CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY

PUBLIC RELATIONS & MARKETING

CALIFORNIA SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES FINAL COMMISSION BY YOUNG AMERICAN COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE VIET CUONG

PIANO CONCERTO WILL FEATURE ACCLAIMED PIANIST SARAH CAHILL
IN 2022-23 SEASON FINALE CONCERT
May 20–21, 2023 at the Lesher Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek

WALNUT CREEK, CA (3 February 2023) – **California Symphony** announces the World Premiere of ***Stargazer***, the third and final commission for California Symphony by **Young American Composer-in-Residence Viet Cuong** (2020-2023), to be performed May 20–21, 2023 in ***Fresh Inspirations***, the orchestra's momentous season finale concert. It was further announced this new piano concerto will feature nationally acclaimed pianist **Sarah Cahill** as the guest soloist. Conducted by California Symphony's Music Director **Donato Cabrera**, ***Fresh Inspirations,*** which will also include Hector Berlioz' *Le carnaval romain (Roman Carnival)* and William Walton's *Symphony No. 1,* will be presented 7:30pm, Saturday, May 20 and 4:00pm, Sunday, May 21, 2023 at the **Hofmann Theatre at Lesher 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.

Says Bay Area-based Cahill, "I've admired Viet Cuong's music for many years, as well as Donato's work with the California Symphony, so it's especially exciting to start the new year by immersing myself in Viet's new piano concerto." Hailed as "a leading light of the new-music piano scene" by *The New York Times* and "a brilliant and charismatic advocate for modern and contemporary composers" by *Time Out New York*, Cahill has premiered over 70 compositions for piano – with an emphasis on interpretation of works across the 20th and 21st centuries. "I'm incredibly excited to create this new piece with Sarah Cahill and the California Symphony," says Cuong. "Some of my all-time favorite composers have written pieces expressly for Sarah, and I'm so honored to be working with her on a piano concerto – a piece I have wanted to write for years." Cahill's dedication to working closely with composers, musicologists, and scholars to prepare scores for performance led her to being named a 2018 Champion of New Music, awarded by the American Composers Forum (AFC) – making Cahill a perfect fit for Cuong as he gears up for a heartfelt adieu.

With this concert, Music Director **Donato Cabrera** concludes his 10th season, celebrating works never before performed by California Symphony and featuring all female soloists. Notes Cabrera, "Our work with Viet has been extraordinary. The works he has debuted with California Symphony have been transcendent, and we know that we are launching an important new voice in American music. I've also wanted to bring Sarah to work with California Symphony for years. She's a well-known advocate for music by living composers, as is our orchestra, and we can't wait to see the new work she and Viet will debut for audiences."

ABOUT VIET CUONG

Acclaimed as "wildly inventive" (*The New York Times*) and "irresistible" (*San Francisco Chronicle*), composer **Viet Cuong**'s music explores the unexpected and whimsical, making surprising combinations and sounds that feel both enchanting and exceptionally satisfying. He was recently featured in *The Washington Post*'s "21 for '21: Composers and performers who sound like tomorrow." Works by the American composer have been commissioned and performed on six continents by musicians and ensembles including the New York Philharmonic, Eighth Blackbird, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Sō Percussion, Alarm Will Sound, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Sandbox Percussion, Albany Symphony, PRISM Quartet, Orchestra of St. Luke's, and Dallas Winds, among others. His music has been featured in venues across the nation – from Carnegie Hall to the Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, National Gallery of Art, and Library of Congress. Cuong's works for wind ensembles have amassed hundreds of performances worldwide, including at Midwest Clinic, World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE), and College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) conferences. Cuong is an Assistant Professor of Music Composition and Theory at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and holds degrees in Music Composition from Princeton University (MFA/PhD). During his studies, Cuong held the Daniel W. Dietrich II Composition Fellowship at Curtis, Naumburg and Roger Sessions Fellowships at Princeton, as well as the Evergreen House Foundation scholarship at Peabody Institute, where he was also awarded the Peabody Alumni Award (the Valedictorian honor) and Gustav Klemm Award. Cuong's music has been awarded the Barlow Endowment Commission, ASCAP Morton Gould Composer Award, Theodore Presser Foundation Award, Suzanne and Lee Ettelson Composers Award, Cortona Prize, New York Youth Symphony First Music Commission, Boston GuitarFest Composition Prize, and the Walter Beeler Memorial Prize.

ABOUT SARAH CAHILL

The *San Francisco Chronicle* describes pianist **Sarah Cahill** "As tenacious and committed an advocate as any composer could dream of," while *San Francisco Classical Voice* says, "I would never miss a recital by Cahill… No wonder she's on top of current music: she's played all of it." Cahill has researched and recorded music by prominent early 20th-century American modernists, including Henry Cowell, Ruth Crawford, Leo Ornstein, Marc Blitzstein, Terry Riley, Frederic Rzewski, and Lou Harrison. Writes *Keyboard Magazine*, "Through her inspired interpretation of works across the 20th and 21st centuries, Cahill has been instrumental in bringing to life the music of many of our greatest

living composers." She has performed classical and contemporary chamber music with artists and ensembles such as Jessica Lang Dance; pianists Joseph Kubera, Adam Tendler, and Regina Myers; violinist Stuart Canin; the Alexander String Quartet; New Century Chamber Orchestra; Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, and many more. She also performs as a duo with violinist Kate Stenberg. Her discography includes more than 20 albums on the New Albion, CRI, New World, Tzadik, Albany, Innova, Cold Blue, Other Minds, Irritable Hedgehog, and Pinna labels. Cahill's radio show, *Revolutions Per Minute*, can be heard every Sunday evening from 6:00 to 8:00pm on KALW, 91.7 FM in San Francisco. Cahill's current projects include The Future is Female, an investigation and reframing of the piano literature featuring more than 70 compositions by women around the globe – from the Baroque to the present day, including new commissioned works. Cahill is on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory, and is a regular pre-concert speaker with the San Francisco Symphony and the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

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 Lesher 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 Lesher Foundation.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

WHAT: **California Symphony** announces the World Premiere of ***Stargazer***, the third and final commission for California Symphony by **Young American Composer-in-Residence Viet Cuong** (2020-2023), to be performed May 20–21, 2023 in ***Fresh Inspirations***, the orchestra's momentous season finale concert. It was further announced this new piano concerto will feature nationally acclaimed pianist **Sarah Cahill** as the guest soloist. Conducted by California Symphony's Music Director **Donato Cabrera**, ***Fresh Inspirations*** will also include Hector Berlioz' *Le carnaval romain (Roman Carnival)* and William Walton's *Symphony No. 1.*

WHEN: **7:30pm, Saturday, May 20, 2023**
4:00pm, Sunday, May 21, 2023

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

CONCERT: **FRESH INSPIRATIONS**
Donato Cabrera, conductor
California Symphony
Viet Cuong, Composer-in-Residence
Guest Soloist: Sarah Cahill, piano

PROGRAM:
Hector Berlioz—*Le carnaval romain (Roman Carnival)*
Viet Cuong—*Stargazer*
Sarah Cahill, pianist
William Walton—*Symphony No. 1.*

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/freshinspirations