



SFCM
SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

SFCM Orchestra

Donato Cabrera,
conductor

Saturday, May 1, 2021, 7:30 PM
Caroline H. Hume Concert Hall

Program

Verdala

Hannah Kendall
(b. 1984)

Suite No. 1 for Small Orchestra

Andante
Napolitana
Española
Balalaïka

Igor Stravinsky
(1882–1971)

Suite No. 2 for Small Orchestra

March
Valse
Polka
Galop

Igor Stravinsky
(1882–1971)

Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92

Poco sostenuto - Vivace
Allegretto
Presto - Assai meno presto
Allegro con brio

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

SFCM Orchestra

Kendall: *Verdala*

Jolie Fitch, *flute/piccolo*

Wentao Jiang, *oboe*

Davis Hampton, *clarinet/bass clarinet*

Shelby Capozzoli, *bassoon*

Kacey Whitfield, *horn*

Karlee Wood, *trumpet*

Ned Harlan, *trombone*

Kobe Lester, *percussion*

Vicki Chen, *harp*

Ryan Cheng, *violin 1*

Cuna Kim, *violin 2*

Anna Brooke, *viola*

Daniela Gonzales Siu, *cello 1*

Aydın Uğur, *cello 2*

Carlos Valdez, *double bass*

SFCM Orchestra

Stravinsky:

Suites No. 1 and 2 for Small Orchestra

Julia Pyke, *flute 1*

Jolie Fitch, *flute 2/piccolo*

Belinda Rosen, *oboe*

Rafael Maldonado, *clarinet 1*

Jake Byers, *clarinet 2*

Shelby Capozzoli, *bassoon 1*

Jamael Smith*, *bassoon 2*

Ben Engelmann, *horn*

Jacob Merrill, *trumpet 1*

Michail Thompson, *trumpet 2*

Chase Waterbury, *trombone*

Jacob Malek, *tuba*

Alex Chen, Caleb Smit, *percussion*

Gloriana Wolf, *piano*

Ryan Cheng, Emily Nardo, Paul Kim,

Magdalena Zaczek, *violin 1*

Michael Chu, Miles Huang, Kate Mayfield, *violin 2*

Paulina Flores, Aaron Lockhart,

Larry Joe Williams III, *viola*

Daniela Gonzales Siu, Clark Evans, Min Ji Kim, *cello*

* Guest Artist

SFCM Orchestra

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7

Michelle Sung, *flute 1*

Elissa Brown, *flute 2*

Jini Baik, *oboe 1*

Quinton Smith, *oboe 2*

Tian Qin, *clarinet 1*

Nicholas Weathers, *clarinet 2*

Shelby Capozzoli, *bassoon 1*

Jamael Smith*, *bassoon 2*

Adolfo Pena, *horn 1*

Ben Engelmann, *horn 1 asst.*

Kacey Whitfield, *horn 2*

Michail Thompson, *trumpet 1*

Karlee Wood, *trumpet 2*

Micah Harrow, *timpani*

Gabriel Anker, Michael Chu, Tabitha Mason, Cuna Kim,

Katie Allen, *violin 1*

Patrick Galvin, Miles Huang, Paul Kim,

Emily Nardo, *violin 2*

Kate Brown, Hannah Wendorf,

Rachael Lindsay, Paulina Flores, *viola*

Abigail Monroe, Mengfan Jin,

Samuel Hernandez-Yanes, *cello*

Tiffany Kung, Kody Thiessen, *double bass*

* Guest Artist

SFCM Large Ensemble Staff

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Score Reader

Artists' Biography

Donato Cabrera is the Music Director of the Las Vegas Philharmonic and the California Symphony, and served as the Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony and the Wattis Foundation Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra from 2009-2016.

Cabrera has greatly changed the Las Vegas Philharmonic's concert experience by expanding the scope and breadth of its orchestral concerts, hosting engaging and lively pre-concert conversations with guest artists and composers, and by creating the Spotlight Concert Series that features the musicians of the Las Vegas Philharmonic in intimate chamber music performances. Since Cabrera's appointment as Music Director in 2013 of the California Symphony, the organization has redefined what it means to be an orchestra in the 21st Century. Under Cabrera's baton, the California Symphony has reached new artistic heights by implementing innovative programming that emphasizes welcoming newcomers and loyalists alike, building on its reputation for championing music by living composers, and committing to programming music by women and people of color.

