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Music, Imagination, and Snoopy Take Center Stage

Santa Rosa Symphony's 2026–2027 Snoopy Family Concert Series invites families to explore storytelling and live orchestral music

(Santa Rosa, Calif.) — The Santa Rosa Symphony's 2026–2027 Snoopy Family Concert Series brings beloved characters, hands-on musical experiences, and world-class performances together. Throughout the season, audiences will experience a wide range of repertoire spanning centuries, cultures, and musical styles, from beloved classical masterworks to contemporary compositions. Curated and conducted by Artistic & Music Director Francesco Lecce-Chong, the three-concert series will be presented on Sundays—October 25, 2026; January 24, 2027; and April 25, 2027—at 3:00 pm in Weill Hall, Green Music Center. Subscriptions on sale now at $54/adult and $24/youth. Single tickets on sale August 3, 2026, at $20/adult and $10/youth.

The Snoopy Family Concert Series is designed to spark curiosity and joy in audiences of all ages. This season, the Santa Rosa Symphony invites audiences to three imaginative musical afternoons filled with storytelling, movement, and discovery. Artistic & Music Director Francesco Lecce-Chong leads the series, joined by Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Orchestra (SRSYO) Conductor Jaco Wong.

Each concert opens with a side-by-side performance featuring members of the Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Orchestra (SRSYO) alongside the professional orchestra and led by SRSYO Conductor Jaco Wong. It celebrates the connection between the Symphony's educational and artistic programs. Families can enjoy interactive sing-alongs, audience participation, and engaging storytelling, as well as the popular Instrument Petting Zoo before each concert. Snoopy will once again join Maestro Francesco and the orchestra onstage throughout the series, and families will have the opportunity to meet Snoopy and Maestro Francesco after each performance.

The season features a variety of special guests and collaborators. Dancers from North Coast Ballet California return for October's **Boo! Let's Dance**, bringing additional visual storytelling and audience participation to a program inspired by musical traditions from around the globe. In January, actor Jeff Coté takes the stage as Ludwig van Beethoven in **Back to Beethoven**, introducing young listeners to one of classical music's most influential composers through a lively theatrical presentation. The concert also showcases Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Orchestra Concerto Competition winner Yihe Wang, who will perform excerpts from Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5 as the featured soloist. April's **Music in the Wild** highlights music inspired by the natural world and welcomes composer and narrator Marko Bajzer, who will share his original work inspired by Northern California landscapes.

"These concerts are some of my favorites to program and perform each season! I love knowing that young audience members are getting their first chances to hear the great orchestral masterpieces. Snoopy, our musicians, and I look forward to bringing the joy of music to all in these interactive concerts!"

- Francesco Lecce-Chong, Artistic & Music Director

Boo! Let's Dance | October 25, 2026, at 3:00 pm
Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor
Jaco Wong, SRSYO conductor
North Coast Ballet California

Explore the World Through Music

Dance, imagine, and explore with Snoopy and the Symphony in this lively concert celebrating musical traditions from around the world.

From Brahms's Hungarian Dance No. 5 to Márquez's Danzón No. 2, the program travels across cultures through music and movement. North Coast Ballet California takes the stage for Ravel's *Mother Goose*, while Snoopy adds to the fun in an interactive performance that will have the whole family moving to the music!

Costumes are encouraged.

Back to Beethoven | January 24, 2027, at 3:00 pm
Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor
Jaco Wong, SRSYO conductor
Jeff Coté, actor
Yihe Wang, violin

A Time-Traveling Musical Adventure

Travel through time with Snoopy as he meets Ludwig van Beethoven in this imaginative family-oriented concert. Transported to the present day, Beethoven shares the stories behind his greatest works, from the dramatic power of the Fifth Symphony to the triumphant spirit of the Ninth.

The program also features Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Orchestra Concerto Competition winner Yihe Wang performing excerpts from Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5, a work by the composer Beethoven deeply admired. A jubilant "Ode to Joy" sing-along brings this fun-filled concert adventure to a close.

Music in the Wild | April 25, 2027, at 3:00 pm
Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor
Jaco Wong, SRSYO conductor
Marko Bajzer, composer and narrator

From Rivers to Mountains to Sea

Step into an afternoon inspired by the great outdoors with Snoopy and the Symphony in Music in the Wild. Explore landscapes near and far, from the sweeping vistas of Ferde Grofé's *Grand Canyon Suite* to the changing seasons of Antonio Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. Experience the flowing beauty of Bedřich Smetana's *The Moldau* alongside the vivid soundscapes of Gabriella Smith's *Tumblebird Contrails*, evoking ocean and wildlife.

