JUNE 11-13

SEGERSTROM CENTER FOR THE ARTS
RENÉE AND HENRY SEGERSTROM CONCERT HALL

PACIFIC SYMPHONY
CARL ST. CLAIR | MUSIC DIRECTOR

2014-15 HAL & JEANETTE SEGERSTROM FAMILY FOUNDATION CLASSICAL SERIES

Performance begins at 8 p.m. Preview talk with Alan Chapman begins at 7 p.m.

CARL ST. CLAIR • CONDUCTOR
DEBORAH VOIGT • SOPRANO | BENJAMIN SMOLEN • FLUTE
GREGORY MACGILLIVRAY • VIDEO CONTRIBUTOR | TEMPE HALE • ART DIRECTION AND ANIMATION

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)
Concerto for Flute and Orchestra in F Major, RV 433 La Tempesta di Mare
   Allegro
   Largo
   Presto
   Benjamin Smolen

Laura Karpman (b. 1959)
Siren Songs WORLD PREMIERE
   Adapted from texts by Amy Gerstler
   Come Kiss Me
   An Astounding Fleet
   Ours Is the Blue Planet
   Gregory MacGillivray, Tempe Hale

Richard Wagner (1813-1883)
Selections from Götterdämmerung ("Twilight of the Gods")
   Dawn and Siegfried’s Rhine Journey
   Siegfried’s Funeral Music
   Brünnhilde’s Immolation Scene
   Deborah Voigt

InTermission

The enhancements in this program are made possible by a generous grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, awarded to the Symphony in support of innovative and thematic programming.

The artist appearances are generously sponsored by Suzanne and David Chonette.
The Thursday, June 11 concert is generously sponsored by Judith Posnikoff.

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The Saturday, June 13, performance is being recorded for broadcast on Sunday, August 2, at 7 p.m. on Classical KUSC.
5-7 p.m. Aquarium of the Pacific's Aquarium on Wheels
Make sure to check out this mobile tide-pool exhibit, where you have the opportunity to feel a spiny sea star, touch a slippery sea cucumber or experience the rough textured skin of a shark. Dedicated to developing an appreciation for the wonders of the ocean environment, Aquarium on Wheels delivers a memorable experience for all ages!

5 p.m. Golden West Pops
The Golden West Pops is honored to be a part of this wonderful community outreach program. Led by Conductor Pollyanna Gorman, the Golden West Pops consists of volunteers from all walks of life, who come together for the sheer love of playing music. Today’s selections range from superheroes to rock-and-roll legends, from travels to the west to marching with the soldiers. Sit back, relax and enjoy the show.

5:30 p.m. Color Choreography
The theme of “Fire and Water” is interpreted and presented in a choreographed expression of music and color by Alan Burner and Bei Bei Zheng. Alan and Bei Bei come together to present a collaborative work involving color and music, and demonstrate how the sounds of music are interpreted into pure-color emotion.

6 p.m. Huntington Beach Concert Band Brass Ensemble
Ten members of the Huntington Beach Concert Band brass section perform favorite melodies of various genres including classical, swing, musicals and pops. Tunes include “Honey Bun” from South Pacific, “Yesterday” by The Beatles and “Little Brown Jug” by J.E. Winner, along with a few others! Huntington Beach Concert Band’s Summer Series of free concerts takes place in Huntington Beach Central Park on Sunday evenings June 28 through Sept. 6, at 5 p.m.

6:30 p.m. Helix Collective
Los Angeles-based Helix Collective performs a high-energy, out-of-the-box mix of world, classical and rock n’ roll. Made up of three talented musicians, Sarah Robinson on flute, Phil Popham on oboe and Jason Lo on piano, Helix “has a little something for everyone: those who like their classics straight up, with a contemporary edge to it, or with populist appeal” (Audiophile Audition Magazine). Performing The Pharmacy: 6 Medications for Flute, Oboe and Piano by Popham, Helix Collective hopes you feel better after hearing the piece than before!

8 p.m. Fire and Water Concert Begins
Turn to page 6 for concert information
Concerto for Flute and Orchestra in F Major, RV 433, “La Tempesta di Mare”

Instrumentation: harpsichord, strings, solo flute
Performance time: 9 minutes

Background

Ethnomusicologists, who study the development of music in different cultures, have found early flutes dating back more than three millennia, and they consider the flute to be the oldest of all instruments. Country kids still make them all over the world, often just by punching holes in a hollow reed. So by the time Antonio Vivaldi published his set of six concertos for flute in 1728, it was already an ancient instrument with a long performance tradition. The first of these concertos, identified as RV 433 in Vivaldi’s catalog, is the one known as La Tempesta di Mare, the storm at sea.

But the flutes Vivaldi may have heard play these six concertos—whether “transverse” flutes held sideways from the mouth and blown across an embouchure hole, or recorders held straight in front of the player— bore little resemblance to the concert flute we know today. Technological advances a century after his death vastly increased the instrument’s dynamic and tonal range, its expressive possibilities and the sheer note speed possible with its keyed valves. Today’s orchestral flute came to fruition in France in the mid-19th century; compared to earlier versions it was a musical marvel perfectly suited to the richness of Vivaldi’s flute concertos, which seem to paint a picture of pounding winds and surging waves.

Abrupt changes in dynamics and phrase length capture the sense of shifting weather—calm one moment, violent the next.

What to Listen For

Vivaldi’s flair for dramatic effects and vivid scene-painting is familiar to us through his Four Seasons. In La Tempesta di Mare we hear the musical evocation of a storm at sea worthy of J.M.W. Turner. Racing through the music we hear scales that demonstrate the soloist’s skill as they paint a picture of pounding winds and surging waves. Abrupt changes in dynamics and phrase length capture the sense of shifting weather—calm one moment, violent the next.