In the 2020-2021 season, Cabrera will continue to work with Las Vegas Philharmonic and California Symphony to give performances in a reimagined way that will keep musicians and audiences safe, keeping alive the vibrant, exciting, high quality music experiences during COVID-19 restrictions. All scheduled events for 2020 will be presented online, while plans for 2021 will be announced in advance of the scheduled performance dates.

In March 2020, Cabrera launched two new online projects to stay engaged with audiences during the Coronavirus pandemic. MusicWise – Conversations about Art and Culture with Donato Cabrera is a weekly series presented on Facebook Live and YouTube Live featuring interviews with engaging artists and civic leaders. The Music Plays On is a series on Cabrera's blog, featuring commentary and analysis on his favorite performances and recordings.

Artists' Biography

Deeply committed to diversity and education through the arts, Cabrera has evaluated the scope, breadth, and content of the Las Vegas Philharmonic and California Symphony's music education programs. In past years, annually reaching over 20,000 Title I fourth graders of the Clark County School District, Cabrera has completely reshaped Las Vegas Philharmonic's Youth Concert Series to be a curriculum-based concert experience, while also integrating a hands-on, complimentary experience with the DISCOVERY Children's Museum. California Symphony's Sound Minds program has achieved national attention for its El Sistema-inspired approach and has a proven track record in impacting the lives and improving the test scores of hundreds of K-6 children in San Pablo's Downer Elementary School.

In recent seasons, Cabrera has made impressive debuts with the National Symphony's KC Jukebox at the Kennedy Center, Louisville Orchestra, Hartford Symphony, Orquesta Filarmónica de Jalisco, Philharmonic Orchestra of the Staatstheater Cottbus, Orquesta Filarmónica de Boca del Río, Orquesta Sinfónica Concepción, Nevada Ballet Theatre, New West Symphony, Kalamazoo Symphony, and the Reno Philharmonic. In 2016, he led the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in performances with Grammy Award-winning singer Lila Downs. Cabrera made his Carnegie Hall debut leading the world premiere of Mark Grey's *Ātash* Sorushan with soprano, Jessica Rivera.

As Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony, Cabrera worked closely with its Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas and frequently conducted the orchestra in a variety of concerts, including all of the education and family concerts, reaching over 70,000 children throughout the Bay Area every year. During his seven seasons as Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra, Cabrera took the group on two European tours, winning an ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming of American Music on Foreign Tours, and receiving critical acclaim for a live recording from the Berlin Philharmonie of Mahler's Symphony No. 1.

Artists' Biography

Cabrera is equally at home in the world of opera. He was the Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Opera from 2005-2008, and has also been an assistant conductor for productions at the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Ravinia Festival, Festival di Spoleto, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Music Academy of the West. Since 2008, Cabrera has frequently conducted productions in Concepción, Chile.

Awards and fellowships include a Herbert von Karajan Conducting Fellowship at the Salzburg Festival and conducting the Nashville Symphony in the League of American Orchestra's prestigious Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview. Donato Cabrera was recognized by the Consulate-General of Mexico in San Francisco as a Luminary of the Friends of Mexico Honorary Committee, for his contributions to promoting and developing the presence of the Mexican community in the Bay Area.

For more information, visit www.donatocabrera.com

Program Notes

Hannah Kendall

Born: 1984; London, United Kingdom

Verdala

Hannah Kendall is a British composer, currently based in New York City, known for her intricate works and creative storytelling. A Doctoral Fellow in composition at Columbia University, she also holds degrees from the University of Exeter and the Royal College of Music. She has been featured on BBC Radio 3's Composer of the Week, winning a 2015 "Women of the Future" award, and has received numerous commissions from leading orchestras. The daughter of two Guyanese immigrants, she has a particular interest in Guyanese poet and political activist Martin Carter, who was most famous for his poems of protest and resistance against British rule, which lasted in Guyana through the mid 1960s. Her chamber opera, *The Knife of Dawn* (2016), which depicted his life and incarceration, garnered widespread acclaim and catapulted her onto the world stage as a composer.