Composer Marko Bajzer narrates *Lassen Awakes*, inspired by Lassen Volcanic National Park, before the concert concludes with a heartfelt sing-along to "This Land Is Your Land."

Extras at every concert!

- Members of the **Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Orchestra**, led by their **conductor Jaco Wong**, will perform alongside Santa Rosa Symphony musicians on the first piece of each program of all three concerts.
- **Snoopy** will join Maestro Francesco and the orchestra onstage at all three concerts.

- **Meet & Greet immediately following each concert** with Maestro Francesco and Snoopy. Ask them to take a photo with you!
- The **Instrument Petting Zoo**, a popular attraction, returns to the lobby for pre-concert fun at 2:00 pm.

SEASON AT-A-GLANCE:
Music will include (in alphabetical order):

MARKO BAJZER: *Lassen Awakes* (w/narration)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3, 1st Mvt (Excerpts)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 5, 1st Mvt (Excerpts)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 5, 4th Mvt (Excerpts) (SRSYO side-by-side)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 6, 1st Mvt (Excerpts)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 6, 2nd Mvt (Excerpts)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 6, 3rd Mvt (Excerpts)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 6, 4th and 5th Mvt (Excerpts)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 7, 2nd Mvt (Excerpts)
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 9, 4th Mvt (Sing-along) (Excerpts)
JOHANNES BRAHMS: Ungarische Tänze [Hungarian Dance] No. 5 in G minor for Orchestra
ALBERTO GINASTERA: Danzas del ballet [Dances of ballet] - *Estancia*, Mvt 4
FERDE GROFÉ: *Grand Canyon Suite*, Mvt 1 (SRSYO side-by-side)
WOODY GUTHRIE: *This Land is Your Land* (sing-along)
ARTURO MÁRQUEZ: Danzón [Dance] No. 2 for Orchestra (excerpt TBD)
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART: Violin Concerto No. 5, Mvt 3 (with Yihe Wang) (Excerpts)
FLORENCE PRICE (ARR. WILLIAM GRANT STILL): Nimble Feet from *Dances in the Canebreaks*, Mvt 1
MAURICE RAVEL: Suite from *Ma Mère l'Oye* [*Mother Goose*] (all 5 movements)
BEDŘICH SMETANA: *The Moldau* (broken into excerpts)
GABRIELLA SMITH: *Tumblebird Contrails* (excerpt)
JOHANN STRAUSS JR.: *An der schönen blauen Donau*, [*On the Beautiful Blue Danube*] (excerpt)
ANTONIO VIVALDI: *Spring*, Mvt 1 (excerpt)
ANTONIO VIVALDI: *Winter*, Mvt 1 (excerpt)
ANTONIO VIVALDI: *Summer*, Mvt 3 (excerpt)
ANTONIO VIVALDI: *Fall*, Mvt 4 (excerpt)

BIOGRAPHIES:
Francesco Lecce-Chong, Artistic & Music Director
American conductor Francesco Lecce-Chong has established himself as a respected leader in the orchestral world through his acclaimed performances, innovative projects, and passionate advocacy for the arts. He was appointed Music Director of two U.S. orchestras, the Eugene Symphony and the Santa Rosa Symphony, before turning 30. With those groups, he successfully launched several groundbreaking projects, commissioning over a dozen major orchestral works and building innovative community partnerships. Now, in his eighth season leading the Santa Rosa Symphony, he has grown the orchestra's reputation as one of the most exciting and important regional orchestras in the US with performances at one of the most renowned concert halls in the world, the Green Music Center.

Lecce-Chong regularly appears with major orchestras around the country from the San Francisco Symphony to the New York Philharmonic, collaborating with top soloists such as Renée Fleming and Itzhak Perlman. His subscription debut with the San Francisco Symphony was described by The San Francisco Chronicle as "first rate" and pointed out the "vitality and brilliance of the music-making he drew from members of the San Francisco Symphony." Other recent subscription debuts include the Seattle Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Utah Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Kansas City Symphony, Detroit Symphony, and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. In 2023, Lecce-Chong debuted in Europe at the prestigious George Enescu Festival with the Romanian National Radio Orchestra, and in 2025, he will debut with the Janáček Philharmonic.