Like Bach, Vivaldi composed his concertos in the expectation that they would be freely adapted for various instruments, but in this case the column of air that creates the flute’s unique sound has a special affinity for the concerto’s depiction of wind. One can only surmise how the tempestuous Vivaldi—known as “the Red Priest”—might have been further inspired by the sound of today’s orchestral flute.

Siren Songs

Notes by Laura Karpman

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns playing conch shells, 3 trumpets, 2 trombones, trombone, tuba, timpani, 4 percussion, harp, piano, strings
Performance time: 23 minutes

Background

In Greek mythology, sirens were seductive women who sang irresistibly beautiful songs to lure sailors. Unsuspecting seafarers, mesmerized by the music of these femmes fatales, were enticed to sail ever closer to the rocky coasts of the sirens’ islands. Listening to the sirens’ songs ensured a horrible fate, as the sailors’ boats crashed upon the rocks.

Climate denial is a kind of siren song. It’s seductive to believe climate disruption might not be true or be as bad as it’s made out to be, but following the siren song of denial takes us into very dangerous waters.

Tom Rand, Policy Options, July 2014

When I got a call from Carl St.Clair to write a piece about the ocean, I thought it would be simple. I have lived my whole life by the ocean. My parents bought a beach house in Playa del Rey, which has been my sanctuary since I was a young teenager. When I was living in New York, immersed in the new music scene, in the back of my mind I always imagined Playa del Rey, the particular view from our beach house, the feeling I had every time I was there. I knew I would return, and when I moved back to Los Angeles, I moved to my beach. And I’ve lived here now for many years, every day seeing the ocean at dawn, every evening walking out on my balcony for a final salty smell and gaze on the horizon. I got married here, I watched my niece and nephew grow here, and now my son… rocking him by the shore on a sleepless night, seeing him learn to play baseball in the sand, and watching him love the ocean as I do, regarding it with the expected ease of a kid growing up on the beach.

Not surprisingly, Vivaldi relied on certain compositional tricks in concerto after concerto—notably the ritornello, or “little return,” that forms so many of his fast movements. This structure dictates the return of the ensemble to the main melody of the movement, while the soloist’s expression is more varied. Ritornello form later gave way to the more complex, sustained structure of sonata allegro form, which develops a theme through variation and modulation. But for Vivaldi’s beloved melodies, the ritornello is ideal.

ANTONIO VIVALDI
(1678-1741)
But, I strangely struggled with this composition—I struggled with how to somehow communicate my love, my need for this place, for its peace, its turbulence, for my holy place. I am overwhelmed with the searing reality of how we have smothered the lungs of the earth, how we could have let things go this far, how my son may not be able to continue living in this place that I have built my life around, our dreams around.

I knew I wanted to write a piece about women and the sea. The ocean is always spoken of with the feminine pronoun, boats are too, but history tells of men exploring, “conquering” the seas, and finally, now conquering them in what may be their ultimate destruction. I also wrestled with, maybe for the first time in my life, my “identity” as a female composer. What does that identity mean? Does it mean anything? Do I have a different perspective? How could it, should it, does it effect my work?

I started listening to some music. I didn’t need to listen to Britten’s Four Sea Interludes from Peter Grimes. I knew it so well... that incredible piece about the other. I didn’t need to listen to La Mer, Debussy’s masterpiece about the ebb and flow of tides and washy harmonies. Two pieces I didn’t know were Ralph Vaughan Williams’ Sea Symphony and Howard Hanson’s A Sea Symphony, both based on the poetry of Walt Whitman. These works and their power embodied a kind of masculine energy—they both, of course, feature voice singing the Whitman texts. I began to think, what if I composed a piece that metaphorically represented the voiceless-ness of women and the ocean, the underwritten histories of women sea goddesses, sailors, navigators, surfers, swimmers and scientists? I also knew I wanted to somehow use the mythology of the sirens, and I came upon pieces by Lily and Nadia Boulanger that explored the Sirens’ deathly haunting tune, the warnings of these seducers, mermaids, prophets.

It was then that I discovered the poetry of Amy Gerstler. She had written a poem called Siren. It was perfect. It captured everything that I wanted to explore in the piece: warmth, humor, and a certain scary and very seductive quality. Siren seemed to be the granddaughter, the great-granddaughter of the Whitman poetry Hansen and Vaughan-Williams had set, but very much alive, current, quirky and profound. I decided to set three pieces of her poetry without a singer. The orchestra would do all the “singing” and Siren Songs was born, with each movement adapted from a poem by Amy Gerstler. I think perhaps uniquely, the visuals by Tempe Hale from contributed material by Gregory MacGillivray become the missing singer. They express both literally and metaphorically the poetry. They sing.

I. Come Kiss Me

Each movement of Siren Songs is titled from a line in the corresponding Gerstler poem that is adapted and “set,” here Siren.

I have
I have
a fish’s tail,
so I’m not
so I’m not qualified to love you.

Pale
Pale as an August sky,
pale as flour milled a thousand times,
pale as the icebergs I have never seen,
and twice as numb-
and twice as numb-
my skin is such a contrast to the rough rocks I lie on,
that from far away it looks like I’m a baby
riding a dinosaur.

The turn of centuries or the turn
of a page means the same to me,
little or nothing.

Come Kiss me
and die soon.
I slap my tail in the shallows- which is to say
I appreciate nature. You see my sisters and me perched on rocks and tiny islands here and there for miles:
untangling our hair with our fingers,
eating seaweed.

Come Kiss me
and die soon.

