



Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José

27th Season

Symphonies and Memories

Saturday, February 24, 2024

7:30 PM

Hammer Theatre Center
San Jose, California

Program

A Field In Pennsylvania

Nancy Bloomer Deussen

Serenade for Strings, op. 20

Edward Elgar

Knoxville: Summer of 1915, op. 24

Samuel Barber

Shawnette Sulker, soprano

- Intermission -

Symphony No. 8, in G major, op. 88

Antonín Dvořák

- I. Allegro con brio**
- II. Adagio**
- III. Allegretto grazioso**
- IV. Allegro ma non troppo**

No still or video photography is permitted during the performance.

A Message from our Board

Would you like to help the Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José by volunteering your time? Looking to grow or use your leadership skills to enhance your resume? The Santa Clara Valley Performing Arts Association Board of Directors, responsible for the MCOSJ, is looking for a few good people interested in helping this musical community organization dedicated to artistic excellence! In particular, the board needs people with financial or marketing experience.

If you are interested in becoming a board member or are just curious what a board member does, email info@missionchamber.org and leave a message, or approach any one of us directly.

Jordan Selburn, president
Andy Cottrell, vice president
Anne Spector, secretary
Susan Biskeborn, treasurer

Lynne Burstein
Sofi Jaquez
Casey Morrison
Emily Ray
Forrest Williams

Orchestra Coordinator: Mary Lou Meeks

Community Support is Vital

The Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José relies heavily on community support to bring high quality symphonic music to Silicon Valley at affordable prices. If you would like to help support the orchestra by making a donation, you may:

1. Donate online at the MCOSJ website: www.missionchamber.org
2. Make a check payable to our sponsoring organization SCVPAA, and mail to:

Santa Clara Valley Performing Arts Association
P.O. Box 32872, San Jose CA, 95152

3. Donate to Santa Clara Valley Performing Arts Association through Arts Choice (workplace giving program)

All donations are tax deductible and donors will be acknowledged in the printed programs. Also, please remember to ask your employer to match your donation. Thank you for your generous support!

Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José concerts are supported, in part, by a Cultural Affairs grant from the City of San José; a grant from Silicon Valley Creates, in partnership with the County of Santa Clara and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Mission Chamber Orchestra is a member of the Silicon Valley Arts Coalition.

Use the Internet to Support MCOSJ

Go to www.goodsearch.com

"Who do you goodsearch for?"

Enter "Mission Chamber Orchestra"

Every search that begins here will generate money
for MCOSJ.

Go to www.iGive.com

"What's your cause?"

Select "Mission Chamber Orchestra"

Register to shop at over 1600 brand name stores
and a portion of each purchase will go to MCOSJ.

Bookmark the sites or enter them on your toolbar.

Thank you!



Mission Chamber Orchestra of San José
Thomas Shoebotham, Guest Conductor

Violin I

Geoff Noer,
concertmaster
Marianne Cooper
Nana Kurosawa
Carolyn Lowenthal
Tomomi Matsumoto
Mary Lou Meeks

Violin II

Anne Spector *
Kim Frampton
Peggy Spool
Jana Tödtmann
Aine Winklebleck
Jerry Yen

Viola

Silvio Rocha *
Monte Benaresh
Kathleen Thompson
Claire Wilson
Pragathi Venkatesh

Violoncello

Garth Cummings *
Hortencia Calvillo
Deb Fenzel-Alexander
Sara Insuasty Silva

Contrabass

Clark Cox *

Flute

Amelia Archer *
Sarah Lloyd

Piccolo

Qia Zhang

Oboe

Robert Scott *
Emily Petersen

English Horn

Ben Lloyd

Clarinet

Sue Biskeborn *
Jordan Selburn

Bass Clarinet

Gordon Snyder

Bassoon

Jack Chan *
Lynne Burstein

Horn

Brian Holmes **
Gary Crandell **
Kathryn Crandell
Jeanette Levinson

Trumpet

Guy Clark *
Paul Dhuse
Susan Schadeck

Tenor trombone

Randy Chase *
Ken Rydeen

Bass trombone

Steve Barnhill

Tuba

Erin Bliss

Timpani

Stuart Langsam

Percussion

Josh Chase
Stuart Langsam
Wendy Tran

Harp

Aysha Gomez-Kureishi

Keyboard

Geri Actor

* Principal

** Co- principal

About the Guest Conductor



Thomas Shoebotham

American conductor Thomas Shoebotham has impressed both audiences and critics with his performances of a wide range of repertory, displaying strong musicality, versatility, and “masterful command of pacing, dynamics, and color.” Equally at home on the concert stage and in the opera and ballet pit, he conducts frequently with professional, community, and youth ensembles, collaborating with notable singers, dancers, and instrumentalists

