

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact

Brenda Fox | Director of Marketing and Patron Services
(707) 546-7097 x 218 | bfox@srsymphony.org
srysmphony.org

February 28, 2025

Santa Rosa Symphony Announces 2025-2026 Season "Invite | Ignite | Inspire"

Season Subscriptions go on Sale Monday, March 3, 2025 PLUS, Year 3, Road to 100, The Complete Beethoven Symphonies

(Santa Rosa, Calif.) —The Santa Rosa Symphony (SRS), in its 14th season as Resident Orchestra of the Green Music Center, announces its 98th season, "Invite | Ignite | Inspire." Music Director Francesco Lecce-Chong, in his eighth year with the Symphony, curates a dynamic blend of timeless classics and bold, new compositions. Including two premieres, over 15 guest artists, works by several living composers, and four educational masterclasses. The 2025-2026 Classical Series runs from October 11, 2025, to May 4, 2026, and is underwritten by the Anderman Family Foundation. The SRS five-year special concert series, Road to 100, *The Complete Beethoven Symphonies*, continues with year three on May 31, 2026. Season subscriptions go on sale Monday, March 3, 2025.

The 2025-2026 season opens in October with "Beethoven & Bernstein" and Beethoven's monumental Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Piano. The Triple Concerto is characterized by rich orchestral textures and the masterful artistry of its soloists, internationally acclaimed duo David Finckel (cello) and Wu Han (piano) alongside 2024 Avery Fisher Career Grant winner Julian Rhee (violin). November's concert, "Spanish Fiesta," features dazzling guitar virtuoso Raphaël Feuillâtre performing Joaquín Rodrigo's beloved, well-known *Concierto de Aranjuez* for Guitar. It also includes Manuel de Falla's energetically humorous *The Three-Cornered Hat*.

After her stunning success with SRS in the 2023-2024 season, violinist Geneva Lewis returns in December for "Geneva Plays Brahms," performing a cornerstone of violin repertoire, Johannes Brahms' Violin Concerto in D major. Rounding out this concert is Richard Strauss' Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*, which captures the charm and grandeur of 18th-century Vienna. In January, "Mendelssohn's *Italian* Symphony" the spirited Cello Concerto in D major by Franz Joseph Haydn will be conducted and performed by renowned cellist Paul Watkins. Watkins will also conduct Felix Mendelssohn's *Italian* Symphony, which was celebrated by the composer as "the jolliest piece I've ever done."

Conductor Francesco Lecce-Chong, along with the orchestra, explores themes of nature, love, and spiritual transcendence for February's "Mahler's Third." Mezzo-soprano Gabrielle Beteag and the Treble Voices of the SSU Symphonic Chorus, directed by Jenny Bent, return to Weill Hall to perform Gustav Mahler's monumental Symphony No. 3, regarded as one of the greatest symphonies of all time. "Rossini & Schubert" in March presents the world premiere of Shuying Li's *Coping Cadences*, which ignites the imagination by merging traditional and contemporary elements. The work features six of the Symphony's principals: Elizabeth Prior (viola), Adelle-Akiko Kearns (cello) Roy Zajac (clarinet), Robert Giambruno (trumpet), Bruce Chrisp (trombone), and Allen Biggs (marimba). Plus, Franz Schubert's emotionally charged *Unfinished* Symphony is beautifully contrasted with Gioachino Rossini's theatrical *William Tell* Overture.

The season finale, "Shakespeare in Music," steps into the world of Shakespeare's dramatic, enduring tales. Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's passionate *Romeo and Juliet* is a timeless and familiar classic, while Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's evocative *Othello* offers a compelling counterpoint for interpreting Shakespeare in music. Plus, pianist Claire Huangci makes her SRS Weill Hall debut with Mozart's expressive Piano Concerto No. 20.

"Our 2025-26 season promises to bring so many powerful and memorable musical experiences to our community. It is a season that features the best and the brightest as we continue our multi-year cycles of the Beethoven and Mahler symphonies alongside favorites from Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Schubert, and Bernstein. I am particularly excited for three decorated and renowned chamber musicians to make debuts with our orchestra in unique ways: David Finckel and Wu Han (of Chamber Music at Lincoln Center) join us for Beethoven's Triple Concerto; Paul Watson (of the legendary Emerson Quartet) takes on a program as cello soloist and conductor. We also continue our dedication to the

composers of today with a new concerto by Shuying Li that will feature six of our own incredible musicians from the orchestra."

- Francesco Lecce-Chong, Music Director and Conductor

"Our 2025-2026 season marks the Santa Rosa Symphony's 98th year of transforming our communities through live music. Maestro Francesco Lecce-Chong's programming is replete with beloved masterworks and contemporary gems. The concerts performed by our lineup of luminary guest artists and the remarkable musicians of the Santa Rosa Symphony are sure to ignite the senses and inspire music lovers of all ages. We invite you to join us at Weill Hall at the Green Music Center for a spectacular season of classical music."

- J. Andrew Bradford, President and CEO

2025-2026 CLASSICAL SERIES PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

Full List of Works in the 2025-2026 Classical Series

In order performed:

Umberto Giordano Intermezzo from Fedora

Ludwig van Beethoven Triple Concerto in C major for Violin, Cello, Piano and Orchestra, Opus 56

Julia Perry A Short Piece for Orchestra

Leonard Bernstein Symphonic Dances from West Side Story

Clarice Assad Baião 'N' Blues

Joaquín Rodrigo Concierto de Aranjuez for Guitar and Orchestra
Manuel de Falla El sombrero de tres picos [The Three-Cornered Hat]

Ruggero Leoncavallo Intermezzo from Pagliacci

Johannes Brahms Concerto in D major for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 77

Jimmy López Aino (West Coast Premiere)

