SEGERSTROM CENTER FOR THE ARTS
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall
Concert begins at 8 p.m. Preview Talk with Alan Chapman begins at 7 p.m.

2012-2013 HAL & JEANETTE SEGERSTROM
FAMILY FOUNDATION CLASSICAL SERIES

ALEXANDER SHELLEY • CONDUCTOR
ALISA WEILERSTEIN • CELLO

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL
(1685-1759)
Music for the Royal Fireworks, HWV 351
Overture
Bourrée
La Paix
La Réjouissance
Menuet I & II

CLAUDE DEBUSSY
(1862-1918)
La Mer (The Sea)
From Dawn to Noon on the Sea
Play of the Waves
Dialogue of Wind and Sea

ANTONIN DVOŘÁK
(1841-1904)
Concerto in B Minor for Cello & Orchestra, Op. 104
Allegro
Adagio ma non troppo
Finale: Allegro moderato
Alisa Weilerstein

INTERMISSION

PACIFIC SYMPHONY PROUDLY RECOGNIZES ITS OFFICIAL PARTNERS

Pacific Symphony gratefully acknowledges the support of its 12,500 subscribing patrons. Thank you!
Music for the Royal Fireworks

Instrumentation: 3 oboes, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 3 horns, 3 trumpets, timpani, harpsichord, strings
Performance Time: 19 minutes

Background

Recognized almost everywhere as “the royal fireworks music,” this suite is known for what it has and what it doesn’t have. What it has: gorgeous melodies in abundance; majestic Baroque rhythms intensified by a large ensemble, heavy on the brasses and woodwinds; and a fabulous sense of occasion, like a dozen stirring fanfares rolled into one. What it doesn’t have: as many stringed instruments as you might expect in Handel’s most abundantly scored work.

Handel’s Music for the Royal Fireworks was commissioned to mark the muddled end to the muddled War of the Austrian Succession, in which England’s stake seemed limited to the personal interest of King George II. As a native of Germany and a scion of the royal house of Hanover, he was England’s dog in a continental fight that ended with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, ensuring his place in the Hanoverian succession. A royal celebration was in order — planned by the stage designer of the Paris Opéra to include the most spectacular fireworks in the most spectacular setting imaginable on April 27, 1749.

 Appropriately enough, the music commissioned for the occasion was to be provided by England’s most eminent composer, George Frideric Handel, who occupied the position of Composer to the Royal Chapel. Like the king, Handel was a native of Germany who adopted England as his home. His wild popularity and success were based not only on the brilliance of his music, but also on his skill as an entrepreneur and producer of musical events. Regarding matters musical in a royal commission, only one person could outrank him: the king himself. But when George II insisted that the music to accompany the royal fireworks should include only martial instruments (primarily brasses) and no “fiddles” (anything with strings), Handel did not comply — instead including a complement of strings just sufficient to balance the “martial instruments” in abundance.

The preparations for the celebration seemed to galvanize the entire city of London for six months in advance of the event: The set machine measuring more than 100 feet in length and height took shape. Props and settings of unprecedented opulence and scale were constructed. As the festival day approached, 101 cannons took their places. Public rehearsals were mobbed. Then, as if to vindicate Handel’s judgment, the royal fireworks turned into a royal fiasco, owing in part to a convergence of bad planning and bad weather. Display areas were poorly lit, the fireworks were incomplete in their spectacular, and a stage pavilion burned down in the middle of it all. The sense of disaster ruining a moment of triumph was so strong that accounts of the debacle noted “only two persons were killed” in the ensuing melee. The one unqualified success: Handel’s music, which won immediate acclaim and was repeated in a concert the following month to benefit his favorite charity, the Foundling Hospital (also a beneficiary of his annual Messiah concerts).

What to listen for

Baroque instrumental suites are typically dance movements that alternate fast and slow tempos — a description that fits Handel’s Music for the Royal Fireworks but hardly conveys its grandeur and beauty. The suite opens with what may be the most grandiloquent of Handel’s musical utterances, an overture in the French style that is all brass and dignity, with stately dotted rhythms conveying the majestic procession of state. This overture opens onto a series of brief, celebratory dances including a bourrée and two minuets, along with two movements honoring the noble character of the sovereign: La Paix, a pastorale representing King George II as the guardian of the peace of the realm, and La Réjouissance, expressing popular rejoicing occasioned by the king’s glorious victory in war. (King George II was, in fact, the last English king to lead troops in battle.)

