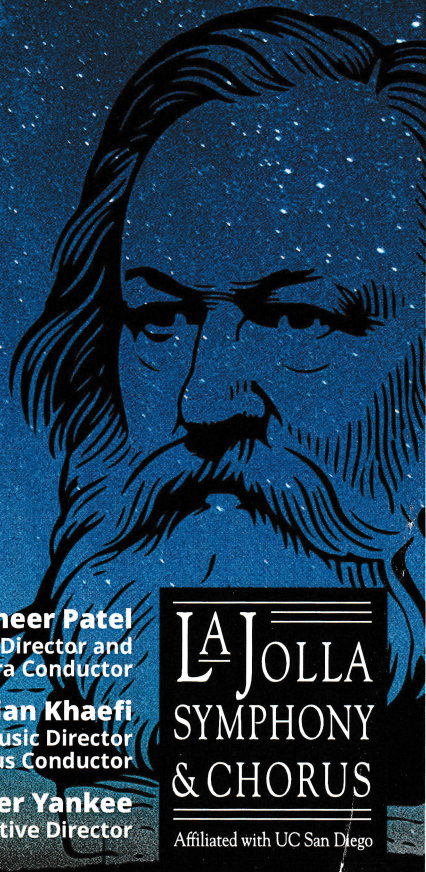


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WEBERN ✦ GOLIJOV ✦ BRAHMS



Sameer Patel
Music Director and
Orchestra Conductor

Arian Khaefi
Sally and Einar Gall Music Director
and Chorus Conductor

Stephanie Weaver Yankee
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2023-24 SEASON



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As we step into the second half of the 2023-2024 season, “Metamorphosis,” we are thrilled to continue presenting a series of concerts that celebrate transformation and reinvention through the magic of music.

As we find ourselves in the midst of this exhilarating season, we are delighted to feature our new Music Director and Orchestra Conductor, Sameer Patel. Alongside Sally and Einar Gall Music Director and Chorus Conductor Arian Khaefi, our artistic leadership team is now complete! This season marks the continuation of an exciting chapter in the history of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus, filled with strong vision and great passion.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your ongoing support of the La Jolla Symphony & Chorus—it means so much to all of us. We eagerly anticipate sharing the rest of this incredible journey with you and creating beautiful music together. Here’s to a remarkable second half of our season!

Warm regards,

Stephanie Weaver Yankee

Stephanie Weaver Yankee, DMA
Executive Director, La Jolla Symphony & Chorus
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Saturday, May 4, 2024, 7:30pm

Sunday, May 5, 2024, 2:00pm

Mandeville Auditorium

Sameer Patel, Music Director and Orchestra Conductor

OSVALDO GOLIJOV

Azul

Paz Sulfurica

Silencio

Transit

Yrushalem

Andrea Casarrubios, cello

Andrew Kresha and N. Scott Robinson, percussion

Mark Danisovszky, accordion

David Aguila, electronics

INTERMISSION

ANTON WEBERN

Passacaglia, Opus 1

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Opus 90

Allegro con brio

Andante

Poco allegretto

Allegro

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2023-24

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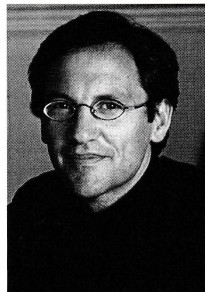
Program Notes

by Eric Bromberger

Azul

OSVALDO GOLIJOV

Born December 5, 1960, La Plata, Argentina



Azul has become one of Osvaldo Golijov's most successful compositions, but it went through a difficult genesis, eventually becoming something far different from what the composer had

planned when he set to work. The initial impulse for this music came from the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which commissioned a piece from Golijov in 2006. As a young man, Golijov had been a composing fellow at Tanglewood, the Boston Symphony's summer home, and now his thoughts returned to Tanglewood and to memories of relaxing on the vast lawn there, listening to concerts, and staring up at the summer sky. His first impulse was to capture that relaxed experience in music, and he composed a work for cellist Yo-Yo Ma and the Boston Symphony that would project a sense of calm and transcendence. He titled the piece *Azul* ("Blue") after the color of that summer sky.

Ma and the Boston Symphony gave the premiere of *Azul* at Tanglewood on August 4, 2006, but Golijov was not happy with it. He felt it incomplete—too innocent—in this state, and so he rewrote it, expanding the music and changing its character completely in the process. The composer has identified many of the forces that helped transform *Azul*. Principal among these was his reading of Pablo Neruda's *The Heights of Macchu Picchu*, a long meditation that is both a painful history of the native peoples of the Western Hemisphere and the poet's own internal

journey. Other influences were diverse: baroque music (both in its conception of form and sound), the wrenching violence that has been so much a part of our lives over the last several decades, and what might almost be called “the music of the spheres”—the composer’s sense of the larger order and beauty that run through the universe. The revised version was premiered on July 31, 2007, at the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York City with Alisa Weilerstein as soloist. Both she and Ma have performed the final version of *Azul* repeatedly since then.