Richard Strauss Suite from Der Rosenkavalier, Opus 59

Caroline Shaw Entr'acte for String Orchestra

Franz Joseph Haydn Concerto No. 2 in D major for Cello and Orchestra, Hob. VII:2

Felix Mendelssohn Symphony No. 4 in A major, Opus 90, Italian

Gustav Mahler Symphony No. 3 in D minor

Gioachino Rossini Overture to II barberiere di Siviglia [The Barber of Seville]

Shuying Li Coping Cadences (World Premiere)

Franz Schubert Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D.759, *Unfinished* Gioachino Rossini Overture to *Guillaume Tell* [William Tell]

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Incidental Music from Othello

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Concerto No. 20 in D minor for Piano and Orchestra, K. 466

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Hamlet (Fantasy Overture) in F minor, Opus 67

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Romeo and Juliet (Fantasy Overture) in B minor

Acclaimed guest artists

- Julian Rhee, violin
- David Finckel, cello
- Wu Han, piano
- Raphaël Feuillâtre, guitar
- Leah Finn, mezzo
- Geneva Lewis, violin
- Paul Watkins, guest conductor & cello
- Gabrielle Beteag, mezzo-soprano
- Elizabeth Prior, viola
- Adelle-Akiko Kearns, cello
- Roy Zajac, clarinet
- Robert Giambruno, trumpet
- Bruce Chrisp, trombone
- Allen Biggs, marimba
- Claire Huangci, piano

2025-2026 CLASSICAL SERIES CONCERTS

The Symphony's 98th performance season (October 2025 – May 2026)

The season opens on Saturday, October 11, 2025, with the finale of the seven-concert Classical Series on May 4, 2026. Saturday and Monday 7:30 pm, Sunday 3:00 pm, Discovery Rehearsal – Saturday 2:00 pm. Please note that there will not be a Discovery Rehearsal for the February 2026 concert. All performances are at the Green Music Center's Weill Hall on the Sonoma State University campus in Rohnert Park, California.

Beethoven & Bernstein

October 11, 12 & 13, 2025 Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor Julian Rhee, violin David Finckel, cello Wu Han, piano

UMBERTO GIORDANO: Intermezzo from Fedora

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Triple Concerto in C major for Violin, Cello, Piano and Orchestra, Opus 56

JULIA PERRY: A Short Piece for Orchestra

LEONARD BERNSTEIN: Symphonic Dances from West Side Story

Spanish Fiesta

November 8, 9 & 10, 2025 Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor Raphaël Feuillâtre, guitar Leah Finn, mezzo

CLARICE ASSAD: Baião 'N' Blues

JOAQUÍN RODRIGO: Concierto de Aranjuez for Guitar and Orchestra

MANUEL DE FALLA: El sombrero de tres picos [The Three-Cornered Hat]

Geneva Plays Brahms

December 6, 7 & 8, 2025 **Francesco Lecce-Chong**, conductor **Geneva Lewis**, violin

RUGGERO LEONCAVALLO: Intermezzo from Pagliacci

JOHANNES BRAHMS: Concerto in D major for Violin and Orchestra, Opus 77

JIMMY LÓPEZ: Aino (West Coast Premiere)

RICHARD STRAUSS: Suite from Der Rosenkavalier, Opus 59

Mendelssohn's Italian Symphony

January 10, 11 & 12, 2026

Paul Watkins, guest conductor & cello

CAROLINE SHAW: Entr'acte for String Orchestra

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN: Concerto No. 2 in D major for Cello and Orchestra, Hob. VII:2

FELIX MENDELSSOHN: Symphony No. 4 in A major, Opus 90, Italian

Mahler's Third

February 21, 22 & 23, 2026

Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor

Gabrielle Beteag, mezzo-soprano

Treble Voices of the SSU Symphonic Chorus, Jenny Bent, director

GUSTAV MAHLER: Symphony No. 3 in D minor

Rossini & Schubert

March 21, 22 & 23, 2026 Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor Elizabeth Prior, viola Adelle-Akiko Kearns, cello Roy Zajac, clarinet Robert Giambruno, trumpet Bruce Chrisp, trombone Allen Biggs, marimba

GIOACHINO ROSSINI: Overture to II barberiere di Siviglia [The Barber of Seville]

SHUYING LI: Coping Cadences (World Premiere)

FRANZ SCHUBERT: Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D.759, *Unfinished* **GIOACHINO ROSSINI**: Overture to Guillaume Tell [William Tell]

Shakespeare in Music May 2, 3 & 4, 2026 Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor Claire Huangci, piano

SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR: Incidental Music from Othello

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART: Concerto No. 20 in D minor for Piano and Orchestra, K. 466

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY: *Hamlet* (Fantasy Overture) in F minor, Opus 67 **PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY**: *Romeo and Juliet* (Fantasy Overture) in B minor

2025-2026 SEASON SPECIAL EVENTS

Road to 100 | The Complete Beethoven Symphonies, Year 3

Sunday, May 31, 2026, at 3 pm

Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor | Weill Hall, Green Music Center

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 4 in B-flat major, Opus 60 **LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN:** Symphony No. 6 in F major, *Pastorale*, Opus 68

In year three of the Road to 100: *The Complete Beethoven Symphonies*, SRS performs two of Beethoven's great works. Like a breath of fresh air, Symphony No. 4 is a luminous and graceful work, radiating noble simplicity. Symphony No. 6, *Pastorale*, journeys through idyllic landscapes, captures humanity's profound connection to nature and culminates in an uplifting hymn of gratitude.

Performed with the orchestra in unique configurations reflecting how the symphonies, in Beethoven's time, may have been played. Be a part of the journey to our centennial celebration in the 2027-2028 season!

Tickets go on sale on August 4, 2025.

