New Haven Symphony Orchestra conducted by Donato Cabrera and with Aya Kaminaguchi, marimba soloist January 22, 2023 • Valley Regional High School



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New Haven Symphony Orchestra

Donato Cabrera, Guest Conductor Aya Kaminaguchi, Marimba Soloist

PROGRAM

Stride for String Orchestra

Anna Clyne (born 1980)

Concerto for Marimba and Strings

Emmanuel Séjourné (born 1961)

I. Tempo souple

II. Rythmique, Énergique

with Aya Kaminaguchi, marimba

~ INTERMISSION ~

Serenade for Winds in E-flat major, Op. 7

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Symphony No. 8 in G Major, Op. 88

Antonín Dvorák (1841-1904)

I. Állegro con brio

II. Adagio

III. Allegretto grazioso

IV. Allegro ma non troppo

Audio and/or videtaping is strictly prohibited.

No flash photography is permitted during the performance.

Program Notes

by Gabi Tunucci

Anna Clyne: Stride for String Orchestra



Photo from @annaclyne on Twitter

Anna Clyne (born 1980) is an English composer now residing in the United States. She studied music at the University of Edinburgh, and later at the Manhattan School of Music. Clyne currently serves as 2022-2023 Composer-in-Residence with the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra. Clyne has worked in both acoustic and electro-acoustic music; her more recent projects have explored the intersection of music and visual art, such as her works *Color Field* and *Abstractions*, in which she shapes images into bold, creative sounds. Clyne's compositions have

been praised by musicians and critics alike: Clyne earned a 2015 Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Classical Composition for her double violin concerto *Prince of Clouds* and was described in a *New York Times* profile piece as a "composer of uncommon gifts and unusual methods."

Stride for String Orchestra (2020)

Clyne's *Stride* was inspired by Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 8 in C minor. Indeed, the turbulent piece is brimming with dramatic emotion reminiscent of Beethoven's works. Though the piece opens softly, the strings quickly pick up speed and intensity, breaking into a discordant theme in which the orchestra seems to fragment, only to be brought together again in an insistent, tempestuous melody. This tension melts into a more dulcet, expressive section towards the end of the piece, still interspersed with moments of subtle foreboding. Finally, the orchestra breaks once again into discord, continuing to a fervent return of the opening theme that culminates with the orchestra in unison playing three decisive downbows, signifying a powerful resolution to the piece's emotional turmoil.



Emmanuel Séjourné: Concerto for Marimba and Strings



Photo from www.emmanuelsejourne.com

Emmanuel Séjourné (born 1961) is a French composer and percussionist. He studied at the Conservatoire de Strasbourg in Strasbourg, France, under Jean Batigne, the founder and director of the six-member percussion ensemble *Les Percussions de Strasbourg*. Séjourné was especially drawn to contemporary and improvised music. He went on to specialize in mallet percussion, winning first prize in percussion in 1980 and later becoming a professor of mallet percussion as well as head of the percussion department. Among his accomplishments, Séjourné is most recognized for his expansion of vibraphone

and marimba performance by introducing new and innovative playing methods and ideas, such as six-stick playing and the vibra-midi. Séjourné artfully fuses Western classical tradition with popular culture to create compelling and passionate compositions.

What is a marimba?

A marimba is a musical instrument in the percussion family. It is made up of wooden bars, each with a resonator pipe beneath it in order to amplify the rich intricacies of its

sound. The marimba is played by striking these bars with mallets, producing warm, resonant tones. Although it may look like a xylophone, the marimba has a much softer sound because the bars are more hollowed-out.

Concerto for Marimba and Strings (2005)



Séjourné's concerto is made up of two movements and features a complex dialogue between marimba and orchestra. The concerto opens with a sweet but somber melody by the strings, followed by sparse, haunting notes on marimba that echo ominously in the quiet. The marimba softens, and the orchestra returns with a passionate lament that crescendos to a shout. The marimba plays alone again, with lush, gentle tones that continue as the orchestra joins, swelling with emotion and eventually returning to a soft echo.

