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**The Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music
Celebrates the Arrival of
New Music Director & Conductor Cristian Măcelaru**

*Season highlights include seven world premieres, one U.S. premiere,
three West Coast premieres, 11 composers in residence, and
anniversary tributes to Lou Harrison and John Adams*

August 4-12, 2017



Cristian Macelaru, photo by Adriane White

SANTA CRUZ, CA—March 13, 2017—The Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, America’s longest running festival of new orchestral music, celebrates the arrival of its brilliant new Music Director and Conductor, **Cristian Măcelaru**, with a sensational series of commissioned works that continue the Festival’s forward-looking tradition and opens creative doors for its dynamic young conductor.

Following Marin Alsop’s fruitful 25-year leadership, Măcelaru, the Romanian-born Conductor-in-Residence at the Philadelphia Orchestra, begins his Festival tenure with premiere-filled programs of new works and fresh re-orchestrations by an esteemed group of composers. Among this season’s highlights are seven world premieres, one U.S. premiere and three west Coast premieres. The Festival commemorates two significant anniversaries: the centenary of Lou Harrison will be celebrated with a tribute composed by David T. Little; and John Adams’ 70th birthday will be celebrated with a tribute composed by Gabriella Smith.

The eleven composers in residence this season are **Karim Al-Zand, Clarice Assad, Gerald Barry, Michael Gandolfi, Jake Heggie, Aaron Jay Kernis, David T. Little, Cindy McTee, Christopher Rountree, Gabriella Smith** and **James Stephenson**.

Special guest artists include **Dame Evelyn Glennie** (percussion), **Jennifer Frautschi** (violin), **Gemma New** (conductor), **Clarice Assad** (piano/vocals), **Keita Ogawa** (percussion), **Jason Hardink** (piano), and **Jonathan Lemalu** (bass-baritone).

In addition to the featured evening concerts, the Festival continues its tradition of hosting open rehearsals, pre-rehearsal talks, and the Conductors/Composers Workshop, a professional training program focusing on the creation and performance of new music.

Departures, Friday, August 4, 8pm

The new chapter in the festival's 55-year history opens with a bountiful program of new, refashioned and relevant music. It begins with **Michael Gandolfi's** spiraling *Points of Departure*, which the Boston-based composer originally wrote for chamber orchestra. The Cabrillo Festival commissioned him this year to reshape this exciting piece for full orchestra, in a re-orchestration receiving its world premiere at Cabrillo. "Angularity can be beautiful," *New York Times* critic Allan Kozinn wrote in a record review of *Points of Departure*, the work of a composer "drawn to both the rigor of the mid-20th-century atonalists and the melodic breadth and textural lushness of the neo-Romantics."

Maestro Măcelaru leads the Festival Orchestra and the great Scottish percussionist **Evelyn Glennie** in the world premiere of another festival-commissioned work, **Clarice Assad's** percussion concerto, *AD INFINITUM*. Assad is a Brazilian pianist, singer and composer whose rich music draws on many genres and styles and has been performed by everyone from Yo-Yo Ma to the Philadelphia Orchestra to the Turtle Island String Quartet. Assad consulted with Glennie on the concerto, which the composer says began with the idea of exploring childhood toys and imaginary worlds, and then developed "into a suite of different phases of life, starting with birth and evolving through adulthood." To open up the sonic possibilities, Assad incorporated improvisational elements in the score. "Evelyn will be able to be very creative in her choices of instruments and sounds, making this a true collaboration," says Assad. This work is the third in the Festival's "Nexus: Creative Collaborations" Initiative, which fosters collaborations between composers and other artists.

Pulitzer-prize winning composer **Aaron Jay Kernis**, whose soulful and imaginative music draws freely on Romanticism, Minimalism, the Impressionists and Hip-Hop, offers his Second Symphony, the composer's response to the Gulf War. "The absurdity and cruelty of this war, in particular the 'surgical' nature of its reliance on gleaming new technological warfare used at a safe distance, made an enormous and lasting impression on me," Kernis wrote about the piece.

Tributes: Part One, Saturday, August 5, 8pm

The richly inventive Bay Area-based composer **Gabriela Lena Frank**, whose music finds inspiration in South American folk songs, Bela Bartók and other varied musical and literary sources, wrote the lively and evocative piece opens tonight's concert, *Three Latin American Dances for Orchestra*. The work begins with an introductory scherzo the composer describes as

“an unabashed tribute to the Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story* by Leonard Bernstein before turning to harmonies and rhythms derived from various pan-Amazonian dance forms.” The middle section summons up the Andean harawi, a melancholy adagio traditionally sung by a single bamboo flute to accompany a solo dancer, and ends with “The Mestizo Waltz,” which “evokes the ‘romancero’ tradition of popular songs and dances that mix influences from indigenous Indian cultures, African slave cultures, and western brass bands.”