Verdala was commissioned in 2018 by the London Sinfonietta for a premiere at the BBC Proms as part of a commemoration of World War I. Her continued interest in Carter led Kendall to bring a unique perspective to this commission by highlighting the involvement of the British West Indian Regiment that was transported to Europe from the Caribbean to fight in the war. Many of these soldiers gave their lives for the cause yet remain largely unacknowledged. The title of this piece refers to one of the ships that carried these soldiers overseas, and the piece draws inspiration from Carter's poem, "O Human Guide." The powerful imagery evoked by lines such as "In the burnt earth of these years... so near so near the rampart spiked with pain... The guilty heaven promising a star... Each day I ride a wild black horse terror..." serves as the basis for the intense musical material in this work.

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This short, four-minute work is written for chamber orchestra. The piece is characterized by rhythmic intensity and intricate lines exchanged between the woodwinds, often broken up by piercing string or brass chords or by the chime of the harp. The piece can be divided into three main sections. The first starts eerily quiet and features the harp, but it quickly builds through pulsing rhythms, louder dynamics, and ominous runs in the low winds. The middle section resembles a non-tonal chorale; the texture becomes sparse and muted, with the winds and brass holding out long tones that fade in and out. The upper woodwinds interject with fast-moving notes that eventually build into the third section. These wild runs continue over a repeated building rhythm in the brass, driving toward a final, sustained crescendo that never quite resolves.

Elissa Brown, PSD '21

Program Notes

Igor Stravinsky

Born June 17, 1882; Oranienbaum, Russia.

Died April 6, 1971; New York City.

Suites No. I and II

While Igor Stravinsky wrote in several musical styles throughout his lifetime, it is always easy to tell when a piece was written by the prolific composer from his identifiably ingenious yet off-kilter musical decisions. These are sometimes compositional choices, like his characteristically jagged melodies, or orchestrational in nature, as with the opening bassoon solo in *The Rite of Spring*. While all composers have similar quirks, Stravinsky's were especially ever-present. Such is the case with Suites Small Orchestra No. 1 and 2. While these miniatures may seem quaint compared to Stravinsky's more famous works, they are laced with the DNA that makes them just as great.

Before they were orchestrated, the two suites were piano duets composed while Stravinsky was living in Switzerland during the First World War. The first of these, compiled in the Second Suite, was Stravinsky's *Three Easy Pieces*, written upon Stravinsky's return from a two-week trip to Italy in 1915. There, Stravinsky met many artists like his long-time collaborator Sergei Diaghilev and Italian futurist Luigi Russolo. All of these meetings inspired Stravinsky to dedicate each of these three duets to a different artist: Alfredo Casella, Erik Satie, and Diaghilev, respectively.

Back in Switzerland, Stravinsky found himself in a tough financial position due to Diaghilev's slow payments and a lack of performances. Despite this, it was in many ways a respite. Stravinsky's family was finally living in their first permanent home since his marriage, and without the hustle and bustle of Parisian life, Stravinsky had more time to spend with his children. This is reflected by his *5 Easy Piano Pieces* (1917), from which the First Suite and the final movement of the second suite derive. These

Program Notes

These duets were written with his children in mind: they would play the easier upper part while Stravinsky would play the more complex lower part.

What makes both of the suites great is the distilled simplicity of Stravinsky's Russian style compounded by his mastery of the orchestra. Arranged in 1925, the First Suite opens with a short, sweet Andante that flirts with an almost Ravelian orchestral sound. Listen to the clarinets here: they bookend the movement with an oscillating eighth note pattern that they trade between themselves every three beats. The odd number of beats is critical here: when the clarinets switch off every other beat in the middle of the movement instead of every third beat, their change is harder to hide. A similar moment occurs towards the end of the Napolitana. Here, the clarinets and bassoons create an almost grotesque, bubbling texture through the overlapping, irregular repetition of four to five-note motives. While similar bubbling textures are common, Stravinsky makes it his own by having each player repeat their motive at different intervals, creating a constantly changing texture.

