Berkeley SYMPHONY

26/27

INHERITANCE

OCTOBER 18, 2026 | 4:00PM
HENRY J. KAISER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

KENT NAGANO, guest conductor
MARI KODAMA, piano

FELIX MENDELSSOHN
ALEX NANTE





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Berkeley Symphony 26/27 Season

photo by Antoine Saito



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Message from the Executive Director


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Friends,

Welcome to Berkeley Symphony's 2026/27 season.

Today's concert, *Inheritance,* reminds us that every new musical chapter grows from what came before. So, too, with an orchestra. What better way to celebrate Berkeley Symphony's artistic inheritance than to welcome back our beloved Music Director Laureate, Kent Nagano, to the stage?

Maestro Nagano's return, alongside his wife, pianist Mari Kodama, is a joyful homecoming and an opportunity to celebrate the remarkable musicians, artists, and audiences who have helped shape Berkeley Symphony's story over the decades.

At the same time, our season looks ahead. We'll bring you new music by composers with local Bay Area ties, masterworks that have stood the test of time, returning artists, and exciting new faces. Through all of it, we remain committed to the adventurous spirit and artistic curiosity that have long defined Berkeley Symphony.

I hope you'll join us on the terrace after the performance to welcome Kent and Mari back to Berkeley Symphony and celebrate this special evening together.

Thank you for being part of Berkeley Symphony. Whether you have been with us for many years or are here for the first time, we are grateful to share this music with you.

Yours truly,

Please join us for a reception following the concert to meet the artists.

This evening's reception is generously hosted by Jane Hammond Events.

The Orchestra

Violin I
Nigel Armstrong, *Concertmaster**
Stuart Canin Chair
Emanuela Nikiforova,
*Associate Concertmaster**
Katie Allen,
*Assistant Concertmaster**
Lisa Zadek
Lyly Li
Kathleen Yuan
Aidan Perreault
Annie Li-Hoburg
Fred Chang

Violin II
Mijung Kim, *Principal**
Julia Churchill, *Assistant Principal**
David Cheng
Alexx Hinkle
Hande Erdem
Lylia Guion
Ann Eastman
Charles Zhou
Gayle Tsern Strang

Viola
Jacob Joseph, *Principal**
Mitso Floor,
*Assistant Principal**
Alex Volonts
Omid Assadi
Lisa Ponton
Rick Diamond
Peter Liepman

Cello
Carol Rice, *Principal*
Stephanie Wu, *Assistant Principal*

Cello *continued*
Isaac Pastor-Chermak
Dina Weinshelbaum
David Wishnia
Ken Johnson
Nick Carlin

Bass
Michel Taddei, *Principal*
Aleksy Klyushnik,
*Assistant Principal**
Dave Horn

Flute
Stacey Pelinka , *Principal**
Janet Maestre Principal Flute Chair
Lance Suzuki

Oboe
Haley Hoffman, *Principal**
Deborah Shidler Principal Oboe Chair
Bennie Cottone

Clarinet
Roman Fukshansky, *Principal*
Bruce Foster

Bassoon
Carla Wilson, *Principal*
Ravinder Sehgal

Contrabassoon
Jarrat Rossini

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Alex Camphouse, *Principal*
Sophia Chen

Trumpet
William B. Harvey, *Principal**
Kale Cumings

Trombone
Chase Waterbury, *Principal**
Kathleen G. Henschel Chair
Craig Bryant
Kurt Patzner