In the second movement, the marimba returns with intensity. It plays a hurried, urgent melody, to which the orchestra responds with equal energy. This tense opening relaxes into a more contemplative middle section punctuated by pizzicato in the cellos. In its final moments, the concerto fluctuates between these two states, eventually building to a powerful ending that seems to purposely leave this conflict unresolved, instead choosing to embrace the mixed emotions that permeate the piece.

Richard Strauss: Serenade for Winds in E-flat major, Op. 7



Richard George Strauss (1864-1949) was a German composer, pianist, and violinist best known for his stunning symphonic poems¹ and expressive style. Strauss cited his greatest influences as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Richard Wagner, and his compositions blend Mozart's light and aerial style with Wagner's more dramatic tones. Strauss's works contemplate the fluctuating emotions of everyday life; Strauss achieves simultaneous delicacy and rich texture that deviates from darker themes explored by his contemporaries.

What is a "serenade"?

A serenade is a short musical composition or performance, often created in honor of someone or something and composed for a small ensemble. Serenades usually feature lighter, more tranquil melodies. The word "serenade," in its oldest usage, referred to the musical greeting of a loved one, typically a lover singing to his lady through an open window on a quiet evening. In fact, "serenade" comes from the Italian word "serenata"; the prefix "sere-" here associated with the Italian word "sera," meaning evening.

Serenade in E-flat Major (1881)

Strauss's *Serenade in E-flat Major* is a single movement composed in **sonata form**², played by wind and horn instruments. The exposition features lyrical themes, the first being a lighter, more lilting melody, while the second embraces a fuller sound and brings out the instruments' richer tones. The second section develops after an introduction by oboe with greater intensity, building in excitement toward the return of the piece's original themes. The horns begin this recapitulation, playing the first theme with gentle passion. The second theme returns briefly before the piece fades gently to a soft finish that leaves listeners with a sense of calm.

Footnotes:

- I. Symphonic poem: A "symphonic poem," or tone poem, is a musical composition, usually a single, continuous movement, inspired by the content of a poem or other extra-musical art form. Some famous examples include Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet and Rachmaninoff's Isle of the Dead, both of which adapt existing literary works.
- 2. The sonata form has three parts that present the piece's main themes: exposition, development, and recapitulation.

Antonín Dvorák: Symphony No. 8 in G Major, Op. 88



Antonín Dvorák (1841-1904) was a Bohemian composer born in Nelahozeves, Bohemia, a town in the former Austrian Empire (now the Czech Republic). Though Dvorák composed in several musical genres, he is particularly well known for his expert ability to translate folk material into more Romantic compositions. Indeed, he helped facilitate the Cezch nationalist movement in music due to the decidedly "Czech" character of his pieces. These lively folk melodies distinguished Dvorák from his more heavy-handed contemporaries, making his

pieces a unique and refreshing departure from the typical musical tradition at the time. Dvorák did not limit himself to this stylistic niche, however. Dvorák's works span a variety of genres; in fact, he mainly composed more technically sophisticated works with international influences. Impressively, the notable quantity of Dvorák's work certainly does not diminish its quality. His masterful compositions still earn the praise of modern musicians and remain beloved by audiences today.

Songs of Bohemia

After years of financial struggle, Dvorák's career breakthrough finally came when he was awarded a grant by the Austrian state that introduced him to Johannes Brahms. In addition to providing Dvorák with valuable advice and guidance, Brahms recommended Dvorák to an influential publisher. The publication of *Moravian Dances* and *Slavonic Dances* earned Dvorák and the music of his homeland, Bohemia, an enthusiastic international audience. The sheet music for *Slavonic Dances* sold out in a single day.

Dvorák is also considered part of Romanticism, a stylistic movement prominent in the 19th century that aimed to create more emotional and dramatic scores that departed from traditional Classical forms. This made nationalism a favorite of many Romantic

composers, as nationalist music sought to glorify the unique characteristics of its nation. Dvorák explained his admiration for his country in an I885 interview for the *Sunday Times* (London), "The Slavs all love music. They may work all day in the fields, but they are always singing, and the true musical spirit burns bright within them."