Celebration 2025! An Evening of Music Elegance "New York Nights"

Honoring Esteemed Patron Sig Anderman, October 10, 2025, at 6:00 pm at the Green Music Center

The Symphony's annual fundraising event, Celebration 2025! will be held on Friday, October 10, 2025, at 6:00 pm at Green Music Center. Celebration 2025! centers around meaningful philanthropy, celebrating the arts and empowering young musicians through our transformative education programs. The evening includes an elegant reception and a private recital by award-winning duo, cellist David Finckel and pianist Wu Han. A gourmet dinner in the Person Lobby features a paddle raise for the Symphony's music education programs. Tickets are \$350/person and can be purchased by calling Patron Services at (707) 546-8742.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE 2025-2026 CLASSICAL SERIES

On sale March 3, 2025 (The subscription renewal deadline to retain the same seats is April 4, 2025)

7-Concert Classical Series

The seven-concert package secures the same seat for all the Symphony's Classical Series concerts. Packages are **\$189-\$686**. (Some seating areas require a minimum, per-seat donation.) *Packages available for purchase starting March* 3, 2025.

4-Concert Mini-Series

Select four of the seven Classical Series concerts to create a customized Mini-Series. 4-Concert packages are **\$120-\$420**. 5-Concert packages are also available. (Some seating areas require a minimum, per-seat donation.) *Packages available for purchase starting March 3, 2025.*

Come As You Can Series

Eight ticket vouchers, which may be redeemed in any combination of performance days and seats. Offers the greatest flexibility. Seating is the best available at the time of redemption. The package is \$456 and is available for purchase starting May 27, 2025.

Discovery Rehearsal Series

These general-seating, working rehearsals are ideal as a shared family experience, a sneak preview of the performances, or as an economical alternative for price-conscious patrons. Saturday at 2 pm of the concert weekend. Some restrictions apply. The package is \$119 (adults) and \$70 (youth 12 and under) and is available for purchase starting May 27, 2025.

Please note that there will not be a Discovery Rehearsal for the February 2026 concert weekend. Included in the package price is one ticket for one of the February performances on Saturday or Monday at no extra cost.

Single tickets on sale August 4, 2025

TICKET OFFERS

Complementary Youth Tickets To encourage their exposure to classical music and transform Symphony attendance into a family outing, youths 7-17 years of age may attend the Symphony for free with a paid adult. These one-for-one tickets are not available for purchase online and only apply to Classical Series concerts. To request tickets, please call Patron Services at (707) 546-8742. Complementary youth tickets are also available with the purchase of subscription packages.

Student Rush tickets are available 1-1/2 hours before the performance, \$10/ticket with a valid student ID.

CLASSICAL SERIES EXPERIENCE ENHANCEMENTS

CONCERT CONVERSATIONS (one hour prior to Classical Series performances)

Music Director Francesco Lecce-Chong discusses the music and composers, often with the guest artists, one hour prior to the Classical Series Concert performances in Weill Hall. These informative, 30-minute pre-concert talks, which are included in the price of the ticket, are general seating. Concert Conversations are held before Saturday and Monday night performances at 6:30 PM and prior to Sunday afternoon performances at 2:00 pm.

PROGRAM NOTES

Program Notes, posted on each of the seven Classical Series concert event pages, offer insight and fascinating details about the concert program. See srsymphony.org. Also included in the concert program book.

SPOTIFY PLAYLISTS

Classical Series concert event pages include a Spotify playlist of the works on that concert program. Full-season Spotify playlists can also be found on the Symphony's website under Plan Your Visit.

HOSPITALITY PARTNERS

The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Sonoma Wine Country in Rohnert Park provides lodging for Santa Rosa Symphony guest artists and conductors. The hotel's Bacchus Restaurant and Wine Bar are open for pre- and post-concert dining.

Rodney Strong Wine Estates provides its award-winning wines as the Symphony's exclusive wine partner for the 2025-2026 season Private Reserve Club receptions held in the Symphony League Founders Room during intermission and following each Classical Series performance. In addition, Rodney Strong provides wine for additional events such as *Celebration 2025*, the Symphony's annual fundraising event, and the *Road to 100* special concert.

Korbel provides its award-winning champagne as the Symphony's exclusive champagne partner for the 2025-2026 season Private Reserve Club receptions held in the Symphony League Founders Room during intermission and following each Classical Series performance. In addition, Korbel provides champagne for additional events such as *Celebration 2025*, the Symphony's annual fundraising event, and the *Road to 100* special concert.

LOGISTICS - THE GREEN MUSIC CENTER

All Classical Series performances are at Weill Hall at the Donald and Maureen Green Music Center on the campus of Sonoma State University in Rohnert Park, with access from the Rohnert Park Expressway entrance near Petaluma Hill Road. The campus is just 42 miles north of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.

PARKING

Entering the Sonoma State University campus from Rohnert Park Expressway, there are parking lots immediately to the right. Parking in lots L, M, N and O is included in the price of a ticket for Santa Rosa Symphony Classical, Discovery Rehearsal and Family Series concerts. (Parking fees may be charged for additional or special events.)

PATRON SERVICES OFFICE LOCATION AND HOURS

Location: 50 Santa Rosa Avenue (1st floor, off elevator lobby)

Hours: Mon, Tues, Thurs, and Fri, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm; Wed, 10:30 am - 5:00 pm; closed Sat, and Sun. Mailing Address: Santa Rosa Symphony, 50 Santa Rosa Avenue, Suite 410, Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Phone: (707) 546-8742, Web: srsymphony.org, email: tickets@srsymphony.org.

CONDUCTOR AND GUEST ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Francesco Lecce-Chong, Music Director and Conductor

Francesco Lecce-Chong has established himself as a respected leader in the orchestral world through acclaimed performances, innovative projects, and passionate arts advocacy.

Appointed Music Director of Santa Rosa Symphony (SRS) and Eugene Symphony before age 30, he launched groundbreaking projects, commissioned over a dozen major works, and forged innovative community partnerships. Now in his seventh season, he has grown the SRS's reputation as one of the most prominent US regional orchestras, with performances at the world-class Green Music Center. This season, he also serves as Artistic Partner with the Eugene Symphony, further advancing his artistic vision.