Timpani
Kevin Neuhoff, *Principal*
John W. Dewes Chair

Percussion
Ward Spangler, *Principal*

Piano
Mary Chun, *Principal*

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Message from Kent Nagano

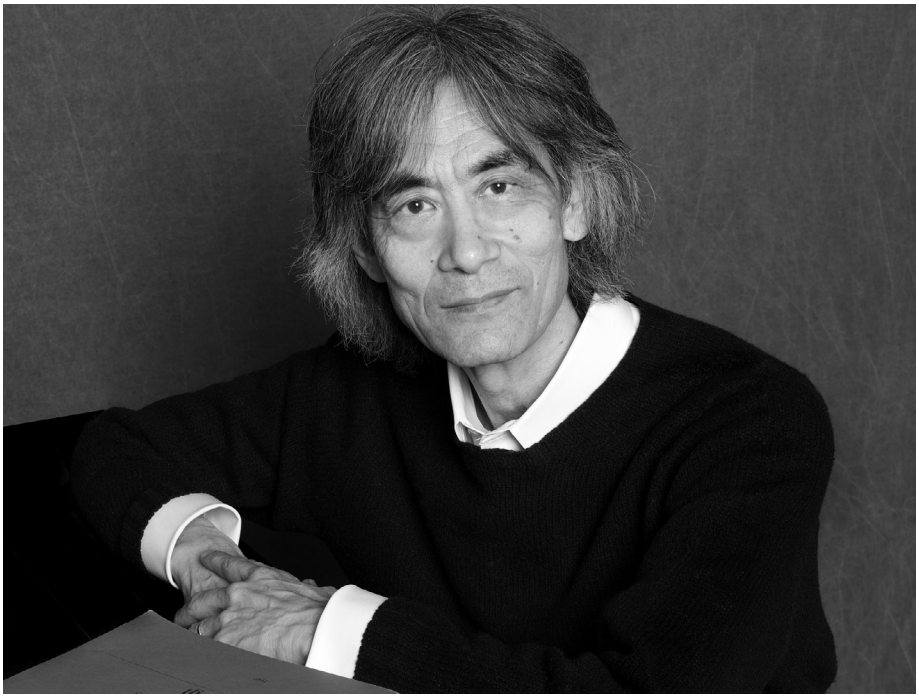


photo by Sergio Veranes

It is with pleasure and deep emotion that Mari and I return to the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra after 18 years to open the 2026/27 Season.

For over a half a century, the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra has served as a respected cultural ambassador for the City of Berkeley, reflecting its ideals as well as its important tradition of visionary social, scientific, educational and artistic leadership.

Working together to sustain this historic music institution is an investment in the substance and quality of our dynamic Berkeley community. This tradition feels especially relevant in our 21st century.

Throughout centuries, history has consistently reaffirmed that sharing the experience of great music and the arts as a community opens the doorway to a future of hope and of optimism. Let us join as neighbours to reaffirm Berkeley's unique and vibrant cultural tradition and celebrate Berkeley Symphony Orchestra in this opening performance of the BSO 2026/27 Season.

Special Thanks

Thank you to these members of our community who made special contributions to help us welcome Kent Nagano and Mari Kodama back to Berkeley Symphony.

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Peter Liepman
Jeffrey Leiter
Janet Maestre
Paul Maestre
Sandy McCoy
Amelie Mel de Fontenay
The Nagano Family
Deborah O'Grady
Ditsa Pines
Lisa R. Taylor



Today's Program

Kent Nagano *Conductor*

Felix Mendelssohn — *The Hebrides* Overture ("*Fingal's Cave*"), Op. 26

Alex Nante — *Vater unser*
(based on BWV 416)
World Premiere

Felix Mendelssohn — Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25
I: Molto allegro con fuoco
II: Andante
III: Presto—Molto allegro e vivace
Mari Kodama *piano*

Intermission

Johann Sebastian Bach — *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland,* BWV 659 ("*Savior of the Nations, Come*"), transcribed for piano by Ferruccio Busoni
Mari Kodama *piano*

Felix Mendelssohn — Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 107 ("Reformation")
I: Andante—Allegro con fuoco
II: Allegro vivace
III: Andante
IV: Andante con moto—Allegro vivace—Allegro maestoso

Please switch off your cell phones, alarms, and other electronic devices during the concert. Thank you.

Program Notes

Kent Nagano's return to Berkeley Symphony brings a program exploring musical connections across centuries. Felix Mendelssohn's works frame a concert in which J.S. Bach's legacy is heard anew through Ferruccio Busoni's piano transcription and the world premiere of Alex Nante's *Vater unser*, dedicated to Nagano and the orchestra.

Felix Mendelssohn

Born on February 3, 1809, in Hamburg, Germany; died on November 4, 1847, in Leipzig, Germany

The Hebrides ("Fingal's Cave"), Op. 26

Composed: 1830; revised 1832

First performance: May 14, 1832, by the Philharmonic Society in London

Estimated length: 10 minutes

Scored for: pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets; timpani; and strings

In 1829, the 20-year-old Felix Mendelssohn traveled from the social whirl of London to Scotland, where a glimpse of the misty Hebrides stirred his imagination in two directions. A talented visual artist as well as a composer, he sketched the islands in pencil and set down in a letter home the musical idea that would become the opening of *The Hebrides*.

The following day, Mendelssohn and a friend sailed to Staffa, the uninhabited island famous for Fingal's Cave. Despite a miserable bout of seasickness, he was awed by the cave-riddled cliffs and their natural architecture of immense black basalt columns—a vision of unspoiled, sublime beauty. The cave would also lend the overture its alternative title.

Mendelssohn continued developing the musical ideas he had stored in his memory, revising the resulting overture over the next several years. Like his earlier *Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Hebrides* is a concert overture: an independent orchestral piece rather than an introduction to an opera or play. Mendelssohn's pioneering efforts in this genre paved the way for the tone poems of later Romantic composers.

What to listen for

The opening idea, first sketched during the 1829 journey, is a downward-spiraling theme played by violas, cellos, and bassoons, tracing a minor chord against a haze of sustained harmonies. Its gravitational pull suggests the constant ebb and flow of waves against the persistence of rock. A contrasting second theme offers a lyrical ascent.

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lingering, sunset-like duet of clarinets in thirds before the coda—*The Hebrides* displays Mendelssohn's inherent classicism. He develops his motivic material economically within a beautifully proportioned sonata form. For the final measures, Mendelssohn reserves a wonderfully subtle gesture: the two themes combine, moving in opposite directions, before fading into a timeless silence.

