

# BERKELEY SYMPHONY



JOANA CARNEIRO  
MUSIC DIRECTOR

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<http://www.berkeleysymphony.org/about/press/>

**Music Director Joana Carneiro and Berkeley Symphony perform West Coast premiere of Mark Grey's new *Frankenstein Symphony* Thursday, May 5 at Zellerbach Hall**

**Simone Porter is soloist in Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto**



*l to r: Joana Carneiro, Mark Grey, Simone Porter*

*Photo credits: Carneiro: Dave Weiland. Grey: Courtesy of Mark Grey. Porter: Jeff Fasano Photography*

**BERKELEY, CA (March 22, 2016)** – Music Director [Joana Carneiro](#) and [Berkeley Symphony](#) close their 2015-16 season [Thursday, May 5 at 8 pm](#) at Zellerbach Hall with the West Coast premiere of Mark Grey's *Frankenstein Symphony*, which the Orchestra co-commissioned with Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Violinist [Simone Porter](#) makes her first appearance in the Bay Area, performing Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with the Orchestra.

Tickets are \$15-\$74 and are available at [www.berkeleysymphony.org](http://www.berkeleysymphony.org) or by phone at (510) 841-2800, ext. 1. Berkeley Symphony offers a \$7 Student Rush ticket one hour prior to each performance for those with a valid student ID.

Composer **Mark Grey**, a native of San Francisco, created the *Frankenstein Symphony* from his forthcoming opera *Frankenstein*, which premieres at La Monnaie in Brussels, Belgium, in June 2016. The symphony was co-commissioned with the Atlanta Symphony and premiered there in February 2016. Both works are based on Mary Shelley's book, in honor of the 200th anniversary of its conception.

In a recent interview, Grey described his inspiration for the *Frankenstein* opera and *Frankenstein Symphony*. "We imagine the Boris Karloff movie, and we tend to have this stereotype of what *Frankenstein* is, but the novel is radically different. It's profound in terms of the social and political issues it foreshadowed – look at cloning, genetic engineering, drones in the air. What we look at [in the dramatic narrative of the opera and symphony] is when that creature is abandoned. What happens when the creator loses all interest in the creation? In the case of *Frankenstein*, it actually backlashes on its creator.

"The first movement is called *Genesis*. The opera begins 400 years after the novel ends, 200 years from now. In the novel, the creature at the end of the novel is in the Arctic – it goes off into its funeral pyre – you never know if the creature survives or not. Our opera opens with scientists finding the creature in a block of ice, and they thaw and reanimate the creature. The symphony opens with these huge chords in the orchestra, which is the spark of life going back into the creature. Then it becomes placid; the fluids are starting to move through the body, and the heart begins to pump. The other movements are about the connection of the creature with Victor and Elizabeth, Victor's fiancée. It's this kind of twisted love triangle.

"To write the symphony, I extracted music from the opera, pulling out lines in the vocal music and trying to assemble a new language in the symphonic form. I really tried to step back with the vocal music and reshape it in the orchestration. The *Frankenstein Symphony* orchestration is slightly different than the opera orchestration."

Grey is renowned as both a composer and sound designer who earned advanced music degrees at San Jose State University. In 2003, he made his Carnegie Hall debut as a composer with the Kronos Quartet. He has received a multitude of commissions from organizations including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Kronos Quartet, and Carnegie Hall, and has worked with artists such as John Adams, Steve Reich, and Philip Glass. His solo, ensemble and orchestral music has been performed in such venues as the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall, Théâtre de la Ville in Paris, Barbican Centre in London, Het Muziektheater in Amsterdam, Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, Philharmonie Hall in Warsaw, UNESCO Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City, Symphony Hall in Phoenix, Royce Hall in Los Angeles, Atlanta Symphony Hall, and at the Ravinia, Cabrillo, Other Minds, Perth International, and Spoleto festivals. His sound design creations have been seen and heard across the globe, and he was the first designer in history to design for the New York Philharmonic at Avery Fisher Hall in 2002.

Appearing in her Bay Area debut is violinist **Simone Porter**, 19, who is the soloist for Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in D major. Since making her professional solo debut with the Seattle Symphony at age 10, Porter has appeared with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (her international debut, at age 13), New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Los Angeles Philharmonic, all before the age of 18, and with many renowned conductors, including Gustavo Dudamel, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Nicolas McGegan, Ludovic Morlot, David Robertson, and Donald Runnicles. This season, in addition to her debut with the Berkeley Symphony, she performs for the first time with the Baltimore, Des Moines, Detroit, and Hartford symphonies and with the Rochester Philharmonic and the Florida Orchestra. She also makes her Ravinia recital debut and is a featured Young Artist in Residence

with American Public Media's *Performance Today*. In March 2015, Simone Porter was named a recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant.

