

# Scheherazade



Jassen Todorov

Still: *Festive Overture*  
(Kyle Baldwin, conductor)

Sibelius: *Violin Concerto*  
(Jassen Todorov)

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Scheherazade*

**November 18**  
8:00pm  
Pre-concert lecture 7:00

**Redwood  
Symphony**

Eric K. Music Director  
THIRTY NINTH SEASON

Cañada College Main Theater • 4200 Farm Hill Blvd., Redwood City

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## 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.

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— SAN FRANCISCO CLASSICAL VOICE

“Redwood Symphony is in a class by itself. It cannot be measured on a scale with other volunteer community orchestras, or even many regional professional orchestras, because it undertakes works that most would not program.”

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“Redwood Symphony is the little orchestra that could. Its vigor and enthusiasm come with flying colors (literally and figuratively), thanks to founding music director Dr. Eric Kujawsky’s decisive podium manner.”

— *Classics Today*

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— Alex Ross, *The New Yorker*

— 39th Season —



**Eric K, Music Director**

**William Grant Still**  
1895–1978

**Jean Sibelius**  
1865–1957

**Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov**  
1844–1908

Festive Overture  
1944

Violin Concerto  
1905

*I. Allegro Moderato*

*II. Adagio di molto*

*III. Allegro ma non tanto*

Jassen Todorov, Violin

I N T E R M I S S I O N

Scheherazade, Symphonic Suite  
Opus 35  
1888

*1. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship*

*2. The Story of the Kalandar Prince*

*3. The Young Prince and the Young Princess*

*4. Festival at Baghdad*



**Saturday, November 18, 2023, 8:00 P.M.**

**Cañada College Main Theater, Redwood City, California**

**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 has 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 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 Penny, books, humor, movies, liberal politics, and Balkan folk dancing.

## The Assistant Conductor



**Kyle Baldwin**, a conductor and a percussionist, is also the music director for the Rainbow Chamber Orchestra, as well as the assistant to the director for the Morrison Chamber Music Center. He has also served as the assistant conductor for the Bay Area Rainbow Symphony. Baldwin is dedicated to building community by recognizing diversity, fostering inclusion and promoting excellence.

He has a diverse background in conducting that includes symphony orchestras, wind ensembles, opera, chamber ensembles, and dance ensembles. Baldwin conducted the music of Dennis Tobenski with Tobenski singing, and played percussion in the West Coast premiere of Tobenski's piece *Only Air*. He was instrumental in preparing the world premieres of Andrew Lipka's *I Am Harvey Milk* and June Bonacich's *Concerto for String Trio* written for the Little Stars Trio.

Outside of music, he enjoys computer programming. He currently lives in San Francisco.

## 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.

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## Donations

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## Call for Musicians

Redwood Symphony specializes in performing music traditionally considered off-limits for amateur players. We have an urgent need for violists, cellists, bassists, and harpists, and urge interested musicians of high proficiency to email [maestroek@sbcglobal.net](mailto:maestroek@sbcglobal.net).

## The Soloist



**Jassen Todorov** has distinguished himself as one of the most prominent violinists of his generation. Dubbed “*an outstanding talent*” by the British music journal *The Strad*, Mr. Todorov has given numerous performances throughout Europe, Asia, Australia, and the Americas. He is also an active performer in his native Bulgaria, where he is considered one of the country’s most prized musicians.

With a repertoire including works from all styles and epochs, Mr. Todorov has recorded the complete sonatas of Bach, Brahms, and Ysaye, as well as Beethoven’s Sonatas Nos. 6 and 10. *The Strad* described him as a “violinist of rare technical ability..He brings musicality to his performances..His left hand is able to deliver Ysaye’s demands in the many mercurial passages with commendable accuracy” and the American Record Guide portrayed it as “high praise, an important release for admirers of Ysaye’s music.”

Mr. Todorov began his musical education in Bulgaria and furthered his studies at the Idyllwild Arts Academy in California. A top prize winner of several national and international competitions, he earned his bachelor’s degree from the Eastman School of Music, New York. From 2000 to 2003, he served as the teaching assistant to Professor Oleh Krysa at the Eastman School and held a violin position at the University of Rochester. Mr. Todorov is the recipient of numerous scholarships and prestigious awards including the Eastman award for excellence in teaching and the Crystal Lyre for achievements in music. Mr. Todorov is a Professor of Violin at San Francisco State University and Visiting Professor at Xinjiang Arts University and Xinjiang Normal University, China.

