

From the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

As we begin 2025 in the midst of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus' 70th anniversary season, I want to take a moment to share my gratitude and excitement with you. This incredible celebration—"LJS&C: 70 Years of Exploration and Excellence"—is truly special, and we wouldn't be here without your support.

This milestone season reflects what makes this organization so unique: the unwavering dedication of our patrons, the commitment of our community of volunteer musicians, and our cherished partnership with UC San Diego's Music Department. Together, we've built something extraordinary—a collaboration that brings people together, inspires transformation, and fills our lives with beauty and meaning.

As we celebrate 70 years, we honor the visionaries who started it all, the supporters who nurtured it, and everyone who has contributed to this remarkable journey. Most importantly, we celebrate you—your support and encouragement light the way for an exciting future.

Thank you for being part of this joyous season and for helping us continue to make music that unites and uplifts.

With gratitude,

Stephanie Weaver Yankee, DMA

Stephanie Weaver Yankee

Executive Director

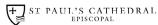
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Saturday, February 1, 2025, 7:30 PM Sunday, February 2, 2025, 2:00 PM Mandeville Auditorium

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La Jolla Symphony

Sameer Patel, Music Director and Orchestra Conductor

NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

from The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya

The Death of the Maiden Fevroniya and Pilgrimage to the Invisible City

ANTHONY DAVIS

Notes from the Underground

JIYOUNG KO

Leaf by Leaf, Dream by Dream
NEE COMMISSION WORLD PREMIERE

INTERMISSION

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Petrushka

First Tableau: The Shrovetide Fair Second Tableau: Petrushka's Room Third Tableau: The Moor's Room Fourth Tableau: The Shrovetide Fair (Toward Evening)

About the Conductor



Named Musical America's April 2023 New Artist of the Month and internationally recognized for his "profound artistry" (The San Diego Union Tribune), Sameer

Patel is one of America's most exciting conductors. Equally at home conducting world premieres and traditional classical works, Patel's infectious enthusiasm for music is felt by musicians, audiences, and students alike.

Patel is the recently appointed Music Director and Orchestra Conductor of the La Iolla Symphony and Chorus, Guided by a passion for sharing a lifelong love for music, he is also the Artistic Director. of the San Diego Youth Symphony—a transformational organization that reaches more than 3,000 students through its twelve ensembles, El Sistema-inspired community programs, and early childhood music classes. Formerly, he served for six seasons as Associate Conductor of the Sun Valley Music Festival and had an acclaimed tenure as Associate Conductor of the San Diego Symphony, where he reinvigorated the orchestra's programming and connection with its community. He has also held conducting positions with the Chicago Sinfonietta and the Fort Wayne Philharmonic.

Recent performances include Puccini's *Tosca* with Houston's Opera in the Heights, as well as concerts with the

orchestras of Chicago, Toronto, St. Louis. Detroit, New Jersey, Baltimore, Princeton. Sarasota, Florida, Phoenix, Grand Rapids, Sacramento, Toledo, New Hampshire, Bozeman, Savannah, Fresno, Knoxville. Alabama, Naples, Reading, and lacksonville. He has also appeared with the National Symphony Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the Wintergreen Festival Orchestra, Abroad, Patel has conducted performances with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Sanremo, the Orchestra Giovanile Italiana, and the Leipziger Sinfonieorchester, Deeply committed to nurturing the next generation of musicians. Patel has taught at the New England Conservatory and the Cleveland Institute of Music, and has led performances with All-State and Honor orchestras throughout the country.

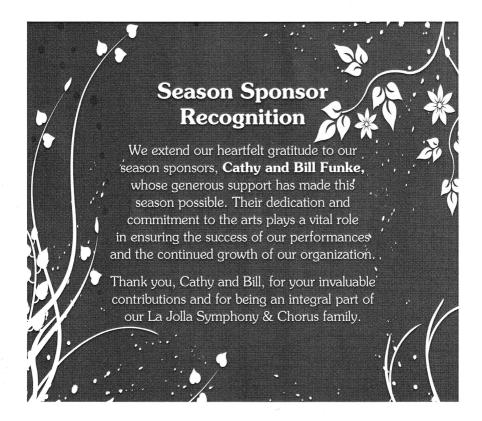
With an enthusiasm for the music of our time, Patel is a champion of music by living composers and has led premieres by Adam Schoenberg, Mason Bates, Osvaldo Golijov, Reena Esmail, and William Harvey, in addition to acclaimed performances by Anna Clyne, Gabriela Lena Frank, Jessie Montgomery, and many others.