Alex Nante

Born in 1992 in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Vater unser (based on BWV 416)

Composed: 2026

First performance: October 18, 2026, by Berkeley Symphony under Kent Nagano (world premiere)

Estimated length: 8 minutes

Scored for two flutes (second doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons (second doubling contrabassoon), two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, glockenspiel, cymbals, tam-tam, bass drum, piano or harp, and strings

Spiritual themes and sacred traditions have long informed the music of Argentine composer Alex Nante. Trained as a guitarist, pianist, and conductor, he studied with composers including George Benjamin and Peter Eötvös and earned a doctorate at King's College London. Kent Nagano has been a major champion of Nante's works. Their collaborations include *O nata lux*, premiered in 2022 by the Haydn Orchestra of Bolzano, and Nante's Third Symphony, *Anāhata*, which Nagano unveiled with the Staatsorchester Hamburg at the Elbphilharmonie in 2025. Named after the heart chakra in Indian spiritual traditions, the symphony explores the symbolism of the heart through sacred texts from East and West, supplemented by the composer's own poetry.

Nagano also inspired Nante to begin a series of works based on Johann Sebastian Bach's chorales. "The project started thanks to Kent Nagano, who encouraged me to write a work based on Bach's 'Ein feste Burg,'" the composer recalls. The resulting piece (based on the same chorale that Mendelssohn uses so ingeniously in the *Reformation* Symphony that concludes today's program) was premiered by the Dresden Philharmonic under Nagano in 2025. In this first installment, Nante explains, "Bach's chorale is almost textually present from the beginning until the end."

The approach is different in *Vater unser*, which draws on Bach's chorale BWV 416, a four-part setting of *Vater unser im Himmelreich* ("Our Father in Heaven"), Martin Luther's 1538 hymn paraphrasing the Lord's Prayer. "Even though Bach's material persists throughout the composition, the approach is freer," Nante explains. "Bach's melodies are a point of departure for unbound orchestral amplification and harmonic elaboration."

Vater unser is dedicated to Berkeley Symphony and Kent Nagano.

What to listen for

Vater unser opens quietly, with a solo clarinet introducing Bach's chorale melody. As other instruments join, the musical texture grows increasingly animated, building towards a brilliant orchestral climax. At this point, Nante inscribes a quotation from *Acts* 26:13 in the score: "brighter than the sun" (translated from the Spanish), a reference to the heavenly light that appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus. The passage reflects the composer's interest in evoking "light in sound," whether in "meditative or ecstatic atmospheres." The music then subsides into a contemplative mood, ending with delicate woodwind phrases over a sustained note in the second violins. At the end of the score, Nante adds the Latin inscription *Ars totum requirit hominem* ("Art requires the whole person").

Felix Mendelssohn

Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25

Composed: 1830–31

First performance: October 17, 1831, in Munich, with the composer as the soloist

Estimated length: 20 minutes

Scored for: solo piano; pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets; timpani; and strings

In addition to his gifts as a composer, Felix Mendelssohn enjoyed an active career as a conductor and virtuoso pianist in demand across Europe. The G minor Concerto was not his first venture into the genre. He had previously composed a piano concerto in A minor for piano and strings (1822), followed by two concertos for two pianos (1823–24). Op. 25 emerged during a stimulating period of travel, drawing on sketches he jotted down in Rome. According to biographer R. Larry Todd, Mendelssohn composed the bulk of the score and orchestrated it while staying in Munich, where he gave the premiere.

The concerto was dedicated to Delphine von Schauroth, a celebrated pianist and composer with whom Mendelssohn exchanged musical ideas. Musicologist Amanda Lalonde argues that the dedication "may have acknowledged her involvement in the work, beyond her inspiring skills as a pianist." In a letter to his family dated October 6, 1831, Mendelssohn even credited Schauroth with composing a passage in the concerto, although its precise identity remains uncertain.

The concerto was enthusiastically received, and Clara Schumann became a notable champion. Its popularity was such that Hector Berlioz parodied it in his *Evenings with the Orchestra*, imagining a fine Érard concert grand possessed by the spirit of the G minor Concerto: "They took the keyboard out of the instrument—and the keys were still moving up and down by themselves . . . ."

What to listen for

Mendelssohn opens the concerto by giving the soloist a sudden early entrance after just a few measures of fiery dramatics from the orchestra. This ploy adds to

the sense of urgency and reinforces the agitated, driving emotions of the first movement. Like Mozart, Mendelssohn knew that the piano could allure with simple, restrained poetry—note the second theme—just as powerfully as with rocketing octaves and rippling scales. Near the end of the first movement, the dotted rhythm of the main theme gives way to a repeated-note fanfare from the trumpets and horns.