In its revised form, *Azul* is in four sections, played without pause, that span about 25 minutes. Golijov scores *Azul* for unusual forces and then deploys them in unexpected ways. He writes for a large orchestra, but one that lacks oboes, though it does include a bass horn and a huge range of percussion instruments. Many of these are instruments of the native peoples of the Western Hemisphere, and even a sample of their names suggests some of the flavor they help create: caxixi, conga, dumbek, goat’s nail, gourd, kanjira, seed rattles, surdo, waterphone, and many more. The baroque influence may be felt in Golijov’s deployment of his forces. Along with the cello soloist and orchestra, he includes a small ensemble that functions somewhat like the concertino in a baroque concerto: a body of soloists who play in contrast to the larger orchestra. Here that ensemble consists of a hyper-accordion (an accordion whose range has been extended electronically) and two percussionists. The composer refers to this ensemble as “a twenty-first century continuo” or “obligato group” and asks that both it and the cello soloist be amplified electronically.

The opening section, titled *Paz Sulfurica* (“Sulfuric Peace”), is derived from *Azul* in its original form. The cello rises over the quiet orchestra, and the “obligato group” gradually weaves into this rendering of the earth below and the sky above. The music grows more dramatic before proceeding directly into *Silencio*, which brings a sharp

change of mood. This movement is cast as a chaconne, a baroque variation form: above a repeating ground, the cello sings a series of slow and meditative variations. *Transit* takes the form of a lengthy cadenza for cello, accompanied subtly by percussion instruments.

Longest by far of the four movements, *Yrushalem* (“Jerusalem”) deserves special discussion, because it brings *Azul* to a conclusion that not only resolves the music’s tensions but also makes a philosophical statement. Golijov based this movement on one of his own earlier compositions, *Tenebrae* (“Shadows”) for string quartet (or quartet and soprano). The composer described the creation of *Tenebrae*, and his description also applies to *Yrushalem*:

I wrote *Tenebrae* as a consequence of witnessing two contrasting realities in a short period of time in September 2000. I was in Israel at the start of the new wave of violence that is still continuing today, and a week later I took my son to the new planetarium in New York, where we could see the Earth as a beautiful blue dot in space. I wanted to write a piece that could be listened to from different perspectives. That is, if one chooses to listen to it “from afar,” the music would probably offer a “beautiful” surface but, from a metaphorically closer distance, one could hear that, beneath that surface, the music is full of pain.

Those two perspectives shape the final movement, which fuses tension with transcendence. At the start of *Yrushalem*, the music returns to the somber opening of the first movement and then expands from there. It is a long meditation, and eventually it rises to a soaring climax. The world may be full of pain, but “this pale blue dot” (to use Carl Sagan’s phrase) is part of a vast and beautiful universe, and across the span of *Azul* we have moved from relaxing beneath the tranquil blue sky at Tanglewood to embrace earth’s place in the starry heavens. Golijov concludes *Azul* with two codas, both of whose titles make cosmic connections: *Pulsar* and *Shooting Stars*. ■

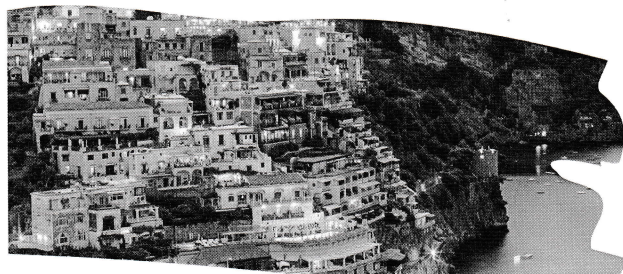
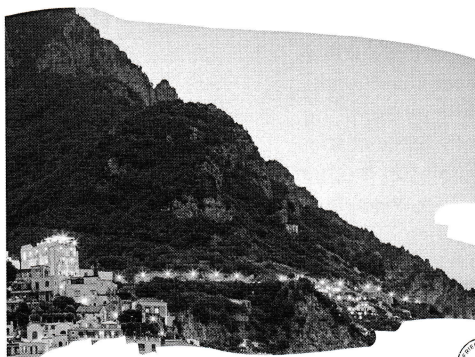
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Andrea Casarrubios

cello

Praised by *The New York Times* for having “traversed the palette of emotions” with “gorgeous tone and an edge-of-seat intensity” and described by *Diario de Menorca* as an “ideal performer” that offers “elegance, displayed virtuosity, and great expressive power,” Spanish-born cellist and composer Andrea Casarrubios has played as a soloist and chamber musician throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. First Prize winner of numerous international competitions and awards, Casarrubios has appeared at Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Piatigorsky, Ravinia, and Verbier Festivals. Her latest engagements include commissions and concerts in Mexico, Colombia, Spain, Romania, Belgium, Germany, Canada, and the United States.

