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A NEW ERA BEGINS: PACIFIC SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES ARTISTIC AND MUSIC DIRECTOR ALEXANDER SHELLEY'S INAUGURAL SEASON

The 2026–27 Classical Series, presented by Hal and Jeanette Segerstrom Family Foundation, launches a daring, high-impact season of landmark works, global stars, and once-in-a-generation experiences—many of them Pacific Symphony firsts

The season unites musical ambition with civic celebration, marking the 20th anniversary of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall and the 40th anniversary of Segerstrom Center for the Arts

Commemorating America250, the season articulates the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence and celebrates the artists who shape America's classical legacy with highlights including Mahler's Second Symphony, a two-week Beethoven Revolution Festival, John Adams' opera Nixon in China, a special Opening Night featuring violinist Joshua Bell, and a one-night-only concert with pianist Emanuel Ax

ORANGE COUNTY, Calif.—February 4, 2026—Pacific Symphony heralds in a thrilling new era under the direction of Artistic and Music Director Alexander Shelley, with the announcement of the 2026-27 Classical Series, presented by Hal and Jeanette Segerstrom Family Foundation. Assuming full leadership of the Southern California orchestra, Shelley has designed the 48th season with a bold artistic vision inspired by America's 250th anniversary. The season's two opening programs also celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, the orchestra's home, and the 40th anniversary of Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

Shelley leads Pacific Symphony through great masterpieces, beginning with **Mahler's Second Symphony**, and introduces new artists and works to elevate the internationally acclaimed orchestra to new heights. At the heart of the season is an exploration of **America250**—including Bernstein's Broadway, Stravinsky's musical innovations, Copland's Americana and more—both from the émigré perspective and that of U.S.-born composers, as well as a look at global influences on America's musical tapestry. As part of this America250 survey, Shelley leads John Adams' Pulitzer-Prize-winning opera, **Nixon in China**, as well as a two-week **Beethoven Revolution** Festival, offering audience members the unique opportunity to experience all nine of his symphonies chronologically.

Shelley has also curated a roster of exceptional guest conductors and soloists with whom he has worked throughout his career. With music that connects to the core of humanity, the 2026-27 season features composers who not only explore society's ideas, but imagine a better one, who ask life's biggest questions, and answer with hope.

"It is a profound honor to begin this chapter with Pacific Symphony, an orchestra of exceptional artistry and boundless spirit," says Shelley. "I am deeply inspired by the milestones that frame our first full season: America's 250th anniversary and the 200th anniversary of Beethoven's death. We'll examine the humanist ideals that galvanized Beethoven, shaped the Declaration of Independence, and defined America as we know it. We'll consider the core belief that the collective is extraordinary for the individual, the very reason why we enter a concert hall in the first place! Above all, we'll celebrate the artists who continue to propel America's classical evolution," he adds.

"From the very beginning, Alexander Shelley's energy, musical insight, and genuine connection with our musicians and community has been felt throughout the organization," says John Forsyte, President and CEO. "The 2026-27 season reflects his belief in music's power to bring people together, honoring great masterpieces, embracing bold ideas, and inviting audiences to experience music that is both uplifting and meaningful. This season rewards those who commit to the full journey—subscribers will experience the throughline, the momentum and the marquee moments that make this inaugural year unforgettable. We are excited to embark on this journey with him and look forward to the many ways his leadership will enrich our orchestra, our audiences, and the cultural life of Southern California."

"Pacific Symphony is deeply grateful to the Hal and Jeanette Segerstrom Family Foundation for its continued leadership and support of the Classical Series, which enables Alexander Shelley and our musicians to pursue ambitious, transformative programming," continues Forsyte. "We are equally grateful to the entire Segerstrom family and the many visionary donors whose generosity built—and continues to sustain—Segerstrom Center for the Arts, a world-class cultural home for Pacific Symphony and our fellow resident companies. Since moving into the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in 2006, its extraordinary acoustics have helped shape our artistic voice, allowing the orchestra to reach new levels of excellence. As we celebrate the concert hall's 20th anniversary alongside the Center's 40th anniversary, we are proud to honor this enduring partnership with two exceptional opening programs that reflect the power, beauty, and promise of classical music."