While Dvorák's energetic melodies were not based on existing Bohemian folk songs, they incorporated the distinctive



Dvorák's family home in the present-day Czech Republic.

characteristics of Bohemian folk music, such as the forms and rhythms of local dances. Even Brahms himself allegedly envied Dvorák's ability to craft such spontaneous and captivating melodies.

Symphony No. 8 in G Major, Op. 88 (1889)

Bohemian folk music permeates Dvorák's Symphony No. 8. This cheerful-sounding piece features a stunning variety of themes that appear seemingly spontaneously. Dvorák described his initial vision for the symphony as something "different from the other symphonies, with individual thoughts worked out in a new way." Indeed, although Symphony No. 8 follows the traditional, four-movement symphony structure (I. Allegro con brio, II. Adagio, III. Allegretto grazioso – Molto Vivace, and IV. Allegro ma non troppo), the piece's spontaneous form makes it fresh and compelling.

I. "Allegro con brio" means "a fast tempo with spirit" in English. As the name suggests, this movement sets a bright and energetic tone for the piece. The movement opens, however, with a rich, lyrical theme in a minor key, creating a more somber atmosphere. The "bird call" of the flute soon interrupts this solemnity, facilitating the movement's jovial principal theme. Dvorák carefully balances this cheerful theme with moments of melancholy, creating a vividly pastoral image of a sun slowly breaking through a cloudy sky.



II. "Adagio" translates to "at a slow tempo." This movement begins softly, with the strings introducing the movement's main theme in conversation with the oboes, flutes, and clarinets. Next comes a gentle, sweet restatement of this theme by the rest of the symphony while the strings accompany with descending scales. The violas and cellos lend to the lighthearted tone with steady pizzicato. A heavier, march-like section follows, creating a melancholy mood that starkly contrasts the preceding theme. Eventually, the gentler melody returns, only to be suddenly interrupted again by bold, passionate strings. The movement finally ends on a tranquil note, indicating that the brief storm has passed.

III. "Allegretto grazioso – Molto Vivace" means "fairly fast and gracefully." Most of this movement is a waltz with a distinctly Bohemian folk sound, characterized by rich string sections. The central trio section played by flute and oboe especially embodies this folk influence; this second theme evokes the flowing rhythm of a country dance, kept in time by the steady beat of the strings and timpani².

IV. "Allegro ma non troppo" means "fast, but not too fast." This final movement is the most turbulent and complex of the four. Dvorák powerfully demonstrates his musical breadth and skill, expertly weaving together several variations of the symphony's themes. The movement opens with a fanfare by the trumpets. Next, the cellos enter with a lush melody that builds in sound and tension, briefly interrupted by soaring, delicate flute tones. The middle section develops into a masterful tempest that fluctuates from major to minor keys before dissolving into a more serene and lyrical melody. The movement ends with a rousing, fast-paced coda that features a whirlwind of strings and triumphant timpani



The waltz theme from the third movement of Symphony No. 8.

Footnotes:

- Pizzicato is a playing technique for string instruments in which players pluck the strings instead of playing them with a bow.
- 2. A timpani is a set of kettle drums played in an orchestra (pictured at right).