Overall, the sumptuous sound of the royal fireworks music is an apotheosis of both the Baroque era and of the monarch for whom Handel wrote it. The end of the Baroque era in classical music is sometimes placed at 1750, the year that Bach died; Music for the Royal Fireworks was written just one year earlier. With the Classical era soon to come, this suite is one of the late glories of Baroque style.

La Mer

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 5 trumpets, 2 trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, 3 percussion, 2 harps, strings
Performance Time: 23 minutes

Background

Is there a composer more closely associated with water, or more vivid in describing it, than Claude Debussy? Like Benjamin Britten in his operas, Debussy returned to the sea again and again in songs and descriptive works for orchestra. “I love the sea and I have listened to it passionately,” he wrote. And as he confessed to his friend and fellow-composer André Messager, “You may not have known that I was destined for a sailor’s life, and it was only by
chance that fate led me in another direction. Yet I have always felt a passionate love for the sea...."

But it turns out that Debussy’s experience of the sea — so poetically infused with impressionistic color, light and rhythmic sway — was a triumph of his imagination over reality; the composer’s experience of life on the water was limited to “two [English] Channel crossings and some seaside holidays,” musicologist Richard Freed informs us. Debussy took one of those seaside holidays at the English Channel town of Eastbourne in 1905, two years after he began sketching La Mer, specifically to complete the work at the seaside.

Though Debussy never completed a symphony, La Mer challenges every section of the orchestra and is certainly symphonic in its scope. And, as with a symphony, its three movements are intended to be performed together — a single sequence representing a day on the sea. As Freed suggests, La Mer is as close to a Debussy symphony as any composition he gave us. By the time of its composition, a year after his operatic masterpiece Pelléas et Mélisande, the 20th century was young and Debussy was elevating his music to new heights, applying his large gifts in large-scaled works. Their breadth intensified the characteristics that his contemporary listeners found challenging: the sensuous, modal scales, ambiguous rhythms, and — most of all — those gliding, unresolved harmonies that keep on rolling and never arrive.

At early performances, doubters predominated even among well-informed listeners, with some critics waggishly comparing their experience with La Mer to a struggle for survival at sea. Among its early champions were composers including Giacomo Puccini and Debussy’s friend Erik Satie. Today, with the sounds of French Impressionist music more familiar to our ears, La Mer is universally appreciated as the masterpiece it is.

What to listen for

The first movement of La Mer represents “From Dawn to Noon on the Sea,” with the sun rising to its height and the waves gathering energy. Here, as in all three movements, brief fragments of melody take shape and dematerialize almost before we can recognize them, gesturally forming the impression of the rocking waters and the sparkle of light. The latent power of the waves is suggested by the ebb and flow of the cellos, with echoes in the horns and timpani.

In “The Play of the Waves,” Debussy’s fragmented, watery figures dart from section to section of the orchestra, with xylophone and harp accents seeming to glint on the water. Motion is ever-present in La Mer, and in this movement, a kind of generalized energy gains in tension as it progresses, leading us directly to the final “Dialogue of the Wind and Sea.” Here Debussy reprises a theme from the opening movement, but restates it with greater dynamic and textural contrasts. The effect is one of growing power and urgency, reflecting the sea’s immensity.

As always, a word of caution when listening to Debussy: relax. Let the music carry you along. Like those early critics, you won’t hear singable tunes or chord progressions that resolve and start over. But you will hear a gorgeously sensual evocation of the sea in all its variety.