to bring “rousing, colorful” presentations to a variety of audiences. Shoebotham is currently Principal Conductor for The New Ballet in San Jose, where he conducts the annual production of the San Jose Nutcracker, as well as other works. Previously, from 2006-2018, he was Music Director of Palo Alto Philharmonic, where he gained recognition for creating compelling concerts that featured both traditional masterpieces and newer works by various current composers, including Chris Theofanidis, Roberto Sierra, Stephen Paulus, Lee Actor, and Jennifer Higdon. In addition, he has conducted numerous other orchestras in both the San Francisco Bay Area and elsewhere, including Peninsula Symphony, the San Francisco Concerto Orchestra, Albuquerque Philharmonic, Contra Costa Chamber Orchestra, and the Rio Grande Chamber Symphony.

As an opera conductor Shoebbotham has conducted performances with Opera San José (*Les Pêcheurs de Perles*), Lyric Theatre of San Jose (*Iolanthe*), West Bay Opera (*The Last Tycoon*), Emerald City Opera in Steamboat Springs (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Berkeley Opera (*Otello*, *Béatrice et Bénédict*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Carmen*, *Così fan Tutte*, and *L'italiana in Algeri*), Opera on Tap San Francisco (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), and Verismo Opera (*Otello*).

Prior to his position with the Palo Alto Philharmonic Mr. Shoebbotham was Assistant Conductor of Peninsula Symphony in San Mateo, California. During this time he conducted numerous works on the orchestra's classical and pops concerts, presented all of the orchestra's family concerts, and filled in for the ailing principal conductor with no rehearsal at a subscription concert to great critical acclaim.

Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Mr. Shoebbotham holds a B.M. in Cello Performance from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. He continued his studies at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where he was awarded a M.M. in Cello Performance and Literature. Returning to Albuquerque, he again studied at the University of New Mexico, earning a M.M. in Orchestral Conducting, while also serving as a conductor, coach, and pianist with the UNM Opera Theater. He has appeared as a cello soloist with several orchestras in the San Francisco Bay Area and performed many solo and chamber music recitals in California, Illinois, and New Mexico. As a pianist he has collaborated with many singers and instrumentalists and served as accompanist for numerous concert and opera choruses.

About the Artist

Shawnette Sulker



Guyanese-American soprano **Shawnette Sulker** has been acclaimed for her “heart-breaking poignancy” and “beautifully tuned soprano” by the San Francisco Chronicle and for her “enchanted vocal splendor” by the Leipziger Volkszeitung. Also described as a singer “...displaying a bright, superbly controlled soprano with perfectly placed coloratura” (The San Francisco Chronicle), she is sought after both in the US and abroad. A consummate performer, she has been a featured artist at San Francisco Opera in their production of *Porgy and Bess*. Her recently sung roles include Poppea

(*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) with both Intermountain Opera Bozeman and West Edge Opera, Die Königin der Nacht (*Die Zauberflöte*) with Santa Rosa Symphony, and Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*) with West Edge Opera.

Ms. Sulker is as equally at home performing standard repertoire as she is in newer works. She had the distinction of creating the leading role of Mary Jane Bowser in Houston Grand Opera’s workshop of Jake Heggie’s latest opera *Intelligence*. Additional new music performance highlights in 2023 included creating the role of Ariel in Allen Shearer’s *Prospero’s Island*, performing Princess Dora in Lori Laitman’s *The Three Feathers*, and singing Sparrow in Okoye’s *Tales from the Briar Patch*. Further new music credits include creating the role of Corina in the world-premiere of David Conte’s opera *Firebird Motel*. The original cast recording can be found on the Arsis label. She has also sung in the American premieres of the following operas: Adam Gorb’s *Anyu17* in the

role of Mila, Tarik O'Regan's *Heart of Darkness* in the role of River Woman, Fabrizio Carlone's *Bonjour M. Gauguin* as La Voix Intérieure, and Zenobia Powell Perry's *Tawawa House* as Fanny.

