

Mason Bates's

UNDISTANT

WEST COAST
PREMIERE

Rossini

William Tell Overture

Bates

Undistant

**Redwood
Symphony**

Eric K, Music Director
THIRTY-SEVENTH SEASON

Main Theater of Cañada College • 4200 Farm Hill Road at I-280, Redwood City • Free parking



Eric K, Music Director
THIRTY-SEVENTH SEASON

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)

William Tell Overture (1829)

Mason Bates (b. 1977)

Undistant (2021)

West Coast Premiere

*There will be no intermission
Mobile devices should remain silent and dark
during the performance*

The Music Director



Redwood Symphony founder and Music Director **Eric K** (formerly Kujawsky) is recognized as one of the foremost conductors in the Bay Area. A graduate of UCLA, Eric K established Redwood Symphony in

1985 after receiving his doctorate in conducting from Stanford University. His teachers include Samuel Krachmalnick, Paul Vermel, and Andor Toth. Dr. K has performed with the Palo Alto Philharmonic, San Jose Chamber Orchestra, Diablo Symphony, Saratoga Symphony, Aspen Music Festival, TheatreWorks in Palo Alto, and orchestras and choruses throughout the West.

Equally at home with symphony, opera, musical comedy, and jazz, Dr. K has served as music director for Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* and *Sunday in the Park with George*, *My Fair Lady*,

Kiss Me Kate, and *Cabaret*. He won both the Bay Area Theater Critics' Circle Award and the Hollywood Dramalogue Award. With Redwood Symphony, he has conducted numerous operas, including *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, *La Bohème*, *Carmen*, *Candide*, *Porgy and Bess*, and *Don Giovanni*.

As a conductor, Dr. K strives for a clear, expressive, and energetic baton technique and for a willingness to depart creatively from accepted orthodoxies of interpretation and programming. Maestro K has conducted most of the standard orchestral repertoire, including all of Mahler's symphonies and the major works of Stravinsky, Bartók, Sibelius, and Brahms, as well as a large number of contemporary composers, including Mason Bates, John Adams, Corigliano, Daugherty, Messiaen, and Elvis Costello. He distinguishes himself as a communicator about music by delivering pre-concert lectures and incisive concert demonstrations with commentary about the music. He teaches violin and clarinet

privately, and is Director of Music Ministries at Ladera Community Church, Portola Valley. Besides music, Eric K is devoted to wife and son, Valerie and Aaron Sarfaty, dog Max and cat Baffi, books, humor, movies, liberal politics, and Balkan folk dancing.

Redwood Symphony Mission Statement

Redwood Symphony enriches the lives of its musicians and the community by presenting spirited, high-quality performances of ambitious orchestral music in an innovative, educational, and entertaining format.

“Redwood Symphony thrives on the impossible.”
– *San Jose Mercury News*

Gioachino Rossini: *William Tell* Overture



By the age of 37, **Gioacchino Rossini** was possibly the most revered and certainly the most successful operatic composer of his day. He had

written 38 operas since the tender age of 18, 28 of them in an incredibly prolific period of eight years, from 1812 to 1819. The French government brought him to Paris in 1824, where he was contracted to compose for the Théâtre Italien and the Opéra. It was for the latter that he wrote his final opera, *Guillaume Tell*, in 1829.

Based on a work by Schiller, the opera recounts the tale of the legendary Swiss hero, William Tell, during the time of the Swiss fight for independence from the Austrian Hapsburgs in the 14th century. Tell, a noted marksman with the crossbow, refuses to bow to a hat set up on a pole by the Austrian governor, Gessler. Gessler arrests him and says

Tell will be freed if he can shoot an apple off his son's head. Tell does so, but says if he had failed, he would have shot Gessler and is chained again. Eventually Tell is freed long enough to kill Gessler, leading to a revolt by the Swiss.

After writing *Tell*, Rossini retired from composing operas. He was tired and at this time chronically ill; but though he eventually regained his health and continued to write piano works (such as the *Péchés de vieillesse*, or *Sins of Old Age*, 1857–1868) and sacred pieces (*Stabat Mater*, 1841), he had ended his theatrical career for good. Newly married to his second wife, he moved to Paris in 1855 and spent the rest of his days as a well-known gourmand, writing, "As far as I'm concerned, I know no more wonderful occupation than food."

The full opera, *Guillaume Tell*, is such a spectacle that it requires six hours to perform. The work combines Italian lyricism with the declamatory style, huge choral ensembles, and theatrical flourishes (ballets, processions) common to French

opera. Yet though *Tell* appears to have been received positively at its premiere on August 3, 1829, it was quickly felt the work was too long, and the opera was soon being cut and cut again. Some companies performed only a semi-staging of the second act. An oft-told tale (though unverified) describes the head of the Opéra telling Rossini that “tonight we are performing the second act of your *Tell*,” to which the composer replies: “Indeed! All of it?”

Not only was the opera Rossini’s longest, its overture was his longest and most elaborate as well. Its musical imagery is seen by many as a precursor to the tone poem. Indeed, its depictions of a storm, a pastoral scene, and heroic riders are now the definitive musical metaphors for each of these images – as anyone who grew up watching American cartoons can tell you!