Cello Concerto

Instrumentation: 2 flutes (second doubling on piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 3 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 trombones, bass trombone, tuba, timpani, percussion, strings, solo cello

Performance Time: 40 minutes

Background

Dvořák’s Cello Concerto in B minor is one of those pieces that is said to have “changed everything.” Yes, other masterpieces for the cello preceded it — notably Bach’s six suites for unaccompanied cello. Among Romantic-era composers, Schumann and Saint-Saëns wrote important cello concertos. But before Dvořák wrote this concerto for his friend Hanuš Wihan, the instrument was viewed mainly as suitable for chamber music or as a team player in the orchestra. And Dvořák himself seemed to find the cello somewhat problematic, complaining of a “nasal” upper register and a lower register that could sound hoarse. In fact, the composer had started a cello concerto in A major almost 30 years earlier, but never completed it. Over the years, his grumblings about the cello and this concerto have become almost legendary, perhaps because they are so starkly at odds with the work’s merits. “I have... written a cello concerto, but am sorry to this day I did so, and I never intend to write another,” he told one of his composition students. “...As a solo instrument [the cello] isn’t much good.”

It’s difficult to reconcile this backstory with the passion and brilliance that distinguish Dvořák’s cello concerto. Today we encounter nothing in this work that hints at revolution, or at discontent with the instrument. The concerto presents itself in the traditional romantic mold of three movements. As was customary, the tempos are arranged in fast-slow-fast sequence. The long, stately introduction that precedes the solo cello’s entrance could even have been called old-fashioned when it was composed in 1894 and 1895.

What was there about this concerto that astounded early listeners?

In fact, it was Dvořák’s success in elevating the cello to the level of the violin or piano as a solo instrument. This is a concerto not of intimacy but of grandeur and passion, imbued with a sense of
What to listen for

Composed in traditional sonata form, this is a big concerto with a big sound. Its extended introductory section quickly establishes a mood of high drama, with a primary and secondary theme stated in the orchestra; the primary theme recurs throughout the first movement. The aural stakes are high by the time the sound of the orchestra recedes into silence, clearing the way for the cello’s solo entrance — a passage that almost growls at us in its seriousness. It is spontaneous, yet portentous. The movement also quickly presents us with virtuosic display, with spectacular triple-stop chords, double-stops, and parallel octaves. Following an impressive passage of trills and a high octave on B, the movement concludes with an emphatic restatement of the initial theme.

In the second movement — an extended, contemplative adagio — we hear the melody of Dvořák’s song “Lasst mich allein,” one of his sister-in-law Josefiná’s favorites. This theme returns at the end of the concerto, interrupting the momentum of the finale. Here the typically energetic final movement, propelled until this point by dancing rhythms, gives way to a melancholy passage in which the solo cello is joined by a solo violin. Dvořák biographer Otakar Sourek takes special note of this reprised theme as a tribute to Josefiná, who was ill while the concerto was being composed. He suggests a romantic subtext: In the concerto’s closing — written when Dvořák had returned to Bohemia from New York — this section, slow and sad, conveys the sense of a love duet that is almost operatic in its drama. It takes on added emphasis coming, as it does, just when we expect to hear the concerto’s fastest music: a climactic final presto.

On matters of fingering, bowing, cadenzas and the like, Dvořák solicited advice from his friend Hanuš Wihan, the cellist to whom the concerto is dedicated. But he rejected almost all the help he was given, and insisted that the concerto be played as written. That fact, along with Wihan’s failure to play its premiere, was long taken as evidence that the two erstwhile friends had fallen out. Happily, we now know that Wihan and Dvořák maintained their cordial relationship, and Wihan’s creditable edition of the concerto is sometimes performed as a matter of historical interest.

Dvořák’s friend Johannes Brahms recognized the cello concerto as a breakthrough for the instrument, and potentially for all music. “Why on earth didn’t I know that one could write a cello concerto like this?” he reportedly asked on his deathbed. (His beautiful double concerto for violin and cello draws far less on the cello’s emotional range. “Had I known, I would have written one long ago.”) Almost 80 years later, editor and author Stephen Greco added his voice retrospectively: “Alas the cello,” he wrote in an elegy after Casals’ death in 1973, “With her subtle hips and winy voice/That only some can savor...” It’s doubtful he could have captured the dark richness of the cello in those lines if Dvořák had not done so first in this concerto.

Michael Clive is editor-in-chief of the Santa Fe Opera and blogs as The Operahound for Classical TV.com.

Stay connected with Pacific Symphony online!