Suite No. 2, orchestrated in 1921, opens with a Marche that is dedicated to Italian composer, pianist, and conductor Alfredo Casella. The quirky piece is reminiscent of *Petrushka*, and like the ballet, Stravinsky foregrounds solo winds, which carry a disjunct melody throughout the piece. The next movement, the Valse, is dedicated to the impressionist composer Erik Satie. This miniature is one of the longest in the set, featuring a duet between the piccolo and the flute. Following this is the much heavier Polka, dedicated to Diaghilev. This movement Stravinsky remembers in particular, saying, “[The Polka] Is a caricature of Diaghilev, whom I had seen as a circus trainer cracking a long whip.” Finally, the bombastic, almost satirical Galop closes out the work with a small wink from the master composer.

Terrence Martin, '21

Program Notes

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: December 16, 1770; Bonn

Died: March 26, 1827; Vienna

Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92

Parallel to Beethoven's rise to prominence in the European musical world was Napoleon Bonaparte's almost continual disruption of its political climate. Napoleon's stance against the established aristocratic and monarchical framework was welcomed by many Europeans, including Beethoven. As soon as Napoleon transitioned to dictatorship and imperialism, however, the composer's enthusiasm famously waned, culminating in the revoking of his dedication of the Third Symphony to him in 1803.

Beyond this political disillusionment, Beethoven was also struggling with personal crises. He had started suffering progressive deafness in 1796, and by 1811 he was plagued by fever and severe headaches. Despite these circumstances, Beethoven was also enjoying a period of immense creativity at this time, as reflected by his achievements in the genre of the symphony. His style explored more adventurous musical ideas—unexpected harmonic paths, more meticulous melodic detail, more extensive thematic development, increasingly complex textures, and powerful orchestration, to name only a few.

Beethoven's Seventh Symphony is a manifestation of his mature symphonic style. He composed the Seventh during a respite in Bavaria from 1811-1812, years which also saw Napoleon's military decline. Following this turn of events, in December 1813, Beethoven premiered the Seventh in a benefit concert for Austrian and Bavarian soldiers who were wounded in the recent Battle of Hanau.

Program Notes

Still traumatized by Napoleon's occupations in 1805 and 1809, Viennese audiences embraced a hope in impending victory that was represented by this concert, which would be repeated on three further occasions.

This four-movement symphony is a display of Beethoven's symphonic power. It begins with a forceful and expansive introduction (*poco sostenuto*), one of the largest introductions in Beethoven's symphonies. Setting a majestic mood with a decisive A major chord, a lyrical oboe plays a melody that melds into the keys of C and F major. Excitement is built through rising scales in the strings that are suddenly doubled by the winds. Towards the end of this introduction, a single E is left as a musical flicker that ignites the following *Vivace* section. Back in the home key, it explores a constant dancing, dotted rhythm. Beethoven once again develops themes between C and F major, marked by sudden changes in texture and dynamics. He continues on imposing this dotted rhythm, driving it to a big A major coda.

A movement so beloved that it was encores at each repeat performance, the *Allegretto* sets a solemn mood by an inverted A minor chord. It is followed by a persistent "walking," funereal rhythm throughout this movement, with a haunting melody by the strings, as if to salute those who have fallen from the Napoleonic wars. It is closed by the same A minor chord that started this movement.

The solemnity is broken with the third movement (*Presto-Assai meno presto*), which erupts in a playful *scherzo* of substantial length, revisited three times in the movement, featuring even more lilting, dance-like rhythms. It is interspersed with a march-like trio interlude in the winds and brass. Its last abbreviated statement gives way to a sudden final gesture to the *scherzo's* energetic playfulness.

The symphony is capped with a forceful and tumultuous *Allegro con brio*, starting with two shattering fortissimo chords. Here, Beethoven insistently drives the movement to the end, starting with obsessively-repeated notes in the bass. Adding to this whirlwind of gestures, the strings continue to move in scales in all directions, layered with chords in the winds and brass maximized to its full power, erupting into a blazing coda.

Kyle Tingzon, MM '21