David T. Little, whom *The New Yorker* called “one of the most imaginative young composers on the music-theatre scene” and *The New York Times* characterized as an artist with “a knack for overturning musical conventions,” pays tribute to the late, great composer and Cabrillo family member Lou Harrison with *The Conjured Life*. Little writes of this work “When Lou Harrison died in Indiana, I was living in Michigan. We were both far from our homes on the coasts; his west, mine east. Though we had never met, his death marked the first time I had mourned the passing of a composer as an elder within a community. That we had been so close geographically when he died—a mere four-hour drive—made it feel all the more tragic to me that we’d never met: a missed chance, a lost moment. His *Threnody for Carlos Chavez* had changed my life—so moving, deep, and full of humanity—and it pained me that I would never get to tell him; never get to thank him. Ever since, Lou and his work have never been far from my mind and I am grateful to have the chance to honor and thank him with this new work, *The Conjured Life*.”

Măcelaru leads the Festival Orchestra in the West Coast premiere of Chicago-based composer **James Stephenson**’s Concerto for Violin, *Tributes*, featuring the sterling violinist **Jennifer Frautschi**, for whom it was written. Stephenson calls *Tributes* “a conscious nod to all of the people who have contributed to the creation of this work: Composers and soloists – past and present – who have written/performed timeless and inspiring violin concertos.” They include Frautschi, whom he praises “for her wonderful technical mastery and musical elegance on the violin,” and trumpet genius Louis Armstrong, “who every day would ‘compose’ improvised solos of incomparable form and structure.”

Award-winning composer **Cindy McTee**, whose music *The Houston Chronicle* has called “a charging, churning celebration of the musical and cultural energy of modern-day America,” offers up *Double Play*. Written in honor of the late composer Elaine Lebenbom, the piece, whose instrumentation includes horns, harp, bongos and cowbell, spans 17 minutes in two continuous movements entitled “The Unquestioned Answer” and “Tempus Fugit.” The composer writes that she has “always been particularly attracted to the idea that disparate musical elements - tonal and atonal, placid and frenetic - can not only coexist but also illuminate and complement one another. I can think of no composer more capable of achieving these kinds of meaningful juxtapositions than Charles Ives. As in Ives’ *Unanswered Question*, my *Unquestioned Answer* presents planes of highly contrasting materials: sustained, consonant sonorities in the strings intersect to create dissonances; melodies for the principal players soar atop; and discordant passages in the brass and winds become ever more disruptive.” “Tempus Fugit (Time Flies)” begins with the sounds of several pendulum clocks ticking at different speeds. The work, wrote *The Washington Post*, “hums with craftsmanship and a catholic array of influences across several centuries.”

Free Family Concert, Sunday, August 6, 1 pm

The festival's annual free and always engaging family concert features the West Coast premiere of the full orchestral version of Michael Gandolfi's *Pinocchio's Adventures in Funland*. It was composed with librettist for piano, percussion, strings and narrator. **Gemma New** conducts this full-blown version, with Music Director Cristian Măcelaru narrating. The piece retells some of the adventures of Geppetto's famously prevaricating marionette, consisting of 15 short scenes that, as the librettist put it, "are designed to entertain and educate young audiences by introducing them to the riches of concert music."

In the Blue Room with Clarice Assad, Sunday, August 6, 8 pm

This year's intimate In the Blue Room concert showcases the sensational Brazilian-born pianist, singer and composer **Clarice Assad**. Performing in duet with percussionist **Keita Ogawa**, Assad plays and sings her vivid pieces, which embrace Western classical forms and Brazilian folkloric styles, French *chanson* and jazz. Called "a triple threat" by the *San Francisco Chronicle* and "a dazzling vocal soloist" by the *Los Angeles Times*, Assad uses her voice freely as an instrument, creating a range of textures and moods that mark her imaginative music.

Con Brio, Friday, August 11, 8pm

The second weekend of the Cabrillo Festival kicks off with works by **William Bolcom**, **Gerald Barry**, **Jorg Widdman** and **Cindy McTee**.