Patel's impressive work has led to recognition from the Solti Foundation U.S., which granted him three consecutive Career Assistance Awards and an Elizabeth Buccheri Opera Residency with North Carolina Opera. He was recognized by Daniele Gatti as a top conductor at the Accademia Musicale

Chigiana in Siena, Italy, which led to his acclaimed debut with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Sanremo, Additionally, Kurt Masur, the late Music Director of the New York Philharmonic, recognized Patel's talents with a prize from the Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Foundation, which allowed him to study with and assist Maestro Masur in his appearances with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. That same year, Patel was one of only six conductors selected by the League of American Orchestras for the Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview with the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, which led to subsequent, multiple engagements with that orchestra.

Patel studied at the University of Michigan and furthered his training across Europe with some of the greatest conductors of our time, including Gianandrea Noseda, Daniele Gatti, David Zinman, Paavo Järvi, and the late conductors Kurt Masur and Bernard Haitink. Additionally, Patel has assisted and learned from leading conductors Gustavo Dudamel, Charles Dutoit, Edo de Waart, Robert Spano, Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, Stéphane Denève, Jaap van Zweden, Thomas Wilkins, Larry Rachleff, and Mei-Ann Chen, among many others.

Proudly born and raised in Michigan, Patel makes his home in San Diego with his wife, Shannon, and his children, Devan and Veda. In his spare time, Patel pursues his passions for literature, languages, jazz, traveling, history, and tennis. ■



Program Notes

from The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya

NIKOLAI RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Born March 16, 1844, Tikhvin Died June 21, 1908, Lyubensk



During the 1890s Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and his librettist Vladimir Belsky became interested in writing an opera based on ancient Russian legends, but much time would pass before

they could get to this project. Not until 1903 did Rimsky begin composing the opera, and in that same year he took the 21-year-old Igor Stravinsky as a private composition student. Rimsky completed The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniva in 1904, and it was premiered at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg on February 20, 1907, only a year before the composer's death. Many regard the opera as Rimsky's finest, though it was seldom performed in Russia during the Soviet era. But the opulent story and Rimsky's wonderful music have attracted new audiences, and the opera can today be heard (and seen) on several recent CDs and DVDs.

As the complex title makes clear, the opera is based on two legends, and Rimsky weaves these together skillfully.

The first is the ancient tale of the City of Kitezh, which was made invisible to protect it from the invading Tatars (formerly known as the Tartars, or Mongols). The second is the story of Saint Fevroniya, who lived in the thirteenth century; in the opera Rimsky transforms her into a sort of earth-spirit, living in the forest and able to commune with birds and animals. Many other currents run through the opera: pantheism, the supernatural, ancient Slavonic myth, and early Christianity.

As with every opera, the story of The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniva is complex, but the briefest of summaries may be useful in hearing the two excerpts performed on this concert. Act I introduces Fevroniva in the forest, where she sings of the divinity of nature around her. The handsome Prince Vselovod, out on a hunt, comes upon her, and the two are instantly engaged. Act II is a sort of genre-piece in which that marriage is celebrated by the local citizens, but a frightening reality suddenly intrudes: the Tatars have invaded and are bearing down on Kitezh, committing atrocities as they advance. Fevroniya prays that the city be made invisible so that the Tatars cannot find it. In Act III the Tatars advance, and Prince Vselovod leads a force out to attack them. A golden fog rises out of the lake and obscures the city. The Battle of Kershenets, depicted by an orchestral interlude, concludes the act, during which Prince Vselovod is killed and Fevroniya is captured by the Tatars. As the invaders approach the spot where

they think the city should be, they see nothing on the horizon, but they do see the reflection of the city in the lake in front of them, and — terrified — they flee. Act IV finds Fevroniya alone in the forest, but now that forest has been transformed into something magical: the trees are lit with candles, fantastic flowers bloom, and birds sing. Fevroniya learns that she must die, and she is accompanied to Kitezh by the ghost of Vselovod. The two are wed, posthumously, in the Invisible City, and the opera ends as peace and good — and the spirit of the earth — prevail.

This concert offers two orchestral excerpts from the opera. The Death of the Maiden Fevroniya depicts not only her death but also her transfiguration in the closing moments of the opera. The Pilgrimage to the City accompanies a procession toward Kitezh, whose ruler—the father of Prince Vsevolod—has set out to make it an enlightened city, consonant with both God and Nature.

