



**BERKELEY SYMPHONY OPENS 2019-2020 SEASON
OCTOBER 24**

JOSEPH YOUNG LEADS IN DEBUT APPEARANCE AS MUSIC DIRECTOR

CONRAD TAO RETURNS AS SOLOIST FOR RAVEL PIANO CONCERTO IN G MAJOR



Berkeley, CA – September 26, 2019 – Berkeley Symphony opens its 2019-2020 season on **Thursday, October 24** at 7:00 p.m. at Zellerbach Hall featuring Joseph Young in his first appearance as the orchestra’s new Music Director. Recently appointed in April, Maestro Young will lead a program that includes the return of Bay Area favorite Conrad Tao as soloist for Ravel’s Piano Concerto in G Major, a rare performance of *Shango Memory* by former UC Berkeley professor of music Olly

Wilson, and Beethoven’s iconic Symphony No. 5 in C minor.

Maestro Young was appointed as Music Director in April 2019 following a highly successful and critically acclaimed debut appearance as guest conductor in January 2019. Due to a last-minute cancellation, Maestro Young stepped in at a moment’s notice with only two days to prepare an ambitious program of works that included a Hannah Kendall world premiere, Bernstein’s Symphony No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra, and Britten’s Four Sea Interludes from *Peter Grimes*. The result was an instant success with Joshua Kosman of the *San Francisco Chronicle* commenting that “Young’s ability to tackle at short notice not only Kendall’s world premiere but also significant works by Britten and Bernstein was an impressive display.” In recent years, Maestro Young has appeared with numerous orchestras such as the Saint Louis Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Bamberger Symphoniker and New World Symphony as well as serving as Assistant Conductor with the Atlanta Symphony from 2014-2017. He currently serves as the Ruth Blaustein Rosenberg Artistic Director of Ensembles at the Peabody Conservatory and Resident Conductor of the National Youth Orchestra (USA).

Praised by *The New York Times* as a musician of “probing intellect and open-hearted vision,” Conrad Tao makes his third appearance with Berkeley Symphony following his February 2016 debut and most recent performance in December 2017. Regarding his 2016 debut, *San Francisco Classical Voice* said that he “knocked socks off Berkeley audiences” in a performance of Beethoven’s Concerto No. 5 while the *San Francisco Chronicle* praised his “showmanship with graceful phrasing and elegant rhetoric” in performances of Rachmaninoff’s *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and Liszt’s *Totentanz*. A recipient of the prestigious

Avery Fisher Career Grant (2012), Tao leads a varied career as a soloist, chamber artist, composer and recording artist. His 2019-2020 season highlights include solo performances with Seattle Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Baltimore Symphony; a solo recital at Carnegie Hall; and a U.S. tour with the JCT Trio. Recent compositional success includes the 2018 world premiere of *Everything Must Go*, commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, which adds to an impressive catalogue of commissions by organizations such as Hong Kong Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia and Pacific Symphony.



Opening the program is a rare performance of Olly Wilson's *Shango Memory*, a work inspired by the Yoruban god of thunder and lightning that was commissioned to mark the New York Philharmonic's 150th anniversary in 1995. With a rich musical background that included jazz and orchestral performance, electronic media and academic studies of African music, Wilson wrote a large body of works performed by orchestras all over the world including Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Moscow Philharmonic. In 1970, he served as professor of music at UC Berkeley where he taught until his retirement in 2002. As part of the upcoming global celebrations of Beethoven's 250th birthday, Berkeley Symphony will conclude the program with the composer's most enduring masterwork, Symphony No. 5 in C minor.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

Berkeley Symphony

Symphonic I: Celebrating a New Era

Thursday, October 24, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

Zellerbach Hall, Berkeley, CA

Joseph Young, conductor

Conrad Tao, piano

Olly Wilson: *Shango Memory*

Maurice Ravel: Piano Concerto in G major

Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor

Single tickets for the concert are \$15-\$96. For more information or to purchase tickets, call (510) 841-2800 x1 or visit www.berkeleysymphony.org.