Mr. Todorov is an accomplished photographer and the Grand Prize Winner of the 2018 National Geographic Photo Contest. His images have been published by numerous magazines and newspapers, and have been exhibited at the Chicago O’Hare International Airport, the Somerset House in London and the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. An active pilot, he holds a Commercial Pilot’s License and Flight Instructor Certificate. Visit Mr. Todorov on the web at [www.jassentodorov.com](http://www.jassentodorov.com).



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## William Grant Still



Known as the “Dean of African-American Classical Composers,” William Grant Still was a legend in his own lifetime. Still, born in Woodville, Miss., in May 1895, was the recipient of two Guggenheim Fellowships, a Rosenwald Fellowship, and commissions from numerous symphony orchestras, composing orchestral and chamber music as well as operas and ballets. But his life as a composer began very differently.

His first musical activity was conducting and arranging for band and string quartet at Wilberforce College in Ohio. After leaving school, he earned a living playing in jazz bands and writing arrangements. In 1916, Still worked in Memphis for W.C. Handy’s band, eventually moving to Harlem after the war, where he continued to play and write for Handy, working with many cultural figures of the famed Harlem Renaissance, or New Negro Movement, including Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Alain Locke, Anna Bontemps, and Countee Cullen. In the late 20’s and 30’s, his music would find a constituency within this group.

While in New York, he was a central figure in the musical life of Harlem. Still played with and composed for top artists in jazz, popular music, art music and musical theater, among them Fletcher Henderson’s Dance Orchestra, ragtime composer Luckyeth Roberts, Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake’s musical revue, *Shuffle Along*, Sophie Tucker, Artie Shaw, and Paul Whiteman. Under Henderson, he joined Henry Pace’s Pace Phonograph Company, Black Swan records.

*This was all a long way from the concert stage, which he had long aspired to. The 1930’s would prove to be the decade where he would begin to own the concert stage with his compositions.*

Still’s first major orchestral work, *Symphony No.1 “Afro-American”*, was performed in 1931 by the Rochester Philharmonic, conducted by Howard Hanson. It was the first time the complete score of a work by an African American was performed by a major orchestra. By the end of World War II, the piece had been performed by orchestras in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Berlin, Paris, and London. At the time, the symphony was arguably the most popular of any composed by any American.

Early on, Still had studied composition with the conservative American composer George Chadwick, but later studying privately with Edward Varèse would prove more important. Varèse would give Still the compositional tools to express his musical ideas with greater freedom, and introduced him, via Varèse’s League of Composers, to the modern (and avant-garde) composers of the day, and to conductors who would champion his concert works.

In 1934, Still moved to Los Angeles after receiving his first Guggenheim Fellowship, allowing him to start work on the first of his nine operas, *Blue Steel*. Two years later, Still conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, becoming the first



African American to conduct a major American orchestra in a performance of his own works.

American composer Henry Cowell's *New Music Edition* published the orchestra score of Still's tone poem *Dismal Swamp*, one of his early works composed in Los Angeles, thus giving him the imprimatur from at least one branch of the "ultramodern" movement.

In December of 1944, Still was selected from 39 American composers to receive the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's Jubilee Prize for Best Overture in a competition celebrating the Orchestra's 50th anniversary.

Still won the Jubilee Prize for his 1944 Festive Overture. The work is divided into rapidly developing sections following a classical sonata form, marked simply with tempo alterations: *Slowly - Faster - Flowing and expressive - Tempo 1 - Much faster - Slower*.

The Overture opens with a short but majestic fanfare, followed by a folksy, picturesque, and pastoral theme overlaid by continued fanfares in the brass. There follows a deeply moving, sweeping melodic section in the strings, answered by the horns, evoking a calm and meditative second theme. Here he offers vivid instrumental solos throughout the orchestra. The development section opens with the military snare drum. Here, Still made a particularly effective use of orchestration, specially brass and percussion; the xylophone solo provides a striking example. The omnipresent fanfare takes us to a brilliant climax based on the main theme, where the work finally ends with a blazing coda.