This fanfare serves as a linking device between movements. It clears the space for a piano solo that leads to a placid Andante in distant E major, which features reduced, pastel-like scoring to enhance the intimate rapport between soloist and ensemble. The movement also retains subtle rhythmic connections with the opening Allegro.

The fanfare returns after a long, hushed pause to launch the finale, whose joyful G major theme counterbalances the G minor passions that had opened the concerto. Mendelssohn not only alludes to the dotted-rhythm pattern of the opening movement's first theme but, near the end, has the soloist echo that movement's second theme—as if chancing upon it while improvising. An exuberant coda revels in the piano's glittering virtuosity.



Johann Sebastian Bach

Born on March 21, 1685, in Eisenach, Germany; died on July 28, 1750, in Leipzig, Germany

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659 *("Savior of the Nations, Come")*

Transcribed for piano by Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924)

Transcribed: 1898

Estimated length: 5 minutes

Scored for: solo piano

Ferruccio Busoni, a formidable creative force as a pianist and composer alike, devoted considerable attention to transcribing Bach's organ music for the modern concert grand. His arrangement of *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* ("Savior of the Nations, Come") belongs to a collection of ten piano transcriptions of J.S. Bach's organ chorale preludes, published in 1898. The underlying chorale is a Lutheran Advent hymn published in 1524, for which Martin Luther adapted a fourth-century Latin hymn attributed to St. Ambrose.

Long associated with the first Sunday of Advent, it expresses anticipation of

Christ's coming and the mystery of his birth. Bach drew on the melody repeatedly; his organ setting BWV 659 belongs to the *Eighteen Chorale Preludes*, a collection he assembled and revised during his final decade. Mendelssohn edited and published 14 of these preludes in 1846, a year before the complete collection appeared (notably, almost a century after Bach's death).

What to listen for

The music begins with a gently moving bass, soon joined by two intertwining voices. Above them emerges the chorale melody, transformed into an elaborately ornamented, singing line. In his piano transcription, Busoni marks the chorale melody *Canto* ("song") and instructs the performer to play it "very expressively, with a full touch," while keeping the accompanying voices in the background.

Felix Mendelssohn

Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 107 ("Reformation")

Composed: 1829–30; revised 1832

First performance: November 15, 1832, in Berlin, conducted by the composer

Estimated length: 30 minutes

Scored for: pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, and trumpets; contrabassoon, three trombones, serpent, timpani, and strings

The grandson of the great philosopher of the Jewish Enlightenment, Moses Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn was baptized a Lutheran at the age of seven and later explored the phenomenon of conversion in his oratorio *St. Paul*. Yet his "sense of spiritual identity," argues biographer R. Larry Todd, was actually "more complex than might be explained by Jewish-Protestant ambivalence."

In 1829—the year of his epochal revival of J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*—Mendelssohn conceived his own musical testament to faith that, unlike his sacred oratorios, relied on instruments alone and had little in the way of obvious precedent. He called the work a *Kirchensinfonie* ("Church Symphony") and planned to present it at the tercentenary celebrations in June 1830 of the Augsburg Confession, the bedrock of Martin Luther's reformist creed.

But the composition gave Mendelssohn considerable trouble. Written without a commission, the *Reformation* Symphony was not performed for the occasion for which he intended it and had to wait more than two years for its premiere. Mendelssohn revised the score extensively, making cuts and elaborating certain passages, but the disappointing critical reception deepened his dissatisfaction. In 1838, he declared that he "would rather burn it than any other piece of mine." The symphony remained unpublished during his lifetime and fell into oblivion until later in the 19th century. It is thus known as Symphony No. 5, though it was the second of his symphonies in order of composition.

Mendelssohn was consciously making a bid to carry forward Beethoven's symphonic legacy with this early, large-scale effort in the genre. According to Todd, he sought to render the Reformation through a programmatic scheme drawing particularly on Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the depiction of battle in *Wellington's Victory*.

What to listen for

Mendelssohn's command of a programmatic musical dramaturgy is especially persuasive in the opening movement. The "antique style" of Catholic sacred music in the slow introduction gives way, as in a vision, to the loftily scored "Dresden Amen"—an ecclesiastical formula Wagner would borrow almost half a century later for *Parsifal*. Mendelssohn sets the stage for the entire work as a reflection on the historical confrontation that led to the emergence of Protestantism. Echoes of epic battles permeate the fierce and fiery D minor Allegro, though the movement leaves an impression of unresolved struggle.

The programmatic subtext becomes more indirect and private in the ensuing two movements. The cheerfully marchlike Allegro vivace Scherzo introduces a sudden contrast, while the G minor Andante shifts the focus inward, its melody singing with quasi-Baroque pathos. Along with further references to the "Dresden Amen," the music has been interpreted by some as alluding to Mendelssohn's Jewish roots.

The finale begins with a preludial passage in which a lone flute proclaims the iconic Lutheran chorale "Ein feste Burg," soon joined by the low strings and winds. The music becomes embroiled in intense counterpoint—another musical metaphor for the showdown between faiths that now finds its thrilling resolution, in the final measures, through the orchestra's unified declaration of fortress-like faith.

