



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact

Brenda Fox | Director of Marketing and Patron Services
(707) 546-7097 x 218 | bfox@srsymphony.org
srsymphony.org

March 14, 2024

Santa Rosa Symphony Family Series presents
“Exploring Beethoven’s 5th with FLC”
Conducted by Maestro Francesco Lecce-Chong
Sunday, April 28, 2024, Weill Hall, Green Music Center

(Santa Rosa, Calif.) — Santa Rosa Symphony (SRS) presents the final concert of the 2023-2024 Family Series season with “Exploring Beethoven’s 5th with FLC” on Sunday, April 28, 2024, at 3:00 pm, at Weill Hall, Green Music Center, conducted by Francesco Lecce-Chong. This concert was inspired by Leonard Bernstein’s televised Young People’s Concerts (1958-1972), performed with the New York Philharmonic and featured on CBS. These concerts introduced an entire generation to the joys of classical music. With his unique storytelling style, Lecce-Chong will delve into the significance of this masterpiece, and kids will discover how Beethoven pushed boundaries that forever changed classical music.

Beethoven’s 5th Symphony is famous for its iconic four notes, "da-da-da-dum," This four-note opening motif—often interpreted as the musical manifestation of "fate knocking at the door"— recurs throughout the work. Learn how fate affected Beethoven and how his own personal struggles influenced the glorious and joyful ending. In distilling Beethoven’s 5th into kid-sized bites, Lecce-Chong hopes to inspire a lifelong love of classical music in children and adults alike.

Introducing a new immersive multi-media experience that gives audiences an up close and personal view of the musicians, their instruments, and Maestro Lecce-Chong. Projected on a big screen above the orchestra, concertgoers will be able to see what’s happening on stage no matter where they sit.

"Like many young people, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony was the first piece of music I fell in love with. Apparently, I was able to convince my parents to get me piano lessons when I relentlessly banged out those immortal opening notes on an old upright piano as a child. All these years later, I am just as obsessed and excited by this music, and for this program, I look forward to taking audiences of all ages on a fun and interactive journey through the inner workings of this special symphony."

Francesco Lecce-Chong, Music Director and Conductor

CONCERT EXTRAS:

PRE-CONCERT FUN: FREE Instrument Petting Zoo

These concerts are designed to be fun and educational for all ages. This affordable concert series includes a complimentary Instrument Petting Zoo one hour before each performance at 2:00 pm, which provides an opportunity for youngsters (and curious adults) to handle and play orchestral instruments.

POST-CONCERT: Meet & Greet with Maestro Francesco Lecce-Chong and SRS Concertmaster Joseph Edelberg immediately following the concert.

BIOGRAPHY:

Francesco Lecce-Chong, music director and conductor

Conductor Francesco Lecce-Chong is the Music Director of the Santa Rosa Symphony and the Eugene

Symphony in Oregon. The press has described him as a “fast-rising talent in the music world” with “the real gift” and recognized his dynamic performances, fresh programming, deep commitment to commissioning and performing new music, and community outreach.

Lecce-Chong has appeared with orchestras around the world including the San Francisco Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, National Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Toronto Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Colorado Symphony, and Hong Kong Philharmonic, and collaborated with world-renowned soloists including Renée Fleming and Itzhak Perlman.

Lecce-Chong is the recipient of several distinctions, including the prestigious Solti Foundation Award. Trained also as a pianist and composer, he completed his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music with Otto-Werner Mueller after attending the Mannes College of Music and Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Italy. He has been mentored and supported by celebrated conductors including Bernard Haitink, David Zinman, Edo de Waart, Manfred Honeck, Donald Runnicles, and Michael Tilson Thomas.

SPONSORS:

The Santa Rosa Symphony Family Series is underwritten by **Victor and Karen Trione**, and **Irene Sohm**.

AT A GLANCE / CALENDAR LISTING:

WHAT: Santa Rosa Symphony Family Series, [Exploring Beethoven’s 5th with FLC](#)

WHO: [Santa Rosa Symphony](#)

Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor

WHEN: April 28, 2024 at 3:00 pm

Complimentary Instrument Petting Zoo one hour prior to the concert at 2:00 pm.

Meet & Greet with Francesco Lecce-Chong and Joseph Edelberg immediately following the concert.

WHERE: Weill Hall, Green Music Center, Sonoma State University

TICKET PRICES:

\$20 adult, \$10 child (12 and under)

TICKETS: [srsymphony.org](#) or (707) 546-8742 (Weekdays 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, opening at 10:30 am Wednesdays) Closed Saturday and Sunday.

ABOUT SANTA ROSA SYMPHONY

Santa Rosa Symphony, the Resident Orchestra of the Green Music Center, is the third-oldest professional orchestra in California, and the largest regional symphony north of Los Angeles. Francesco Lecce-Chong, the Symphony's fifth music director in its 96 years, began his tenure in 2018. J. Andrew Bradford joined SRS as President and CEO in 2023. The Symphony is committed to the core values of artistic excellence, innovative programming, comprehensive music education, and community service.

The Symphony’s performance schedule includes 21 Classical Series concerts (seven sets), Discovery Dress Rehearsal concerts, a three-concert Family Series, a four-concert Pops Series, and special concerts.

Awards include an American Symphony Orchestra League MetLife Award for Community Engagement and a first-place award for adventurous programming in the 2012-2013 season from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP).

The Symphony is recognized as having one of California's most comprehensive music education programs, serving nearly 20,000 youths annually. Collaborations with schools and organizations across Sonoma County have gained the Santa Rosa Symphony national attention and support.

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