The thing I love about this poem, in fact, about all Amy’s poems, are the quick changes, the instant turns from something very serious to something truly witty, in fact, funny. This, of course, posed compositional challenges, but I think my training as a film composer has made me compositionally nimble, so I find this to be a delicious challenge. The sirens, of course, are complicated female figures in mythology and have appeared in many forms and over the centuries. They are seductive, deadly, beautiful. There are many visual representations of the sirens and images of the instruments the sirens might have played: one showed lyre, aulos and voice. In finding the orchestral analogies, I chose to create a kind of concerto for harp/piano (lyre) two oboes (the aulos was an ancient double piped instrument), and cello, whose digital waveform is the closest to the human voice.
II. An Astonishing Fleet

I love what Diana Nyad did. She absolutely never gave up her dream. She did something no one has done before while she was firmly in middle age. And I love that she did it in the sea. Her courage inspires me. In some ways, I scored her historic swim from Cuba to Florida, but from her point of view. She would apparently sing various pop songs to herself, over and over on a seemingly endless loop. At one point, she saw hallucinations, the Taj Mahal, the yellow brick road, and just kept going. I think this movement is her hallucinatory swim, in and out of consciousness. It is based on the Gerstler's poem A Watery Grave:

I got lost. Out of Breath.
Goldfish with shivery
gills wriggle through the secluded pool I stare into.
Water’s Cold
Silt stirred up at bottom.
I rub my eyes, see an astonishing fleet
of tiny dinghies, and a beautiful schooner, manned by children.
The little ships aren’t real, but swim before my eyes
Water’s Cold
Out of Breath.

The movement begins in the water, with percussion instruments, like a swimmer’s head, bobbing in and out of the water, with conch shells in the distance. The music has a whiff of a Cuban influence, sultry and salty, as our heroine swims further from the shore, and slips into a beautiful, heroic dream state.

III. Ours is the Blue Planet

This movement is the final siren song, a piece about saviors who are filled with both alarm and hope. It is especially inspired by the work of Dr. Sylvia Earle, an astonishing scientist, who with joy and fortitude is doing her best to save the oceans. This movement is a tribute to her and the many others who are doing such essential work. The brass section, the traditionally heroic members of the orchestra, are featured and sing the text.

The opening serves as a kind of cadenza for this concerto for orchestra. I did a bit of research, and found that there are a plethora of sirens around the world, each with a different purpose and a different sound. These original sirens are heard here as triggered audio, timed and tuned. I found the closest analogies within the orchestra; for example, the clarinets play the Doppler effect of the French ambulance siren, the low strings the Japanese tsunami siren, and an odd concerto grosso ensues. These sirens melt away to the jazz of the Gerstler texts and pass the melodic duties to the brass orchestra; for example, the clarinets play the Doppler effect of the French ambulance siren, the low strings the Japanese tsunami siren, and an odd concerto grosso ensues. These sirens melt away to the jazz of the Gerstler texts and pass the melodic duties to the brass section, the traditionally “heroic” members of the orchestra, as a portrait of the saviors of the sea.

Here, the Gerstler poem, The Mermaid’s Purse, is adapted. Again, Gerstler moves seamlessly between humor and penetrating seriousness.

Ours is the blue planet.
Not the hot bloody red one,
But the mountain-wrinkled earth
covered with a little brush
and immense amounts of water,
most of which, as you know,
is inhabited by mermaids.

One afternoon you are walking along the shoreline, sunburned sandy and a little salty-skinned, when you notice a kind of container you’ve never seen before.

It can only be a mermaid’s purse washed up on the beach. Cautiously, you pour its contents out on the ground. A boiling and hissing, a flexible sizzling gumbo is suddenly bubbling at your feet.

How are you going to clean it all up?

Does every mermaid carry
This much in her purse?
And if so… how can the oceans
Swallow so much color
And remain so terrifically blue?

and die soon….

Finally, Siren Songs seems to be about passing things on; dreams, myths, music, poetry, and above all, the earth.

I dedicate Siren Songs to my son, may we protect his ocean.

Selections from Götterdämmerung

Instrumentation: 3 flutes, piccolo, 3 oboes, English horn, 3 clarinets, bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, 4 horns, 4 Wagner tubas, trumpets, bass trumpet, 3 trombones, bass trombone, tuba, 2 timpani, 2 percussion, 2 harps, strings, soprano
Performance time: 44 minutes

Background

Two years ago the world marked the bicentennial of Richard Wagner’s birth, another occasion to reflect on the importance of one of Western music’s most influential composers. Wagner’s impact was transformative not just in opera or in classical music, but throughout the arts. Not even Beethoven had so great an impact on our conception of art; it is said that modern painters might not paint as they do today had Wagner not composed as he did yesterday.

Both a great composer and a rebellious aesthetic philosopher, Wagner published his revolutionary ideas about artistic and musical expression in impassioned essays long before his operas themselves began to sound revolutionary. It was not until he embarked on composing Tristan und Isolde and his huge operatic tetralogy, Der Ring des Nibelungen, that these ideas fully took root in his music. Götterdämmerung, the final opera in this cycle, comprises about five hours of music and resolves the complexities of the Ring in a final scene of overpowering majesty, Brünnhilde’s Immolation. Brünnhilde’s voluntary death by fire not only brings transcendence to her romance with the mortal hero Siegfried, but—with a conflagration of fire and flood — restores a corrupted world to the natural order depicted at the outset of the Ring cycle.