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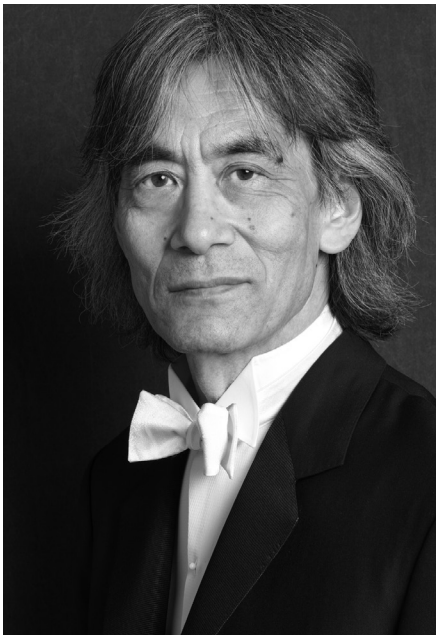
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Conductor Kent Nagano


photo by Sergio Veranes

Kent Nagano is considered one of today's outstanding conductors for both operatic and orchestral repertoire. Since the season 2026/27, he is the Chief conductor and Artistic Director of the Orquesta y Coro Nacionales de España (OCNE) in Madrid and was appointed as the Principal Artistic Partner of Filarmonica Toscanini in the season 2025/26. He has been Honorary Conductor of the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin since 2006, Concerto Köln since 2019, the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal since 2021 and the Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Hamburg since 2023 and is as patron of the Herrenchiemsee Festival.

Kent Nagano, together with Jan Vogler, is the artistic director of "The Wagner Cycles", a Ring project developed between 2023 and 2026 by the Dresden Music Festival with the Dresden Festival Orchestra and Concerto Köln. Every year one of the four parts of Wagner's "Der Ring des Nibelungen" was staged according to historically informed performance practice. From 2027 on, Kent Nagano will conduct the Dresden Festival Orchestra in several complete performances of "The Ring of the Nibelungen", including a performance at the Konzerthaus Wien.

From 2015 to 2025 Kent Nagano was General Music Director of the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra and State Opera, where his tenure included major productions such as *Boris Godunov*, *Salome*, *Peter Grimes*, *Les Troyens* and *Lulu*. Previously, he was Music Director of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (2006 – 2020), General Music Director of the Bavarian State Opera (2006 – 2013) and Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin.

As a much sought-after guest conductor, Kent Nagano regularly works with leading international orchestras worldwide. 2026/27 season highlights include projects with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, the Hamburg Philharmonic State Orchestra, the NHK Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and the WDR Symphony Orchestra amongst others. In addition, Kent Nagano will conduct

the premiere of Jacques Offenbach's *Les contes d'Hoffmann* at the Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, as well as the production of John Adams' *Nixon in China* at the Teatro alla Scala.

Born in California, Kent Nagano maintains close ties to his home state, serving as Music Director of Berkeley Symphony Orchestra from 1978 to 2009. His first major international success came in 1984 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, when Olivier Messiaen appointed him assistant to Seiji Ozawa for the premiere of *Saint François d'Assise*. This success in the United States led to a series of prominent European appointments, including Music Director of the Opéra National de Lyon (1988–1998) and of the Hallé Orchestra (1991–2000). In 2003, Nagano became the first Music Director of Los Angeles Opera, having previously served as its Principal Conductor for two years.

Kent Nagano has received Grammy Awards for recordings of Busoni's *Doktor Faust*, Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, and Saariaho's *L'amour de loin*. His extensive discography includes recordings for BIS, Decca, Sony Classical Deutsche Grammophon, Analekta and Harmonia Mundi.

He has also received numerous honors, including the Order of Canada, the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, the "Ordre des arts et des lettres" of Québec and of France, and the Brahms Prize 2024.

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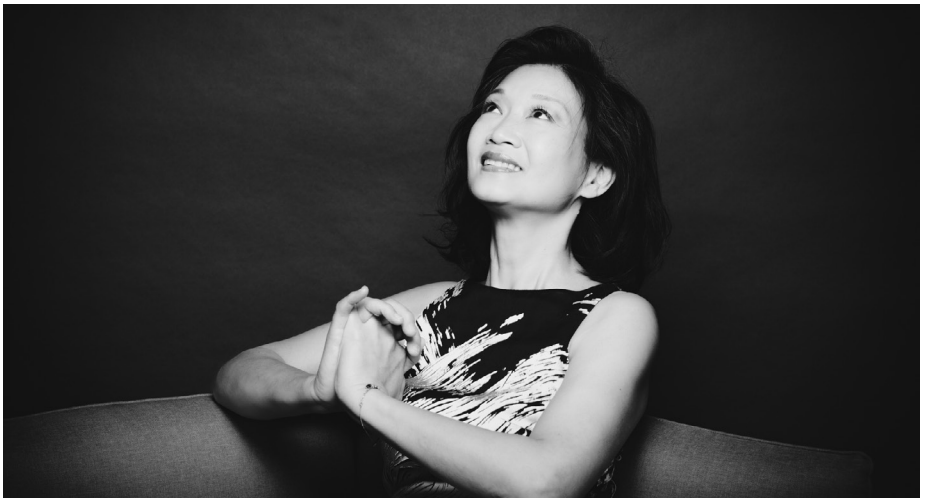