Program Note by Eric Bromberger

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Open Hours

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Mission Statement

The mission of the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus Association is to enrich and inspire the diverse communities of San Diego by bringing together committed and passionate musicians to perform an imaginative mix of contemporary and traditional music at a high level of excellence.

La Jolla Symphony & Chorus 2024-2025

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Notes from the Underground

ANTHONY DAVIS Born February 20, 1951 Paterson, New Jersey



Notes from the Underground (1988) is a two-movement orchestral work dedicated to the late Ralph Ellison, author of Invisible Man.
The title evokes multiple layers of influence,

referencing both Dostoevsky's existential novella and Ellison's collection of essays, *Shadow and Act*. The piece also serves as a riff on Duke Ellington's *Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue*, reflecting Davis's unique integration of jazz and orchestral forms.

The first movement, *Shadow*, introduces thematic fragments that are later expanded upon in the second movement. The second movement, *Act*, unfolds in ten distinct steps, employing Davis's signature polyrhythmic structures to create a meditative, ritualistic quality. This movement, inspired by proto-minimalist techniques rooted in jazz, pays homage to the rich cultural legacy of Ellington and Ellison.

Program Note by Melanie Moore (LJS&C), in collaboration with Anthony Davis

Pulitzer Prize-Winning Composer Anthony Davis

Anthony Davis is celebrated internationally for his groundbreaking operatic, orchestral, choral, and chamber works. Opera News hails him as "a national treasure" for his innovative contributions to music, while The New York Times recognizes him as one of the "great living American composers." A graduate of Yale University, Davis currently serves as the Cecil Lytle Endowed Chair in African American Music at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), where he mentors the next generation of composers and musicians. Mr. Davis is also currently a professor of music at the University of California.

Best known for his operas, Davis has pioneered the genre by addressing contemporary political and social issues. His Pulitzer Prize-winning opera, *The Central Park Five*, explores themes of

racial injustice and resilience, with music and narrative that create awareness and empathy. Other celebrated operas include *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X,* which debuted at the Metropolitan Opera in 2023, and *Amistad,* inspired by the mutiny on the enslaver ship. His works seamlessly blend opera with jazz, improvisation, and other contemporary styles, offering audiences compelling stories of historical and modern significance.

Davis's influence extends beyond the stage. His orchestral and instrumental works have been performed by leading symphonies, including the New York Philharmonic and Los Angeles Philharmonic. Among his numerous accolades are a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, induction into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the OPERA America Hall of Fame. His role at UCSD further cements his legacy as a vital force in American music, inspiring through both his compositions and his dedication to education.

LJS&C Honors Local Composer, Wu Man

The La Jolla Symphony & Chorus is excited to award the inaugural Steven Schick Prize for Acts of Musical Imagination and Excellence to local composer and pipa player Wu Man!

This new prize celebrates an individual or organization that enriches and continues LJS&C Music Director Emeritus Steven Schick's innovative and unique musical legacy. Ms. Wu has premiered hundreds of new works for the pipa, while spearheading multimedia projects to both preserve and raise awareness of China's ancient musical traditions. Ms. Wu will join LJS&C onstage to perform Lei Liang's *Five Seasons* for "Echoes of Time" on May 3 and 4, 2025.

Leaf by Leaf, Dream by Dream

JIYOUNG KO Born 1982, South Korea



I wrote this piece inspired by J.R.R.
Tolkien's novel *Leaf* by Niggle. The main character, Niggle, is a painter who dreams of completing a beautiful tree, but he becomes too focused on

perfecting each individual leaf. Distracted by the needs of his neighbors, he ultimately passes away without completing the tree. The story inspired me to see our lives as being like the act of drawing a leaf. The things we do every day may seem trivial, but the leaves we each create come together, one by one, to form a large and beautiful tree. In time, that tree can provide a place where someone may rest in its shade. In this sense, each of us is like a beautifully drawn leaf.

This piece is driven by a melody that represents the leaf. The melody continues to appear throughout in various disguises and transformed forms, reflecting different sonorities and textures, in accordance with the story of the novel. To maintain a connection to my emotions and the source of this piece, I wrote a poem based on the novel, and the following is the last verse:

"...

For within each leaf lay a narrative,

A dream transcending the ordinary,

And Niggle, the modest creator,

Found his place in the everlasting song."

