roman Carnival)*
Viet Cuong—*World Premiere*
(title TBA)

William Walton—*Symphony
No.1*

TICKETS: Subscriptions for three, four, or five concerts start at \$99 and are available now.

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Single tickets \$49-79 and \$20 (for students 25 and under with valid Student ID) go on sale in July 2022.

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

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MEDIA: Contact Sydney Albin, Carla Befera & Co.
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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/californiasymphony>