New Haven Symphony Orchestra

Donato Cabrera, Guest Conductor Aya Kaminaguchi, Marimba Soloist

STRINGS

Violin Yuan Ma Cello Judith McDermott-Eggert Concertmaster Principal Gregory Tompkins David Southorn Rebecca Patterson Tiffany Wee Assistant Concertmaster Assistant Principal Saerom Yoo Artemis Simerson Tom Hudson Chieh-An Yu Marika Basagoitia, Principal Second Violin Joanne Choi Harmony Fellow Stephan Tieszen Christine Coyle Dénise Chividian. Iulia Henderson Assistant Principal on leave Mariusz Skula Second Violin Patricia Smith Millie Piekos Viola Axel Vallejos, Satoka Abo Principal Harmony Fellow Marvin Warshaw Simon Bilyk Bass Soohyun Choi Assistant Principal Elisabeth Ewe Principal Ellen Higham Bin Gui Andrew Trombley Gretchen Frazier Lap Hei "Jeremy" Hao Assistant Principal Bethany Hargreaves Akiko Hosoi Nicholas Cathcart Brian Isaacs Stephanie Hug Yaroslav Kargin Jim Andrews Yoon Be Kim Jill Pellett Levine Alexander Bickard Oliver Leitner Carol Warshaw Christopher Johnson Anna Leunis Jennifer Quián-López, Jeffrey Tomkins Nathan Lowman

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Assistant Principal
Marta Boratgis

Trumpet

HARP

Principal
Vacant

Vacant

Jennifer Hoult

Clarinet Assistant Principal
Ken Tedeschi

Principal PIANO
David Shifrin Trombone Principal

Assistant Principal Principal William Braun

Bixby Kennedy Scott Cranston

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Terrence Fay
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The New Haven Symphony Orchestra enriches Connecticut's cultural landscape through exceptional performances and education programs that are accessible to residents from all walks of life. Innovative programming offered statewide inspires deeper audience engagement and meaningful artistic and educational collaborations which increase the reach and impact of the Symphony. Authentic commitments to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access move the NHSO to provide representation that reflects the richly diverse communities we serve in all areas of Symphony leadership.



Donato Cabrera, Guest Conductor for the New Haven Symphony Orchestra, is the Music Director of the California Symphony and the Las Vegas Philharmonic. He 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 to 2016. Cabrera is one of only a handful of conductors in history who has conducted performances with the San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Opera, and the San Francisco Ballet. Cabrera is dedicated to adventurous programming, living composers, and digital innovation. He is keenly focused on outreach and engagement, and programming that reflects the communities he is serving.

Since Cabrera's 2013 appointment as Music Director 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. Cabrera also oversees the selection process of the California Symphony's celebrated Young American Composer-in-Residence program, through which the orchestra has supported the burgeoning careers of composers including Mason Bates, Kevin Puts, Katherine Balch, and the current Composer-in-Residence, Viet Cuong. In September 2020, California Symphony launched a landmark collaboration with USC Radio Group (KUSC in Los Angeles and KDFC in San Francisco) to broadcast a series of archival performances of programs featuring works by past Composers-in-Residence.

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. With a commitment to programming works by living composers, Cabrera recently led one of the premiere performances of Philip Glass' newest piano concerto, co-commissioned by the Las Vegas Philharmonic and composed for Simone Dinnerstein; began and ended the 2019-2020 season with works by Anna Clyne and Gabriela Lena Frank and has celebrated the incredible Las Vegas talent pool with the creation of the Very Vegas Showcase, performing songs and works written by local performers.

In 2020, Cabrera implemented many new digital initiatives, reflecting his vision of breaking down barriers between the audience and the performer and staying engaged with audiences during the Coronavirus pandemic. MusicWise — Conversations about Art and Culture with Donato Cabrera is a series presented on Facebook Live and YouTube Live featuring interviews with engaging artists and civic leaders who influence and shape the cultural landscape. The Music Plays On is a series on Cabrera's blog, featuring commentary and analysis on his favorite performances and recordings along with YouTube clips.

Cabrera also launched an online chamber series with both the Las Vegas Philharmonic and California Symphony. The Las Vegas Philharmonic adapted its *Spotlight Series* to a digital livestream format, presented at The Space in Las Vegas. The *Spotlight Series* features members of the orchestra in their favorite pieces for small ensembles, and the stories behind the music and the inspiration they've provided. California Symphony produced *Poetry in Motion*, a series of three virtual concerts inspired by poetry. It was filmed in collaboration with Mercury Soul, a San Francisco Bay Area collective of musicians, dancers, visual artists, DJs and videographers, one of whose co-founders is Grammy-winning composer Mason Bates.