Facebook Twitter Tumblr YouTube Mobile App

www.PacificSymphony.org
In 2012-13, Music Director Carl St.Clair celebrates his 23rd season with Pacific Symphony. 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. St.Clair’s lengthy history with the Symphony 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 40 years — due in large part to St.Clair’s leadership.

The 2012-13 season continues the three-year opera-vocal initiative, “Symphonic Voices," with a semi-staged production of Puccini’s *Tosca*, and a “Music Unwound” concert featuring Soprano Ute Lemper singing Kurt Weill’s *Seven Deadly Sins* as well as songs by George Gershwin and Edith Piaf. Two additional “Music Unwound” concerts highlighted by multimedia elements and innovative formats include Mozart’s *Requiem* and the 100th anniversary of Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring*. The 13th American Composers Festival is a jazz celebration featuring the Duke Ellington Orchestra and composer Daniel Schnyder.

In 2008-09, St.Clair celebrated the milestone 30th anniversary of Pacific Symphony. In 2006-07, he led the orchestra’s historic move into its home in the Renee 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. The Symphony received rave reviews from Europe’s classical music critics — 22 reviews in total.

From 2008 to 2010, 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 recently led Wagner’s *Ring Cycle* to great critical acclaim. St.Clair 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 orchestras in Europe.

St.Clair’s international career has him conducting abroad numerous 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 successfully 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. St.Clair’s commitment to the development and performance of new works by American composers is evident in the wealth of commissions and recordings by Pacific Symphony. St.Clair has led the orchestra in numerous critically acclaimed albums including two piano concertos of Lukas Foss on the harmonia mundi label. Under his guidance, the orchestra has commissioned works which later became recordings, including Philip Glass’ *The Passion of Ramakrishna*, Richard Danielpour’s *An American Requiem* on Reference Recordings and Elliot Goldenthal’s *Fire Water Paper: A Vietnam Oratorio* on Sony Classical with cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Other composers commissioned by St.Clair and Pacific Symphony include William Bolcom, Philip Glass, Zhou Long, Tobias Picker, Frank Ticheli and Chen Yi, Curt Cacioppo, Stephen Scott, Jim Self (the Symphony’s principal tubist), Christopher Theofanidis and James Newton Howard.

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 education programs including Classical Connections, arts-X-press and Class Act.
B orn in 1979, English conductor Alexander Shelley was unanimously awarded first prize in the 2005 Leeds Conductors Competition and was described in the press as “the most exciting and gifted young conductor to have taken this highly prestigious award. His conducting technique is immaculate, everything crystal clear and a tool to his inborn musicality.”

In recent seasons Shelley has performed with, among others, the BBC Symphony, Royal Philharmonic, Philharmonia, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra in Caracas, Mozart Orchestra Salzburg, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, MDR Leipzig, Komische Oper Berlin, Stockholm Philharmonic, Gothenburg Symphony, Swedish Radio, National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, Seattle and Houston Symphony Orchestras, City of Birmingham Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the English, Scottish and Zurich Chamber orchestras, the Orchestre National de Bordeaux and the Melbourne, Malaysia, New Zealand, Seoul and Singapore symphony orchestras.

Forthcoming highlights include debuts with the Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, the Konzerthausorchester and Deutches Sinfonie Orchester Berlin, NDR Radiophilharmonie, Sapporo Symphony, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, the symphony orchestras of Luxembourg, Monte Carlo and Montpellier, an extended tour of Germany with the Bundesjugendorchester and, in February 2013, four performances of Verdi’s Requiem with the Mozarteum Orchestra at the Festspielhaus Salzburg.

In 2012, Shelley completed his third year as chief conductor of Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra. In September 2011, he signed a four-year extension to his contract, ensuring that he will continue both his intensive subscription, regional and international concert schedule with the orchestra (including tours to Italy, Belgium, China and a re-invitation to the Musikverein in Vienna) until 2017.

Shelley also enjoys a close relationship with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, with whom he performs regularly both in Bremen and around Germany. He is artistic director of their Zukunftslabor project — an award-winning series which aims to build a lasting relationship between the orchestra and a new generation of concert-goers through grass-roots engagement and which uses music as a source for social cohesion and integration.

