



BEACH CITIES SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE THE THIRD CONCERT OF OUR 75TH SEASON

BCSO Celebrates

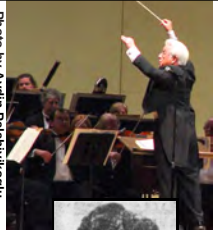
our "Joyous" 75th Year with Beethoven's 9th!

Dr. Geoffrey Pope, Conductor

Photo by Esther Mukai



Photo by Aydin Palabiyikoglu



Some of BCSO's **Maestros** (above, then L-to-R, clockwise):
Geoffrey Pope (2021-present);
Herman Clebanoff (1980-1987);
Vernon Robinson (1949 into 50s);
Barry Brisk (mid-90s -2019 (25 yrs)); &
Louis Palange (1950s - 80s (32 years!));
& BCSO's 50th Season Concert Program



Beach Cities Symphony & Torrance Civic Chorale Honor BCSO's 75 Year Tradition of FREE Classical Concerts!

Dr. Ed Trimis, Torrance Civic Chorale PLUS
Erin Wood, Soprano James Callon, Tenor
Julia Metzler, Alto Roberto Perlas Gomez, Baritone



7:15pm Pre-concert Lecture
8pm Concert then Reception
16007 Crenshaw Blvd

Marsee Auditorium
El Camino College
Torrance, CA 90506

PARKING \$3
FREE ADMISSION

Beach Cities Symphony Orchestra

Welcomes You to the 3rd Concert of Our 75th Season

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THE BEACH CITIES SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Dr. Geoffrey Pope, DMA

Music Director and Conductor

The "Peter B. Landecker

Music Director & Conductor" Podium



Third Concert - 75th Season

Friday, March 21, 2025 • 8:00 pm

Pre-Concert Lecture • 7:15 pm

El Camino College • Marsee Auditorium • Torrance, CA

PROGRAM

BCSO Celebrates our 'JOYOUS' Milestone of 75 Years!

WELCOME

Bradley Cohen, BCSA President & Erika Snow Robinson, BCSA Chair

REMARKS & PROCLAMATION PRESENTATIONS

The Office of The Honorable Holly J. Mitchell

Los Angeles County Supervisor, Second District

Presented by Jessalyn Waldrop, Constituent Services Deputy for Supervisor Mitchell

The Office of the Honorable Al Muratsuchi

California State Assemblymember, 66th Assembly District

Presented by Erick Ponce-Furlos, Field Representative for Assemblymember Muratsuchi

The Office of the Honorable Ben Allen

California State Senator, California Senate District 24

Presented by Edward Feves, Field Representative for Senator Allen

"The Star-Spangled Banner" Francis Scott Key

Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op.125 "Ode To Joy" Ludwig van Beethoven

I. Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso

III. Adagio molto e cantabile

II. Molto vivace

IV. Finale: "Ode to Joy"

Erin Wood • Soprano

Julia Metzler • Alto

James Callon • Tenor

Roberto Perlas Gomez • Baritone

RAFFLE DRAWINGS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CONCERT

**Please - NO flash photography, videography or cellphone usage
in any form during performance. Please silence cellphones.**

Latecomers will be seated during a suitable pause in the performance. Please turn off any watches, cellphones, alarms, cameras or any other communication/recording devices during the performance. The use of cameras and/or recording devices are not allowed during Beach Cities Symphony Orchestra performances. Patrons are not allowed on stage. Those who wish to meet musicians should wait until they are safely off-stage first.

Following tonight's performance, there will be a reception in the lobby for the musicians, soloists, BCSO members, guests, advertisers and all members and guests of the Beach Cities Symphony Association and its supporters. Join us for refreshments and to meet our Conductor and musicians!

Check out our website at <https://www.beachcitiessymphony.org> for news & info!

Join our newsletter for BCSO concert reminders & news: INQUIRY@BEACHCITIESSYMPHONY.ORG



Meet Dr. Geoffrey Pope

BCSO Music Director & Conductor

The “Peter B. Landecker Music Director & Conductor” Podium

Geoffrey Pope has been recognized through numerous appointments, commissions, and awards as a conductor and composer. He was delighted to be appointed Music Director and Conductor of BCSO in 2021. Pope’s musical work has taken him throughout the United States and Europe, where he seeks to present provocative and engaging performances that have a strong cultural impact.

