



Albanian violinist Tedi Papavrami will play Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1 with the Santa Rosa Symphony Oct. 5, 6 & 7.

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by Diane Peterson

## Familiar Faces in Symphony Season

There will be lots of familiar faces when the Santa Rosa Symphony opens its 2013-2014 season this weekend at the Green Music Center's Weill Hall.

The "Encores and Debuts" season not only welcomes back such soloists as cellist Maya Beiser but showcases familiar works such as Jean Sibelius' Symphony No. 2.

"That's a theme running through the season," said Santa Rosa Symphony Music Director Bruno Ferrandis. "Because it's anchored in the repertoire, it's one of the most balanced seasons I've ever realized."

The orchestra also will present a few contemporary works on the heels of winning an award from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) for innovative programming during 2012-2013.

"For me, it's mission accomplished, as far as the first season in the hall," Ferrandis said. "This year, we have a lot of things to explore as well ... it's a very creative and modern program."

For Ferrandis, last season flew by quickly — it was the symphony's first year as resident orchestra of the new hall — and ended on a high note with Dmitri Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10.

This season, the symphony picks up where it left off by performing Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5, one of the composer's most popular works. When it was written in 1937, Shostakovich was under intense scrutiny by the Soviet government.

"He returned to grace, thanks to this symphony," Ferrandis said. "It has so much pathos, drama and irony."

Albanian violinist Tedi Papavrami will return to play Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1, a work written in 1955 for violinist David Oistrakh. For the curtain-opener, the orchestra will play "Short Ride in a Fast Machine," a fuel-injected work by Bay Area composer John Adams.

“I heard this piece was his most popular work,” Ferrandis said. “It’s very challenging, with lots of pulse and rhythm.”

The rest of season’s program will circle the globe, starting with a showcase for Israeli-American cellist Maya Beiser in November.

Beiser chose two meditative works to perform: Max Bruch’s “Kol Nidrei,” based on Jewish folk and liturgical melodies, and Argentinean composer Osvaldo Golijov’s “Mariel.”

To provide contrast, Ferrandis completed the program with Four Dances from “Estacia” by Argentinean composer Alberto Ginastera, and the Cuban Overture and “Catfish Row Suite” from “Porgy and Bess,” both by George Gershwin.

December brings a contemplative choral program featuring Haydn’s Mass No. 10, “Mass in Time of War.” Ferrandis first heard Leonard Bernstein conduct that work in the 1980s, so he paired it with Bernstein’s Symphony No. 1, “Jeremiah.”

“The theme is spirituality and lamentation,” he said.

For a bit of holiday fun, he added Leopold Mozart’s “Toy Symphony,” which will feature local celebrities playing the toy instruments.

In January, Guest Conductor Enrique Arturo Diemecke returns with an East/West program highlighted by the American premiere of Zhao Jiping’s Concerto For Pipa and Orchestra. The four-string Chinese lute will be performed by Wu Man, named 2013 Instrumentalist of the Year by Musical America. Mozart’s Symphony No. 15 and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 6, “Pastorale,” provide Classical ballast.

In February, the orchestra will sweep the audience off to icy Scandinavia with Edvard Grieg’s Piano Concerto performed by French pianist Philippe Bianconi, plus Sibelius’ Symphony No. 2 and the American premiere of Norwegian composer Orjan Matre’s “Resurgence.”

In March, the orchestra will give a world premiere of Persian composer Behzad Ranjbaran’s Viola Concerto, played by Paul Silverthorne, principal violist of the London Symphony Orchestra.

Ferrandis paired the new concerto with two works redolent of the Orient: Alexander Borodin’s Polovtsian Dances from his opera “Prince Igor,” and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov’s seductive “Scheherazade.”

The season closes with a sparkling piano program, featuring Jon Kimura Parker performing Rachmaninoff’s “Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini.” In a nod to spring, the orchestra will present Claude Debussy’s “Printemps,” and Igor Stravinsky’s iconic “The Rite of Spring.”

“That’s a beautiful program,” Ferrandis said. “Debussy and Stravinsky were both pianists, too.”

Note: Conductor Laureate and pianist Jeffrey Kahane will perform a special benefit concert on May 22, presenting Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 3 and Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 2.

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