A further sampling of Ms. Sulker's dynamic range of roles includes Sister Rose (*Dead Man Walking*); Floralba (*Messalina* by Pallavicino); Pip (Heggie's *Moby Dick*); Zerbinetta (*Ariadne auf Naxos*); Cunegonde (*Candide*); The Visitor (Sankaram's *Formidable*); Carolina (*Il matrimonio segreto*); Musetta (*La Bohème*); Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*); Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*); Olympia/Giulietta/Antonia (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*); Oscar (*Un ballo in maschera*); Constanze (*Abduction from the Seraglio*); Clara (*Porgy and Bess*); Belinda (*Dido and Aeneas*); Treemonisha (*Treemonisha*); Madame Silberklang (*Der Schauspieldirektor*).

On the concert stage, the soprano recently sang a program of operatic favorites at Naples's Teatro di San Carlo, recitals in New York's Scorca Hall and at Stanford University, Orff's *Carmina Burana* with Peninsula Ballet Theatre, The Majesty of the Spiritual concert at Herbst Theatre and Lincoln Center (honoring the works of living masters R. Carter, J. Hairston, and L. McLin), and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Berkeley Symphony. Some of her other concert repertoire includes Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras*; Bach's *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen*; Mozart's *Exsultate, Jubilate*; Handel's *Messiah*; Bach's *Coffee Cantata*; Scarlatti's *Su le sponde del Tebro*; Mozart's *Grand Mass in C minor*; Fauré's *Requiem*; Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* and *Mass in B ♭*; Bach's *Magnificat* and *Weihnachts-Oratorium*; Pergolesi's *Magnificat*; Mahler's Symphonies No. 4 and No.8.

Additional international performing credits for Ms. Sulker feature singing Adele throughout the Netherlands and Belgium in a tour of *Die Fledermaus*, an art song recital at Red Door Studios in Amsterdam, and a series of Christmas concerts at the Ritz-Carlton in Osaka, Japan. She also sang orchestra concerts of both *Porgy and Bess* highlights and Mendelssohn's *Psalm 42*, performed in Leipzig's Gewandhaus and Prague's Smetana Hall. The soprano recorded a CD of operatic favorites with New Zealand's Orchestra Wellington and can be seen

and heard in an on-camera operatic appearance in the feature film *Jackson*, directed by J.F. Lawton.

Some noteworthy companies with which Ms. Sulker has performed include Hawaii Opera Theatre, American Bach Soloists, Internationale Opera Producties, Mark Morris Dance Group, Opera Naples, Eugene Symphony, Union Avenue Opera, Winston-Salem Symphony, Opera Memphis, Opera Idaho, Oakland Symphony, Opera San José, Natchez Music Festival, Pacific Opera Project (POP), Garden State Philharmonic, Opera Fairbanks, Opera Modesto, Ars Minerva, Festival Opera, Music in the Mountains, and Mendocino Music Festival, to name a few. Her upcoming engagements feature singing in a workshop for the new opera *Bulrusher* by Nat Stookey as Bulrusher for Cincinnati Opera, *Die Königin der Nacht* with Livermore Valley Opera, the soprano solo in Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with Mission Chamber Orchestra, and Opera Parallèle and SF Jazz's double bill production of Little's *Vinkensport*/Karpman's *Balls* (as Sir Elton John's Trainer and Susan B. Anthony, respectively).

Mark your calendars!

Upcoming Mission Chamber Orchestra 2024 concerts:

Illumination

Saturday, May 11, 7:30PM

De Anza College Visual and Performing Arts Center
21250 Stevens Creek Blvd., Cupertino

Anthony Rivera, guest conductor

Program Notes

by the conductor

A Field in Pennsylvania

Nancy Bloomer Deussen (1931-2019)