Pope received his undergraduate degree in composition at the University of Southern California. He received master’s degrees in composition and conducting at the Eastman School of Music, where he was awarded the prestigious Walter Hagen Conducting Prize. In 2017, he completed his doctorate in conducting at the University of California, Los Angeles.

As a conductor he has performed with organizations including the symphonies and opera departments of UCLA and UC Irvine, Eastman School Symphony Orchestra, Musica Nova, Sound ExChange Orchestra, OSSIA New Music, Opera Brittenica, Synchrony, Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra, Lakewood Symphony, Aurora Symphony, Pleven Philharmonic (Bulgaria), and ensembles at USC and Occidental College.

Notable conducting engagements include performances of Johan Strauss, Jr.’s *Die Fledermaus* at UC Irvine, the first English language production of Stephen Sondheim’s *Sweeney Todd* in Budapest, and *Son of Chamber* Symphony for the composer at the Inside the (G)Earbox: John Adams @ 70 symposium at UCLA. He conducted Benjamin Britten’s opera *The Rape of Lucretia* as part of the worldwide Benjamin Britten Centenary celebrations, with “energy and flair” (Boston Classical Review), conducting a “warm and expressive rendering of Britten’s complicated score” (Boston Musical Intelligencer). Other past engagements include the premiere of Jason Barabba’s *Lettere da Triggiano* oratorio with the What’s Next? Ensemble and members of the Los Angeles Master Chorale, a multimedia concert performance of Osvaldo Golijov’s *Ayre* with soprano Terri Richter at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, and performances of Arnold Schoenberg’s *Pierrot Lunaire* with the Experimental Playground Ensemble throughout the Denver Metropolitan Area to great acclaim.

2021 recordings conducted by Pope include composer Michael Kim-Sheng’s album *Heavy Moon*, and *Cadere* by Noah Meites. Past recordings include the *Benjamin Boretz Violin Concerto* with Tchaikovsky Medalist Charles Castleman for the Open Space label, and Robert Morris’ *Roundelay*, distributed internationally by the Perspectives of New Music label. He was recently audio editor and mixing engineer of the first virtual opera featuring full orchestra and singers, with each person recorded individually during COVID. For this he executed over 20,000 edits to Valley Opera’s production of *Suor Angelica* to synchronize performers into a cohesive, seamless whole. This production is currently a 2022 semifinalist for The

Meet Dr. Geoffrey Pope, continued

American Prize. His musical work has been featured on radio stations including Classical KUSC, Colorado Public Radio, and Southern California Public Radio.

Pope made his European conducting debut in 2015 with the Pleven Philharmonic (Bulgaria), leading workshop performances of Dvorak, Elgar, and Barber. While studying at the Eastman School of Music, Pope served as Assistant Conductor of Musica Nova, Eastman's renowned contemporary music group, and has prepared ensembles for eminent conductors Brad Lubman, Jeffrey Milarsky, and Alan Pierson, in addition to working with resident composers Oliver Knussen, Steven Stucky and Tristan Murail. He was the Founding Music Director of the Sound ExChange Orchestra, an ensemble devoted to presenting concerts of both standard and new repertoire in unorthodox settings to encourage audience interaction with performers and inspire a new generation of listeners. Pope has appeared with the OSSIA New Music ensemble, the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra, and has functioned as Music Director for the Eastman Graduate Composers' Sinfonietta. While at USC, Pope founded the Starving Composers' Ensemble, some of whose recorded performances were broadcast on Classical KUSC 91.5. He also conducted the premiere of his own chamber opera, *The Stone House*, with the Chamber Opera of USC, and served as Assistant Conductor for the USC Thornton Contemporary Music Ensemble in 2007 and 2008. The following year, he conducted a new production of *Dido and Aeneas* in Wichita, Kansas, directed by Kazakh performance artist Timur Bekbosunov. While completing his doctoral studies, Pope was co-conductor, manager, and librarian of the UCLA Symphony from 2014-2017. He has led UCLA Philharmonia and Opera UCLA on several occasions, including in a lecture-recital featuring music of Richard Wagner and Bernard Herrmann, for which he composed a companion piece. He also regularly conducted Flux, UCLA's new music ensemble led by eminent pianist and professor Gloria Cheng. In 2016, he performed with the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz for musical luminaries including Herbie Hancock and Kenny Burrell. Pope's conducting teachers have included Neal Stulberg, Brad Lubman, Neil Varon, Diane Wittry, and Mark Davis Scatterday.

