The concert begins at 1 p.m.

**IRENE KROESEN • CONDUCTOR**

- **Traditional: Arr. Robert Kerr**
- **Fantasy on Simple Gifts**
- **Brian Balmages (b. 1975)**
- **Point Lookout (A Fantasy on Civil War Songs)**
- **Aaron Copland (1900–1990)**
  - **Grover’s Corners from Our Town**
  - **Arr. Paul Lavender**
  - **Sarah Liu, Hannah Velez, soloists**
- **Joshua Reznicow (b. 1975)**
- **American Sketches: a Fantasy for String Orchestra**
  - **Arr. Robert Longfield**
  - **Sein Yun, Rachel Tian, Lawrence Song, Giulia Roy, soloists**
- **Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990)**
  - **Arr. Robert Longfield**
  - **Bernstein Suite:**
  - **Danzon from Fancy Free**
  - **Arr. Stephen Bulla**
  - **One Hand, One Heart from West Side Story**
  - **Arr. Robert Longfield**
  - **America from West Side Story**
  - **Isabella Yuan, Angela Huang, Sol Choi, Irene Lee, soloists**
- **Louis Prima (1910–1978)**
  - **Sing, Sing, Sing**
  - **Arr. Dean Marshall & Bob Phillips**
  - **Eunice Lee, Jayden Yeung, violins**
  - **Mary LaBlanc, drumset**

This afternoon’s performance is generously sponsored by **Elaine Sarkaria.**
Fantasy on Simple Gifts
ARR. ROBERT KERR

Composer Robert Kerr has led a truly diverse musical career. After attending the North Carolina School of the Arts and receiving a master’s degree at the University of Tulsa, he has written music for Universal Studios, NASA, Barney and Disney World. Many of his compositions are politically involved, including his “Prayer for Peace” and his first symphony (composed in memory of September 11). Kerr’s works combine elements and styles derived from folk, popular and classical music. In addition to composing, Kerr is also a violinist, conductor and arranger. Kerr’s Fantasy on Simple Gifts is a series of variations on the traditional song “Simple Gifts,” including minor-key variations.

The original “Simple Gifts” is a traditional song of the Shakers, a deeply religious Christian sect (formally called the United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing). Living a communal life, the Shakers renounce worldly possessions and are devoted to a simple life of prayer and the belief that Christian perfection is possible on earth. Founded in England, the religious sect migrated to colonial America in 1774 and reached their heyday in the mid-19th century. Today they are almost extinct, but a single community survives in rural Maine with approximately four adherents.

The Shakers produced approximately 10,000 songs. This one, a dancing song, was composed in 1848 by Joseph Brackett (1797–1882), a member of the Shaker community in Alfred, Maine. The song was brought to international fame by Aaron Copland, who used it in 1944 at the climax of his ballet Appalachian Spring. Although it is often quoted out of context as a folk tune, there is considerable debate over whether it is proper to take what music scholar Jennifer DeLapp-Birkett calls “a living tradition with a deeply sacred basis” out of its context. Pieces like Fantasy on Simple Gifts speak to complicated musicological problems of ownership and authenticity.

Grover’s Corners
AARON COPLAND (1900–1990)

Having maintained an interest in Socialist ideas after seeing the economic suffering around him during the 1930s, Aaron Copland used his musical talents to help raise national spirits. After writing highly experimental music that combined urban jazz with neoclassical elements of his hero Stravinsky, Copland changed his musical style decisively to incorporate elements of American folk music. Like many American Socialists in the 1930s, he did not see any tension between Communism and American society. Quite the contrary, many in Socialist circles emphasized the compatibility between the two. At the same time, not to be understated is the fact that, like many other American Jews, Copland felt great patriotic pride in his country. The American themes and folk elements in his music represent a commitment to his social ideals, a wish to help his nation and compatriots, and the deep desire to assimilate into mainstream American culture common to the American Jewish community.

Although today Copland is famous for his ballets and orchestral music, he wrote the music for eight films. Grover’s Corner was taken from the play Our Town (1940). Based on a 1938 play by Thornton Wilder, it is an idyllic depiction of rural life in a fictional small town in southern New Hampshire (based on the town of Peterborough) during the years 1901-1913. It follows a young couple, Emily and George, as they grow from school children into adults. In the original play, Emily dies in childbirth. In the third act, a meditation on the precious value of life, Emily’s spirit implores those still living to cherish their lives. In the film version, Emily’s death is a dream, and she lives.

Copland was the perfect choice of composer for this film, having spent considerable time in an artist’s colony just outside of Peterborough. Writing about his philosophy of film music, he once noted, “The composer is in a special position to appreciate what music does to a film because he sees it first without any music. Movie audiences may not consciously realize they are listening to music when they view a film, but it works in their emotions nonetheless.”