CSO Music Director Eugene Goossens wrote in the program notes, "The prize-winning composition...which was written and scored in the space of a few weeks, has a definite American flavor. It bespeaks the pride of the composer in his native land, the warmth of the American people, and the grandeur of Scenic America."

His wife, the dancer and writer Verna Avery said of her husband: "[William Grant Still] is a product of so many different phases of American life that each separate phase is now unrecognizable. It follows that his music is a more accurate expression of that life than any yet conceived."

- Stephen Ruppenthal

## Jean Sibelius



Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) was born Johan Julius Christian Sibelius, in the town of Hämeenlinna in the Russian Grand Duchy of Finland. His family called him Janne, but he changed his name to the French Jean, inspired by his seafaring uncle. He spoke Swedish at home and learned Finnish in school. After graduating from high school in 1885, Sibelius studied law, but soon abandoned that path, enrolling at the Helsinki Music School (later renamed the Sibelius Academy). Martin Wegelius, the school principal, became his chief mentor.

An accomplished violinist and able pianist, Sibelius aspired to be a virtuoso, but soon realized that his real calling was composing. His most famous compositions are the patriotic tone poem *Finlandia* (1899) and his *Second Symphony* (1902). He also gained notoriety conducting his music, touring extensively, and running up huge bills at restaurants after his concerts, squandering his pay eating and drinking the night away. His weakness for alcohol plagued him for most of his life, and distressed his wife Aino and their five daughters. Still, Sibelius had an enduring love of nature and of his country's folk legends, both of which inspired his music. With his symphonies and tone poems, Sibelius achieved international fame and, in his later years, wealth and leisure.

Jean Sibelius's *Violin Concerto*—his only concerto—had a rough start. Willy Burmester, the German virtuoso to whom Sibelius first dedicated the piece, became its enemy, swearing he would never play it (and he never did), after having been deprived of the chances to give its first two performances due to a venue change that he was unable to accommodate. Instead, Sibelius engaged a less-qualified soloist. The *Concerto's* debut in February 1904 was a disaster, due to the limited skill of the soloist and the limited time he had to learn it. This debacle caused Sibelius to withdraw and revise the piece extensively, making the solo part somewhat simpler—though still quite virtuosic—and transforming it into the work we know today. This new version had a successful premiere in October 1905 when Richard Strauss led the Berlin Philharmonic with concertmaster Karel Halíř taking the soloist's role, but only after Burmester had been asked and was again unavailable. Sibelius proceeded to give his concerto a surprise rededication, to the young Hungarian virtuoso Ferenc von Vecsey, who was only 12 at the time, who would not live beyond the age of 42, and who did not even perform the concerto until he was 13. Vecsey did, however, go on to champion the work throughout his all-too-brief career. The Sibelius *Violin Concerto* was also a favorite of Jascha Heifetz, who gave the work its first recording. It since become a *It* has since become a staple of the violin repertoire.

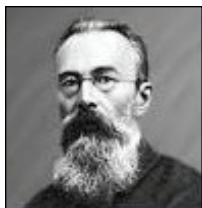
The *Concerto* is in the traditional three-movement form. The first movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins with an atmosphere of softly undulating strings in D minor. Over this backdrop, the violin announces the main thematic motif of three notes that rise

and fall: G-A-D (IV-V-I in D minor), connecting them to a long, expressive melodic exposition. The three-note theme and associated melodies are repeated and varied by both orchestra and soloist. The violin develops this material into a lengthy mid-movement cadenza. Throughout, the solo violin alternately whips the orchestra into greater frenzies and then calms them. At last, the violinist's high-velocity bowing and fingering fire us to a searing *Allegro molto vivace*, leading the movement to a smashing finish.