This work was commissioned by conductor Sameer Patel and the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus with generous support from the Thomas Nee Fund. I am deeply thankful to conductor Sameer Patel and the Nee family for making this commission possible, as well as to the musicians of the La Jolla Symphony for bringing the piece to life.

Program note by Jiyoung Ko

Thomas Nee Commission, named in honor of LJS&C's Music Director Emeritus, offers an annual paid commission for an orchestral or choral work to graduate composition students of the University of California, San Diego.

The Nee Commission is a prestigious initiative established by the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus to support the creation of new, innovative works by emerging composers. Each season, a talented composer is selected to write a piece that reflects the spirit of exploration and excellence that defines our organization.

This year, we are honored to feature **Jiyoung Ko** and her work, *Leaf by Leaf, Dream by Dream*, as part of our continued commitment to fostering creativity and innovation in the arts.

Jiyoung Ko

Thomas Nee Commission Composer

Born in Korea, Jiyoung Ko is a composer of orchestral, chamber, and vocal music whose works are deeply rooted in narrative, guiding her creative decisions. Her music often reflects themes of people, landscapes, and experiences, with an affinity for dense textures, resonant hues, and poetic, delicate melodies that shines through in all her creations. Her compositions encompass a wide range of styles — from cutting edge to traditional — that resonate with both ordinary and professional listeners. She seamlessly bridges the realms of intellectual depth and accessibility, an achievement frequently noted by audiences.

Her work has been performed in the United States, South Korea, Japan, and Germany by various ensembles, orchestras and musicians, including the Grand Rapids Symphony, Mivos Quartet, Dal Niente, Wasteland, Del Sol String Quartet, Cepromusic ensemble, Palimpsest, New York New Music Ensemble, Contemporary Music Ensemble Korea, NEC Honors Ensemble, KNUA Chamber Ensemble, Min Kwon, Christopher Adler, and Dan Lippel, among others. Recently, Ko premiered sumbisori through a Chou Wen-chung commission from Steven Schick, and her

piece *Undulate*, written for Khaen, had its Asia premiere at the National Gugak Center in Korea. Her piece boiling/blooming will be performed at the 2025 HEAR NOW Music Festival on March 30th, alongside upcoming projects that include a solo flute work and a piece for percussion ensemble.

In 2019, Ko was a finalist in the League of American Orchestras' Women Composers Readings and Commissions Program supported by the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation. Her orchestral work, Remembrances, was selected by the American Composers Orchestra's EarShot New Music Readings for a performance by the Grand Rapids Symphony in 2018, and Ko was the ArtPrize 10 Public Vote winner for the same piece. She was also selected for the 2018 Civic Orchestra of Chicago New Music Workshop with coaching by the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) at Chicago's Symphony Center. Additionally, Ko has been a fellow at the Iune In Buffalo Music Festival, Pacific Rim Music Festival, and NONG Music Festival.

Ko is pursuing a Ph.D. in music composition at UC San Diego. She holds a MM in music composition from the New England Conservatory and a MA and BA in music composition from Korea National University of Arts.

Petrushka

IGOR STRAVINSKY Born June 17, 1882, Oranienbaum Died April 6, 1971, New York City



Petrushka,
Stravinsky's ballet
about three
puppets at a
Russian Shrovetide
carnival, actually
began life as a sort
of piano concerto.
In the summer of
1910, shortly after
the successful
premiere of *The*

Firebird, Stravinsky started work on a ballet about a pagan ritual sacrifice in ancient Russia. But he set the manuscript to *The Rite of Spring* aside when he was consumed by a new idea: "I had in my mind a distinct picture of a puppet, suddenly endowed with life, exasperating the patience of the orchestra with diabolical cascades of arpeggi. The orchestra in turn retaliates with menacing trumpet-blasts. The outcome is a terrific noise which reaches its climax and ends in the sorrowful and querulous collapse of the poor puppet."

When impresario Serge Diaghilev visited Stravinsky that summer in Switzerland to see how the pagan-sacrifice ballet was progressing, he was at first horrified to learn that Stravinsky was doing nothing with it. But when Stravinsky played some of his new music, Diaghilev was charmed and saw possibilities for a ballet. With Alexander Benois, they created a storyline around the Russian puppet theater,

specifically the tale of Petrushka, "the immortal and unhappy hero of every fair in all countries." Stravinsky composed the score to what was now a ballet between August 1910 and May 1911, and *Petrushka* was first performed in Paris on June 13, 1911, with Nijinsky in the title role.