Lecce-Chong regularly appears with major US orchestras, from the San Francisco Symphony to the New York Philharmonic, collaborating with top soloists such as Renée Fleming and Itzhak Perlman. Additional debuts include Seattle Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Utah Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony, and Detroit Symphony. In 2023, Lecce-Chong debuted in Europe at the prestigious George Enescu Festival with the Romanian National Radio Orchestra, which led to a regular relationship with the orchestra.

Throughout his career, Lecce-Chong has fostered an unparalleled dedication to the orchestral art form's future. One of his first large-scale endeavors was the "First Symphony Project," which consisted of major commissions from next-generation composers across four seasons, including multiple residencies. He has integrated a dozen new orchestral works into the repertoire from composers like Grammy winner Michael Daugherty, Conrad Tao, Clarice Assad, and Gabriella Smith. To keep SRS connected to its community during the pandemic, he spearheaded SRS @ Home, which brought live internet performances to thousands of households. Several performances were broadcast on local PBS TV, reaching two million viewers. This series included works by living composers and a partnership with Pulitzer Prize winner Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, culminating in a CD release in 2022.

Trained as a pianist and composer, Lecce-Chong studied at the Curtis Institute of Music, Mannes College of Music, and Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Italy before winning positions as Associate Conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony and Milwaukee Symphony. Lecce-Chong has received several distinctions, including the Solti Foundation Award. He has been mentored by renowned conductors, including Bernard Haitink, David Zinman, Edo de Waart, Manfred Honeck, Donald Runnicles, and Michael Tilson Thomas.

Julian Rhee, violin

Winner of the prestigious 2024 Avery Fisher Career Grant, Korean American violinist Julian Rhee came to international prominence following his prize-winning performances at the 2024 Queen Elisabeth International Violin Competition and the Silver Medal at the 11th Quadrennial International Violin Competition of Indianapolis. Rhee has appeared with Milwaukee Symphony, Belgian National Orchestra, Antwerp Symphony, Württemberg Chamber Orchestra of Heilbronn, Indianapolis Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Richmond Symphony, and San Diego Symphony alongside Francesco Lecce-Chong, Valentina Peleggi, Rune Bergmann, Antony Hermus and Leonard Slatkin, among others. Equally passionate about chamber music, Rhee is the newest member of Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's prestigious Bowers Program.

Rhee has performed at and attended festivals including the Ravinia Steans Institute, Marlboro Music, and NorthShore Chamber Music Festival, performing alongside esteemed musicians such as Vadim Gluzman, Jonathan Biss, and

Mitsuko Uchida. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees as teaching assistant of Miriam Fried at the New England Conservatory, and currently studies with Christian Tetzlaff at the Kronberg Academy. Rhee is the recipient of the outstanding 1699 "Lady Tennant" Antonio Stradivari violin and Jean Pierre Marie Persoit bow on extended loan through the generosity of the Mary B. Galvin Foundation and the Stradivari Society.

David Finckel, cello

David Finckel's dynamic musical career has included performances on the world's stages in the roles of recitalist, chamber artist, and orchestral soloist. The first American student of Mstislav Rostropovich, he was the winner of the Philadelphia Orchestra's junior and senior divisions, resulting in two performances with the orchestra. In 19, he joined the Emerson String Quartet, and during thirty-four seasons garnered nine Grammy Awards and the Avery Fisher Prize. His quartet performances and recordings include quartet cycles of Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Dvořák, Brahms, Bartók, and Shostakovich, as well as collaborative masterpieces and commissioned works.

Finckel and Wu Han founded ArtistLed, the first internet-based, artist-controlled classical recording label in 1997. ArtistLed's catalog of more than 20 releases includes the standard literature for cello and piano, plus works composed for the duo by George Tsontakis, Gabriela Lena Frank, Bruce Adolphe, Lera Auerbach, Edwin Finckel, Augusta Read Thomas and Pierre Jalbert. His orchestral recordings include both the Dvořák and Harbison concertos.

Artistic Co-Director of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, he also co-founded Music@Menlo in 2003, an innovative summer chamber music festival in Silicon Valley.

Finckel taught extensively with the late Isaac Stern in America, Israel, and Japan. He is currently a professor at both the Juilliard School and Stony Brook University and oversees both CMS's Bowers Program and Music@Menlo's Chamber Music Institute. Passionately dedicated to education for musicians of all ages and experience, he developed a special Resource section of his website to provide, at no cost, a wealth of guidance for students on both music study and careers, as well as invaluable information for arts organizations and individuals on every aspect of concert presenting. Finckel's 100 online lessons on cello technique, Cello Talks, are viewed by an international audience of musicians (cellotalks.com).

Along with pianist Wu Han, Finckel was the recipient of Musical America's Musicians of the Year Award in 2012.

Wu Han, piano

Pianist Wu Han, recipient of *Musical America*'s Musician of the Year Award, the highest honor bestowed by the organization, enjoys a multi-faceted musical life that encompasses performing, recording, and artistic direction at the highest levels.

Her recent concert activities have taken her from New York's Lincoln Center stages to the most important concert halls in the United States, Europe, and Asia. In addition to countless performances of virtually the entire chamber repertoire, her recent concerto performances include appearances with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Atlanta Symphony, and the Aspen Festival Orchestra.

Han is the founder and Artistic Director of ArtistLed, classical music's first artist-directed, internet-based recording label, which has released her performances of the staples of the cello-piano duo repertoire with cellist David Finckel. Her more than 80 releases on the ArtistLed, CMS Live and Music@Menlo LIVE labels include masterworks of the chamber repertoire with numerous distinguished musicians, the latest being Schubert's Winterreise with baritone Nikolay Borchev.

