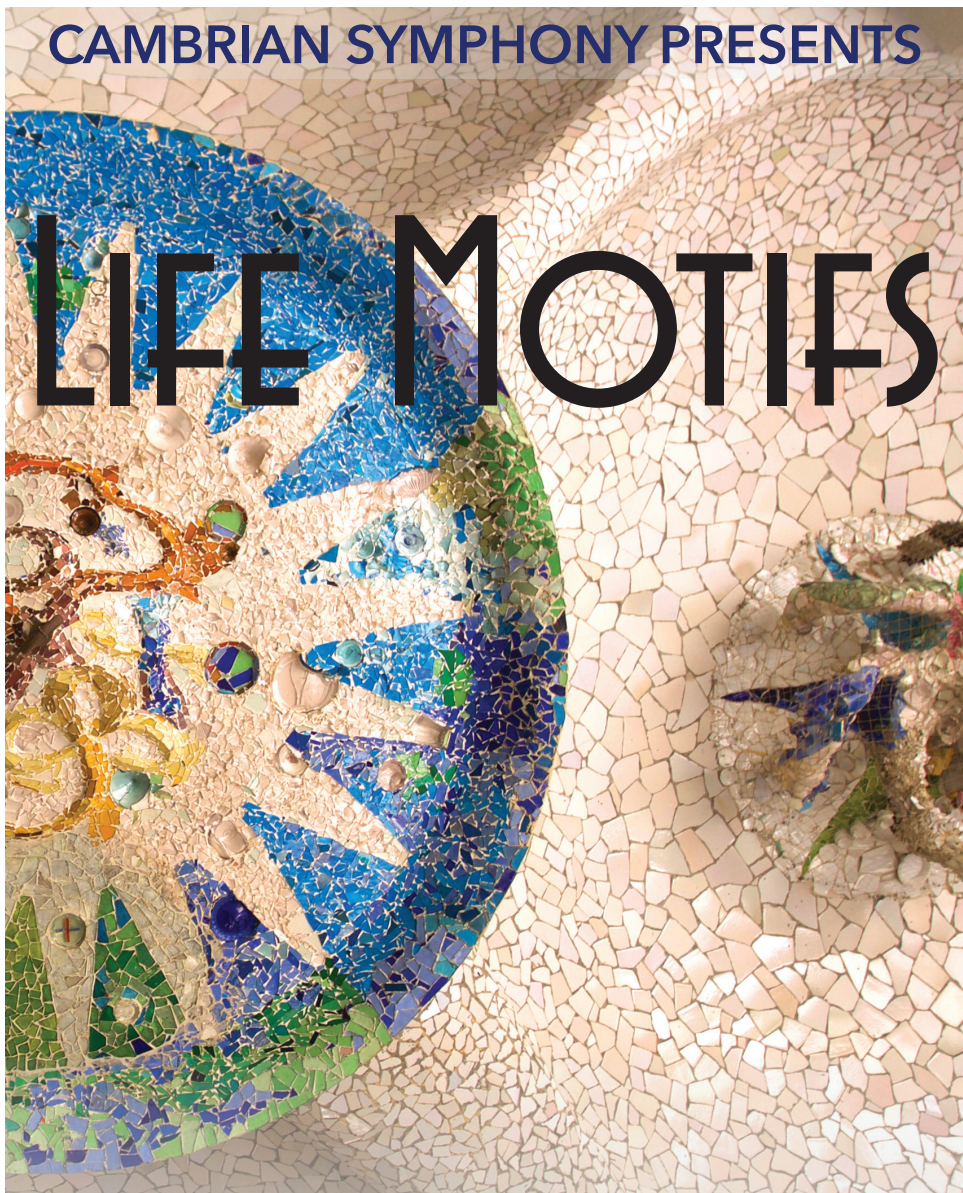


CAMBRIAN SYMPHONY PRESENTS

LIFE MOTIFS



Saturday April 13, 2024 at 7:30 pm

De Anza Visual and Performing Arts Center

21250 Stevens Creek Boulevard, Cupertino CA

Free Admission/Suggested Donation \$25 Per Adult



**CAMBRIAN
SYMPHONY**

Life Motifs

Program

Thomas Alexander, Conductor

“Sunrise” from Also Sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30 Richard Strauss

Tod und Verklärung (Death and Transfiguration), Op. 24 Richard Strauss

Intermission

End Titles from “Emma” Rachel Portman

Theme from “Jurassic Park” John Williams

Sayuri’s Theme from “Memoirs of a Geisha” John Williams

Adventures on Earth from “E.T. (The Extra-Terrestrial)” John Williams

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Cover Artwork by Kelli Reynolds

Richard Strauss,

Also Sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30, and Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24

In this 1888 letter, Richard Strauss (b. 1864, d. 1949) speaks to his interest in the Tondichtung, literally “tone-poem”:

If you want to create a work of art that is unified in its mood and consistent in its structure, and if it is to give the listener a clear and definite impression, then what the author wants to say must have been just as clear and definite in his own mind. This is only possible through the inspiration by a poetical idea, whether or not it be introduced as a programme. I consider it a legitimate artistic method to create a correspondingly new form for every new subject, to shape which neatly and perfectly is a very difficult task, but for that very reason the more attractive.