As a composer, Pope has enjoyed performances by various ensembles and individuals worldwide. In 2007, the Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra performed his work in Prague, Budapest and Leipzig. His solo viola piece, *Disembarking*, was commissioned by playwright E. M. Lewis for her *Song of Extinction*, and was hailed as "the most amazing element of all" by the Santa Monica Daily Press. In 2008, his commissioned work *Srebrenica Fields* was performed at the Summer Brass Institute in Atherton, California, and in 2010, his music was performed by flutist Catherine Branch at the Kennedy Center's VSA Festival. In 2012, his setting of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *Ring Out, Wild Bells*, was awarded second prize in the Hazel Renshaw Carol Competition, and performed by the Music Makers of London in the historic St. Sepulchre-without-Newgate chapel. Later that year, Pope premiered *Radium & Sky*, written in memory of the Aurora theater shooting victims, with the Aurora Symphony Orchestra. The piece was subsequently featured on

Meet Dr. Geoffrey Pope, continued

Colorado Public Radio's Colorado Matters series and on Morning Edition. In 2013, Pope received Third Place from The American Prize for his chamber orchestra work, *Votive*, described by judges as "intimate, contained, ritual music that moves in a very 'human' progress—almost as if strands of thought come forward, linger in examination and then dissipate." Pope's former composition teachers include Donald Crockett, Tamar Diesendruck, and Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon. He also studied with the late composer and electroacoustic music pioneer Allan Schindler, for whom he was a teaching assistant at the Eastman Computer Music Center. His current project, *Sarajevo Vespers*, is an opera based on a true story of events in the Bosnian War, with a libretto by archaeologist and novelist Courtney Angela Brkić.

His scholarly interests include Viennese music of the early twentieth century, and the role of diegetic music in the evolution of sonic spatialization. His doctoral dissertation, *Auf der Bühne*, addresses the evolving role of instrumental music written to be performed onstage (Bühnenmusik, or banda) in German language opera, and the coordination issues involved in its execution and synchronization with the orchestra pit.

Dr. Pope enjoys regular work in the commercial music industry as a session conductor and orchestrator, and as a forensic musicologist helping composers and studios navigate music copyright infringement matters via consulting and expert testimony services. He is thrilled to be back with BCSO for his 2nd full season!

For more information, visit www.geoffreypopemusic.com.

Geoffrey Pope Music —
website of the conductor and composer



For more information, about Dr. Pope's film and media music services, including forensic musicology, please visit www.musicalproblemsolver.com.

Musical Problem-Solver LLC



Beach Cities Symphony Orchestra It All Began a Mere 75 Years Ago...



Above: Bob Peterson, Past Board Chair, BCSO French Horn from 1949 - 2020, and the last charter BCSO member (R.I.P.)



Above: Decades-long BCSO board member & violinist, Margaret McWilliams



Five of BCSO's founding couples who were thick as thieves and all either actual family, or related thru marriage (L-R): William "Bill" Purdon and Ruth (Manikowski) Purdon; John Roehl and Pauline (Krienke) Roehl; Oliver Krienke and Carol (Manikowski) Krienke; Kenneth Hunter and Elaine (Manikowski) Hunter; Ernest "Ernie" Johnson and Doris Manikowski Johnson

Each year, BCSO performs with local young student musicians!



...with a few **FOUNDING** families who liked to play classical music and decided the South Bay should have a community orchestra. About 20 families gathered, and the rest is history! Vernon Robinson was our first conductor and from the beginning, BCSO was about music and socializing, complete with silver and fine china tea socials put on by the women musicians or musicians' wives. There is BCSO royalty, as seen above - five original BCSO families who decided to make this happen - but the best thing about Beach Cities Symphony is how multi-generational we have become over the decades and our musicians' longevity!

Grace Roehl Van Dusen, current BCSO violinist, whose parents were BCSO founders, attended BCSO's 1st concert as a small child, then played with BCSO as a Mira Costa senior in 1960 at the behest of her band director, Mr. Cather (BCSO trumpet, John Cather's dad)



Esther Keel, above, performed with BCSO in 1998 at age 13, then again as an adult in 2017!

DID YOU KNOW?
BCSO Principal trumpet, John Cather, joined BCSO as a teen, then again as an adult, like his father, who had also played for BCSO?