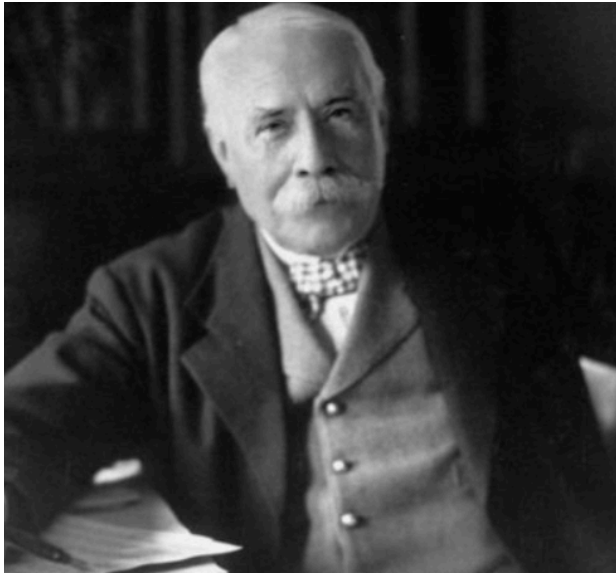


A Field in Pennsylvania is a ten minute tone poem for full orchestra, written in 2005 to commemorate the heroic actions of the passengers of United flight 93 on September 11, 2001. The work begins quietly, with a rustle in the strings, as if depicting the gentle breeze in the grass of rural Pennsylvania. A theme that suggests the forward movement of a large jet is heard, which builds up as the listener senses the aircraft coming closer and closer. The theme's progress is suddenly cut off when the disaster occurs, and we hear descending slides from many of the instruments of the orchestra, followed by a period of awful quiet. A hymn in

memory of the passengers begins, quietly at first, but with growing intensity, until the final fanfare brings the work to a stirring conclusion.

www.missionchamber.org

Serenade for Strings, op. 20
Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

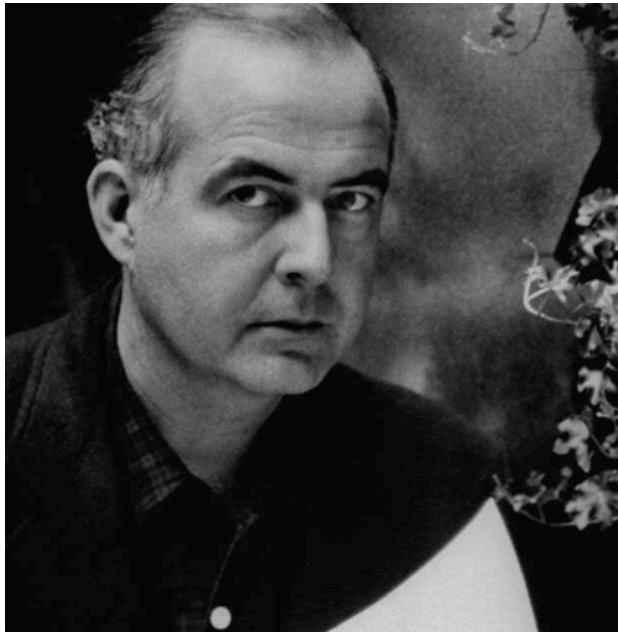


Sometime in the late 1880s Elgar, who was still trying to find his voice as a composer and make a success of composition as a career, wrote three short works for string orchestra, originally conceiving them as simply studies, titled “Spring Song”, “Elegy”, and “Finale”. Several years later, in 1892, he revised the pieces, discarding the third one and combining the first two with a newly written finale that had thematic

connections to the first movement. The programmatic titles were also dropped, and the entire work was given the name “Serenade” for the first performance by the Worcester Ladies’ Orchestral Class, with the composer conducting.

The first movement, mostly in a lilting 6/8 meter, constantly hovers between feelings of lighthearted humor and melancholy pathos, with a distinct rhythmic figure that opens the work underlying all the subtle shifts of mood. The second movement presents, after a short introduction, a long, sustained, singing melody that would become so characteristic in Elgar’s larger works, such as his symphonies, concertos, and the famed *Enigma Variations*. The third movement, the shortest of the three, begins with a gentle return to the mood of the first movement, and eventually ends with the same theme that began the entire work.

Knoxville: Summer of 1915, op.24
Samuel Barber (1910-1981)



Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op. 24, is a work for voice and orchestra written by Samuel Barber in 1947. It takes its text from a 1938 short prose piece by the renowned writer James Agee. The work was commissioned by soprano Eleanor Steber, who premiered it in 1948 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under Serge Koussevitzky. Agee's work depicts the almost dream-like thoughts of a young child, and Barber uses the orchestra to paint an idyllic, nostalgic picture of Agee's native Knoxville, Tennessee.

The preamble is a simple, dreamlike depiction of an evening in the American South, narrated by a child who seems, at times, to transform into an adult. It is difficult to tell at times the identity of the speaker, enhancing the dreamlike quality of the work. Barber described the work as a "lyric rhapsody", in fairly free form, but with hints of ABA and *rondo* forms.