Having made his professional opera debut with The Merry Widow for Royal Danish Opera in 2008, Shelley was re-invited for a new production of Gounod’s Romeo and Juliet in 2011. Forthcoming opera productions include La Bohéme for Opera Lyra at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa in 2012 and a new production of Figaro for Opera North in 2014.

The son of professional musicians, Shelley studied cello with Timothy Hugh and Steven Doane at the Royal College of Music and professor Johannes Goritzki at the Robert-Schumann-Hochschule, Dusseldorf. He studied conducting with professor Thomas Gabrisch and in 2001 he founded the Schumann Camerata in Dusseldorf. Following over 80 concerts with this young chamber orchestra both in Germany and abroad, last season they presented the fourth edition of “440Hz,” an innovative series of concerts involving prominent German television, stage and musical personalities which Shelley conceived as a major initiative to attract young adults to the concert hall.
American cellist Alisa Weilerstein has attracted widespread attention worldwide for playing that combines a natural virtuosic command and technical precision with impassioned musicianship. Following her Zankel Hall recital debut in 2008, Justin Davidson of New York Magazine said: “Whatever she plays sounds custom-composed for her, as if she has a natural affinity with everything.” In September 2011, she was named a MacArthur Foundation Fellow and in 2010 she became an exclusive recording artist for Decca Classics, the first cellist to be signed by the prestigious label in over 30 years. Weilerstein’s debut album with Decca, released in November 2012, features performances of the Elgar Cello Concerto in E Minor and the Elliott Carter Cello Concerto with conductor Daniel Barenboim and the Berlin Staatskapelle.

Weilerstein has appeared with all of the major orchestras throughout the United States and Europe with conductors including Marin Alsop, Daniel Barenboim, Pablo Heras-Casado, Sir Andrew Davis, Gustavo Dudamel, Sir Mark Elder, Christoph Eschenbach, Manfred Honeck, Marek Janowski, Paavo Järvi, Jeffrey Kahane, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Ludovic Morlot, Peter Oundjian, Matthias Pintscher, Yuri Temirkanov, Osmo Vänskä, Simone Young and David Zinman.

Weilerstein’s 2012-13 season includes engagements in Canada, Belgium, Finland, France, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Russia and across the United States. In September 2012, she returned to Germany to perform the Elliott Carter Cello Concerto with Daniel Barenboim and the Berlin Staatskapelle. On November 1, Weilerstein performed Haydn’s D major Cello Concerto with Nicholas McGegan and the Orchestra of St. Luke’s at Carnegie Hall. She will appear with conductor Gianandrea Noseda and the Philadelphia Orchestra in December (Elgar Cello Concerto), conductor Lionel Bringuier with the Atlanta Symphony in April (Shostakovich Cello Concerto No. 1) and at the Kennedy Center with conductor Christoph Eschenbach and the National Symphony Orchestra in May (Elgar Cello Concerto). In January 2013, Weilerstein will tour Europe with pianist Inon Barnatan, visiting Germany, Spain and the Netherlands. Weilerstein will make her debut with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields in March for a 16-city tour with Mr. Barnatan.

Her 2011-12 season included return engagements with the Minnesota and Cleveland Orchestras and a tour to Australia, appearing with conductors Tadaaki Otaka (Tchaikovsky’s “Rococo” Variations), Paul Daniel (Shostakovich’s Cello Concerto No. 1) and Osmo Vänskä (Prokofiev’s Cello Concerto). During this tour period she made her debut with the Seoul Philharmonic in Korea.

In August 2010 she made her BBC Proms debut with the Minnesota Orchestra and Osmo Vänskä performing Shostakovich’s Cello Concerto No. 1. She subsequently performed this work on a 15-city U.S. tour with the St. Petersburg Philharmonic led by Yuri Temirkanov and Nikolai Alexeev in 2011 that included appearances in Walt Disney Concert Hall, Davies Symphony Hall, Boston’s Symphony Hall, Chicago’s Orchestra Hall and Carnegie Hall.