Through his leadership, Lecce-Chong has fostered an unparalleled dedication to the future of the orchestral art form through commissions, community initiatives, and arts education. One of his first large-scale endeavors was the "First Symphony Project," which consisted of major commissions from the next generation of renowned composers across four seasons, complete with multiple residencies in the communities. In less than a decade, he has introduced over a dozen major new orchestral works to the repertoire from composers such as Pulitzer Prize winner Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Grammy winner Michael Daugherty, Conrad Tao, Clarice Assad, and Gabriella Smith. During the pandemic, the Santa Rosa Symphony reached over two million households in the Bay Area through its "Santa Rosa Symphony Presents" TV broadcasts through local PBS. The programming included over 20 works by living composers and a partnership with Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, culminating in a recording of her music conducted by Lecce-Chong released in 2022 on the Delos label, the first CD release in the orchestra's history. To mark the conclusion of his eight-year tenure with the Eugene Symphony, the Delos label has released the orchestra's first commercial recording, featuring a newly commissioned piece by David Schiff commemorating the legendary Olympic runner, Steve Prefontaine.

Lecce-Chong is equally committed to the opera repertoire, having first conducted performances of Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* at age 24 in New York City. He continued to build his opera credentials as staff conductor with the Santa Fe Opera and leading performances with the Florentine Opera in Milwaukee. More recently, he led the Eugene Symphony through the most ambitious project in its history: a semi-staged presentation of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. In Santa Rosa, Lecce-Chong conducted and directed Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, complete with his own original dialogue, and partnered with a local arts high school to create a multidisciplinary experience of the opera.

Jaco Wong, Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Orchestra conductor
San Francisco-based conductor and composer, Jaco Wong embraces his American education while being deeply rooted in his Hong Kong upbringing. In addition to his diverse interest in repertoire ranging from symphonic, operatic, choral to contemporary music, jazz and pop, Wong pushes boundaries of the traditional concert music setting with multidisciplinary projects and innovative ways of exploring topics of science, philosophy, and culture.

Wong serves as Conductor of the Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Orchestra and Assistant Conductor at San Francisco Symphony, where he has assisted Elim Chan, Dalia Stasevska, and Kazuki Yamada. Previously, Wong served as Assistant Conductor for the Oakland Symphony for more than three years, where he assisted Mei-Ann Chen, Leonard Slatkin, Joseph Young, among others, and conducted the orchestra at Michael Morgan Memorial Concert and *Family Concert: Peter and the Wolf*. Wong made his Canada debut conducting the Orchestre symphonique de Québec at Domaine Forget de Charlevoix under the guidance of Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Kensho Watanabe, and Japan debut conducting the Toyama Sinfonia. Wong has conducted San Jose Chamber Orchestra's collaboration with San Jose Dance Company, Mercury Soul, a DJ/ classical music event by Mason Bates, Teddy Abrams at Louisville Orchestra and Edwin Outwater at the Dr. Phillips Center Steinmetz Hall Opening Celebration, with notable artists including the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Jennifer Hudson. Wong is also the Interim Artistic Director of Mill Valley Philharmonic

Wong serves as associate conductor with Opera Parallèle, premiering Kenji Oh's *The Emissary*, chorus master for *Harvey Milk: Reimagined*, and beyond. Previous engagements include serving as assistant conductor for Festival Opera and Prague Summer Nights Music Festival. During Wong's 6-year tenure as the music director of Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church, he directed Handel's *Messiah*, Caroline Shaw's *To the Hands*, and many other works. Other career highlights include conducting the Taipei Philharmonic, a recording session for Emmy Award-winning composer Jeremy Zuckerman, and participating in the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music as a conducting associate and Monteux Music Festival in New York City.

Featured on San Francisco Classical Voice and performed by New World Symphony's "By Ear: A Journey into Musical Perception," Wong's composition *Inkling* is a multimedia orchestra work with fixed electronics in collaboration with animation artist Evan Tedlock, University of Maryland Baltimore County, and

neuroscientist Enrique Vargas, UCSF Sound & Music Perception Lab, premiered at Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture. Most recently, Wong's arrangement of David Bowie's *Heroes* was performed by San Francisco Symphony, Jessica Vosk, and Edwin Outwater. Commissioned for an interactive installation, *Psithaura* is a finalist of the American Prize in composition, which has been performed in more than four countries and seven cities, including under the baton of Donald Nally at the Northwestern University New-Music Conference. Wong has previously composed for San Jose Chamber Orchestra, LA Choral Lab's GPS-enabled Soundwalk, Iris Contemporary Dance Company, Bill T. Jones, Hocket piano duo, Lang Lang, and the Shenzhen Symphony Orchestra. Wong's music is published by See-A-Dot Music Inc.