Currently Artistic Co-Director of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and Music@Menlo, Silicon Valley's innovative chamber music festival, she also serves as Artistic Advisor for Wolf Trap's Chamber Music at the Barns series and for Palm Beach's Society of the Four Arts, and in 2022 was named Artistic Director of La Musica in Sarasota, Florida.

Passionately dedicated to education for musicians of all ages and experience, Han guides CMS's Bowers Program, which admits stellar young musicians to the CMS roster for a term of three seasons. Under her artistic direction, through CMS's performances, education, and recording/broadcast activities, her programming draws more people to chamber music than any other organization of its kind. In recent seasons, she conceived and produced over 270 digital events that sustained chamber music communities across the country. Han also oversees the Chamber Music Institute at Music@Menlo, which immerses some forty young musicians every summer in the multi-faceted fabric of the festival. She was privileged to serve on multiple occasions as a faculty member of the late Isaac Stern's Chamber Music Encounters in Israel, New York, and Japan.

A recipient of the prestigious Andrew Wolf Award, Han was mentored by an elite selection of some of the greatest pianists of our time, including Lilian Kallir, Rudolf Serkin, and Menahem Pressler. Married to cellist David Finckel since 1985, Han divides her time between concert touring and residences in New York City and Westchester County.

Raphaël Feuillâtre, guitar

Hailed as the new face of classical guitar worldwide, Raphaël Feuillâtre fascinates audiences and critics alike with the depth of his interpretations, his dazzling virtuosity, and the richness of his repertoire.

Winner of the prestigious Guitar Foundation of America (GFA) in 2018 (USA) and ADAMI's "Classical Revelation 2021", Feuillâtre was chosen as an exclusive artist by the label Deutsche Grammophon in 2022. He is, to date, one of the very few guitarists to have signed with this legendary label. This fruitful collaboration gave birth to a first single "Les Barricades Mystérieuses", soon followed by his debut album "Visages Baroques" in 2023, which displays different facets of the Baroque aesthetic. Following his acclaimed debut at New York's Carnegie Hall in 2023, he has performed in the world's most prestigious concert halls and festivals - including Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, the "Folle Journée" in Nantes, and the Beethoven Haus in Bonn - as well as at major guitar events such as the Festival International de Guitare de Paris, the Festival Guitarras del Mundo in Argentina, and the Changsha International Guitar Festival in China.

His passion for chamber music and his desire to champion his instrument in this repertoire has led him to collaborate with musicians of the highest caliber: recorder player Lucie Horsch, trumpet player Lucienne Renaudin Vary and violinist Maria Dueñas in venues such as Deutsche Grammophon's Yellow Lounge, the Dresden Music Festival and the Società del Quartotto Di Milano – Scala G. Verdi.

Born in 1996 in Djibouti, Feuillâtre was introduced to the guitar by his first teacher, Hacène Addadi, before joining Michel Grizard's class at the Conservatoire de Nantes in 2012. Three years later, he entered the Conservatoire National de Musique et de Danse de Paris in the classes of Roland Dyens and Tristan Manoukian. During this period, he was mentored by Judicaël Perroy, who played an essential role in his artistic development.

In addition to winning first prize at the GFA, Feuillâtre has forged a strong reputation in the classical guitar world by winning the following competitions: Jose Tomas International Guitar Competition in Villa Petrer (Spain - 2017), Kutna Hora International Guitar Festival (Czech Republic - 2017), Viseu International Spring Music Festival (Portugal - 2016), Fontenay-sous-Bois Guitar Competition & Festival (France - 2015), and Ciudad de Coria International Guitar Festival (Spain - 2014). An ambassador for the guitar and keen to contribute to the development of its repertoire, Feuillâtre has arranged numerous works from the repertoire of instruments he loves - with a particular predilection for keyboard instruments such as the piano and harpsichord – a taste particularly reflected in his choice of programs for his recordings.

Driven by a desire to pass on his passion for music and the guitar, Feuillâtre teaches at the Pôle Supérieur - Bretagne and is co-founder of the Lille Guitar Academy, a summer academy for guitarists. Students from all over the world receive his guidance at masterclasses given at the San Francisco Conservatory, the Manhattan School in New York and the Haute École de Musique in Geneva. He is also involved in projects to raise awareness of the arts, particularly following a tour in the USA during which he took part in several activities in schools and prisons. Feuillâtre is supported by Savarez, a historic string-manufacturing company founded in 1770, and plays a guitar by Australian luthier Greg Smallman.

Leah Finn, mezzo

Leah Finn is an operatic mezzo-soprano and musical theatre artist from Virginia Beach, Virginia. Most recently, Finn appeared as a Resident Young Artist with the Ohio Light Opera Company, performing 45 performances of various musicals and operettas. In 2024, she was a Manetti Shrem Opera Fellow with Festival Napa Valley. Some favorite credits include Taller Daughter in Missy Mazzoli's *Proving Up*, Serse in Handel's *Serse*, Zanetto in Mascagni's *Zanetto*, Annio in Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*, The Secretary in Menotti's *The Consul*, Flavio in Handel's *Flavio*, Zweite Dame in Mozart's *Die Zauberfl*öte, and Jade Boucher in Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*. She is also featured in the documentary *Flicka* which tells the story of the life and career of legendary mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade.

When she is not performing, Finn is also passionate about directing and, most recently, was the Assistant Director for David Hanlon's *The Pigeon Keeper* with Opera Parallèle. She holds a Professional Studies Certificate and Master's in Voice from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music under the tutelage of Catherine Cook. Finn graduated with a Bachelor's in Voice and Music Theatre from James Madison University.

Geneva Lewis, violin

American/New Zealand violinist Geneva Lewis has forged a reputation as a musician of consummate artistry whose performances speak from and to the heart and who has been lauded for the "remarkable mastery of her instrument" (CVNC) and hailed as "clearly one to watch" (Musical America).