The magnificence of Wagner’s music is well suited to such immense thematic materials, but brief prose summaries are not. Still, even a
Richard Wagner
(1813-1883)

reviled Jewish composers including Mendelssohn, Offenbach and Meyerbeer, who had supported his career.) These realities added to the difficulties of programming Wagner’s works in the decades following World War II. In a 2012 article for The New Yorker, the critic Alex Ross described him as “the most volcanically controversial figure in the history of music.” By now most audiences have learned to separate the greatness of his art from the hatefulness of his personal philosophy, and his music has even been performed occasionally in Israel. But the debate continues. As recently as 2011 the critic David P. Goldman, writing online for The Tablet, concluded that Wagner’s music should be banned there but that it is indispensable for music students and professional musicians everywhere.

What to Listen For

In listening to excerpts from Götterdämmerung, we first have to get our Siegfrieds straight. The Siegfried of Wagner’s Siegfried (Idyll is not the Siegfried we encounter in this opera, but rather Wagner’s son by his second wife, Cosima (named, of course, for the hero of Götterdämmerung). At the time they fell passionately in love, Cosima—who was Franz Liszt’s illegitimate daughter by the glamorous Parisian socialite Marie d’Agoult—was married to the distinguished conductor Hans von Bülow, one of Wagner’s strongest supporters. Beset by creditors and artistic difficulties, Wagner accepted the Bülow’s offer of refuge in their country house in Tübischen, near Lake Lucerne. In a sense, we can hear Wagner’s love for Cosima in the music of the Ring cycle; their romance seemed to catalyze Wagner’s composing. It rejected rules and long-accepted convention for a higher truth that Wagner associated with Schopenhauer’s concept of human will. Cosima had proudly born two children to Wagner before Bülow granted her a divorce.

We must also keep track of vocabulary, starting with the “through-composed” style of composition that Wagner pioneered (durchkomponiert), which creates a seamless flow of music, rejecting the traditional rules of development and resolution that divide the music. Wagner’s building blocks are motivic phrases that are never classed as melodies, no matter how melodic they might sound, because they never seek to end in a musical resolution; instead, like our deepest feelings, they seem to have no particular beginning or end. Endless scholarship has been devoted to the meaning and interplay of Wagner’s motifs (Leitmotiven), but he did not expect us to track them as we listen. We sense their meaning and feel their impact more deeply through rapt listening than we could through conscious analysis.

In all three excerpts, even in the bottomless grief expressed in Siegfried’s funeral music, there is a sense of ecstasy that comes from the sheer immediacy of feeling unbounded by rules. And, as throughout the Ring, the sound is ecstatic and flowing, nullifying the external sense of time with its own timeless pulse.

The Rhine journey functions as a prelude to the sixth scene of Götterdämmerung, by which time Siegfried and Brünnhilde have discovered their love and Siegfried must venture forth to prove his valor. In it we hear the beauty of a hero’s character taking shape as well as the breaking day. The final scene of Götterdämmerung, with Brünnhilde joining the murdered Siegfried in death, is an apocalyptic coup-de-théâtre unlike anything else in Western culture, bringing together all of the themes of Wagner’s epic Ring. Siegfried has been murdered by a deceitful ally, but his death and Brünhilde’s make possible the rebirth of the world, restoring the natural order that had been corrupted by greed and covetousness... and by a single gold ring.

scant paragraph of description can suggest some reasons why, of all great classical composers, Wagner is the household name whose music we rarely get to hear. Some excerpts are familiar, of course — the ubiquitous wedding march from Lohengrin, with the words “here comes the bride” grafted on; the “Ride of the Valkyries” from the Ring’s second opera, Die Walküre; the preludes from operas including The Flying Dutchman, Die Meistersinger and Tannhäuser. But the Ring, for all its brilliance and influence on the course of music, is an experience that is mostly reserved for enthusiasts with the time and money to invest in it: four operas, generally presented on successive nights, embodying about 15 hours of music. “An evening of Wagner,” at least at the opera house, is a very long evening indeed.

Deborah Voigt, one of the great Wagnerian sopranos of her generation, is a celebrated interpreter of the role of Brünhilde, the Valkyrie who appears throughout the Ring and brings it to its stunning conclusion. But even Voigt rarely gets to perform Wagner in the concert hall. “It’s difficult to excerpt Wagner,” she noted in conversation with Pacific Symphony. For one thing, the operas are constructed with a continuous musical flow, rather than as a series of discrete arias and orchestral passages. Then there’s the matter of sheer scale: In addition to their length, these operas require a big stage and a huge orchestra—sometimes upward of 100 players or even more. That’s beyond the scope of most ensembles, though it has helped shape the modern orchestral sound everywhere. The term “Wagner orchestra” is synonymous with the big sound that Wagner brought to fruition.

Wagner wrote the librettos for his own operas, and worked on the Ring cycle for about two and a half decades starting around 1848—a time of political turmoil throughout Europe and in Wagner’s life. He was perennially plagued by debt and in trouble with the authorities for his political statements, but in his art he intended to create an experience that was the opposite of this kind of worldly struggle, a pure embodiment of human will. In this goal he was deeply influenced by his reading of the philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer. It was Wagner’s reading of Schopenhauer and his belief in the nobility of truly German culture that made him one of the most favored composers of the Nazi regime. (Outspokenly anti-Semitic, Wagner...
Brünnhilde's Immolation Scene from Götterdämmerung
Translations by David Headland

Starke Scheite
schichtet mir dort
am Rande des Rhins zuhauf!
Hoch und hell
lodre die Glut,
die den edlen Leib
der hehrsten Helden verzehrt.
Sein Ross führet daher,
dass mit mir dem Recken es folge:
denn des Helden heiligeste
Ehre zu teilen,
verlangt mein eigener Leib.
Vollbringt Brünhildes Wunsch!