In 2009, Weilerstein was one of four artists invited by the First Lady, Michelle Obama, to participate in a widely-applauded and high-profile classical music event at the White House that included student workshops hosted by the First Lady, and playing for guests including President Obama and the First Family. In 2008, Weilerstein was awarded Lincoln Center’s Martin E. Segal prize for exceptional achievement; in 2006, she was named the winner of that year’s Leonard Bernstein Award; and in 2000 she received an Avery Fisher Career Grant.

Committed to expanding the cello repertoire, Weilerstein is a fervent champion of new music. She has performed Osvaldo Golijov’s Azul for cello and orchestra around the world, which was originally written for Yo-Yo Ma. She also frequently performs Golijov’s Omaramor for solo cello. In 2008 she gave the world premiere of Lera Auerbach’s 24 Preludes for Violoncello and Piano with Auerbach at the Caramoor International Music Festival. The duo has subsequently performed this work, juxtaposing it with Shostakovich’s 24 Preludes for Piano arranged for cello and piano by Auerbach, at the Schleswig-Holstein Festival, the Kennedy Center and for San Francisco Performances.
Pacific Symphony, celebrating its 34th season in 2012-13, is led by Music Director Carl St.Clair, who marks his 23rd season with the orchestra. The largest orchestra formed in the U.S. in the last 40 years, the Symphony is recognized as an outstanding ensemble making strides on both the national and international scene, as well as in its own burgeoning community of Orange County. Presenting more than 100 concerts a year and a rich array of education and community programs, the Symphony reaches more than 275,000 residents—from school children to senior citizens.

The Symphony offers moving musical experiences with repertoire ranging from the great orchestral masterworks to music from today’s most prominent composers, highlighted by the annual American Composers Festival and a new series of multi-media concerts called “Music Unwound.”

The Symphony also offers a popular Pops season led by Principal Pops Conductor Richard Kaufman, who celebrates 22 years with the orchestra in 2012-13. The Pops series stars some of the world’s leading entertainers and is enhanced by state-of-the-art video and sound. Each Pacific Symphony season also includes Café Ludwig, a three-concert chamber music series, and Classical Connections, an orchestral series on Sunday afternoons offering rich explorations of selected works led by St.Clair. Assistant Conductor Maxim Eshkenazy, now in his final season with the Symphony, brings a passionate commitment to building the next generation of audience and performer through his leadership of the Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra as well as the highly regarded Family Musical Mornings series.

Since 2006-07, the Symphony has performed in the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, with striking architecture by Cesar Pelli and acoustics by the late Russell Johnson. In September 2008, the Symphony debuted the hall’s critically acclaimed 4,322-pipe William J. Gillespie Concert Organ. In March 2006, the Symphony embarked on its first European tour, performing in nine cities in three countries.

Founded in 1978, as a collaboration between California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) and North Orange County community leaders led by Marcy Mulville, the Symphony performed its first concerts at Fullerton’s Plummer Auditorium as the Fullerton Chamber Orchestra under the baton of then-CSUF orchestra conductor Keith Clark. The following season the Symphony expanded its size, changed its name to Pacific Symphony Orchestra and moved to Knott’s Berry Farm. The subsequent six seasons led by Keith Clark were at Santa Ana High School auditorium where the Symphony also made its first six acclaimed recordings. In September 1986, the Symphony moved to the new Orange County Performing Arts Center, where Clark served as music director until 1990.

The Symphony received the prestigious ASCAP Award for Adventuresome Programming in 2005 and 2010. In 2010, a study by the League of American Orchestras, “Fearless Journeys,” included the Symphony as one of the country’s five most innovative orchestras. The orchestra has commissioned such leading composers as Michael Daugherty, James Newton Howard, Paul Chihara, Philip Glass, William Bolcom, Daniel Catán, William Kraft, Tobias Picker, Frank Ticheli and Chen Yi, who composed a cello concerto in 2004 for Yo-Yo Ma. In March 2012, the Symphony premiered Danielpour's Toward a Season of Peace. The Symphony has also commissioned and recorded The Passion of Ramakrishna by Philip Glass (released in September 2012), An American Requiem, by Richard Danielpour, and Elliot Goldenthal’s Fire Water Paper: A Vietnam Oratorio with Yo-Yo Ma.