Cabrera is equally at home in the world of opera, frequently conducting productions in the United States and abroad. He was the Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Opera from 2005-2008, working on over 18 productions and conducting multiple performances. Cabrera 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, he has frequently conducted productions ranging from Mozart to Puccini in Concepción, Chile. In 2021 he made his debut with Opera San José conducting Rimsky-Korsakov's Mozart and Salieri in an innovative digital production to be streamed online.



Donato Cabrera is continuously championing contemporary music and living composers. He made his Carnegie Hall debut leading the world premiere of Mark Grey's *Atash Sorushan* with soprano, Jessica Rivera, and led members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in Jonny Greenwood's *There Will Be Blood* as part of the CSO's *MusicNOW* series. He also led the San Francisco Symphony Chorus with organist Paul Jacobs in the world premiere of Mason Bates' *Mass Transmission*, subsequently conducting it in Carnegie Hall. Cabrera co-founded the New York-based American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME), which is dedicated to the outstanding performance of masterworks from the 20th and 21st centuries. He conducted ACME in the world premiere of the all-live version of Steve Reich's *WTC 9/11* for three string quartets and tape at Le Poisson Rouge in New York City, and led performances of Icelandic composer Jóhann Jóhannsson's *Drone Mass* with ACME and Theatre of Voices at Duke Performances and the Big Ears Festival.

Deeply committed to diversity and education through the arts, Cabrera evaluates the scope, breadth, and content of the California Symphony and Las Vegas Philharmonic's music education programs. 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. 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 Museum, Las Vegas.

Also an advocate of adult education, Cabrera helped create and shape the California Symphony's program Fresh Look: The Symphony Exposed, a weekly lecture series at the Walnut Creek Library that helps to explain the music and composers in an approachable, yet in depth way. It moved online in July 2020 and attracted more than four times the number of households who attended the inaugural classes in person in 2018. During his tenure at the San Francisco Symphony Cabrera also helped create and conduct, Play Out Davies!, a project that welcomed amateur musicians of any level and of all ages, to be coached by a member of the San Francisco Symphony, and to play on the stage of Davies Symphony Hall with Cabrera conducting.







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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 upheld the orchestra's reputation for outstanding artistry at home and abroad. He 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. I.

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.

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.



Aya Kaminaguchi is principal percussionist and marimba soloist for the New Haven Symphony Orchestra.

Ms. Kaminaguchi was the winner of the Takatsuki Music Competition in 1999, the Osaka College of Music Young Artists Competition in 1998, the Aspen Music Festival Soloist Competition in 1997, Percussive Arts Society Audition, and was a finalist of the International Marimba Festival in Belgium 2001. Ms. Kaminaguchi has performed as a soloist at the Settsu Music Festival 1998 and the Percussive Arts Society Young Artists Concert in Japan 1998. She has performed with renowned percussionists Neboja Zivkovich, Michael Burritt, and an upcoming

marimbist Nanae Mimura. As an orchestral percussionist, Ms. Kaminaguchi has performed with numerous orchestras, including the Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, Hyogo Performing Arts Center Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong,



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Palm Beach Opera, New World Symphony, the Opera House Orchestra, the Kansai Philharmonic, and toured worldwide with *Star Wars: In Concert.* During summers she has performed with the National Orchestral Institute, the Aspen Music Festival Orchestra, the Bayreuth Music Festival Youth Orchestra, and has toured Central America with the New England Conservatory Youth Philharmonic. In addition to being the Principal Percussionist of the New Haven Symphony, Ms. Kaminaguchi is also currently a member of the Sarasota Opera, Hudson Valley Philharmonic and Excelsis Percussion. She is sponsored by SABIAN Cymbals.

Ms. Kaminaguchi began piano at the age of three, drumset at the age of nine, and mallet percussion hand-drums and orchestral percussion at the age of fifteen. She earned her master's degree, with a full scholarship, at the Boston Conservatory of Music where she studied with Sal Rabbio, Nancy Zeltsman, and Pat Hollenbeck. She has taught percussion and piano at high schools and in her private studio for more than five years.