As an active educator, Wong serves as the Orchestra Director of the Harker School, leading its Orchestra to perform in Carnegie Hall, Chicago Symphony Center, Green Music Center and Jazz Band to the Essentially Ellington Festival organized by Jazz at Lincoln Center. Wong also served as conducting faculty as San Francisco Conservatory of Music Pre-College and was the Resident Conductor of the Great Wall Youth Chinese Orchestra. Wong is the former Choral Director and Musical Vocal Director of Palisades Charter High School and has prepared the Esperanza Azteca Youth Chorus to perform with Placido Domingo. Wong holds a Professional Studies Certificate in Orchestral Conducting from San Francisco Conservatory of Music and a double master's degree in music composition and Choral Conducting from University of Southern California. He also attended a Summer Study Abroad in Paris at Eastman School of Music and Institute for Research and Coordination in Acoustics/Music.

Jeff Coté, actor
Jeff Coté has been a familiar presence on Sonoma County stages for more than four decades. A graduate of Santa Rosa High School and Sonoma State University, he later earned an MFA from Indiana University. After returning to Sonoma County, Coté joined the Board of Directors of 6th Street Playhouse.

Recent acting credits include *The Homecoming* with the Roustabout Professional Ensemble, *Equivocation at Spreckels Performing Arts Center*, and serving as Narrator for *The Composer Is Dead* with the Santa Rosa Symphony. His recent directing work includes *Head Over Heels* at 6th Street Playhouse. Coté is married to Jenifer Coté, Director of Theater at Sonoma Academy.

Yihe Wang, violin
Yihe Wang is a Beijing-born violinist who moved to Santa Rosa at age four, where he began his musical journey. Currently in his second year in the position, Wang served as concertmaster of the Santa Rosa Symphony Youth Orchestra (SRSYO) for the 2024-2025 season, leading the orchestra in its 2025 Tour to Germany and the Netherlands. He has spent three years with SRSYO and other ensembles. Wang was accepted to the 2025 California All-State String Orchestra in Sacramento. He is also a member of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Wang began studying the violin with Dr. Richard Loheyde at age six and continues his studies with Chen Zhao. Currently 15, he attends Maria Carrillo High School as a sophomore and frequently serves as principal cellist and violinist in Maria Carrillo's orchestra program and assists in coaching the group.

Wang enjoys exploring jazz and mariachi styles in his school ensembles and playing gigs with his peers around Sonoma County. In his free time, he can be found hiking locally or composing.

North Coast Ballet California
North Coast Ballet California (formerly Petaluma City Ballet) was incorporated in 1981 to provide a performance vehicle for Petaluma's young dancers for 45 years. The company is based at the Petaluma School of Ballet. Ann Derby became Artistic Director in 1985 and Zoura O'Neill Co-Artistic Director in 1987.

NCBC is celebrating 45 years of excellence with its upcoming 40th annual *Nutcracker,* in collaboration with Petaluma School of Ballet, and the company's 39th anniversary.

The purpose of North Coast Ballet California is to bring the art of dance to Northern California, including the younger community, by offering professional performance opportunities for dance creators and dancers.

As a member of The Ballet Alliance, NCBC has performed in 39 Festivals throughout the United States and Canada.

Many NCBC dancers have received numerous scholarships to summer intensives through TBA. Alumni have gone on to dance professionally with Peninsula Dance Theatre & San Diego City Ballet companies, as well as Ballet Met, Nevada Ballet Theatre, Central West Ballet, Juilliard, and Mark Morris Dance Company.

NCBC's repertoire includes *Coppelia, Peter & The Wolf, Snow White, Graduation Ball, Tales of Beatrix Potter, Sorcerer's Apprentice, Hansel and Gretel, Alice in Wonderland,* and *Ballet de Seuss*. Our *Once Upon a Ballet Series* reaches 2,000 school children annually. In 2025, NCBC's *Once Upon a Ballet Series* returned to our county's schools with the new ballet Ballet de Seuss and, this season, Snow White.