In contrast to symphonies and sonatas of the classical period which largely express themselves through comparison to “standard” or “expected” forms that their public was familiar with, tone poems generally use unique forms catered to their inspiration. Strauss made many contributions to the genre including *Aus Italien* (1886), *Macbeth* (1888/1891, the subject of his letter), *Don Juan* (1888), *Tod und Verklärung* (“Death and Transfiguration”, 1889), *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (1896), and *Don Quixote* (1897). Without an expected form to guide the listener, tone poems rely more strongly on the use of themes, motives, or the “leitmotif.” The idea of a leitmotif is that it drives the musical design, as opposed to typical themes which may just punctuate or articulate an underlying design. Associated with Richard Wagner, leitmotifs offer a compelling way to understand and construct music.

Widely known for its use in Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey*, the opening to *Also Sprach Zarathustra* presents the “Nature theme.” Set in the key of C, often associated with purity or simplicity, the nature theme’s first three notes refrain from landing on the 3rd of the chord, which would make it major or minor. Immediately after, the major and minor third are announced: this alternation takes us away from the initial stability. This tone poem is based on the book of the same name by Nietzsche. In the prologue, Zarathustra leaves his family, leaves his home, enters the mountains, and stands before the rising sun, which is felt in Strauss’ music by the building of intensity.

The earlier *Death and Transfiguration* is not based on a literary source but instead Strauss’s own concept (as summarized by Bryan Gilliam): “a dying artist, obsessed by an artistic Ideal, is transfigured at death to recognize his Ideal in eternity.” The opening alludes to irregular breathing or beating of

the heart. We hear lyrical episodes, introducing themes and perhaps representing the dying person's fond memories of life. We are soon reminded of the subject's dire health by fiery music. We can imagine the artist struggling against their condition. The music starts to dwindle but turns back around for a passionate arrival at a chord and statement of the "Ideology" theme. It is first heard in the brass and is notable for its dramatic octave leap. Throughout this work, Strauss's mastery of melody and form is wonderfully apparent.

Rachel Portman, *Emma*, End Titles

Rachel Portman (b. 1960) is an English pianist and composer whose music can be heard in many films such as *The Joy Luck Club* (1993), *Emma* (1996), *Beloved* (1998), *Chocolat* (2000), *Bessie* (2015), and *A Dog's Purpose* (2017). She has many works composed independent of film, including the choral symphony *The Water Diviner's Tale* (2007) and the orchestral piece *Endangered* (2013); these pieces are among several that deal with Earth and climate change as subjects or inspirations. With her original score for *Emma*, Portman became the first female composer to win an Academy Award. She has recently branched out by releasing albums of her own piano playing, most recently an album of "Film Works on Piano."

The music for the end titles of *Emma* skillfully recaps the themes and moods of the film, which is based on Jane Austen's novel of the same name. In 2001, Portman spoke about her score for *Emma*, stating "it is an orchestral piece, by which I mean that there is nothing in it that you wouldn't find in a symphony orchestra. It was influenced by my roots and my classical background.... Film music is definitely opening up classical music to more people."

John Williams, *Jurassic Park*, *Memoirs of a Geisha*, and *E.T. (The Extra-Terrestrial)*

At the Hollywood Bowl Hall of Fame Ceremony in 2000, Steven Spielberg announced:

There is nobody in my experience who made the kind of impact on my career and my films than this man. This man has absolutely transformed everything that I have done into something that I could not imagine ever having done. . .And I know of no one who knows how to write film music that goes straight to your heart and straight to your soul than my good friend John Williams.

John Williams' (b. 1932) style of orchestral music that we love from *Star Wars*, *Jaws*, *Jurassic Park*, *Memoirs of a Geisha*, *E.T. (The Extra-Terrestrial)*, *Home Alone*, *Harry Potter*, *Schindler's List* and many more can be partially thought of as a revival of a classic style of Hollywood music from the '40s. In the '60s, the French New Wave (among other trends) brought with it a decline of some directors' interest in the lush music of earlier times. French director Robert Bresson commented: "How many films are patched up by music! Films are flooded with music. This prevents us from seeing that there is nothing in those images." Sci-Fi films often used orchestras but would typically use modern 20th century techniques like serialism, atonality, chance, or electronically generated sounds. Films such as *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) and *Planet of the Apes* (1968) are examples of this. Kubrick's *2001* is an exception for including standard orchestral music, but he chose many excerpts from many different composers: "However good our best film composers may be, they are not a Beethoven, a Mozart or a Brahms." In this context, George Lucas' decision to work with John Williams was not at all a "given." Williams convinced Lucas to use an original score, instead of going the Kubrick route: "2001 and several other films have utilized this technique [of using many diverse musical excerpts] very well. But what I think this technique doesn't do is take a piece of melodic material, develop it and relate it to a character all the way through the film." Williams brought back motive-driven orchestral film scores, and the rest is history.