Peter Landecker, has been a BCSO violinist since 1978, was our OG BCSO webmaster in 1998, & is also our Podium-Naming Donor from 2023-24

BCSO currently has 17 musicians who also played Beethoven's 9th w/the El Camino Choir on Nov 12, 1999 for Beach Cities Symphony's 50th Season!

DID YOU KNOW?

We've had parents/children; husbands & wives play? Mr./Mrs. Bill & Mary Malcolm; Mr./Mrs. John Wisniewski; CURRENT: Horst & Kay Marie Kuder!



FROM THE BCSA BOARD CHAIR

Hey Y'all!

I am SOOOO very excited to be able to tell you that our 75th "Diamonds & BCSO Are Forever" Gala - which took place on March 1st at the Redondo Beach Elks - was a SMASHING SUCCESS and **WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT Y'ALL!**

We raised nearly \$7,000 and had an absolute BLAST doing it! Thank you for reminding me what we can do as a community when everyone comes together for a common goal! The fact that we are celebrating our 75th year as a local, free, and nearly-all-volunteer community orchestra performing classical music for the South Bay is, in and of itself, a HUGE feat and speaks volumes about what a *special group like this and its volunteers, community supporters, board members and friends can make happen.*

It's wild to think we have, among our current BCSO musicians, at least 17 of us (if I counted correctly, and of which I am one!) that were on this very same stage *a quarter of a century ago* for our 50th season, playing Beethoven's 9th Symphony with The El Camino Choir! We are thrilled to once again play, what I and many others consider, the greatest piece of music ever written - and partner with The Torrance Civic Chorale, along with four amazing soloists. So, keeping with tradition, we played "Ode to Joy" for our 50th and 60th seasons, and here we are for 75! JUST, WOW!

I am grateful for all those who laid the solid foundation for our symphony to make it this far and I look forward to more student musicians who return to us as adults and continue our tradition of amazing, free classical music. I also look forward to grandparents bringing grandbabies, parents bringing kids, teachers and students - so we continue to thrive for another 75!

Spread the word about us, won't you? Give a donation if you can! It's only through the generosity of those who care about music and culture that we can keep this SUPER SPECIAL GROUP we call the Beach Cities Symphony Orchestra thriving! Thanks in advance for being here - it means the world! Visit BCSO at: <https://www.beachcitysymphony.org/membership/>



Musically Yours,

Erika

Erika Snow Robinson,

Beach Cities Symphony Association Board Chair
2nd Bassoonist (Since 1999)

FROM THE BCSA PRESIDENT

Welcome back to the 3rd concert of our 75th Season!

We are so excited you joined us this evening! It's hard to believe that it's been fifteen years since we last played this piece - time sure flies when you're playing the classics - and this is DEFINITELY ***THE*** classic!



We are very fortunate to have four world-class soloists with us tonight, two of which you may have been lucky enough to hear at our last concert. We're also happy to partner for the first time with the Torrance Civic Chorale, another local and community-minded group that local residents can join, much like Beach Cities Symphony, if you're interested in singing and keeping live musical performances thriving!

As Erika touched on, BCSO only exists through the good graces of our generous donors, our awesome volunteers - both within the symphony and without - and we're hoping that you want to continue that tradition. We want to be around for at least another 75 years, if not longer, so let us know how you can help.

Our gala was a tremendous evening, full of fun, food, dancing, auctions and prizes - all while raising money for a good cause! We especially hope it brought to light what Beach Cities Symphony musicians and supporters already know: that we have a truly special group here in the South Bay and we want to share that with everyone.

There are many ways you can help BCSO...**email us & let's talk about them at inquiry@beachcitysymphony.org - here are some suggestions:**

- 1) **monetarily sponsor** an upcoming concert;
- 2) **buy an ad in our concert program;**
- 4) **donate to BCSA:** www.beachcitysymphony.org/membership AND/OR
- 5) **volunteer** on our BCSA board, at our concerts, or with a skill we need!

BCSO has never charged for a concert, nor do we plan to but we truly need our "whole village" to show up for us - so talk about us, follow us on social media, hand out our bookmarks and please consider donating! Tell others of our 75-years-young DIAMOND of the Beach Cities and **we will see you at a future concert & mark May 16th on your BCSO calendar!**

**Bradley Cohen, BCSA Board President
Principal Clarinetist (Since 1989)**

75th Gala Thank You's

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(in no certain order)

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BCSO's 75th Gala & Season Team!