National Medal of Arts, Pulitzer Prize, and Grammy Award-winner **William Bolcom**'s short, one-movement work, Symphony No. 9, gets its West Coast premiere under the baton of Maestro Măcelaru. Bolcom wanted this piece to be intentionally short, as his final statement in the symphonic form. Of this work Bolcom writes, "Our current world situation is the most stressful I can remember in our country or elsewhere since my childhood, but it was brewing full force already when I wrote the Ninth. The recent disastrous elections here and in the U.K. are only part of the fallout of what I already felt—an elemental war between two bitterly opposing forces. There is ample reason for despair, but I still believe in the 'still, small voice.' The formal shape of this one-movement Ninth Symphony generates from the opposing forces in battle, both ranked against that voice. My hope is in the voice's quiet recurring statement; may it prevail."

Irish composer **Gerald Barry**'s witty Piano Concerto receives its U.S. premiere with celebrated pianist **Jason Hardink** performing. The concerto "takes conventional concerto rhetoric and stands it on its head, cramming it into a 25-minute single movement as a careering series of no-holds-barred confrontations between the piano, with its weaponry of forearm clusters, torrents of repeated notes and rare precious moments of utter calm" writes *The Guardian*.

Maestro Măcelaru leads the Festival Orchestra in German composer **Jörg Widmann**'s *Con Brio*, translated into "with fire" or "with spirit." An 'exercise in fury and rhythmic insistence,' *Con Brio* was composed with a knowing wink towards 19th-century Romanticism. Critic Georgia Rowe wrote of this work, "(*Con Brio*) incorporates material from Beethoven's 7th and 8th symphonies in a kaleidoscopic scheme. Familiar phrases are sliced and diced, leaving jagged edges everywhere: bows strike strings, woodwinds chirp in protest and brass instruments stutter in a series of tense episodes broken by abrupt cuts. The piece ends quietly, but it produces a small universe of sound throughout its 12-minute span" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*).

The program closes with award-winning composer **Cindy McTee**'s Symphony No 1: *Ballet for Orchestra*. This captivating work is composed of four movements, which embrace various dance styles and draw inspiration from famous scores of balletic pedigree. McTee writes, "Music is said to have come from dance—from the rhythmic impulses of men and women. Perhaps this explains my recent awareness of the inherent relationships between thought, feelings, and action—that the impulse to compose often begins as a rhythmical stirring and leads to a physical response—tensing muscles, gesturing with hands and arms, or quite literally, dancing."

Tributes: Part Two, Saturday, August 12, 8pm

Four world premiere/Festival commissions close out the 2017 Cabrillo Festival.

The world premiere of an orchestral suite of American composer **Jake Heggie**'s critically acclaimed opera, *Moby-Dick*, opens up the program. *Moby-Dick* is a "masterpiece of clarity and intensity" wrote critic Joshua Kosman in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The suite is arranged by Măcelaru, who collaborated with Patrick Summers on the world premiere of *Moby-Dick* as assistant conductor for the Dallas Opera.

The program also includes the world premiere of a Festival-commissioned work by **Christopher Rountree**. A conductor and composer working at the intersection of classical music, new music, performance art and pop, Rountree is the founder, conductor and creative director of the path breaking L.A. chamber orchestra *wild Up*. This commission is part of an ongoing series designed to identify the next generation of talent sponsored by the Pacific Harmony Foundation, established by celebrated composer John Adams and his wife, the noted landscape photographer Deborah O'Grady.

John Adams' 70th birthday, a milestone celebrated by the music community around the globe, is commemorated at the Cabrillo Festival with the world premiere of a new piece by **Gabriella Smith**. The prolific San Francisco-based composer has a special relationship to Adams – her composition *Tumblebird Contrails* was commissioned by the Pacific Harmony Foundation for the Festival in 2014.

Maestro Măcelaru closes out the Festival with the world premiere of a powerful new work by Canadian composer **Karim Al-Zand** featuring Grammy Award-winning, New Zealand-born Samoan bass baritone **Jonathan Lemalu**. Al-Zand, whose music has been celebrated as "strong and startlingly lovely" (*Boston Globe*) offers *The Prisoner*, a work inspired by the story of Adnan Latif, a Yemeni man imprisoned at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba from January 2002 until his death there 10 years later. The libretto includes segments of a letter Latif wrote to his lawyers, interspersed with poems by Rilke and Rumi.

CABRILLO FESTIVAL CONCERT TICKETS, SCHEDULE & SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

TICKETS

Festival tickets range from \$30-\$65 with many events free and open to the public. The public may access information on the Festival website at www.cabrillomusic.org or call (831) 426-6966; and people are encouraged to join the mailing list to receive advance notification.

Tickets may be ordered by mail beginning May 4 through the Festival's Advance Ticket Order Form; and then via phone, walk-up, or on-line through SantaCruzTickets.com beginning June 14.