The text does not tell a story, but rather is a poetic evocation of life as seen from the perspective of a small child. It is full of alliteration ("people in pairs", "parents on porches", "sleep, soft smiling", "low on the length of lawns"). The point is that nothing is happening; the adults sit on the porch and talk "of nothing in particular, of nothing at all". Their voices are "gentle and meaningless, like the voices of sleeping birds". A horse and a buggy go by, a loud auto, a quiet auto, a noisy streetcar. The members of the family lie on quilts, in the yard, and eventually the child is put to bed, where he ponders his existence and place in the world.

Symphony No. 8, op. 88
Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)



Dvořák composed this symphony in 1889 to commemorate his election to the Bohemian Academy of Science, Literature, and Arts, and conducted the world premiere in 1890 in Prague. His previous symphony, the great D minor symphony, had been a stormy, passionate work, and in this new symphony he strove to present a work, "different from the other symphonies, with individual thoughts worked out in new ways." The mood overall is cheerful and lyrical, drawing its inspiration from

the Bohemian folk music that Dvořák loved so much.

Dvořák retained the traditional four movement structure of the typical symphony of that era, but structured the movements in unusual ways. The first movement begins with a dark introduction in minor key, which only serves to make the transformation to major key even more impressive and heartening. There is a characteristic "bird call" theme that returns at points in the movement, and numerous other melodic ideas that propel the work forward. The second movement begins with fragments that slowly congeal as the various sections of the orchestra converse with each other, building to an impressive climax before returning to the opening fragments. The third movement is not a *scherzo* or *furiant* as is often the case in a Dvořák symphony, but rather a nostalgic quasi-waltz that moves along at a moderate pace, with the mood of an *intermezzo*. The *finale* begins with a brilliant trumpet fanfare that soon settles into a series of variations for various instruments of the orchestra, becoming more and more energized and excited as the movement progresses. A return of the calm opening material gives way to the final section of the work, again brimming with energy, and recalling the Czech conductor Rafael Kubelik's comment that, 'in Bohemia the trumpets never call to battle – they always call to the dance!'

Acknowledgements

(Donations received February 20, 2023 - February 20, 2024)

Conductor's Circle (\$1000 +)

Anonymous
Susan & Robert Biskeborn
Gerald Brady
The Britto Trust
City of San Jose take pART Grant
Doris Davis
Marc Hopkins
Portuguese Fraternal Society of America
Portuguese Historical Society of Ca., Inc.
Silicon Valley Creates Grant
Robert & Alice Teppel

Sponsor (\$500-999)

Benevity Fund
Marianne & Geoffrey Cooper
Brian Hosken
James Kleinrath, DDS
Luso American Financial
Anne Prescott
Jordan Selburn
Richard Kelso & Claire Wilson

Benefactor (\$250-499)

Celestino & Manuela Agular
Dolores Cascarino
Louise Detwiler
Jacquelyn K. Hall Trust Fund
Manuel & Cecilia Homem
Alfonse R. Leal
Sarah Lloyd
Forrest & Dorothy Williams

Patron (\$100-249)

Katherine Bazak
Manuel & Margaret Cabral
Casa De Macau USA, Inc.
Jack Chan
Garth Cummings

The Eisbach Family Trust
Deb Fenzel-Alexander
William & Lorraine Glick
Trudy Keltz
Kandace Klemba
Nana Kurosawa
Goetz Leonhardt
Marian Lin
Ben & Julie Lloyd
Elba Lu
Lusitano Club of California
Macau Cultural Center, Inc.
William McGraw
Robert Miller
Noon Arts & Lectures
Raymond Shen
Richard Sogg
Louise B. Tamm
Susan Zerweck

Friend (\$10-99)

Melanie Astin
Mr. Bird
Richard Blish
Ann Byler
Hortencia Calvillo
Kenin Coloma
Kim Frampton
Mary Glass
Hector Guerra
Robert & Maxine Halem
Hillel Hachlili
Juliet Hamak
Sharmon Hilfinger
Patrick Kennedy
Mengxiong Liu
Steven & Mary Lou Meeks
Tom Nguyen
Mary Pizzo
Lynette Schlick
Peggy & Alan Spool
Wai Ping Wong