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Amber & Sumit Purohit
Brian Robinson
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Robert Torres
John Cather
Dr. Geoffrey Pope
Joanne Lazzaro
AND "Beach Cities String Quartet:"
Susan Stolovy, Sophia Liebert,
Eve Ahlers & Sophia Momand

**BCSO CANNOT THANK YOU ENOUGH FOR ALL
YOUR SUPPORT, HARD WORK, TIME & EFFORT!**

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**NEXT UP: May 16th, 8pm
BCSO's "Artists of the Future" Concert!**

BCSO is supported, in part, by the LA County Board of Supervisors through the Department of Arts & Culture. We are grateful to be a LACDAC partial grantee & acknowledge LA County 2nd District Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell's support of the arts.



FROM THE MAESTRO

Dear BCSO Supporters, Musicians & Family-

After the fun and successful 75th Gala we just had, heading into the Beethoven's 9th Symphony, we are reminded how lucky we are to have such a supportive community here in the South Bay - and one that is showing more and more interest in helping BCSO truly thrive.



Tonight is a great BCSO tradition that I'm grateful to continue and be a part of, since it takes a small army to pull off performing Beethoven's 9th Symphony and we have worked hard to make it happen.

I hope you will continue to invest in this orchestra's future, so many more people can share an experience like this one tonight, for generations to come. I also hope you will join us at our May 16th "Artists of the Future" concert where we highlight local student musicians. Only through our young musicians will we continue to move forward through the decades and keep the love for classical music alive.

Musically yours,

Dr. Geoffrey Pope
Music Director and Conductor
Beach Cities Symphony Orchestra

Photo of Dr. Geoffrey Pope
conducting taken by
Esther Mukai.



**Thanks Torrance Civic Chorale for partnering with
BCSO on Beethoven's 9th!**

"Ode to Joy"  *75th*



MAY 16, 2025

BCSO's "Artists of the Future" Concert

**Thank you to the (MTAC) Music Teacher's
Association of California - South Bay Branch -
for being our decades-long partner!**

PROGRAM NOTES



Ludwig van Beethoven

1770 – 1827

Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op.125 “Ode To Joy”

I. Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso

II. Molto vivace

III. Adagio molto e cantabile

IV. Finale: “Ode to Joy”

In the decade leading up to about 1812 Beethoven had enjoyed the most productive period of his life. He not only had composed well over two dozen major works—works

that stand in the highest ranks of Western music—and many more other compositions in various genres, but he had changed the game of musical composition in lasting ways. Building upon the work of Haydn and Mozart, he crafted a musical language that would forever set the mark for those who aspire to a musical style that is founded in an unprecedented internal coherence, logical extension and exploration of tonality, and a remarkable economy of means. Moreover, he did so within a relentless exploration of formal, architectural structure, as well as developing a deep, expressive, lyrical and dramatic content. In essence—he had become the Beethoven who has hence stood in the exalted ranks of classical composers.

It was not without its personal price, however. In addition to the intensity of his busy life as a composer of works that constantly evolved in content and complexity, he faced constant pressures in coping with his loss of hearing, his wrangles with his family, his disappointments in personal relationships, and the never-ending hassles with publishers and impresarios. In short, by about 1812 there began a period of less productivity, of reconsiderations of the path forward in musical style--and just plain mental and physical fatigue. It was the beginning of a time that eventually led to what musical scholars have commonly referred to as his last, and third, stylistic period. While the works from this period are universally hailed by musicians as works of genius and unparalleled in their advanced style, it must be admitted that much of the concert-going public still has difficulty with appreciating the spare, often obscure, and abstract nature of many of these compositions. And yet, there is the Ninth Symphony, standing apparently forevermore in the smallest circle of almost everyone’s most beloved works of Beethoven. How is this possible? Is the Ninth Symphony not characteristic of the other works from this late, difficult period? Wherein lies the almost universal appeal?

Development of the symphony as a genre from the models left by the mature Haydn and Mozart to its position of central importance in the musical world was one of Beethoven’s greatest achievements. Discounting the derivative first two symphonies—as good as they are—the core of his symphonic achievements lies in the six symphonies of the aforementioned decade. He finished the eighth symphony in 1812 and about that time began a few sketches for the ninth. It is clear that at that juncture he did not envision the special place that the ninth would take in his oeuvre, but rather, it was just the next one, number nine. Work went more slowly, however, and even after the

PROGRAM NOTES, con't.