North Coast Ballet California continues to gain inspiration and grow by being part of The Ballet Alliance and highly values our membership, as well as the networking and friendships that have developed over the years.

Marko Bajzer, composer
Marko Bajzer is a Croatian-American composer, bassoonist, and educator based in the San Francisco Bay Area in California. Bajzer has written for a variety of media, including orchestra, wind ensemble, chamber music, voice, and electronics. His current large-scale project is *From Sea to Shining Sea: a Musical Journey through America's National Parks*, a series of works depicting scenes from national parks across the United States, each of which can be performed as a standalone symphonic poem or combined in any number of configurations into a suite. Bajzer has been the Artist-in-Residence at four national parks thus far: Lassen Volcanic National Park, Great Basin National Park, Voyageurs National Park, and Joshua Tree National Park; and has been commissioned by orchestras across the United States, including the Reno Philharmonic, Juneau Symphony, Rochester (MN) Symphony Orchestra, Bloomington (MN) Symphony Orchestra, Bemidji Symphony Orchestra, and the North State Symphony. His other works have been performed by the Travis Air Force Band of the Golden West, Blue Lake Festival Orchestra and Band, Bay Area Rainbow Symphony, the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Wind Ensemble, San Francisco Choral Artists, Splinter Reeds Quintet, and many others.

Bajzer earned his Bachelor of Music (M.C.L.) in music composition, bassoon performance, and music education from the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music. He obtained his Master of Music degree in composition from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. His primary teachers include Mason Bates, Dan Becker, Douglas Knehans, and Joel Hoffman, with additional studies with Samuel Adler, Derek Bermel, Ellen Harrison, and Michael Fiday. Bajzer taught music theory and composition at California State University, East Bay from 2019 to 2023.

High-res photos and interview opportunities available: Francesco Lecce-Chong

SPONSORS:
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Francesco Lecce-Chong is sponsored by an anonymous donor.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:
Charles M. Schulz Creative Associates, Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center, and Snoopy's Home Ice.

HOSPITALITY PARTNER
Santa Rosa Symphony gratefully acknowledges the DoubleTree by Hilton Sonoma Wine Country in Rohnert Park for providing lodging for our esteemed guest artists and conductors. Enjoy our signature warm DoubleTree cookie welcome upon arrival. Gather Restaurant, Gather Bar & Patio, perfect for pre- and post-concert dining.

AT A GLANCE / CALENDAR LISTINGS:
WHO: Santa Rosa Symphony, Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor

WHAT: Snoopy Family Concert Series

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

WHEN:
Sunday, October 25, 2026, Boo! Let's Dance at 3:00 pm
Sunday, January 24, 2027, Back to Beethoven at 3:00 pm
Sunday, April 25, 2027, Music in the Wild at 3:00 pm
Complimentary Instrument Petting Zoo at 2:00 pm at all three concerts

TICKET PRICES:
3-concert subscription packages: $54/Adult; $24/youth (12 and under) | Packages on sale, Monday, July 6, 2026
Single tickets: $20/Adult; $10/youth (12 and under) | Tickets on sale Monday, August 3, 2026

HOW TO PURCHASE TICKETS:
srsymphony.org or (707) 546-8742 or in person: 50 Santa Rosa Ave, 1st Floor, Santa Rosa, CA. Weekdays 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, 10:30 am – 5:00 pm on Wednesday, closed Saturday & Sunday.

ABOUT SANTA ROSA SYMPHONY
Santa Rosa Symphony (SRS), the Resident Orchestra at Green Music Center, is the third-oldest professional orchestra in California and the largest regional symphony north of Los Angeles. Francesco Lecce-Chong began his tenure in 2018 as the Symphony's fifth music director in its 98 years. J. Andrew Bradford joined SRS as President and CEO in 2023.

SRS performances include 21 Classical Series concerts presented over seven concert weekends, six Discovery Rehearsals, a three-concert Family Series, a four-concert Symphony Pops Series, and special events.

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.

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). In 2022, SRS, in conjunction with Delos Productions, released its first commercial label recording, *Cello Concerto & Other Work*s, featuring works by composer Ellen Taaffe Zwilich.

The Santa Rosa Symphony is committed to the core values of artistic excellence, innovative programming, comprehensive music education, and community service.

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