WHERE:

All concerts will be held at the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium at 307 Church Street in Santa Cruz, with the exception of Music in the Mountains held at Nestldown in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

SCHEDULE

Friday, August 4, 8pm: DEPARTURES

Michael Gandolfi: *Points of Departure* (World Premiere, re-orchestrated for full orchestra, Festival commission)

Clarice Assad: Percussion Concerto *AD INFINITUM* (Evelyn Glennie, percussion) (World Premiere, Festival Commission)

Aaron Jay Kernis: Second Symphony

Saturday, August 5, 8pm: TRIBUTES Part One

Gabriela Lena Frank: *Three Latin American Dances*

James Stephenson: Concerto for Violin *Tributes* (Jennifer Frautschi, violin) (West Coast Premiere)

David T. Little: *The Conjured Life* Commemorating Lou Harrison's Centenary (World Premiere re-orchestrated for chamber orchestra, Festival commission)

Cindy McTee: *Double Play*

Sunday, August 6: 1pm: FREE FAMILY CONCERT

Michael Gandolfi: *Pinocchio's Adventures in Funland* (West Coast Premiere) (Gemma New, conductor: Cristian Măcelaru, narrator)

Sunday, August 6, 8pm: IN THE BLUE ROOM with Clarice Assad

Clarice Assad (piano/vocals) with Keita Ogawa (percussion)

Wednesday, August 9, 6:30pm: MUSIC IN THE MOUNTAINS Fundraiser at Nestldown, Los Gatos

Wine and food tastings in a spectacular garden setting, and a chamber music concert featuring performances of works by composers William Bolcom and Karim Al-Zand, performed by Jason Hardink, piano; Cristian Măcelaru, violin; concertmaster Justin Bruns, and Festival principal clarinet Bharat Chandra; plus a performance by bass-baritone Jonathan Lemalu.

Friday, August 11, 8pm: CON BRIO

William Bolcom: Symphony No. 9 (West Coast Premiere)

Gerald Barry: Piano Concerto (Jason Hardink, piano) (U.S. Premiere)

Jörg Widmann: *Con Brio*

Cindy McTee: Symphony No. 1: *Ballet for Orchestra*

Saturday, August 12, 8pm: TRIBUTES Part Two

Jake Heggie: *Moby-Dick* Orchestral Suite (World Premiere, arranged by Cristian Măcelaru, Festival Commission)

Christopher Rountree: new work (World Premiere, Festival Commission/Pacific Harmony Foundation)

Gabriella Smith: new work in honor of John Adams' 70th Birthday (World Premiere, Festival Commission)

Karim Al-Zand: *The Prisoner* (Jonathan Lemalu, bass baritone) (World Premiere, Festival Commission)

7 WORLD PREMIERES/FESTIVAL COMMISSIONS:

Karim Al-Zand: *The Prisoner* (Jonathan Lemalu, bass baritone)

Clarice Assad: Percussion Concerto *AD INFINITUM* (Evelyn Glennie, percussion)

Michael Gandolfi: *Points of Departure* (re-orchestrated for full orchestra)

Jake Heggie: *Moby-Dick* Orchestral Suite (new arrangement by C. Măcelaru)

David T. Little: *The Conjured Life* (re-orchestrated for chamber orchestra)

Christopher Rountree: new work (John Adams' collaboration/Pacific Harmony Fndtn.)

Gabriella Smith: new work

1 U.S. PREMIERE:

Gerald Barry: Piano Concerto (Jason Hardink, piano)

3 WEST COAST PREMIERES:

William Bolcom: Symphony No. 9

James Stephenson: Concerto for Violin *Tributes* (Jennifer Frautschi, violin)

Michael Gandolfi: *Pinocchio's Adventures in Funland* (West Coast Premiere of orchestral version) (Conducted by Gemma New; Narrated by Cristian Măcelaru)

GUEST ARTISTS:

Dame Evelyn Glennie, percussion

Jennifer Frautschi, violin

Gemma New, Cabrillo Assistant Conductor

Cristian Măcelaru, narrator

Clarice Assad, piano/vocals

Keita Ogawa, percussion

Jason Hardink, piano

Jonathan Lemalu, bass-baritone

11 COMPOSERS IN RESIDENCE:

Karim Al-Zand

Clarice Assad

Gerald Barry

Michael Gandolfi

Jake Heggie

Aaron Jay Kernis

David T. Little

Cindy McTee

Christopher Rountree
Gabriella Smith
James Stephenson