In tonight's selections, we hear not only the genius for themes that Williams is famous for, but also his excellent orchestration: notice the progression from brass to winds to strings in *Jurassic Park*, the flute in *Memoirs of a Geisha*, and the use of percussion at the start of *E.T.'s Adventures on Earth*. Williams' music can be difficult to play, but that challenge is part of what makes the music so engaging for musicians and listeners alike.

Program notes by Dermot Gleeson

Our Guest Conductor



Thomas Alexander started the violin at the age of four after he was captivated by the magic and splendor of *The Nutcracker*. He studied violin performance at UCSD, then moved to San Francisco, and played with many community and professional orchestras near and around San Francisco. He spent 15 years working with the San Francisco Civic Symphony Association, serving on the board, playing concertmaster in multiple groups, and starting numerous ensembles including “Mozart to Mendelssohn,” “Civic Strings,” and “Civic Pops.” It was through this organization that he started conducting in earnest, leading Civic Strings, Mozart to Mendelssohn, and guest conducting the San Francisco Civic

Symphony. Thomas also founded impromptuSF as Music Director. It was *The Nutcracker*, again, that brought him to Cambrian Symphony.

CAMBRIAN SYMPHONY

Violin 1

Nina Han**
Courtney Onodera
Vita Yee
Wei Gao
Lindsay Onodera
Brianna Wagener
Edmund Allen
Lauren Wagener
Matthew Carson
Eric Young

Violin 2

Malin Huffman*
Karen Paik
Ben Shiverdaker
Bella Hue
Shelley MacAllister
Sam Burnett

Viola

Goetz Leonhardt*
Silvio Rocha
Panithi Kachinthorn
Derek Wang
Jason Martel
Ishaan Ranjan
Ken McKnight
Veer Tomar

Cello

Sung Choi*
Enoch Kim
Eric Penunuri
Jonathan Hieu Reed
Joanne Huang
Ray Wang
Rishi Shah
Meilani Huynh
Audrey McDonald

Bass

Rafael Zepeda*
Scarlett Rocha
John Braunreuther
Jay Soule

Flute

Brian Bensing*
Amy Streeper

Piccolo

Kenin Coloma

Oboe

Claudia Engel*
Lorna Kohler

Clarinet

Geoff Burr*
Jordan Selburn

Bass Clarinet

Kathy Switky

Bassoon

Lettie Smith*
Matthew Thornton

Contrabassoon

Juliet Hamak

French Horn

Ross Gershenson
Amberle Mitchell
Nathan Huie
Rayna Davis
Brian Anderson

Trumpet

Guy Clark*
Laura Shea-Clark
Jeffrey Thompson

Trombone

John Fitzhugh*
Keefe Ismael

Bass Trombone

Jackson Baker

Tuba

Jay Perry

Percussion

Christine Lovejoy*
Wendy Tran
Jason Sander

Keyboards

Eiko Mitani

Harp

Dana Wallace

** *Concertmaster*

* *Principal*

Our Artistic Director



Born in Antwerp, Belgium, **Scott Krijnen** was raised in an environment of music, conducting and education. A recipient of a Master's Degree in Cello Performance from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, cello has been his connection to education, conducting and performance and the voice he uses most to share his love of music. As a conductor, he is sought after throughout the Bay Area, most recently being appointed the new Music Director of the Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra. As an educator, Scott currently teaches over 250 students through 6 orchestras at Castillero Middle School and is in his 19th year of teaching. He has won many accolades including the 2020 Teacher of the

Year Award at Castillero, Grammy Educator of the Year Quarter-Finalist for 2020 and 2021, and a 2020 Belle Foundation Grant, as well as the 2017 Bay Section Orchestra Director of the Year Award, 2016 CMEA Richard L. Levin Orchestra Educator Award, and the 2016 CSN Bay Area All-Star Teacher Award, earning \$20,000 to support the music program at Castillero. Scott has strong connections throughout California including presenting for state-wide conventions, coaching and guest conducting, leading sectionals and presenting at the university level, adjudicating regional and state-wide festivals, and has coached and presented with PACO for the last 19 years. Scott is happily married to his wife of 20 years, Aryn, and is the father of two beautiful children who get to grow up in the same wonderful world of music as their father.

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