Philharmonic Society of London formally commissioned the Ninth Symphony in 1817, serious efforts did not begin until around 1822, with completion only in 1824, about three years before his death. A major element in the work, the novel and unprecedented incorporation of a choral setting of Schiller's Ode to Joy poem, had actually been in the back of his mind since way back in 1793, but had not yet found its ultimate musical rôle for Beethoven. And, of course, he had composed the Fantasy in C Minor for Piano, Chorus, and Orchestra, op. 80 later, in 1808, as a "brilliant finale" for the concert which saw the premières of the fifth and sixth symphonies. There are many similarities between the Choral Fantasy and his setting of Schiller's poem in the Ninth Symphony. They have always been clear to all, and the composer himself acknowledged the kinship. They include strong melodic and harmonic similarities between their respective main tunes, and a like idealism in universal human and artistic values expressed in the texts. So, all in all, there were lots of elements stewing in the pot during the long gestation period of this major work of his last years.

All of these elements came together in a work that was significantly different from the great six symphonies that preceded it. To be sure, the novelty of the choral finale, with four vocal soloists, was sufficiently path breaking. There was also a logical extension and development of technical elements in form and texture, as well. But even lay audiences immediately sensed a more abstract, elevated, and deeper sense of spiritual "mission" from the outset.

The central idea of the symphony obviously stems from Schiller's poem celebrating the universal brotherhood of mankind. But that celebration is not easily, nor quickly arrived at. Before the stirring words of the fourth movement, there is much psychological ground to be explored—and so the first three movements delve into darker reflections of the realities of existence. The first movement opens with a floating, ominous "cloud" of suspense whose exact tonality is fittingly indeterminate. But after sixteen bars, the main theme—a jagged and dynamic affair—appears in the central key of D minor. Other motives appear in constant parade—quite unlike many of his other works in which he literally works to death a single idea. This movement is rife with aphoristic, and eminently useful ideas, all contributing to a sense of unity, despite their multiplicity. The careful listener will find that as the movement constantly explores the stress, uncertainty, and challenge of making sense of existence, these motives pervade the musical fabric and carry the whole along. A further sense of unrest is generated by Beethoven's tendency—a common one in his late works—to avoid the structurally reassuring contrast of tonic and dominant keys. Here, the tonal polarity is between D minor and Bb major—one of the composer's favorite juxtapositions of keys. While there are many quiet moments (even in "happy" keys), the dark uncertainly pounds along all the way to a forceful conclusion—in which it might be said that nothing is actually "concluded" with regard to higher matters.

Conventionally, the fast, dance-like (or in this case, scherzo) movement is the third one, but in this case Beethoven chose to put it second. Like the beloved last movement, it has garnered a secure place in popular culture, even serving some years ago as the theme for the evening television news. And like the first movement, there is no joy in this one, either. It is a serious, hammering thing, driven by the timpani, which opens the

PROGRAM NOTES, con't.

movement with its signature rhythm. Usually, the formal structure of a scherzo is somewhat straight forward, but the composer chose here to employ the full sonata form, with its first and second theme groups, development section, and recapitulation—yet more evidence of the scale and importance that Beethoven imbued in the work. It is relatively easy to keep track of the main section and its repeats, for the composer has thoughtfully provided us with three bars of complete silence to mark them. The traditional middle section of a scherzo, the trio, here is unusual in that it is not only in duple meter (two to the bar), but is in the cheerful parallel major key—really, one of the first extended sections in the symphony thus far not in a minor key. After this diversion, the expected return to the first section occurs, but severely abbreviated, and after a quick allusion to the trio, a sudden ending surprises us.

The Adagio is a glorious example of Beethoven's unequalled skill in evoking the transcendent. A leisurely exploration in anticipation of the "joy" of the last movement—and which has hitherto eluded us—it continues the delicious juxtaposition of the keys of Bb and D major/minor. After a brief introduction, the violins play the familiar theme in Bb, followed shortly by the other half of the main theme, but now in the other key. Two variations on these themes in various remote and refreshing keys constitute the body of the movement. A little fanfare-like figure introduces the coda, and after a bit more variation (Beethoven can never resist the procedure) this meditative episode is over.