Wie Sonne lauter
strahlt mir sein Licht:
der Reinstein war er,
der mich verriet!
Die Gattin trägend,
- treu dem Freundene,
- von der eignen Trauten
- einzig ihm teuer -
schied er sich durch sein Schwert.
Echter als er
schweur keiner Eide;
treuer als er
hielt keiner Verträge;
lauter als er
liebte kein andrer:
- wheiser als er
schwur keiner Eide;
- keiner Verträge;
treuer als er
- einzig ihm teuer -
von der eignen Trauten
- treu dem Freunde, -
doch he, der mich verriet!

Daß wissend würde ein Weib!
der Reinste verraten,
mich musste
dem Fluche, dem du verfielst:
der sie gewirkt,
weihtest du den,
dir so tauglich erwünscht,
Durch seine tapferste Tat,
der hehrstest Gott!
Meine Klage hör',
erschaut eure ewige Schuld!
Auf mein blühendes Leid:
Lenkt euren Blick
O ihr, der Eide
wiehe die Leid:
ersten watchers, -
er schuf der Schuld!
Meine Klage hör!
er ist dein Herr,
Siegfried, mein seliger Held.
Dem Freunde zu folgen,
wie herst du freudig?
Lockt dich zu ihm
die lachende Lehe?
Fühl' meine Brust auch,
wie sie entbrennt;
helles Feuer
das Herz mir erfasst,
ing zu umschlingen,
Umschlossen von ihm,
in mächtigster Minne
vermählt ihm zu sein!
Heiajho! Grane!
Grüss' deinen Herrn!
Siegfried! Siegfried! Sieh!
Selig grüss dich dein Weib!

With the sun's brilliance,
his radiance shines on me.
He was the most innocent —
he, who betrayed me.
He deceived his wife
to remain loyal to his friend.
He did not touch
the woman he loved;
his sword lay between them all night.
None were so honest
by their oaths;
none were so true
to their promises.
No man loved
more purely than he.
And yet, all oaths,
all promises and the truest love
no man betrayed these
as he did.

Do you know why that was?
You gods,
the eternal guardians of oaths,
look down
on my great suffering;
Behold your eternal guilt.
Hear my lament,
mighty god.
The courageous deed
you desired of him
sacrificed him to the curse
you incurred.
This purest of men
had to betray me
so that at last
I might understand.

And do I understand what you want?
I understand everything.
At last, it all becomes clear.

Auch deine Raben
här ich rauschen;
mit bang ersehnter Botschaft
send ich die beiden nun heim.
Ruhe, ruhe, du Gott! -

Mein Erbe nun nehm' ich zu eigen. -
Verfluchter Reif! Furchtbarer Ring!
Dein Gold fass' ich
und geb' es nun fort.
Der Wassertiefe weise Schwestern,
des Rheines schwimmende Töchter,
euch dank' ich redlichen Rat.
Was ihr begehrt, ich geb' es euch:
aus meiner Asche nehmt es zu eigen!
Das Feuer, das mich verbrennt,
reinge vom Fluche der Ring!
Hir in der Flut löset ihn auf,
und lauter bewahrt das lichte Gold,
das euch zum Unheil geraubt.

Fliegt heim, ihr Raben!
Rauht es eurem Herren,
was hier am Rhein ihr gehört!

An Brünhildes Felsen
fahrt vorbei! -
Der dort noch lodert,
weiset Loge nach Walhall!
Denn der Götter Ende
dämmt nun auf;
So - werf' ich den Brand
in Walhalls prangende Burg.

Grane, mein Ross!
Sei mir gegrüsst!
Weisst du auch, mein Freund,
wohin ich dich führe?
Im Feuer leuchtend,
liegt dort dein Herr,
Siegfried, mein seliger Held.
Dem Freunde zu folgen,
wiederst du freudig?
Lockt dich zu ihm
die lachende Lohe?
Fühl' meine Brust auch,
wie sie entbrennt;
helles Feuer
das Herz mir erfasst,
ing zu umschlingen,
Umschlossen von ihm,
in mächtigster Minne
vermählt ihm zu sein!
Heiajho! Grane!
Grüss' deinen Herrn!
Siegfried! Siegfried! Sieh!
Selig grüssen dich dein Weib!

I hear the whispering of your ravens.
I send them home to you
with the news you anxiously await.
Peace.
Rest now, god.

I now take my inheritance for my own.
Cursed, terrible ring!
I take your gold
and now I give it away.
You wise daughters of the Rhine,
I thank you for your good counsel.
And I give you what you desire.
From my ashes take it for your own.
The fire that consumes me
will cleanse the ring of its curse.
In the water you will redeem it,
and there you will guard the gold
whose theft has brought such misfortune.

Fly home, you ravens.
Tell your lord
what you’ve heard here by the Rhine.
Fly past Brünhilde’s mountain
as you go.
Send Loge, who burns there still,
to Valhalla.
For the demise of the gods is at hand.
I cast this torch
at Valhalla’s resplendent towers.

Grane, my horse!
I greet you.
Do you know where
we’re going?
Your master lies
in the brilliant flames.
Are you eager to follow
your friend?
Do the laughing flames
beckon you to him?
Feel how I also burn;
a last desire seizes my heart
to embrace him,
to be enfolded in his arms,
to be one with him
in the intensity of love!
Grane, greet your lord!
Siegfried, look!
Your wife greets you.

Selig grüss dich dein Weib!
In 2014-15, Music Director Carl St. Clair celebrates his landmark 25th anniversary season with Pacific Symphony. He is one of the longest tenured conductors of the major American orchestras. St. Clair’s lengthy history solidifies the strong relationship he has forged with the musicians and the community. His continuing role also lends stability to the organization and continuity to his vision for the Symphony’s future. Few orchestras can claim such rapid artistic development as Pacific Symphony—the largest orchestra formed in the United States in the last 50 years—due in large part to St. Clair’s leadership.