Casarrubios’ compositions have been programmed by organizations such as the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, National Philharmonic, Carnegie Hall, Sphinx Organization, Washington Performing Arts, the European Parliament, NPR, and the Argentinian, Brazilian and Spanish National Radios. Her album *Caminante: Music of Andrea Casarrubios* presents some of her own original music and it was chosen as one of the “Best 2019 Classical Music Albums” by Australia’s *ABC Classic*, celebrating her artistry as “superhuman.” Her acclaimed piece *SEVEN* “an intense and elegiac tribute to the essential workers during the pandemic” (*The New York*

Times) received its Carnegie Hall premiere in 2021, and has been performed around the world since. Other recent original works include the orchestra version of *Afilador* (2022-23) commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for MusicNOW, and *Herencia* for String Orchestra (2023), a “stirring creation” (*The Strad*) commissioned for Sphinx Virtuosi’s 2023-24 tour and premiered at Carnegie Hall’s Stern Auditorium in 2023.

As a guest soloist at Auditorio Nacional in Madrid, Casarrubios premiered her own Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, *MIRAGE*, a work that she will continue to perform next season. Other upcoming appearances as a cellist include performances of Franz Schubert’s *Arpeggione* Sonata arranged for cello and orchestra by Casarrubios herself, Osvaldo Golijov’s *Azul* with conductor Sameer Patel, as well as duo recital programs featuring her own music alongside works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Nadia Boulanger, Manuel de Falla and Xavier Foley.

A dedicated mentor, Casarrubios has taught masterclasses at The Juilliard School, University of Southern California, Eastman School of Music, City University of New York, Missouri State University, as well as at numerous festivals and institutions on tour. Her cello teachers have included Maria de Macedo, Lluís Claret, Amit Peled, Marcy Rosen, and Ralph Kirshbaum. She is an alumna of Ensemble Connect, and as part of her Doctoral degree in New York, Casarrubios also studied composition with John Corigliano.

Passacaglia, Opus 1

ANTON WEBERN

Born December 3, 1883, Vienna

Died September 15, 1945, Mittersill



Anton Webern began studying privately with Schoenberg in 1904, and the completion of the *Passacaglia* in the early months of 1908 marked the unofficial end of those studies—he decided that the *Passacaglia* should be his

first official work and published it as his Opus 1. Webern led the Tonkünstlerverein Orchestra in the first performance in Vienna on November 4, 1908, just a month before his 25th birthday.

A passacaglia was originally a dance form built on a repeating ground bass over which a composer would create a series of melodies, but it gradually evolved into one of the strictest of variation forms. As a form, the passacaglia was already old when Bach used it, and when Webern wrote his *Passacaglia* he was probably thinking of a more recent example: the finale of Brahms' *Fourth Symphony*, composed only 23 years earlier, in 1885. If the form itself looks backward, Webern's handling of it in many ways looks ahead to his mature music. Webern calls for a very large orchestra but uses that orchestra with great delicacy and precision—often there are only a handful of instruments playing. Also evident is another characteristic of the mature Webern—the most intense expressiveness compressed into the shortest spans. And already Webern is willing to experiment and make a form his own: the passacaglia was originally in a triple meter, but Webern's *Passacaglia* is in 2/4 throughout.

To open the finale of his *Fourth Symphony*, Brahms shouted out his eight-bar ground bass with brass and woodwinds, but Webern's presentation of his ground bass is striking for its understatement: it is announced triple *piano* by pizzicato strings. Those stark and solitary notes, surrounded by silences, will form the foundation of the *Passacaglia*. In the first variation a solo flute, marked both *pianissimo* and *espressivo*,

sings a lovely countertheme to the ground bass, and this melody will figure importantly across the ten-minute span of the *Passacaglia*—it evolves immediately into the clarinet theme of the second variation. Webern offers a total of 23 variations in his *Passacaglia*. Some observers have been at pains to see in the progression of these variations a sort of sonata form, but it is far better to take this music for itself rather than trying to shoehorn it into another pattern. The *Passacaglia* is in D minor (Webern is still willing to use a key signature in this work, despite the fact that the home tonality is under considerable tension throughout), though for four variations (Nos. 12-15) the music eases into D major for a sort of moonlit central episode. After this, the return to D minor—though very quiet—feels unusually ominous (it may be worth noting that one of the other great works of German contrapuntal mastery, Bach's *Chaconne* for unaccompanied violin, is also in D minor, and it too makes a brief and relaxing excursion into D major along the way). As the *Passacaglia* drives to its extremely dramatic climax, Webern recalls several of his earlier variations, and a coda further develops some of these before the music subsides into inaudibility. ■