The incorporation of a chorus in the last movement was simply unprecedented at the time, and still is remarkable. But then, a choral setting of Schiller's poem is, of course, the *raison d'être* of the whole symphony. But how to transit into it after such a serious, long, and imposing three movements? That it gave Beethoven fits is well documented. He labored at many solutions before finding the way that seemed to make the whole affair a logical procession to the inevitable. And so the unique form of the last movement effects that end. The "roadmap" of the movement is varied and somewhat complex, but in the end it all makes sense and informs the sense of inevitability as it proceeds.

The movement begins with a fiery storm of agitation, quickly followed by the solo basses literally singing like an operatic bass, in the best of vocal recitative style, obviously taking over the show. The orchestra presents a short review of snatches of the first three movements—with the basses seeming to "reject" them. The basses, which obviously have found the solution, present their idea, an intimation of the famous last movement's tune. The real theme then appears several times, each with fuller harmony and orchestration. But, apparently, that's not sufficient, and a human voice finally enters—to the tune of the original recitative by the basses and entreats all: "Oh, friends, not these tones!" More variations follow, this time in various combinations of vocal soloists and chorus, each one raising the emotional and musical stakes. At the climax it is all dramatically broken off at the words: "Before God!" What ensues is a kind of Turkish march that starts softly in the lower voices (including the distinctive contra-bassoon). This last variation gradually builds, helped by the interjections from the excited tenor and the men in the chorus. When the climax is reached, the voices drop out, and the orchestra zips into double fugue in the same bustling march rhythm. After a short, quiet transition the full orchestra and chorus blaze out with the main theme.

PROGRAM NOTES, con't.

But, soon thereafter all slows down and the chorus and trombones dramatically intone the directive for the “millions” to embrace the earth below of the “common Father.” A short hymn-like passage then earnestly and reverently changes its mind, and suggests that all should “look upward” to the Maker’s mansion in the starry pavilions. In joy at this new understanding of mankind’s salvation, chorus, soloists, chorus, and orchestra plunge into the general celebration of that fact. Dramatic variants of tempo, texture, and familiar themes drive us to a conclusion that has few equals in all of music—and we are reminded, yet again, of why Beethoven, notwithstanding the human faults that he shares with us all, had the inimitable gift to point the way to human transcendence.

Program Notes by Wm. E. Runyan

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<https://www.runyanprogramnotes.com/ludwig-van-beethoven/symphony-no-9-d-minor-op-125>

MEET OUR BCSO “ODE TO JOY” SOLOISTS

ERIN WOOD SOPRANO



Soprano Erin Wood’s portrayals have received praise for her “soaring soprano,” her “immense voice full of grit at the bottom and transcendent radiance at the top” and her “volcanic outpouring of sound.”

Roles include Sieglinde/Ortlinde in “*Die Walküre*,” Lisa in “*Pikovaya Dama*,” Gutrune/Third Norn in “*Götterdämmerung*” and Amelia in “*Un Ballo in Maschera*” during her career with San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Metropolitan Opera.

Concert engagements include Verdi “Requiem” with the London Symphony Chorus, performances of Wagner “Wesendonck Lieder,” Mahler “Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen” and Fourth Symphony, and Strauss “Vier letzte Lieder.”

Awards include the George London Foundation’s Kirsten Flagstad Award for Wagnerian singers, and Finalist at the Lauritz Melchior International Singing Competition in Aalborg, Denmark. Ms. Wood is an alumna of UCLA, and Lyric Opera of Chicago’s Ryan Opera Center. She is a member of the Voice faculty at El Camino College.

JULIA METZLER ALTO



Los Angeles-based soprano Julia Metzler is an active up-and-coming opera singer and concert soloist. Her recent and upcoming roles include Vitellia in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Mrs. P in *The Man who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*, Micaëla in Bizet’s *The Tragedy of Carmen*,

MEET OUR SOLOISTS, con't.

As a roster member of the Los Angeles Master Chorale, Ms. Metzler can frequently be heard performing at the Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Hollywood Bowl. She has performed as a soloist with both the Los Angeles Philharmonic and with the Chorale, most recently in Bach's *Magnificat* and Handel's *Messiah*.