Named a BBC New Generation Artist (2022-24), Lewis is also the recipient of a 2022 Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award and a 2021 Avery Fisher Career Grant. She was also Grand Prize winner of the 2020 Concert Artists Guild Competition, winner of the Kronberg Academy's Prince of Hesse Prize (2021), *Musical America*'s New Artist of the Month (June 2021), a Performance Today Young Artist in Residence, and a YCAT Concordia Artist.

In 2023, Lewis made her BBC Proms debut with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Jaime Martin. The 2024-25 season includes debuts with the Orquestra Filarmonica de Minas Gerais, Indianapolis Symphony, Des Moines Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, The Florida Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and Vancouver Symphony.

Lewis made her solo debut at age 11 with the Pasadena POPS, and has since gone on to perform with orchestras including Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, North Carolina Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC New Orchestra of Wales, BBC Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Austin Symphony, and San Diego Symphony under conductors such as Gemma New, Hugh Wolff, Nicholas McGegan, Grant Llewellyn, Giordano Bellincampi, and Dirk Meyer.

Deeply passionate about chamber music, Lewis has had the pleasure of collaborating with prominent musicians such as Jonathan Biss, Glenn Dicterow, Miriam Fried, Kim Kashkashian, Gidon Kremer, Marcy Rosen, Sir András Schiff, and Mitsuko Uchida. She has performed in venues and festivals such as London's Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Marlboro Music Festival, Kronberg Festival, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, Ravinia, and Chamberfest Cleveland.

An advocate of community engagement and music education, Lewis was selected for New England Conservatory's Community Performances and Partnerships Program's Ensemble Fellowship, through which her string quartet created interactive educational programs for audiences throughout Boston. The quartet was also chosen for the Virginia Arts Festival Residency, during which they performed and presented masterclasses in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Lewis received her Artist Diploma from New England Conservatory as the recipient of the Charlotte F. Rabb Presidential Scholarship, studying with Miriam Fried. She also studied with Professor Mihaela Martin in the Professional Studies Program at the Kronberg Academy. Prior to that, she studied with Aimée Kreston at the Colburn School of Performing Arts.

Lewis currently performs on a composite violin by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini, c. 1776 generously on loan from a Charitable Trust.

Paul Watkins, guest conductor & cello

Acclaimed for his inspirational performances and eloquent musicianship, Paul Watkins enjoys a distinguished career as a concerto soloist, chamber musician, and conductor. He is the Artistic Director of the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival in Detroit (since 2014), the cellist of the Emerson String Quartet (2013-2023), and Visiting Professor of Cello at Yale School of Music (since 2018). He took first prize in the 2002 Leeds Conducting Competition and has held the positions of Music Director of the English Chamber Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of the Ulster Orchestra.

As a cellist, Watkins has given regular concerto performances with prestigious orchestras across the globe. Also a dedicated chamber musician, Watkins was a member of the Nash Ensemble (1997-2013) and the Emerson String Quartet (2013-2023). After 44 successful seasons, the Quartet has decided to retire, and undertaken an extensive series of farewell tours, culminating in their final performances in New York Lincoln Center in October 2023, where the concert was filmed for a planned documentary by filmmaker Tristan Cook, and the release of their final recording of Berg, Chausson, Schoenberg, and Hindemith with prestigious guests, soprano Barbara Hannigan and pianist Bertrand Chamayou.

As a conductor, Watkins has conducted all the major British orchestras and a wide range of international orchestras. In 2006, he made his opera debut, conducting a critically praised new production of Poulenc's *La Voix Humaine* for Opera North.

Gabrielle Beteag, mezzo-soprano

American mezzo Gabrielle Beteag (pronounced Bee-tag) brings a fresh joy and commanding warmth to repertoire spanning Baroque to contemporary works. Praised for her "precise, soaring voice" by San Francisco Classical Voice, Beteag's recent performance in the San Francisco Adler Fellow Showcase was "a peak performance at the opera...a moment of transfiguration."

The start of 2024 took Beteag back to the Bay Area to sing Mahler's Das Lied von der Erde with the San Francisco Ballet. This summer, she was in residence as a Filene Artist at Wolf Trap Opera, where she sang Anna I in Weill's The Seven Deadly Sins in collaboration with the National Orchestral Institute + Festival and served as the Alto Soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the National Symphony Orchestra. In the fall, she returns to San Francisco Opera for their 102nd season, covering Ulrica in Un ballo in maschera and singing Offred's Mother in The Handmaid's Tale, before finishing the year singing Mahler's Second Symphony with the Santa Rosa Symphony.

Endlessly inspired by the challenges inherent in developing new work, Beteag counts her role creation of Iras in John Adams' *Antony and Cleopatra* during SFO's Centennial Season as a career highlight. Other recent performances include *Stimme von Oben in Die Frau ohne Schatten* and Teacher in *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* at San Francisco Opera, Mercédès in *Carmen* at The Atlanta Opera, where she was a Studio Player, and Woman with Hat/Duchess in *The Ghosts of Versailles* at Chautaugua Opera.

In 2020, Beteag fulfilled a long-held dream of winning the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She has received accolades from several other competitions, including the Giulio Gari Foundation (Third Place, 2024), Operalia (Semifinalist, 2023) and the Cooper-Bing Competition at Opera Columbus (First Place, 2023).

During the COVID-19 shutdown, Beteag created the Songbook Sundays series, through which she shared her renditions of Golden Era jazz standards on social media, accompanying herself on the ukulele.

While offstage, Beteag enjoys watching films with her husband, Tim, and receiving the best vocal coaching around from their hound dog, Hambone.

Elizabeth Prior, viola

An active Bay Area violist, Elizabeth Prior is the principal violist with the Santa Rosa Symphony and is also a season substitute with the San Francisco Ballet. She is a member of the New Century Chamber Orchestra. Prior is the associate principal with the Marin Symphony and performs regularly with the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Skywalker Symphony and the Farallon Quintet.