The second movement is a beautifully reflective *Adagio di molto*, which displays the violinist's softness and lyricism. The Finale, *Allegro ma non tanto*, features Polonaise rhythms. Basses and timpani, joined at times by other strings, provide a softly galloping accompaniment to the violin's melodic exposition. This texture returns later in the soloist's restatement of the Polonaise melodies. There is an air of extended suspense about this movement: it really wants to get somewhere. The music maintains an irresistible forward momentum, leading to a central orchestral climax in D major, and right out of it again, careening toward its final destiny. At last the soloist pushes the orchestra to a searing, high-velocity *Allegro Molto Vivace* that leads the movement to a smashing finish..

- Franklin Davis

## Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov



Russian composer Nikolai Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908) is best known for his major orchestral works *Capriccio Espagnol*, *Scheherazade* and the *Russian Easter Overture*. Displaying a dazzling palette of orchestral color and mood, these works, along with his sixteen operas and three symphonies, among many other works, cemented his reputation as a master of melody and orchestration. As the youngest member of The Five (with Mussorgsky, Borodin, Cui and Balakirev), Rimsky-Korsakov was co-creator of a distinctly Russian school, with operas about Russian history and works featuring traditional Russian folk music and original melodies in that style. As music professor at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, he taught his techniques of composition and orchestration to over 250 students, including Glazunov, Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and Respighi.

Rimsky-Korsakov was inspired to compose *Scheherazade* during the winter of 1887-88, while working with Glazunov to complete the opera *Prince Igor*, which their friend Borodin had left unfinished at his death. Inspired by Borodin's evocative music, and by his familiarity with the popular Arabian Nights tales of Scheherazade, he embarked on some musical storytelling, finishing his four-movement symphonic suite during the following summer. Its premiere performance was in Saint Petersburg that October, conducted by the composer. Rather than a narrative of any one story, the music paints active, colorful pictures of episodes, characters, and scenes from several of Scheherazade's tales, one in each of the four movements.

In Rimsky-Korsakov's preface to the score, he relates the backstory:  
*The Sultan Shahriar, convinced of the duplicity and infidelity*

of all women, vowed to slay each of his wives after the first night. The Sultana Scheherazade, however, saved her life by recounting to the Sultan a succession of tales over a period of one thousand and one nights. Overcome by curiosity, the monarch postponed the execution of his wife from day to day, and ended by renouncing his bloody resolution altogether. Many were the marvels recounted to Shahrar by Scheherazade. For the telling of these things she drew from the verses of the poets and the words of folk songs and tales, connecting her stories one with the other.

In his memoirs, Rimsky-Korsakov elaborates further:

*In composing Scheherazade I meant these hints [the movements' titles] to direct but slightly the hearer's fancy on the path which my own fancy had traveled, and to leave more minute and particular conceptions to the will and mood of each. All I had desired was that the hearer, if he liked my piece as symphonic music, should carry away the impression that it is beyond doubt an Oriental narrative of some numerous and varied fairy-tale wonders and not merely four pieces played one after the other and composed on the basis of themes common to all the four movements. ...*

The four movements are united by the recurrence of two musical motifs, representing the Sultan and Scheherazade. These two principal characters are introduced at the very beginning as a sort of "rolling of the credits". The motif of the brutally powerful Sultan Shahrar is proclaimed by the low brass and woodwinds, backed by strings. Scheherazade's theme is high, sinewy and undulating, and often played by solo violin. The composer writes: "The unifying thread consisted of the brief introductions to the first, second, and fourth movements and the intermezzo in movement three, written for violin solo and delineating Scheherazade herself as she tells her wondrous tales to the stern Sultan. The final conclusion of the fourth movement serves the same artistic purpose." As the last movement comes to a close, instead of giving us a slam-bang ending, Rimsky-Korsakov reminds us that these are but samples of a nearly endless sequence of tales. So it is that the suite ends gently, with the seductive solo violin (Scheherazade herself) having the last word.

*Scheherazade* is scored for two flutes (second doubling piccolo) and piccolo, two oboes (second doubling English horn), two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, cymbals, snare drum, bass drum, tambourine, tam-tam, harp, and strings.