ABOUT JOSEPH YOUNG

Joseph Young is increasingly recognized as "one of the most gifted conductors of his generation." In recent years, he has made appearances with the Saint Louis Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Colorado Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Bamberger Symphoniker, New World Symphony Orchestra, Spoleto Festival Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Música, and the Orquesta Sinfonica y Coro de RTVE (Madrid), among others in the U.S. and Europe. Currently, Joseph is the Ruth Blaustein Rosenberg Artistic

Director of Ensembles at the Peabody Conservatory. In this role, he leads the programming and direction of all Peabody Conservatory instrumental ensembles. Joseph became the Resident Conductor of the National Youth Orchestra (USA) in 2018.

In his most recent role, Joseph served as the Assistant Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony where he conducted more than 50 concerts per season. Mr. Young also served as the Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra, where he was the driving force behind the ensemble's artistic growth. Previous appointments have included Resident Conductor of the Phoenix Symphony and the League of American Orchestras Conducting Fellow with Buffalo Philharmonic and Baltimore Symphony.

Joseph is a recipient of the 2015 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award for young conductors, an award he also won in 2008 and 2014. In 2013, Joseph was a semi-finalist in the Gustav Mahler International Conducting Competition (Bamberg, Germany). In 2011, he was one out of six conductors featured in the League of American Orchestras' prestigious Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview.

Joseph completed graduate studies with Gustav Meier and Markand Thakar at the Peabody Conservatory in 2009, earning an artist's diploma in conducting. He has been mentored by many world-renowned conductors including Jorma Panula, Robert Spano and Marin Alsop with whom he continues to maintain a close relationship.

ABOUT BERKELEY SYMPHONY

Berkeley Symphony is unique among Bay Area and American orchestras for its commitment to innovation, community, and excellence. Founded in 1971 in the intellectual and artistic nexus of Berkeley, California, the Orchestra is committed to premiering and commissioning new music and champions women composers, sustained by the supportive musical environment of Berkeley, the East Bay, and the San Francisco Bay Area. From the outset, the people behind Berkeley Symphony's culture and programming were attuned to the culturally diverse people and the heady creative climate of their home city.

Thomas Rarick, a protégé of the great English maestro Sir Adrian Boult, founded the orchestra in 1971 as the Berkeley Promenade Orchestra. Reflecting the spirit of the times, musicians performed in street dress and at unusual locations such as the University Art Museum. When Kent Nagano became the music director of the orchestra in 1978, he charted a new course by offering innovative programming that included rarely performed 20th-century works and numerous premieres. The renamed Berkeley Symphony Orchestra gained an international reputation for its adventurous programming, and became known for premiering the music of international composers and showcasing young local talents. Berkeley Symphony entered a new era in January 2009 when Joana Carneiro became the Orchestra's third Music Director in its 40-year history. In 2016, Berkeley Symphony and composer Anna Clyne were awarded a Music Alive grant for a three-year composer residency, designed to immerse Clyne and the Symphony in the creation of new work, collaboration with other Berkeley arts institutions, music education, community outreach and multidisciplinary activities. Joseph Young succeeds Music Director Emerita Joana Carneiro in the 2019-2020 season after Maestro Carneiro announced her intent to step down as Berkeley Symphony's Music Director at the end of the 2017-18

season following nine seasons at its artistic helm.

Berkeley Symphony has introduced Bay Area audiences to works by upcoming young composers, many of whom have since achieved international prominence. Celebrated British composer George Benjamin, who subsequently became Composer-in-Residence at the San Francisco Symphony, was first introduced to the Bay Area in 1987 when Berkeley Symphony performed his compositions *Jubilation* and *Ringed by the Flat Horizon*; as was Thomas Adès, whose opera *Powder Her Face* was debuted by the Orchestra in a concert version in 1997 before it was fully staged in New York City, London and Chicago.

PHOTO CREDITS

Joseph Young / Berkeley Symphony

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