The Symphony’s award-winning education programs benefit from the vision of St.Clair and are designed to integrate the Symphony and its music into the community in ways that stimulate all ages. The orchestra’s Class Act program has been honored as one of nine exemplary orchestra education programs by the National Endowment for the Arts and the League of American Orchestras. The list of instrumental training initiatives includes Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra, Pacific Symphony Youth Wind Ensemble and Pacific Symphony Santiago Strings.

In addition to its winter home, the Symphony presents a summer outdoor series at Irvine’s Verizon Wireless Amphitheater, the organization’s summer residence since 1987.
MEET the orchestra

CARL ST.CLAIR • MUSIC DIRECTOR
William J. Gillespie Music Director Chair

RICHARD KAUFMAN • PRINCIPAL POPS CONDUCTOR
Hal and Jeanette Segerstrom Family Foundation Principal Pops Conductor Chair

MAXIM ESHKENAZY • ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
ALEJANDRO GUTIÉRREZ • ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
Mary E. Moore Family Assistant Conductor Chair

FIRST VIOLIN
Raymond Kobler
Concertmaster, 
Eleanor and Michael Gordon Chair
Paul Manaster
Associate Concertmaster
Jeanne Skrocki
Assistant Concertmaster
Nancy Coade Eldridge
Christine Frank
Kimiyo Takeya
Ayako Sugaya
Ann Shiau Tenney
Maia Jasper
Robert Schumitzky
Agnes Gottschewski
Dana Freeman
Grace Oh
Jean Kim
Angel Liu
Marisa Sorajja

SECOND VIOLIN
Bridget Dolkas*
Jessica Guideri**
Yen-Ping Lai
Yu-Tong Sharp
Ako Kojian
Ovsep Ketendjian
Linda Owen
Phil Luna
Marla Joy Weisshaar
Robin Sandusky
Alice Miller-Wrate
Shelly Shi

VIOLA
Robert Becker*
Catherine and James Emmi Chair
Meredith Crawford**
Carolyn Riley
John Acevedo
Erik Rynearson
Luke Maurer
Julia Staudhammer
Joseph Wen-Xiang Zhang
Pamela Jacobson
Adam Neeley
Cheryl Gates
Margaret Henken

CELLO
Timothy Landauer*
Kevin Plunkett**
John Acosta
Robert Vos
László Mező
Ian McKinnell
M. Andrew Honea
Waldemar de Almeida
Jennifer Goss
Rudolph Stein

BASS
Steven Edelman*
Douglas Basye**
Christian Kollgaard
David Parmeter†
Paul Zibits
David Black
Andrew Bumatay
Constance Deeter

FLUTE
Benjamin Smolen*
Valerie and Hans Imhof Chair
Sharon O’Connor
Cynthia Ellis

PICCOLO
Cynthia Ellis

OBOE
Jessica Pearlman*
Suzeanne R. Chonette Chair
Deborah Shidler

ENGLISH HORN
Lelie Resnick

CLARINET
Benjamin Lulich*
The Hanson Family Foundation Chair
David Chang

BASS CLARINET
Joshua Ranz

BASSOON
Rose Corrigan*
Elliott Moreau
Andrew Klein
Allen Savedoff

CONTRABASSOON
Allen Savedoff

FRENCH HORN
Keith Popejoy*
Mark Adams
James Taylor**
Russell Dicey

TRUMPET
Barry Perkins*
Tony Ellis
David Wailes

TROMBONE
Michael Hoffman*
David Stetson

BASS TROMBONE
Robert Sanders

TUBA
James Self*

TIMPANI
Todd Miller*

PERCUSSION
Robert A. Slack*
Cliff Hulling

HARP
Mindy Ball*
Michelle Temple

PIANO•CELESTE
Sandra Matthews*

PERSONNEL MANAGER
Paul Zibits

LIBRARIANS
Russell Dicey
Brent Anderson

PRODUCTION
STAGE MANAGER
Will Hunter

ASSISTANT
STAGE MANAGER
William Pruett

* Principal
** Assistant Principal
† On Leave

The musicians of Pacific Symphony are members of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 7.