- Franklin Davis

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— 39th Season —



**Eric K, Music Director**

## UPCOMING CONCERTS

**February 10, 2024: Mahler's "Tragic" Symphony**  
*Mahler: Symphony No. 6*

**April 6, 2024: The Planets**  
*Ellington: The Giggling Rapids*  
**Kyle Baldwin**, conductor  
*Glass: Violin Concerto*  
**Julian Brown**, violin  
*Holst: The Planets*

**June 1, 2024: Catch It Tonight!**  
*John Williams: Liberty Fanfare*  
*Bernstein: Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*  
*Williams: Escapades from "Catch Me If You Can"*  
**Michael Hernandez**, alto saxophone  
**Mark Goldstein**, vibraphone

**July 27, 2024: Summer Chamber Concert**  
*Ravel: Pavane for a Dead Princess*  
*Handel: Concerto a dui cori*  
*Bizet: Symphony in C*

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Eric K, Music Director  
Kyle Baldwin, Assistant Conductor

## Violin I

Danny Coward Concertmaster  
*Barbara Ild Chair*  
Chris Barrow L  
Kayla Butler L  
Cleber Olivares  
de Albuquerque A  
Romain Kang  
Kathy Kaufmann  
Karen Kenrick L  
Benjamin Ko L  
Tommy Kuo  
Leah Lader  
Jason Lin  
Koki Nishimura L  
Alina Ren A  
Shira Sanghvi  
Caren Shapiro  
Leslie Xu A  
Chris Yeh

## Violin II

Sarah Moskovitz \*  
*J. Samuel Jones Chair*  
Mia Astar L  
*Celestine B. Jones Chair*  
Kathrin Berkner-Cieslicki L  
Catherine Habiger L  
Diane Honda L  
Joy Lai A  
Jennifer Lawry  
Yingda Li A  
Kristin Link  
Joyce Malick  
Navid Mir A  
Grace Reim  
Catherine Sue  
Dale Umetsu L  
Ann Yvonne Walker L

## Viola

Michael Luxton \*  
Callie Belback A  
Marina Borsodi-Benson  
Tanya Buxton L  
David Craford  
Griff Derryberry  
Skyler Litz L  
Martin Pollack A  
Kim Williams L  
James Woodward A

## Cello

Ellis Verosub \*  
*Alex Kahler Chair*  
Aaron Baca L  
Lynda Bloomquist  
*Woo Zanoni Family Chair*  
Chris Healy A  
John Hornberger L  
Tetsu Ishihara L  
Ismael Jaffri 1  
Julian Schafer  
Janet Sloan  
Anthony Yee

## Bass

Brian Link \*  
Steve Auerbach  
Bob Crum L  
Ken Laxer A  
Georg Schuele L  
Nancy Sitton A

## Flute and Piccolo

Lisa DiTiberio 3  
Patricia Harrell 1, 2  
*George and Emily Jaquette chair*  
Lynn Lightsey L  
*Edith Klauda Chair*  
Ann Wharton A

## Oboe and English Horn

Kurtis Kaminishi  
Michael Odynski 2  
Peter Stahl 3

## Clarinet

Joan Hebert 3  
*James Kleinrath and Melody Singleton chair*  
David Miller  
Richard Steinberg 1, 2  
*Diane F. Ingalls Chair*

## Bassoon

Theo Clarke \*  
*Doug McCracken Chair*  
Mia Stormer

## Contrabassoon

Barbara McKee A  
*Booth/Brockner/Schassar Memorial Chair*

## Horn

David Dufour 3  
*Earl Saxton Chair*  
Mika Imawaka 1  
Mark McMahon  
James Millar 2  
*Dr. Edward and Lenora Speer Chair*  
Greg White

## Trumpet

Franklin Beau Davis 3  
Stephen Ruppenthal 1, 2  
*Robert LaBerge Chair*  
Dan Swinehart  
*Dwight Albert Chair*

## Trombone

Daven Tjaarda-Hernandez \*  
*C. Richard Walker Chair*  
Kristin Arendt

## Bass Trombone

Michael Hartglass

## Tuba

Joel White \*

## Percussion

Mark Goldstein \*  
*Charlotte Jordan Chair*  
Richard Gibson A  
Blake Hemingway A  
Allan Miller  
*Françoise Miller Chair*  
Mattijs Van Maaren A  
Clara Qin A  
Delphean Quan