A frequent opera competitor, Ms. Metzler was a 2018 Metropolitan Opera National Council Awards National Semi-Finalist. She has won numerous awards, including the Mondavi Center Young Artists' Competition (Grand Prize), and the Los Angeles Spotlight Awards (Grand Prize).

In 2011, Ms. Metzler made her debut at the National Center for Performing Arts with the China National Symphony Orchestra in Beijing, returning in 2014 for more concert debuts. She has performed Chinese music concerts with the New York City Opera Orchestra, and in Paris at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. In 2017, she was invited to sing on CCTV for China's Lunar New Year Gala - the most widely watched television broadcast in the world.

Ms. Metzler has appeared on NPR's *'From the Top'* and was featured in the HBO Miniseries *'Masterclass,'* coaching with Plácido Domingo. Ms. Metzler holds degrees in vocal performance from San Francisco Conservatory of Music and UCLA. She hails from a family of classical musicians, and together they run the Metzler Violin Shop in Glendale.



JAMES CALLON **TENOR**

Praised for his “golden-toned tenor,” as noted by myrvoldstheatrenotes.com, James Callon is rapidly distinguishing himself as a dynamic singer possessing the “emotional and gorgeous voice” (Grants Pass Daily Courier), of the romantic, full lyric tenor. Though lauded for his

“beaming strong voice” (San Jose Classical Music Examiner), Mr. Callon's ability to produce tenderly-spun high notes above the staff has shown his to be a voice of “rare beauty, compelling ardor, and...touching nuance.” (San Francisco Classical Voice).

After undergrad at UC Irvine, Mr. Callon began soon performing on the main stage for LA Opera, Tulsa Opera (also a former member of the Resident-Artist Program), Rogue Opera, and Opera San Jose, where he recently concluded a 2-yr residency. As Opera San Jose's resident tenor, Mr. Callon graced the stage in no less than eight full productions, including the critically acclaimed remount of *Madama Butterfly* in which, “Resident tenor, James Callon, is a perfectly awful BF Pinkerton (in the best way possible) with an amazing voice, as usual.” (San Jose Metblogs).

Additional mainstage credits are many including roles in *La Traviata*; *Götterdämmerung*; *Gianni Schicchi*; *Die Zauberflöte* and numerous guest

MEET OUR SOLOISTS, con't.

appearances. As a resident of Opera San Jose, Mr. Callon also performed the roles of Nadir (*Les pêcheurs des perles*), Manrico (*Il Trovatore*), Fenton (*Falstaff*), among others and Eisenstein (*Die Fledermaus*) in which, “Lyric tenor, Mr. Callon, handles both the acting and singing chores with equal aplomb, displaying a refined tone and an affable comic sense.” (Gregory M. Alonzo, Stark Insider).

An accomplished concert artist, Mr. Callon has sung with various symphonies and chamber groups. Recent concert credits include: Beethoven's *9th Symphony* with Cypress College, Schubert's *Nachthelle* for the Jacaranda Music Society, Handel's *Messiah* with the LA Master Chorale, and Mozart's *Requiem* with the LA Philharmonic. James and his wife Maria currently reside in Hayward, CA.

ROBERTO PERLAS GOMEZ BARITONE



Filipino-American baritone, Roberto Perlas Gomez, has performed his extensive repertoire of over one hundred roles with many of the international and regional opera companies throughout the United States. His career has had a special emphasis on California. He performs many of the standard leading baritone roles in French and Italian opera, with Figaro in *Barbiere* and Germont in *La traviata* being his signature pieces. He recently sang the role of Elias in the Filipino opera, *Noli me tangere* at Kennedy Center.

Mr. Gomez made his international debut as Marcello in *La Boheme* with Shanghai Opera. He was in Manila to create the title role of Rizal in a premiere celebrating the centennial of the Philippine National hero.

Mr. Gomez made his European debut for Arena di Verona as Chinese Prime Minister, Chou en-lai in the Italian premiere of John Adams' *Nixon in China*, a role he later reprised with Long Beach Opera. He further performed title roles with Long Beach in Antonio Vivaldi's long lost *Motezuma*, an American premiere, and *Emperor of Atlantis*.

He has made a specialty of modern operas, most recently performing in *The Camp*, an opera about a Japanese-American family's incarceration during WWII.



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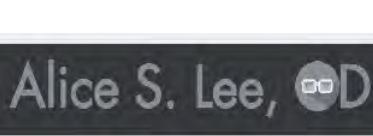
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October
2024

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