CONCERT VIDEO EDUCATIONAL FUND

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. These videos will be posted on our YouTube channel for educators and the public to access free of charge as part of our music education and outreach effort. The videos also will be broadcast by UCSD-TV to all 11 UC campuses and by satellite and cable to over 100,000 viewers.

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.



Sameer Patel 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 newly appointed Music Director and Orchestra Conductor of the La Jolla 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 held an acclaimed tenure as Associate Conductor of the San Diego Symphony, where he reinvigorated the orchestra's programming and connection with its community.

Highlights of Patel's 2023/24 season include a return to the Florida Orchestra and debuts with the Omaha Symphony and at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

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 Jacksonville. He has also appeared with the National Symphony Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Wintergreen Festival Orchestra, and at the New England Conservatory of Music. Abroad, Patel has conducted performances with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Sanremo, the Orchestra Giovanile Italiana, and the Leipziger Sinfonieorchester.

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 two children, Devan and Veda. In his spare time, Patel pursues his passions for literature, languages, jazz, traveling, history, and tennis.

Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Opus 90

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Born May 7, 1833, Hamburg

Died April 3, 1897, Vienna



Brahms spent the summer of 1883 in Wiesbaden, where he took a second-story apartment looking out over the Rhine. He had just turned 50, which is a bad birthday for anyone, but at this moment in his life he was feeling new energy. In

January of that year he had heard a contralto. Her name was Hermine Spiess, she was 26, she had a beautiful voice, and Brahms fell in love with her. Hermine lived in Wiesbaden, so Brahms found an apartment there, and that summer—with a magnificent view of the Rhine and very much in love with a young woman—Brahms composed his *Third Symphony*. At 50, Brahms was a supremely accomplished composer—powerful, subtle, refined, and passionate—and his mastery is evident in every measure of the *Third Symphony*. Of his four symphonies, the *Third* is the shortest, most concise, and most subtle (all four movements end quietly), and it is marked by an attention to instrumental color rare in Brahms' music.

The opening *Allegro con brio* is extraordinary music, even by Brahms' standards. It is built around a three-note motto: the rising sequence F-Ab-F. Brahms said that motto was a reflection of his personal credo "Frei aber froh: "Free but happy." That rising three-note figure will saturate this movement: they are the first three notes of

the symphony, and that motto will function melodically, serve as an accompaniment, and bind sections together. After the brass blazes out the motto to open the symphony, the main theme—marked *passionato*—comes crashing downward in the violins like a mighty wave. It is characteristic of this symphony that the three-note motto has been instantly transformed into the bass-line beneath this powerful theme, and over the next few moments the motto will be woven into the texture of the music countless times. The second theme, sung by solo clarinet and quickly taken up by the violas, dances gracefully in the unusual meter 9/4, but surprisingly the development is quite short. A noble horn call (derived from the opening motto) leads to an extended—and very agitated—recapitulation before the movement closes on a quiet restatement of the opening theme.

The two middle movements are also unusual: the *Third Symphony* has no true slow movement, nor is there a scherzo. Instead, Brahms offers two moderately-paced central movements, both littered with his constant reminder to performers: *dolce, espressivo*. The *Andante* (in sonata form) opens with a graceful tune announced by clarinets and bassoon, and—curiously—those two instruments also have the slightly-sprung second theme; the luminous closing moments of this gentle movement are particularly beautiful. The cellos' C-minor melody at the start of the *Poco Allegretto*, with its subtle shadings and gypsy turns, is one of the most haunting themes Brahms ever wrote. A slightly rustic middle section, full of off-the-beat accents, gives way to the return of the opening theme, but now—in a magic touch—Brahms assigns it to the solo horn, which soars above shimmering string accompaniment.

The finale opens ominously in F minor, but this quickly gives way to the heroic main theme in C major for cellos and horns. A powerful development—with secondary

material derived from the second movement—leads to a conclusion full of even more original touches. The music turns quiet, and—very subtly—Brahms begins to bring back themes from earlier movements: the three-note motto from the first movement, the second theme from the *Andante*, and finally—at the very end—the opening theme of the first movement. That theme had been heroic at the very beginning of the symphony, but now it returns in dignified calm. Its quiet concluding descent has been compared by one critic to the fall of autumn leaves, and this very concise symphony ends not in thunder but on a restrained wind chord.