## Harp

Brian Swager

## Keyboards

Delphean Quan

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\* = principal

L = on leave

A = acting member

1 = principal on Still

2 = principal on *Siobelius*

3 = principal on  
*Rimsky-Korsakov*



Maestri and members of Redwood Symphony in their formal attire, October 2023

# PALO ALTO PHILHARMONIC



## Paris to Prague

**Stravinsky** *Suite No. 2 for  
Small Orchestra*

**Françaix** *Clarinet Concerto*

**Mozart** *Symphony No. 38  
"Prague"*

Clarinet soloist  
**Steve  
Sánchez**



8pm\* Saturday

**December 9, 2023**

Cubberley Theatre, Palo Alto  
4120 Middlefield Road

(\*7:30pm  
pre-concert  
talk)

[www.paphil.org](http://www.paphil.org)

### Tickets:

**\$20** General/Senior

**\$10** Youth (<26 yrs old),  
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at the door  
or online

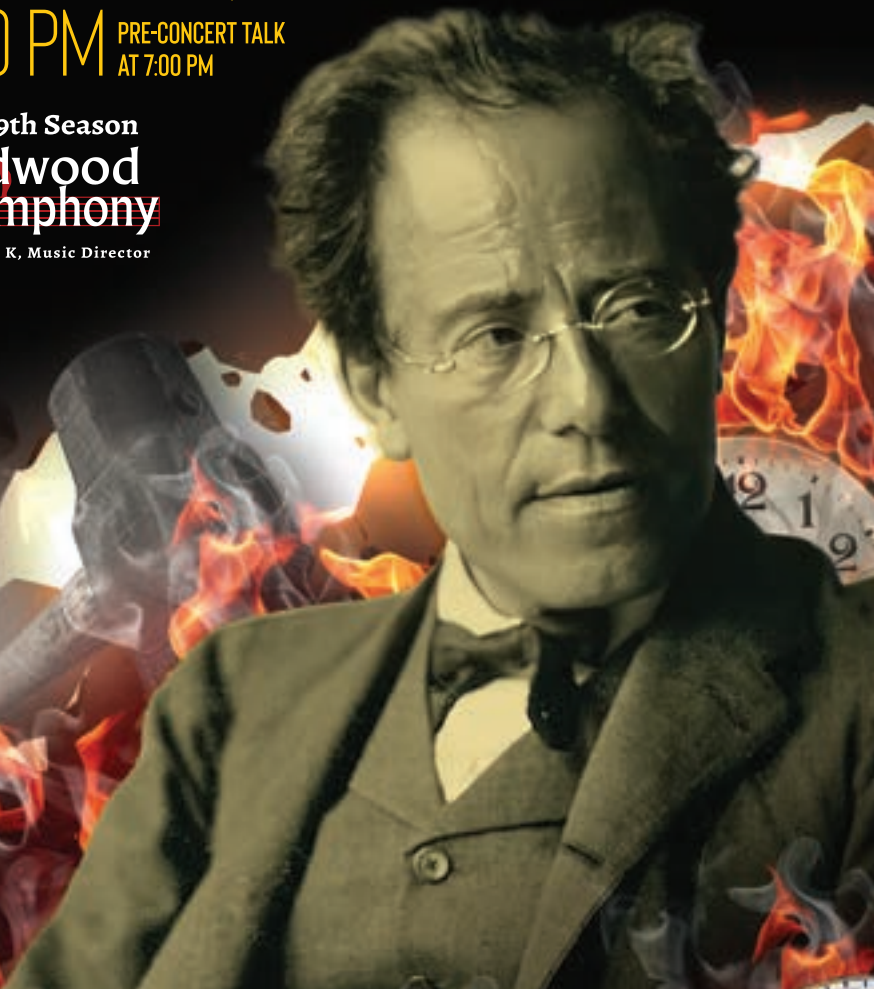
# MAHLER'S "TRAGIC" SYMPHONY

MAHLER:  
SYMPHONY NO. 6  
ERIC K., CONDUCTOR

FEBRUARY 10, 2024

8:00 PM PRE-CONCERT TALK  
AT 7:00 PM

39th Season  
**Redwood  
Symphony**  
Eric K., Music Director



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