The cellos and string basses open the work, heralding the dawn. This section, though peaceful, is actually a virtuosic segment for the low strings: Rossini divides the passage into eight

separate parts. Some “raindrops” from the woodwinds and swirling “wind” from the strings segue into a violent storm, with brass blaring and drums rolling. In the calm following, an English horn and flute sound the familiar tune now associated with quiet, bucolic scenes. Rossini based this melody on the Swiss *ranz des vaches*, a tune played on the Alpine horn by cowherds to call in their cattle. Finally, a trumpet sounds the four notes known throughout the world as the opening of the theme for the Lone Ranger, though Rossini meant to signify the approaching Swiss army. The rousing rhythm is that of a popular dance called the *galop* – and what better dance to conjure up an image of galloping horses, whether of Guillaume Tell’s Swiss Army or of the Lone Ranger’s white steed? Hi ho, Silver, indeed!

October, 2002

Mason Bates: *Undistant*



Over crackling digital white noise drift textures from three musical ensembles, strewn across a dark space. Cold string harmonics and percussion, muted brass chords, and plaintive woodwinds:

these isolated elements float in a primeval emptiness. Barely recognizable fragments of Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* drift through the soundworld, which has a muffled perspective akin to deafness.

But like microbes in a primordial soup, these elements begin swirling together. The digital crackles – sound samples from today's online communication platforms – coalesce into a quiet rhythm, while the ensembles' ambient clouds merge. Strings descend from the stratosphere into arpeggiations, brass and woodwind swells

quicken their overlaps, and a soulful melody emerges that connects all elements. This slow-motion coming together, composed under challenging times for music and fellowship, is envisioned as an affirmation of human connection.

– *Mason Bates*

The Orchestra

Since 1985, Redwood Symphony's innovative programs have featured major modern works by Adams, Adès, Bartók, Copland, Lutoslawski, Mahler, Messiaen, Shostakovich, and Stravinsky, as well as the great classics of Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms. This ambitious, contemporary programming has drawn a high number of volunteer professionals to Redwood Symphony's ranks. The orchestra has performed throughout the Bay Area, including Davies Symphony Hall, Flint Center, Cañada College Main Theater, the San Mateo Performing Arts Center, and the Fox Theater in Redwood City. Redwood Symphony has recorded seven CDs, including the newest featuring Brahms's First Symphony and the world premiere of Mark Starr's *Johannes Brahms Rag for Banjo and Orchestra*. Our CDs are available from Amazon.com and via iTunes. Redwood Symphony proudly welcomes children for free

with an adult to most performances, a tradition it pioneered in the Bay Area.

Violin I

Heather Katz, *CM*

Danny Coward, *Assistant CM*

Kayla Butler *L*

Hsinkai Chang *L*

Romain Kang

Kathy Kaufmann *L*

Benjamin Ko *L*

Tommy Kuo

Leah Lader

Jason Lin *L*

Koki Nishimura *A*

Grace Reim *L*

Caren Shapiro

Chris Yeh

Violin II

Sarah Moskovitz * L

Kristin Link, *Acting Principal*

Rigele Abilock A

Mia Astar

Kathrin Berkner L

Catherine Habiger L

Diane Honda

Jennifer Lawry

Joyce Malick

Catherine Sue A

Dale Umetsu

Ann Yvonne Walker L

Viola

David Friburg *

Michael Luxton

Chris Barrow L

Tanya Buxton

Rebecca Gertmenian L

Steve Harvey A

Allyson Nakayama *L*

Doug Tomm

Kim Williams *L*

Cello

Ellis Verosub * *L*

Aaron Baca, *Acting Principal*

Lynda Bloomquist *L*

Amy Brooks *L*

John Hornberger *L*

Julian Schafer

Janet Sloan

Anthony Yee *L*

Bass

Brian Link *

Steve Auerbach

Bob Crum *L*

Georg Schuele *A*

Flute/Piccolo

Lisa DiTiberio

Yukoh Hammura *A*

Patricia Harrell

Lynn Lightsey *L*

Oboe/English Horn

Kurtis Kaminishi *L*

Michael Odynski

Peter Stahl

Clarinet

Joan Hebert

David Miller, bass/Eb *L*

Richard Steinberg

Bassoon

Douglas McCracken *L*

Jared Prolo

Mia Stormer

Horn

David Dufour

Naomi Dushay *A*

Jim Millar

Greg White

Trumpet

Stephen Ruppenthal

Dan Swinehart

Trombone

Bryan Hardester * *L*

Paul Gilles, Acting Principal

Kristin Arendt

Takanori Kato *L*

Tuba

Joel White * *L*

Percussion

Richard Gibson *L*

Mark Goldstein

Allan Miller

Vanya Tarasov *A*

Keyboard

Delphean Quan

Laptop

Doug Tomm

* = principal

L = on leave

A = Acting Member

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We would also like to remember
Barbara Todd
a longtime lobby volunteer who died in March
2020.

Redwood Symphony sincerely thanks its amazing
volunteer staff for helping organize and bring our
concerts to life. Bravo! If you would consider
helping us in the future, contact us at
info@redwoodsymphony.org