The premiere of the *Third Symphony* in Vienna on December 2, 1883, was the occasion of one of the major collisions between the Wagner and Brahms factions in that city. The followers of Wagner, who had died earlier that year, tried to hiss each movement of the symphony, but they were drowned out by the cheers of Brahms' supporters. The young Hugo Wolf, a passionate Wagnerian and a sworn enemy of the "classical" Brahms, wrote a searing review of the symphony, calling it "Disgustingly stale and prosy. Fundamentally false and perverse. A single cymbal-stroke of a work by Liszt expresses more intellect and emotion than all three symphonies of Brahms and his serenades taken together." Brahms' lifelong friend Clara Schumann, however, had quite a different view. She wrote the composer: "What a harmonious mood pervades the whole! All the movements seem to be of one piece, one beat of the heart, each one a jewel. From start to finish one is wrapped about with the mysterious charm of the woods and forests." ■

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Rachmaninoff's All-Night Vigil: Two venues
Tickets available online at LJSC.org and at the door.

Saturday, May 11, 2024

7:30 PM
ST PAUL'S EPISCOPAL
CATHEDRAL
2728 SIXTH AVE, SAN
DIEGO, CA 92103

Sunday, May 12, 2024

2:00 PM
THE VILLAGE CHURCH
RANCHO SANTA FE
6225 PASEO DELICIAS
RANCHO SANTA FE, CA
92067

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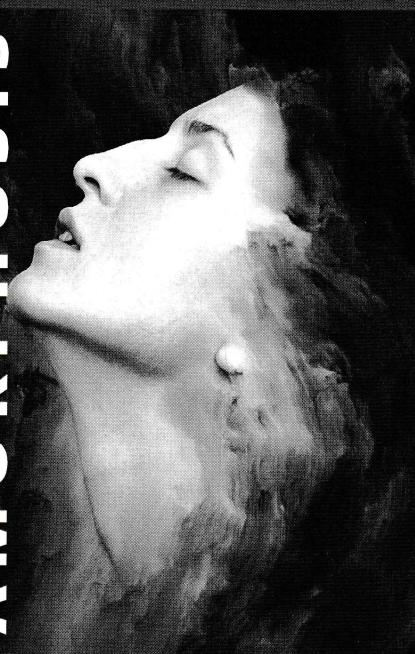
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NOVEMBER 4-5, 2023

THIS SOIL

Kristin Kuster	MOXIE
Samuel Barber	<i>Knoxville: Summer of 1915</i>
Florence Price	Piano Concerto in One Movement
Gala Flagello	<i>Bravado</i>
Gabriela Lena Frank	<i>Escaramuza</i>
Leonard Bernstein	<i>Symphonic Dances</i> from <i>West Side Story</i>

DECEMBER 3, 2023

BY THE HEARTH COMMUNITY SING

George Frideric Handel	Messiah Sing-Along (Part I and Hallelujah Chorus)
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DECEMBER 9-10, 2023

NEW BEGINNINGS

Gabriela Ortiz	<i>Kaayumari</i>
Igor Stravinsky	<i>Symphony of Psalms</i>
Kaija Saariaho	<i>Ciel d'hiver</i>
Jean Sibelius	Symphony No. 3

FEBRUARY 10-11, 2024

A BROKEN HALLELUJAH

Nasim Khorassani	<i>Crescendo</i>
Toru Takemitsu	<i>From me flows what you call Time</i>
Niloufar Nourbakhsh	<i>Veiled</i>
Igor Stravinsky	<i>Le Sacre du printemps</i> (The Rite of Spring)

MARCH 16-17, 2024

NEXUS

Lili Boulanger	<i>D'un matin de printemps</i>
Nina Shekhar	<i>Lumina</i>
Claude Debussy	<i>La mer</i>
Francis Poulenc	<i>Gloria</i>

MAY 4-5, 2024

TO THE STARS

Anton Webern	<i>Passacaglia</i>
Oswaldo Golijov	<i>Azul</i>
Johannes Brahms	Symphony No. 3

MAY 11-12, 2024

HOLY RADIANT LIGHT CHORUS-ONLY CONCERT

Sergei Rachmaninoff	<i>All-Night Vigil</i>
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JUNE 8-9, 2024

TIME PRESENT AND TIME PAST

Maurice Ravel	<i>Ma Mère l'Oye</i>
John Adams	<i>Harmonielehre</i>