photo by Lyodoh Kaneko

Mari Kodama, *piano*

"To Kodama's great credit, she seeks out the subtle beauties of this music, resorting neither to overstatement nor to an assumed naivety. Her clarity of touch and unfailing kinaesthetic sense are a pleasure to experience."—*Gramophone,* December 2024. Mari Kodama is consistently praised for her virtuosity in a wide range of repertoire, including orchestral, chamber and solo works by composers of all periods. She is also known for her natural musicality, tonal expressiveness with a clear form, and as a benchmark Beethoven interpreter.

In the 2025/26 Season, Mari Kodama showcases her diverse talents with various international concert appearances, such as duo recital with Momo Kodama at Lucerne Festival, a return to Muse & Piano at Louvre Lens and Filarmonica de Stat Transilvania (Lawrence Foster). She also continues her series with all 32 Beethoven piano sonatas and new work written by Rodolphe Bruneau-Boulmier at Konzerthaus Blaibach. Other recent highlights include an opening concert with Le Cercle de l'Harmonie in Paris (Jérémie Rhorer) where she plays Beethoven's Piano Concerto No.1 on fortepiano, an open-air concert with Philharmonischen Staatsorchester Hamburg, debut concerts with National Symphony Orchestra, Taiwan (Lan Shui), Orchestra Haydn of Bolzano and Trento, and Orchester der KlangVerwaltungand at Herrenchiemsee Festival, and a return to Japan Philharmonic (Kahchung Wong). As a further demonstration of her versatility, Kodama played a central part in the hugely successful ballet production 'Beethoven Projekt II' (John Neumeier) which re-opened the Staatsoper Hamburg after months of COVID-19 closures and which was revived in 2022/23 with eight performances.



photo by Lyodoh Kaneko

In the 2025/26 season, she returned to the Staatsoper Hamburg for a new production of Death in Venice (Neumeier). In recital, she collaborated with Markus Hinterhäuser featuring Messiaen's Visions de l'Amen and with Rebekka Hartmann featuring Beethoven violin sonatas along with Bruneau-Boulmier's new works. She also organised the Beethoven Festival 'A Life in a Day' in San Francisco and presented all 32 of Beethoven's piano sonatas over two days by 14 different soloists.

Beethoven's piano works form a focal point of Mari Kodama's recording activities with Pentatone and Berlin Classics. She is one of few female pianists to record the composer's complete sonatas, with her 2014 box set from Pentatone receiving critical acclaim. In fall 2019 she released Beethoven's Piano Concerto No.0-5, which together with his Rondo for Piano and Orchestra and his Eroica Variations for solo piano complement the Beethoven CD—Box with all of Beethoven's piano concertos as well as the Triple Concerto together with Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin and Kent Nagano (Berlin Classics). Kodama's latest releases are Mozart's Concertos for Three Pianos and Poulenc's Concerto for Two Pianos with Orchestre de la Suisse Romande and a nuanced portrait of Bruckner's piano works on Pentatone (October 2024) which received great reviews from various publications.

Through her performing activities, Mari Kodama has brought infrequently heard gems of the piano repertoire to global audiences. She has performed Stenhammer's Piano Concerto No.2 in Gothenburg and New York and has also collaborated with Viviane Hagner on Alban Berg's Chamber Concerto for Piano and Violin, which they performed with both the Jyväskylä Sinfonia and the DSO Berlin. Additionally, in 2013 Mari Kodama premiered Jean-Pascal Beinthus' Double Piano Concerto together with Momo Kodama and Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo. Mari Kodama also performed in the Canadian premieres of Jörg Widmann's Valse Bavaroise and Humoresken, both at the Canadian Orford Festival in summer 2010.

In addition to her performances, Mari Kodama also plays an active role as a music festival Artistic Director. She co-founded the Forest Hill Musical Days Festival, a chamber music festival in San Francisco, with her husband Kent Nagano, and she has also led the chamber music series at the Orford Music Festival. In 2018 she assumed artistic directorship at the Festival Tra Luce e Sogno in Postignano, Italy, for which she secured artists such as Christian Gerhaher, Matt Haimovitz and Gerold Huber, among others. Mari Kodama is a Steinway Artist.



photo courtesy Alex Nante

Alex Nante, *composer*

Nante's extensive oeuvre is characterized by a nocturnal and dreamlike atmosphere which opens the door to a spiritual world. Born in Buenos Aires in 1992, he has already firmly established himself in the concert halls with his work. In 2025 his third Symphony *Anāhata,* a celebration of the heart symbol, was premiered in ElbPhilharmonie by the Staatsorchester Hamburg conducted by Kent Nagano, with the singers Mojca Erdmann, Evan Hughes, the organist Olivier Latry and the Audi chor.