### **ABOUT BERKELEY SYMPHONY**

Recognized nationally for its spirited programming, Berkeley Symphony has established a reputation for presenting major new works for orchestra alongside fresh interpretations of classic European and American repertoire. Berkeley Symphony continues its steadfast commitment to presenting original and unique programs, with a 2015-16 season that combines important contemporary works, U.S. and West Coast premieres, and commissioned work alongside classic masterworks. In addition to the October West Coast premiere of Kaija Saariaho's *Laterna Magica* and the West Coast premiere in May 2016 of Mark Grey's *Frankenstein Symphony*, a co-commission with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestra performed Lutosławski's Concerto for Orchestra and Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 ("Emperor") in February, with Conrad Tao as soloist, and will perform Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in D major, featuring Simone Porter, in May.

Since the 1979-80 season, including the works planned for this season, Berkeley Symphony has performed 64 world premieres, 28 U.S. premieres, and 21 West Coast premieres. Berkeley Symphony has been recognized in 10 of the past 12 seasons with an Award for Adventurous Programming from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). In addition to its concerts at Zellerbach Hall and its Berkeley Symphony & Friends Chamber Music Series, Berkeley Symphony regularly partners with Cal Performances, the performing arts presenter and producer of the University of California, Berkeley, to provide music for visiting artists. Berkeley Symphony's award-winning Music in the Schools program benefits over 4,600 elementary and middle school students in Berkeley each year. San Francisco public radio station KALW 91.7 FM is Berkeley Symphony's broadcast partner, airing all Berkeley Symphony subscription concerts.

### **ABOUT JOANA CARNEIRO**

As Music Director, Joana Carneiro has captivated the public with her commanding stage presence and adventurous programming, which has highlighted the works of several prominent contemporary composers, including John Adams, Kaija Saariaho, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Brett Dean, and Gabriela Lena Frank. Carneiro is regarded as one of the most exciting and outstanding young conductors working today. During the 2015-16 season, her seventh leading Berkeley Symphony, she conducts the Orchestra in two West Coast premieres, Kaija Saariaho's *Laterna Magica* and Mark Grey's *Frankenstein Symphony*, as well the U.S. premiere of Sofia Gubaidulina's *Fachwerk*. Carneiro's commitment to expanding the community base of Berkeley Symphony and upholding the Orchestra's artistic excellence was recognized by the League of American Orchestras, which honored her with the Helen M. Thompson Award in 2010. She was appointed Music Director of Berkeley Symphony in 2009, succeeding Kent Nagano as only the third Music Director in the 40-year history of the Orchestra.

Named Principal Conductor of the Portuguese National Symphony at the Teatro de Sao Carlos in January 2014, Carneiro remains the Official Guest Conductor of the Gulbenkian Orchestra in her native Lisbon. She is also increasingly in demand throughout the world for guest conducting engagements, both for orchestras and opera companies. Prior to her Berkeley Symphony appointment, she served as Assistant Conductor with the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 2005 to 2008, where she worked closely with Esa-Pekka Salonen and led performances at Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Hollywood Bowl.

For more information, please contact Jean Shirk at [jean@shirkmedia.com](mailto:jean@shirkmedia.com), 510-332-4195, or visit [www.berkeleysymphony.org/about/press](http://www.berkeleysymphony.org/about/press).

**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**Thursday, May 5, 2016 at 8 pm**

Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley campus, Bancroft Way at Dana Street, Berkeley

Joana Carneiro, *conductor*

Simone Porter, *violin*

Berkeley Symphony

**Program IV: *Monstrous***

Mark Grey: *Frankenstein Symphony* (**West Coast premiere, Berkeley Symphony co-commission with Atlanta Symphony Orchestra**)

Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto No. 1 in D major

**Tickets:** \$15-\$74. Tickets are available at [www.berkeleysymphony.org](http://www.berkeleysymphony.org) and by phone at (510) 841-2800, ext. 1. Berkeley Symphony offers a \$7 Student Rush ticket one hour prior to each performance for those with a valid student ID.