From the moment of that premiere, Petrushka has remained one of Stravinsky's most popular scores, and the source of its success is no mystery: Petrushka combines an appealing tale of three puppets, authentic Russian folktunes and street songs, and brilliant writing for orchestra. The music is remarkable for Stravinsky's sudden development beyond the Rimsky-inspired Firebird, particularly in matters of rhythm and orchestral sound. One of those most impressed by Petrushka was Claude Debussy, who spoke with wonder of this music's "sonorous magic."

A brief summary of the music and action, which divides into four tableaux separated by drum rolls:

First Tableau: The Shrovetide Fair

To swirling music, the curtain comes up to reveal a carnival scene in 1830 St. Petersburg. The crowd mills about, full of organ grinders, dancers, and drunkards. An aged magician appears and — like a snake charmer — spins a spell with a flute solo. He brings up the curtain in his small booth to reveal three puppets: Petrushka, the moor, and the ballerina. At a delicate touch of his wand, all three spring to life and dance before the astonished crowd to the powerful *Russian Dance*. A drum roll leads to the

Second Tableau: Petrushka's Room

This opens with the Petrushka being kicked into his room and locked up. The pathetic puppet tries desperately to escape and despairs when he cannot. Stravinsky depicts his anguish with two clarinets, one in C major and the other in F-sharp major: their bitonal clash has become famous as the "Petrushka sound." The trapped puppet rails furiously but is distracted by the appearance of the ballerina, who enters to a tinkly little tune. Petrushka is drawn to her, but she scorns him and leaves.

Third Tableau: The Moor's Room

Brutal chords take us into the moor's opulent room. The ballerina enters and dances for the moor to the accompaniment of cornet and snare drum. He is charmed, and the two waltz together. Suddenly Petrushka enters (his coming is heralded by variations on his pathetic clarinet tune), and he and the moor fight over the ballerina. At the end, the moor chases him out.

Fourth Tableau: The Shrovetide Fair (Toward Evening)

At the scene of the opening tableau, a festive crowd swirls past. There are a number of ballet set-pieces here: the Dance of the Nurse-Maids, The Peasant and the Bear (depicted respectively by squealing clarinet and stumbling tuba), Dance of the Gypsy Women, Dance of the Coachmen and Grooms (who stamp powerfully), and Masqueraders. At the

very end, poor Petrushka rushes into the square, pursued by the moor, who kills him with a slash of his scimitar. As a horrified crowd gathers, the magician appears and reassures all that it is makebelieve by holding up Petrushka's body to show it dripping sawdust. As he drags the slashed body away, the ghost of Petrushka appears above the rooftops, railing defiantly at the terrified magician, who flees. Petrushka's defiance is depicted musically by the triplet figure associated with him throughout. The strings' quiet pizzicato strokes, taken from both the C major and F-sharp major scale, bring the ballet to an end that is — dramatically and harmonically—ambiguous.

A NOTE ON THE TEXT: Stravinsky published his original version the year after the premiere, but in 1947 he returned to the score and revised it. These revisions had several purposes: to reduce the size of the orchestra, to simplify some of the metric complexities, and to give greater importance to the piano, which had been the music's original inspiration but had faded from view in the ballet version. Each version has its proponents, some preferring the greater clarity of the revision, others the opulence of the original. At this concert, Stravinsky's original 1911 version is performed.

Program Note by Eric Bromberger

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Julia Perry A Short Piece for Orchestra
Lei Liang Five Seasons, for Pipa and String Orchestra
Arnold Schoenberg Accompaniment to a
Cinematographic Scene
Alexander von Zemlinsky Prelude to Es War Einmal
Robert Schumann Symphony No. 4, Op. 120



JUNE 7-8 **Elijah's Triumph**Felix Mendelssohn *Elijah*

MAY 3-4

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Thanks to a generous gift by the Family of Joan Forrest, in her memory,
La Jolla Symphony & Chorus will be videotaping each of the concerts this season.

Selected videos will be posted on our YouTube channel and on UCSD-TV
as part of our ongoing music education and outreach efforts.

With ongoing support, we can turn LJS&C's unique commitment to performing new music and lesser-known works into an invaluable educational resource.

If you are interested in joining the Family of Joan Forrest in supporting this effort, please contact Stephanie Weaver Yankee at sweaver@ljsc.org for details.

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