During his tenure, St. Clair has become widely recognized for his musically distinguished performances, his commitment to building outstanding educational programs and his innovative approaches to programming. Among his creative endeavors are: the vocal initiative, “Symphonic Voices,” inaugurated in 2011-12 with the concert-opera production of La Bohème, followed by Tosca in 2012-13, La Traviata in 2013-14 and Carmen in 2014-15; the creation five years ago of a series of multimedia concerts featuring inventive formats called “Music Unwound”; and the highly acclaimed American Composers Festival, which celebrates its 15th anniversary in 2014-15 with a program of music by André Previn.

St. Clair’s commitment to the development and performance of new works by composers is evident in the wealth of commissions and recordings by the Symphony. The 2014-15 season continues a recent slate of recordings that has included three newly released CDs by today’s leading composers: Richard Danielpour’s Toward a Season of Peace, released in 2013-14, Philip Glass’ The Passion of Ramakrishna, and Michael Daugherty’s Mount Rushmore and The Gospel According to Sister Aimee, both released in 2012-13. Two more are due for release over the next few years, including William Bolcom’s Songs of Lorca and Prometheus and James Newton Howard’s I Would Plant a Tree and The Gospel According to Sister Aimee, both released in 2012-13. Two more are due for release over the next few years, including William Bolcom’s Songs of Lorca and Prometheus and James Newton Howard’s I Would Plant a Tree and The Gospel According to Sister Aimee.

In 2006-07, St. Clair led the orchestra’s historic move into its home in the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. The move came on the heels of the landmark 2005-06 season that included St. Clair leading the Symphony on its first European tour—nine cities in three countries playing before capacity houses and receiving extraordinary responses and reviews.

From 2008-10, St. Clair was general music director for the Komische Oper in Berlin, where he led successful new productions such as La Traviata (directed by Hans Neuenfels). He also served as general music director and chief conductor of the German National Theater and Staatskapelle (GNTS) in Weimar, Germany, where he led Wagner’s Ring Cycle to critical acclaim. He was the first non-European to hold his position at the GNTS; the role also gave him the distinction of simultaneously leading one of the newest orchestras in America and one of the oldest in Europe.

In 2014, St. Clair assumed the position as music director of the National Symphony Orchestra in Costa Rica. His international career also has him conducting abroad several months a year, and he has appeared with orchestras throughout the world. He was the principal guest conductor of the Radio Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart from 1998-2004, where he completed a three-year recording project of the Villa–Lobos symphonies. He has also appeared with orchestras in Israel, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and South America, and summer festivals worldwide.

In North America, St. Clair has led the Boston Symphony Orchestra (where he served as assistant conductor for several years), New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic and the San Francisco, Seattle, Detroit, Atlanta, Houston, Indianapolis, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver symphonies, among many.

A strong advocate of music education for all ages, St. Clair has been essential to the creation and implementation of the Symphony’s education programs including Pacific Symphony Youth Ensembles, Sunday Casual Connections, OC Can You Play With Us, arts-X-press and Class Act.
TRADITION AND INNOVATION: KEYS TO THE FUTURE
BY PETER LEFEVRE

On the surface, it doesn’t seem like the work of a music director has changed much over the past 100 or so years. Look at a grainy black-and-white photo of Mahler in full flight before an orchestra and (except for the haircuts) there isn’t much of a difference. Same instruments, same podium and baton, an audience likely hearing the same music.

Looks are deceiving, though. New challenges present themselves regularly, new cultural trends, new technologies. And as the 25th anniversary season of Carl St.Clair’s appointment to the music directorship of Pacific Symphony draws to a close, St.Clair knows how important it is to shape the change rather than be shaped by it.

“I don’t think people know what it takes to be a music director,” St.Clair says. “Just over the last 15 years the whole spectrum has changed immensely. The mission is the same, but breadth of offerings and types of programs have evolved as the audience has grown and their respect and appetite for the art form has developed.”

The rate of change has been particularly accelerated for Pacific Symphony, a comparatively young orchestra driven toward innovation, performing in a region that appreciates an entrepreneurial spirit.

“Pacific Symphony has always been a major orchestra in the making,” he says, “in that from a few years before I arrived, everyone involved with the Symphony came from big orchestras. Jim Medvitz came from the Houston Symphony, Lou Spisto came to Pacific Symphony from the Pittsburgh Symphony, and I had been introduced to the Symphony by John Williams while I was assistant conductor of the Boston Symphony.

“What that brought to the Symphony’s development was a knowledge of what it takes to be a major orchestra. Had the three of us not come from major orchestras in that period of the Symphony’s life, the trajectory could have been very different. What our President John Forsyte has brought is exactly the same thing. He was under the tutelage of Henry Fogel, and on and on. That detail has done a lot, in retrospect, to create the orchestra we have now.”

Today, the Symphony weds traditional orchestral practice with new approaches that speak to modern audiences. “Music Unwound,” for example, an initiative now in its fifth year, has served as a lab for experimentation.

“Music Unwound” came from a desire to provide contextualization for programs,” says St.Clair. “How do you contextualize music so it could be better understood? The grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation catapulted us into exploring new ways we could present music, and those innovations have become a part of our DNA.”

This season’s “Music Unwound” concerts come to a conclusion June 11-13 with “Fire and Water,” bringing together Vivaldi and Wagner (selections from Götterdammerung sung by internationally celebrated soprano and CSUF alumna Deborah Voigt), along with a world premiere by composer Laura Karpman accompanied by video from Gregory MacGillivray. The concert also spotlights the Symphony’s principal flutist Benjamin Smolen as soloist. All with a free live simulcast of the concert in the hall’s outdoor plaza. The concert represents much of what St.Clair prizes in the orchestra’s development.