In 2024, As the first recipient of the Prix Pisar—in collaboration with The Juilliard School, Villa Albertine and Théâtre des Champs Elysées—his piece *A Subtle Chain* was premiered by the soprano Jodie Devos and the orchestra Les Siècles conducted by François Xavier Roth.

In 2022 *El Río de Luz* was premiered by Los Angeles Philharmonic under Gustavo Dudamel and *O nata lux* by the Haydn Orchestra of Bolzano under Kent Nagano.

Three major works for the Orchestre National de Lille were heard as part of his 2021–2023 residency: *Sinfonía del cuerpo de luz*, conducted by Alexandre Bloch and nominated to Victoires de la musique classique, his second symphony *Mystérion*, for orchestra, choir, and vocal soloists, conducted by Ben Glassberg and *Luz de lejos*—a piano concerto for Alexandre Tharaud conducted by Emilia Hoving, recently released in Tharaud's album "Concertos" (Erato/Warner Classics).

Alex Nante was a fellow at the Herrenhaus Edenkoben until December 2021, where he composed a new string quartet for the JACK Quartet. At the beginning of 2021, his string quartet *Prima Materia* was premiered at the Lucerne Festival with the Quatuor Diotima.

Current projects include two monographic CDs, one with Ensemble Écoute (Label B records) and the other with Vanessa Wagner (Label La Scala). His Bach homage *Ein feste Burg* will be premiered on October 2025 by the Dresdner Philharmonie conducted by Kent Nagano.

Alex recently founded in Buenos Aires the vocal ensemble *Terra Lucida* of Vocación Humana, which he conducts. The purpose of the ensemble is to interpret sacred music of East and West, with the aim of contributing to interreligious and intercultural dialogue, as well performing regularly in hospitals and collaborating in various social projects.

In addition to *Terra Lucida*, Alex was as well the co-founder of Ensemble Écoute of the Cité Universitaire de Paris,

Ensemble Awkas and Orquesta Amigos de la Nueva Música.

The Argentine, who is also trained as a guitarist, pianist, and conductor, has studied with Sir George Benjamin, Peter Eötvös, Stefano Gervasoni, Luis Mucillo, Santiago Santero, and Daniel D'Adamo, earning a doctorate from King's College London and degrees from the Conservatoire de Paris, the National University of the Arts of Argentina, Université Paris 8 and the Conservatoire de Reims.

The first major premieres of Alex Nante's works took place in relation to his numerous early awards. These include compositions such as *Fulgor*, (1st Prize 2010 Daegu Contemporary Music Orchestra Competition, South Korea) *Tres sueños lúcidos* (1st Prize "Guillermo Graetzer" composition competition 2013, world premiere with the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional 2017), *La pérégrination vers l'Ouest* (Orchestre National d'Île de France, Compositions Prize Île de Créations 2015 and Premio Nacional 2018) and *Helles Bild* (Sinfonieorchester Basel, 2nd prize Basel Composition Competition 2019). Several works were written in 2018 as part of the Peter Eötvös Mentoring Program; among others, the flute concerto *de luz y sueño* was premiered with the Hungarian Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Two major commissions followed in 2019: *Invocación* was premiered by the Orquesta Filarmónica de Buenos Aires at the Teatro Colón and *Las noches de las piedras* was launched by Ensemble Musikfabrik under Peter Eötvös in Cologne. Also in 2019, Alex Nante received the Prix de composition de la Fondation Salabert for *Estrella de la mañana*, based on poems by Jacobo Fijman—an example of the influence mystical poetry from East and West present in many of his vocal works.

His film music received distinctions in festivals in Spain and Argentina, such as the scores written for Sebastián Alfie's *The Kaiser of Atlantis* and for Alejandro Fadel's *Murder Me, Monster*.

Alex Nante's works have been recorded by distinguished artists and ensembles. About his CD *Le Fil d'Ariane*, which is a juxtaposition of his music with that of Pietro Locatelli, made in collaboration with violinist Marianne Piketty and Le Concert Idéal, Le Monde wrote enthusiastically, "each page of our young contemporary is a masterpiece of sensitive diffraction, as intelligently composed as it is deeply felt."

Alex Nante received the support of Académie des Beaux-Arts—Institut de France, Mozarteum Argentino, Ibermúsicas, Académie Musicale de Villecroze and Fondation Banque Populaire.

His works are edited by Durand / Universal Music Publishing Classical and Éditions Henry Lemoine.