Other orchestral positions include the Freiburg Philharmonic (Associate Principal) and the Cape Town Symphony. She has toured and worked with Pittsburgh Symphony, Südwestfunk Baden Baden, Stuttgart Radio, Basel Symphony, and the Mannheim Opera Orchestras.

A native of South Africa, Prior was a prizewinner in the International String Competition in Pretoria and gave her debut at Carnegie Hall with the Russian Chamber Orchestra. Other engagements include the Amelia Island Chamber Music Festival, Sun Valley Summer Symphony, Grand Tetons Music Festival, Chamber Ensemble Cologne, Grass Valley and Mendocino summer festivals, Midsummer Mozart, and "Chamber Music San Francisco." She performed regular Viola recitals for 13 years with Maestro Donald Runnicles / piano. Prior recently released her new CD, 'Viola Romance' with pianist Miles Graber.

Adelle-Akiko Kearns, cello

Hailed by critics as an "impressive" cellist exhibiting "beautifully sensuous cello playing," Adelle-Akiko Kearns is a highly in-demand solo, chamber, and orchestral performer based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The recipient of the prestigious Artists International Award, Kearns made her New York recital debut at Carnegie's Weill Hall in November of 2008. Since then, she has appeared on the world's most important stages, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Suntory Hall, Davies Symphony Hall, and many others.

In 2006, Kearns gave the Japanese premiere of the Korngold Cello Concerto with the Tokyo Philharmonic and was immediately engaged to return the following season to perform the Dvořák Concerto. Other previous solo appearances include concerto collaborations with the Santa Rosa Symphony, Monterey Symphony, Symphony of the Redwoods, Cambrian Symphony, Auburn Symphony, Juilliard Conductors' Orchestra, the West Valley Symphony

(Arizona), the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Orchestra, the Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra, and the Pacific Chamber Symphony.

As a chamber musician, Kearns has performed at the world's leading music festivals including the Saito Kinen, Aspen, Tanglewood, Yellow Barn and Spoleto Festivals. She has collaborated with members of the legendary Juilliard String Quartet as well as renowned chamber musicians Zuill Bailey, Jorja Fleezanis, Axel Strauss, Ian Swensen, Paul Hersh, Jodi Levitz, Daisuke Suzuki, and the Da Capo Chamber Players.

In 2003, Kearns was the only cellist from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music chosen to play for the late Mstislav Rostropovich, and in addition, she has undertaken masterclasses with some of the most revered cellists such as Bernard Greenhouse, Raphael Wallfisch, Paul Katz, David Finckel, Norman Fischer and Mark Kosower.

Kearns is currently the Principal Cellist of the Santa Rosa Symphony, Assistant Principal Cellist of Symphony San Jose, the Monterey Symphony, and the Music in the Mountains Festival Orchestra, and is also a regular substitute cellist with the San Francisco Symphony. Before returning to the Bay Area in 2011, Kearns served as the Assistant Principal Cello of the Louisiana Philharmonic and as a member of the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra.

An avid educator, Kearns is currently professor of cello at San Jose State University and teaches privately throughout the South Bay as well. She is also the coach of the San Jose Youth Symphony and Golden State Youth Orchestra's cello sections.

Kearns holds degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the Juilliard School. Her principal teachers include Bonnie Hampton, Joel Krosnick, Sadao Harada, and Irene Sharp.

A native of San Francisco, Kearns grew up with many Sonoma County relatives and as a child, enjoyed monthly trips up to Santa Rosa to visit her grandmother at Oakmont. She is thrilled that her work with the Santa Rosa Symphony allows her to get to spend time in this beautiful area.

Roy Zajac, clarinet

Principal Clarinet Roy Zajac has played the clarinet since he was 10 years old, when he started on an instrument purchased from a neighbor. The music of his family and their friends, who played guitar and sang, permeated his young life in rural Mexico.

Though neither he nor his brother took to the guitar, they both found the instruments they loved. Zajac auditioned and won the position of Principal Clarinet for the Santa Rosa Symphony in 1998, while he was still in the Air Force Band of the Golden West. He also began playing as a substitute for other orchestras, a role he describes as the most challenging—often requiring him to step in on short notice and quickly adapt to new ensembles.

Zajac, who likes to share his passion with young musicians, teaches and mentors and has had the honor of seeing his students achieve positions in California Allstate (first chair), San Francisco Youth Orchestra and the SRS Youth Orchestra. Many have won scholarships based on their musical ability.

For three years, before the Green Music Center was built, he played for donor recitals to help raise funds for its construction. "Throughout that time, I played for many lovely people. Most memorable was Ray Manzarek of The Doors."

In addition to his winning audition for the Air Force Band of the Golden West, Zajac says he's also very proud of winning positions with the Naval Academy in Annapolis, the Filharmonica Del Bajio in Guanajuato, Mexico, and the Grand Teton's Music Seminar.

Zajac is particularly drawn to the harmonies, folk sounds, instrumentation and rhythms of Russian composers, such as Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky and Shostakovich. One of his career highlights was performing as the guest artist for the Mozart Clarinet Concerto with the Santa Rosa Symphony in 2013.

Robert Giambruno, trumpet

Robert Lau Giambruno was born and raised in San Francisco and is thrilled to perform regularly in the Bay Area. Appointed as principal trumpet of the Santa Rosa Symphony in October of 2022, he also holds the position of principal trumpet with Symphony San Jose and, previously, the Rogue Valley Symphony. In addition, Giambruno can be found regularly performing with other Bay Area ensembles, including the San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Opera, Berkeley Symphony, and Oakland Symphony, amongst others. Giambruno attended Arizona State University and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, studying with David Hickman and Mark Inouye.