“The reason I programmed this the way I did was to raise the flag,” he says, “to say ‘This is what we’ve become.’ The flexibility and agility we have as an organization to take advantage of positive new things on the horizon, to avoid the pitfalls of certain other institutions, the versatility, really, is one of the most important assets we have.”

With all the transformation, where to from here?

“We’ve never had a season where we haven’t developed, altered, enhanced and recreated ourselves,” he says. “That’s not going to stop. We still don’t know what we’re going to be when we grow up. We’re still getting better, getting more efficient, serving more people as Orange County’s orchestra. The reason we have such incredibly powerful dedication by our Board is the fact they’ve always been on a ship that’s kept moving. We all realize that every drop of energy and generosity we receive is put into the lifecycle of the Symphony to support growth and opportunity.

“I definitely think that you need important goals set out three or four years in advance. We are still living off the adrenaline that we left Europe with at our final concert in Vienna, but that can only last so long. We’re not just sitting in one place. We need greater challenges, a tour needs to be on the horizon. The involvement and motivation from the musicians themselves is creating excitement from within the orchestra, and this creates a new well of energy just now springing forth. I’m as excited as anyone.”
Deborah Voigt is increasingly recognized as one of the world’s most versatile singers and one of music’s most endearing personalities. Through her performances and television appearances, she is known for the singular power and beauty of her voice, as well as for her captivating stage presence. Having made her name as a leading dramatic soprano, she is internationally revered for her performances in the operas of Wagner, Strauss and more, and is also an active recitalist and performer of Broadway standards and popular songs. Besides boasting an extensive discography, she appears regularly as both performer and host in the Metropolitan Opera’s Live in HD series, which is transmitted live to movie theaters around the world.

The 2014-15 season sees one of Voigt’s most personal projects come to fruition, with HarperCollins’s publication of her candid, funny and soul-baring memoir Call Me Debbie: True Confessions of a Down-to-Earth Diva. She returns to the opera house, reprising her star turn in Francesca Zambello’s Salome for her Dallas Opera debut; making her title role debut in a new staging of The Merry Widow at Michigan Opera Theater; and undertaking the roles of Elisabeth and Venus in Tannhäuser at the Hamburg State Opera—her first time singing both parts in the same production. In concert, she headlines the Las Vegas Philharmonic’s opening-night gala and season-closing events at both Pacific Symphony and the University of Southern Mississippi Symphony, which she joins for “An Evening with Deborah Voigt.” As WQXR’s inaugural Susan W. Rose artist-in-residence, she co-hosts the opening-night broadcast of Carnegie Hall Live, hosts the classical station’s new fall series The Sopranos with Debbie Voigt; hosts and performs at the New York Public Radio Gala; and co-hosts a number of opera events and masterclasses at WQXR’s Jerome L. Greene Performance Space. Meanwhile, as returning artist-in-residence at the Washington National Opera, the beloved soprano continues mentoring young singers in the company’s Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program.

Last season, Voigt hosted the San Francisco benefit concert for Sing with Haiti, to aid the rebuilding of Haiti’s Holy Trinity Music School, destroyed in the earthquake of 2010. Under James Levine’s leadership, she made her role debut as Marie in Berg’sraveeen in Lessing’s The Merry Widow at Michigan Opera Theater; and undertaking the roles of Elisabeth and Venus in Tannhäuser at the Hamburg State Opera—her first time singing both parts in the same production. In concert, she headlines the Las Vegas Philharmonic’s opening-night gala and season-closing events at both Pacific Symphony and the University of Southern Mississippi Symphony, which she joins for “An Evening with Deborah Voigt.” As WQXR’s inaugural Susan W. Rose artist-in-residence, she co-hosts the opening-night broadcast of Carnegie Hall Live, hosts the classical station’s new fall series The Sopranos with Debbie Voigt; hosts and performs at the New York Public Radio Gala; and co-hosts a number of opera events and masterclasses at WQXR’s Jerome L. Greene Performance Space. Meanwhile, as returning artist-in-residence at the Washington National Opera, the beloved soprano continues mentoring young singers in the company’s Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program.

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Throughout her career, Voigt has given definitive performances of iconic roles in German opera, from Richard Strauss’s Ariadne, Salome, Kaiserring (Die Frau ohne Schatten) and Chrysothemis (Elektra) to Wagner’s Siegfride (Die Walküre), Elisabeth (Tannhäuser) and Isolde. She is also noted for starring roles in Strauss’s Egyptian Helen, Der Rosenkavalier and Friedensnstag; Wagner’s Lohengrin; and Berlioz’s Les Troyens, and her portrayals of such popular Italian roles as Tosca, Aida, Amelia (Un Ballo in Maschera), Leonora (La Forza del Destino), La Gioconda and Minnie (La Fanciulla del West).

Voigt’s extensive discography includes two popular and critically successful solo recordings for EMI Classics: All My Heart: Deborah Voigt Sings American Songs with pianist Brian Zeger, named one of the “Best of the Year” by Opera News magazine, and the Billboard top-five bestseller Obsessions, which presents scenes and arias from operas by Wagner and Strauss. Her recording of Strauss’s Egyptian Helen was another Billboard bestseller and was again named one of the best of the year by Opera News. Deutsche Grammophon released a live recording of Voigt’s headlining role debut in the 2003 Vienna State Opera Tristan and Isolde, as well as a Blu-ray DVD set of her starring role as Brünnhilde in Robert Lepage’s visionary Ring cycle at the Met, which won the Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording of 2013.