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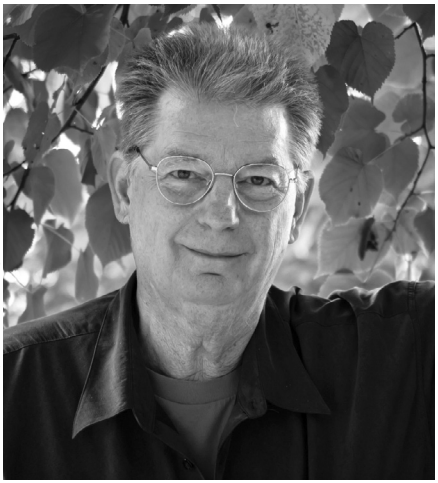


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Paul Dresher, *pre-concert talk host*

Paul Dresher is an internationally active composer noted for his ability to integrate diverse musical influences into his own coherent style. He pursues many forms of musical expression including experimental opera/music theater, chamber and orchestral composition, live instrumental electroacoustic music, musical instrument invention, and scores for theater and dance. A recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship in Composition in 2006, he has received commissions from the Library of Congress, St Paul Chamber Orchestra, Spoleto Festival USA, Kronos Quartet, SF Symphony, SF Ballet, Present Music, Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Brenda Way/ODC Dance and Chamber Music America. He has had his works performed at the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Festival d 'Automne in Paris, the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, and the Minnesota Opera.

Recent works include *Global Moves* (2022) for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, *Breathing at the Boundaries* (2020) created with Rinde Eckert, Alexander V. Nichols, Michael Palmer and the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company; *Crazy Eights & Fractured Symmetries*, commissioned and premiered by Berkeley Symphony in 2016; *Family Matters* (2014), a duo for TwoSense (cellist Ashley Bathgate and pianist Lisa Moore); and *Two Entwined* (2011), commissioned by pianist Sarah Cahill and premiered at the Spoleto Festival USA.

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About Berkeley Symphony



photo by Louis Bryant Photography

Founded by **Thomas Rarick** in 1971, Berkeley Symphony has become an integral part of the Bay Area classical music scene. The orchestra, known for its blend of classical and contemporary music, has grown into a respected institution that both honors their roots and embraces innovation. Starting in 1978, under the visionary leadership of Music Director **Kent Nagano** (1978-2009), Berkeley Symphony gained an international reputation for their adventurous programming, becoming known for premiering the music of international composers and showcasing young local talents.

Berkeley Symphony continued to make history in the intervening years, welcoming **Joana Carneiro** as their third Music Director in 2009, followed by the dynamic **Joseph Young** in 2018. His tenure, which concluded in 2025, strengthened the symphony's commitment to innovative programming, award-winning educational initiatives led by Education Director **Ming Luke,** and vibrant community engagement programs like Students at the Symphony. Now, looking ahead, Berkeley Symphony is entering an exciting new chapter—one rooted in curiosity, creativity, and a deep connection to community.

Berkeley SYMPHONY

26/27 SEASON

UPCOMING CONCERTS

NIGHT OF THE IMAGINATION
Sunday, November 15 | 4:00 PM
The Hillside Club
Philip Glass | J. S. Bach | Missy Mazzoli | Claude Debussy

TRANSFORMATION
Saturday, February 27 AND Sunday, February 28 | 4:00 PM
Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Concert Hall
Gabriella Smith | Max Richter

COMPASS
Sunday, April 4 | 4:00 PM
The Hillside Club
Maurice Ravel | Igor Stravinsky | Caroline Shaw | Viet Cuong

REMEMBRANCE
Sunday, June 6 | 4:00 PM
Zellerbach Hall
Jake Heggie | Franz Schubert

SPECIAL EVENTS

WINTER PROMENADE
Thursday, December 3 | 5:00 PM
Berkeley City Club

MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS LUNCHEON
Tuesday, March 23 | 12:00 PM
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Crafted in partnership with Berkeley Unified School District, Berkeley Symphony's Music in the Schools (MITS) program provides a comprehensive and inclusive music curriculum to over 4,700 Berkeley public school students each year and is recognized by the League of American Orchestras as one of the country's top music education programs. Ming Luke has served as the Education Director since 2007 and continues to bring joy, laughter, and music to the students in the MITS Program.

Launched in Fall 2022, the Elevate initiative is a series of additional support opportunities to respond to two major transition points where BIPOC student participation and engagement drops more significantly than in other populations: the beginning of fourth grade, when students select instruments in band and orchestra, and high school seniors interested in music as a college path and career.

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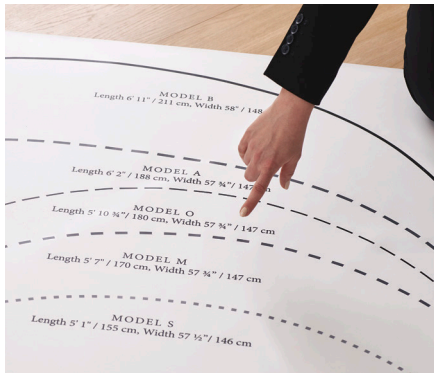
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