Point Lookout
BRIAN BALMAGES (B. 1975)

Brian Balmages has enjoyed a prolific career. In addition to composing, he is also a conductor, performer and producer. He received his bachelor’s degree from James Madison University, and a master’s degree from the University of Miami. Currently, he is serving as professor of instrumental conducting and as band director at Towson University, near Baltimore. In 2013, Balmages had the high honor of composing music for the inaugural prayer service at President Barack Obama’s second term.

Point Lookout was inspired by the composer’s trip to Point Lookout State Park, the location in Maryland where the Potomac River meets the Chesapeake Bay. During the Civil War era, this was an extremely strategic location. Used initially as a military hospital, the site became a prison for Confederate soldiers and sympathizers; remains of the fort can still be seen today. Familiar songs emerging in snippets out of the texture reflect the echoes of history coming to life in the composer’s imagination as he walks around the park in the modern day.
American Sketches: A Fantasy for String Orchestra

JOSHUA REZNICOW (B. 1975)

Born in Minneapolis, Joshua Reznicow received his bachelor’s degree in string education, composition and theory from the University of Northern Iowa and his master’s degree in arts and teaching from Coe College (in Cedar Rapids, Iowa). A composer, director and string teacher, he is the director of orchestral activities in Linn-Marr High School, in Marion, Iowa. He also teaches composition and strings at Coe College. Composed in 2009, American Sketches was commissioned by Sandy Tatge and the Roosevelt High School Orchestra in Des Moines.

Bernstein Suite: "Danzon," "One Hand, One Heart," "America"

LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918–1990)

Composed for the Broadway stage in 1957, West Side Story remains the best known composition of Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990). In fact, West Side Story was almost East Side Story. The idea for the musical dates to 1949 discussions between Bernstein, choreographer Jerome Robbins, and librettists Arthur Laurents and Stephen Sondheim. The original idea was for a modern retelling of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet in New York’s Lower East Side, involving a Jewish Holocaust survivor and an anti-Semitic Irish-American street gang, the Jets. The idea gradually evolved over the next several years before reaching its current form.

Bernstein composed West Side Story at the same time as Candide; several musical selections migrated between the two works. Indeed, the song “One Hand, One Heart” was originally intended for Candide. Nevertheless, the two works are remarkably distinct: waltzes and other European aristocratic dance forms predominate in Candide, while West Side Story is heavily indebted to Latin and jazz influences. West Side Story premiered at the National Theatre in Washington, D.C. on Aug. 19, 1957, and ran for two years at the Winter Garden Theatre in New York starting on Sept. 26, 1957. The musical was propelled to fame in 1961 by a film adaptation.

A modern retelling of Romeo and Juliet, West Side Story takes place in an impoverished area of New York’s Upper West Side (interestingly, in precisely the same location where Lincoln Center would be built a decade later and Bernstein himself would conduct the New York Philharmonic). Two rival street gangs, the Jets (white) and Sharks (Puerto Rican) are having it out with one another; the leaders plan to fight each other to determine which gang would control the neighborhood. Tony, a former member of the Jets and the best friend of the Jets’ current leader, meets Maria, the sister of the Sharks’ leader; the two fall in love at first sight. When the two leaders fight, Tony kills his rival (Maria’s brother). Maria forgives Tony and the two decide to run away together; she sends a messenger to inform Tony of her plan. However, when the messenger (Anita) arrives at the Jets’ territory, they taunt and humiliate her. Enraged, she tells Tony that Maria is dead. Distraught with grief, Tony runs into the streets begging to be killed; he finds Maria still alive just before he is shot by a member of the Sharks. Maria begs everyone to stop the violence. While violence had been in musical theater before, the level of violence depicted in West Side Story was unprecedented—both acts end with corpses on stage.

In “America,” Anita sings about the perceived superiority of the mainland United States to Puerto Rico; the song incorporates references to the rhythms of Latin American popular music. In “One Hand, One Heart,” Maria and Tony pretend to marry each other, knowing that a real marriage would be out of the question because of the difference in their social class.

The 1944 ballet Fancy Free was commissioned by Jerome Robbins for the American Ballet Theatre; the piece premiered at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York (not bad for a 24-year-old composer). The plot centers on three sailors on leave in New York City during the war. Looking for dates, they only find two young women. The sailors decide to hold a dance competition where the two winners would go out with the young women. Equally matched, they end up fighting and scaring away their dates. “Danzón,” a Latin American dance from Cuba, represents the third sailor’s efforts in the competition.