Voigt studied at California State University, Fullerton. She was a member of San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program and won both the Gold Medal in Moscow’s International Tchaikovsky Competition and First Prize at Philadelphia’s Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition. A Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, she was Musical America’s Vocalist of the Year 2003, won a 2007 Opera News Award for distinguished achievement, and in 2009 received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of South Carolina. Known to Twitter fans as a “Dramatic soprano and down-to-earth Diva,” Voigt was named by the Los Angeles Times as one of the top 25 cultural tweeters to follow.
A composer who brings to her music feverish imagination, impeccable musicianship, complexity, versatility, unbridled joy and fearlessness, Laura Karpman's music is, in the words of George Manahan, music director of New York City Opera, “a rare combination of heart and groin.” With her rigorous musical approach, coupled with conceptual and progressive uses of technology and recording, Karpman is a true 21st-century American composer. She is one of a handful of female composers with an active career in film and television, winning four Emmys and receiving an additional seven nominations, an Annie Award nomination and a GANG award and nomination for her video game music. She was named one of the most important women in Hollywood by Variety Magazine, and is a professor at UCLA in the School of Theater, Film and Television.

A native of Los Angeles, Karpman began composing music at 7 years old and continued her studies at Phillips Academy at Andover and the National Music Camp, Interlochen, Mich. Her lifelong obsession with jazz began early on as well, when, at age 11 she started memorizing Ella Fitzgerald’s scat solos.

Later she started playing and singing in high school bands, sneaking into clubs with a fake I.D. to hear great players like Anthony Braxton, Oscar Peterson, Ella Fitzgerald, Ahmad Jamal and Betty Carter, among others.

Karpman attended the University of Michigan School of Music, studying composition with William Bolcom and Leslie Bassett, and spent a life-changing summer studying with the legendary Nadia Boulanger at Fontainebleau. She then went on to Juilliard, where she received her master’s and doctoral degrees as a student of Milton Babbitt, composing and studying the complexities of concert music by day, while playing jazz and scat singing in Manhattan clubs by night.

Benjamin Smolen was appointed principal flutist of Pacific Symphony in September 2011. Since beginning his studies at the age of 10 in Charlotte, North Carolina, he has won top prizes at the Haynes International Flute Competition, the James Pappoutsakis Memorial Flute Competition and the New York Flute Club Young Artist Competition. He has also given solo performances with the Princeton University Orchestra, Charlotte Civic and Youth Orchestras, Gardner Webb Symphony Orchestra, and on National Public Radio’s From the Top with pianist Christopher O’Riley. His performances have been featured on NPR, WGBH-Boston, French National Radio, and the Naxos and Mode record labels. During the summer, Smolen has participated in the Manchester Music Festival, the American Institute of Musical Studies Festival Orchestra in Graz, and twice as a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center.

Smolen completed his undergraduate studies in the Music and Slavic departments at Princeton University, during which time he also completed a Performance Diploma at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory. He subsequently earned a Master of Music degree in Flute Performance at the New England Conservatory and a Performance Certificate from the University of Michigan. His primary teachers include Paula Robison, Michael Parloff, Amy Porter, Jayn Rosenfeld and Jennifer Dior.
Greg MacGillivray is a giant-screen documentary filmmaker who has produced and directed some of the most successful films in the IMAX® film format, including the box-office hit Everest and the Academy Award-nominated films The Living Sea and Dolphins. With 35 giant-screen IMAX/IMAX 3D films to his credit, MacGillivray has shot more 70mm film than anyone in cinema history—more than two million feet. He is the first documentary filmmaker to reach the $1 billion benchmark in worldwide ticket sales. An ardent ocean conservationist, MacGillivray and his wife Barbara recently founded the One World One Ocean Foundation, a non-profit public charity devoted to science education through giant-screen films and companion programming. The Foundation’s first initiative is the One World One Ocean campaign, MacGillivray’s most ambitious project yet: a sustained, multi-platform ocean media campaign aimed at changing the way people see and value the ocean. The campaign includes three IMAX films, a television series, a feature documentary, and a series of original online programming—all to be released in collaboration with MacGillivray Freeman Films over the next five years. To The Arctic is the first film presentation of One World One Ocean.

Tempe Hale is a Los Angeles visual artist and filmmaker who works in animation and documentary, combining hand-drawn worlds with documentation of family and community narratives. She bends “Magical Realism” to explore what it means to be human and the choices we make for ourselves in the face of difficulty. Her animations have screened at Chitrakatha India, Expotoons in Buenos Aires, EICTV Cuba, DropInk TV in Japan, and won Best Animation at the Women in Film Festival in Los Angeles 2013. She spent 10 years in the Monterey Bay area where she was the co-founder of Young Artists’ Studio, an after-school art program for disabled teenagers, funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Upon her return to her native Los Angeles in 2010, she produced commercials at Brewster Parsons and in 2014, earned an MFA in experimental animation from the California Institute of the Arts. This past year she was associate producer on an Alison Eastwood feature film completing production in spring 2015.

Thank you to our Thursday Night Concert Sponsor

Judith Posnikoff

Judith Posnikoff, co-founder and managing director at Pacific Alternative Asset Management Company (PAAMCO) is an impactful philanthropist in Orange County. She serves on the boards of Pacific Symphony, The Wooden Floor, the Second Harvest Food Bank, the Foundation for the Great Park and Defenders of Wildlife. In addition, she is a member of the founding board of directors of the Association of Women in Alternative Investing, and the 100 Women in Hedge Funds Institute. Judy’s first involvement with Pacific Symphony was as the underwriter of From the Top, a nationally syndicated radio show in 2013, and she is an active member of the Symphony’s Development Committee. We are most grateful to Judy Posnikoff for her generous support, and for the underwriting of Thursday evening’s concert.