Bruce Chrisp, trombone

Santa Rosa Symphony Principal trombonist Bruce Chrisp joined the orchestra in 1992. He has previously appeared as soloist with the Santa Rosa Symphonietta, Santa Rosa Symphony, Sonoma County Philharmonic, Santa Cruz Symphony and the Vallejo Symphony. Chrisp is also principal trombonist with the Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera, Fresno Philharmonic, Oakland, Marin, Carmel Bach Festival, and Vallejo Symphony Orchestras and is second trombone with Opera San Jose. He has performed with the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, the Virginia Symphony, the Oregon Symphony, and the San Diego Symphony. He is a founding member of the San Francisco Brass Company, a Bay Area brass quintet, and also enjoys performing Renaissance music on a replica of a 450-year-old trombone.

He received his bachelor's in music education from the University of Michigan and his Master of Music degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. His major teachers have been Mark Lawrence, Dennis Smith, and Edward Zadrosny.

Chrisp is currently the Professor of Trombone, Euphonium and Tuba at the University of the Pacific Conservatory of Music. Originally from Davis, CA, Chrisp currently resides in Vallejo, with his wife Gabrielle Wunsch, a professional violinist.

Allen Biggs, marimba

Allen Biggs is Principal Percussionist with the Santa Rosa Symphony and timpanist with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. He is a founding member of the California Symphony, performs regularly with the Marin and Oakland Symphonies, and was a member of the Bay Area Jazz Composer's Orchestra for many years. He plays drums with the jam band Jamalicious and was a member of Escola Nova de Samba for many years.

The list of touring Broadway productions he has worked on for the past 25 years includes everything from *Amelie* to *Wicked*. Biggs has done several national tours with Western Opera Theater; he can be heard on soundtracks including the feature film *Renfield*; a recording he made with the group Chanticleer won two Grammy awards, and he performs on the Grammy-nominated cast album of *A Chorus Line*.

Biggs is an active educator. He leads a popular percussion trio, which performs in schools throughout Sonoma County. Biggs runs the Moke Hill Music Festival, which takes place in the gold country town of Mokelumne Hill and celebrates contemporary music. A volunteer teacher with the global humanitarian organization Art of Living, Biggs is dedicated to creating a stress-free, violence-free society one breath at a time.

Claire Huangci, piano

American pianist Claire Huangci continuously captivates audiences with her "radiant virtuosity, artistic sensitivity, keen interactive sense and subtle auditory dramaturgy" (*Salzburger Nachrichten*). With an irrepressible curiosity and penchant for unusual repertoire, she proves her versatility with a wide range of repertoire spanning from Bach and Scarlatti via German and Russian romanticism to Bernstein. Amy Beach, and Barber.

Huangci's 2024-2025 season is peppered with exciting projects, starting with a new collaboration on Alpha Classics. Following a highly acclaimed Mozart concerto album with the Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg, she will release an all-American solo disc titled MADE IN USA.

Kicking off a string of international orchestral engagements, Huangci will return to the Frankfurt Opera and Museum Orchestra, Porto, Iceland, Vorarlberg, Nordwestdeutsche, and Pacific symphony orchestras, and debut with the Basel, Hannover, Bremen, Bochum, and Milwaukee symphonies. In the last seasons, she has been a fixture on the concert circuit presenting an unusual breadth of repertoire and directing various concertos from the piano in the play-direct tradition.

In solo recitals and with international orchestras, Huangci has appeared in some of the most prestigious halls such as Carnegie Hall, Suntory Hall Tokyo, Paris Philharmonie, Frankfurt Alte Oper, Dortmund Konzerthaus, Munich Prinzregententheater, Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, Berlin Philharmonie, Vienna Konzerthaus, and Salzburg Festspielhaus. She is a welcome guest of renowned festivals including the Lucerne Festival, Rheingau Musik Festival, and Klavier Festival Ruhr. Her esteemed musical partners include the Mozarteumorchester Salzburg, Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, Tonhalle-Orchester Zurich, Musikkollegium Winterthur, Munich Chamber Orchestra, and Basel Chamber Orchestra, together with Carl St. Clair, Elim Chan, Michael Francis, Howard Griffiths, Pietari Inkinen, Jun Märkl, Cornelius Meister, Sir Roger Norrington, Eva Ollikainen, Alexander Shelley, and Mario Venzago.

Born in Rochester New York, Huangci displayed an early penchant for piano and was invited to the White House in 1999. She studied with Gary Graffman and Eleanor Sokoloff at the Curtis Institute of Music before moving to Hannover for further studies with Arie Vardi. She rose to international prominence with top prizes at several major competitions, including European and US Chopin competitions, ARD Music Competition, Geza Anda Competition, and Grand Prix of the Paris Play Direct Academy. Since then, she has led a number of orchestras in various concerto repertoire. Claire is a proud ambassador of the Henle Publishing House, and Artistic Director of the Erbach Kammerkonzerte series.

High-res photos and interview opportunities available upon request.

ABOUT SANTA ROSA SYMPHONY

Santa Rosa Symphony (SRS), the Resident Orchestra at Green Music Center, is the third-oldest professional orchestra in California and the largest regional symphony north of Los Angeles. Francesco Lecce-Chong began his tenure in 2018 as the Symphony's fifth music director in its 97 years. J. Andrew Bradford joined SRS as President and CEO in 2023.

SRS performances include 21 Classical Series concerts presented over seven concert weekends, six Discovery Rehearsals, a three-concert Family Series, a four-concert Pops Series, and special events.

The Symphony is recognized as having one of California's most comprehensive music education programs, serving nearly 20,000 youths annually. Collaborations with schools and organizations across Sonoma County have gained the Santa Rosa Symphony national attention and support.

Awards include an American Symphony Orchestra League MetLife Award for Community Engagement and a first-place award for adventurous programming in the 2012-2013 season from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). In 2022, SRS, in conjunction with Delos Productions, released its first commercial label recording, *Cello Concerto & Other Works*, featuring works by composer Ellen Taaffe Zwilich.

The Santa Rosa Symphony is committed to the core values of artistic excellence, innovative programming, comprehensive music education, and community service.

###