Sing, Sing, Sing

LOUIS PRIMA (1911–1978)

Like jazz music in general, Louis Prima (1911-1978) was a New Orleans native. A trumpeter and singer, he studied violin as a youth, and was largely self-taught. During the 1940s he led a big band and was heavily influenced by the musical style of Louis Armstrong. His Sing, Sing, Sing (With a Swing), composed in 1936, is considered the hallmark of swing jazz. Later in his career, Prima turned to popular music; among his many compositions include Way Down Yonder in New Orleans and the music for the 1967 movie The Jungle Book.

Joshua Grayson is a Ph.D. candidate in historical musicology at the USC Thornton School of Music.
IRENE KROESEN  •  MUSIC DIRECTOR

Irene Kroesen received her bachelor’s degree in music education and teaching credential from Chapman University. Currently, Kroesen is a retired string specialist for the Irvine Unified School District (USD). From 1988 to 2011, Kroesen was an adjunct instructor at Chapman University where she taught the String Methods for music education majors. Kroesen has also served as a mentor teacher for Irvine USD as well as a designated master teacher for Chapman University and California State Universities, Long Beach and Fullerton. She has also written curriculum for county and state workshops as well as sharing and distributing her teaching materials to Placentia-Yorba USD and Garden Grove USD.

Kroesen has appeared as conductor of the Irvine Elementary and Middle School Honor Orchestras and guest conductor of the Middle School Honor Orchestras for Las Vegas Unified, Capistrano Unified, Placentia-Yorba Linda School District, Long Beach Unified, Fresno-Madeira County and the SCSBOA All-Southern Middle School Honor String Orchestra. Kroesen served as the guest conductor for the Inaugural Year 2015 SCSBOA Elementary Honor Orchestra. She has also served as manager and assistant conductor of the Orange County Youth Symphony Orchestra and is currently the conductor of Pacific Symphony Santiago Strings. She is listed in Who’s Who Among American Teachers and is a past recipient of the Alumni of the Year Award from the School of Music at Chapman University. In 2003, she received the Orange County Outstanding Arts Educator Award for Elementary Instrumental Music. In 2006, Kroesen was selected as the Irvine Unified School District Elementary Teacher of the Year.

As a string educator and clinician, Kroesen has given numerous workshops at both county and state music conferences as well as working with individual school orchestras from Nevada, Arizona and the country of Norway. She has also served as an adjudicator for the Disney Creative Challenge and has auditioned violinist and violists for both the All-Southern California Middle School and High School Honor Orchestras. In 2015, Kroesen served as program advisor for Pacific Symphony’s Strings for Generations program and is currently the music director for the 2016-17 season.

Kroesen is a member of the American String Teachers Association, Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association, Music Educators National Conference and California Music Educators Association. She is also a member of the Los Angeles Musicians Union and is active as a professional violist.

PACIFIC SYMPHONY SANTIAGO STRINGS 2016–17 SEASON

IRENE KROESEN  •  MUSIC DIRECTOR

Sections listed alphabetically

VIOLIN I
Joanna Bai
Evan Chan
Jehyeok (Justin) Heo
Rachel Kim
Ethan Lee
Eunice Lee
Kate Lee
Adam Lin
Sarah Liu
Alexander Tran
Hannah Velez
Austin Wang
Alison Yang
Isabella Yuan
Julia Yuen
Sein Yun
Mengshu Zhang

Ronica Cheng
Richard Feng
Jason Galantine
Sierra Green
Angela Huang
Grace Jin
Shayna Kaplan
Rebecca Liu
Sam Mikolajczyk
Gloria Park
Aniyah Shen
Rachel Tian
Tiffany Xiao
Leyland Yang
Kevin Ye
Jayden Yeung

Zoe Lee
Nicholas Pan
Kadie Park
Lawrence Song
Jason Stange
Lucy Van der Reis
Max Wang
Amanda Zhu

CELLO
Ethan Cho
Hannah Does
Andrea Huang
Madeleine Kim
Irene Lee
Tiana Lin
Jonah Pacis
Eric Park

VIOLIN II
Christian Byun
Lianne Cha
Claire Chen
Laura Chen

Alison Cao
Sarah Chen
Elaine Chi
Joon Choi
Sol Choi
Yejin Heo

DOUBLE BASS
Carly Bunim
Ethan Chang

PIANO
Laura Chen
Zoe Lee
Rebecca Liu
Eric Park

PERCUSSION
Justin Ahn
Kyle Graham
Mary LaBlanc
Mitchell Rogers

STAFF
Bridget Bow,
Strings Coach
Amanda Sansonetti,
Santiago Strings Manager