The 2026-27 Classical Series includes 12 subscription weeks, plus four Sunday matinees and six specials. This is a season to experience from start to finish—and subscriptions are the best way to secure the most sought-after programs, seats, and savings. For more information, visit pacificsymphony.org.

2026-27 HIGHLIGHTS AT A GLANCE

SPECIAL: OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION WITH JOSHUA BELL

Pacific Symphony launches the next chapter of its celebrated legacy with a special opening night event on September 24, 2026, featuring violinist **Joshua Bell**, one of the iconic American soloists on our time, in a dazzling celebration of 20 years of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall and 40 years of Segerstrom Center for the Arts. With a career spanning four decades, the GRAMMY® Award-winning violinist shines with Édouard Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole*, a dance-infused, virtuoso showcase for violin and orchestra.

Shelley's opening program kicks off the America250 celebration. Surrounded by vibrant American classics and contemporary voices, the evening pairs beloved showstoppers by Bernstein, Gershwin and Korngold with music by contemporary American composers Jessie Montgomery and Kevin Puts. Bursting with color, momentum, and celebration, the concert offers a thrilling first taste of the artistic scope and direction of Shelley's inaugural season, as every American composer represented will have larger works performed by Pacific Symphony later in the season.

SHELLEY INTERPRETS MAHLER'S SECOND SYMPHONY

Mahler's Second Symphony, "Resurrection," opens Pacific Symphony's classical subscription series, October 1-3, 2026. A work of vast scope and emotional intensity, it was Mahler's first symphony to integrate orchestral writing with voice and language. For this performance, Alexander Shelley leads the **Pacific Chorale**, soprano **Miah Persson**, and mezzo-soprano **Dame Sarah Connolly** through soaring melodies, dramatic climaxes, and a transcendent choral finale.

Mahler's lasting influence in building European tradition within the United States endures, shaped in part by his tenure as principal conductor of the Metropolitan Opera and later as music director of the New York Philharmonic in the early 20th century. His "Resurrection" is more than a showcase of orchestral and vocal brilliance; it is a work that speaks to the rebirth of self through an ideal, a meaningful reflection of the values that guided the Declaration of Independence, and a powerful statement at the start of Shelley's inaugural year.

Mahler's Second Symphony is also part of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall and 40th anniversary of Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

SYMPHONY AND THE SCREEN

Highlighting America's film music tradition, two of Shelley's programs feature melodies that have inspired, or been inspired by, the silver screen. The first takes place on October 22-24, 2026 as the orchestral magic of Dukas' *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (immortalized in Disney's *Fantasia*) is performed alongside Strauss' dramatic tone poem, *Also sprach Zarathustra* with its iconic sunrise fanfare featured in the opening of *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Virtuoso **James Ehnes** performs a sweeping Violin Concerto by celebrated film composer James Newton Howard.

The second film-centric program, May 20–22, 2027, celebrates music evoking the grandeur of space, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the release of the first *Star Wars* film. Shelley leads Holst's immersive orchestral suite, *The Planets*, whose influence can be heard in John Williams' legendary scores, as well as John Williams's *Star Wars* Suite for Orchestra. Making her Pacific Symphony debut, saxophonist **Jess Gillam** joins the orchestra for "Escapades" from Williams' score to *Catch Me If You Can*, completing an evening that fuses cinematic spectacle with symphonic power.

BEETHOVEN REVOLUTION FESTIVAL: A LIFETIME JOURNEY

A bucket-list festival for the ages, Pacific Symphony and Alexander Shelley present all nine Beethoven symphonies over two weeks—a rare opportunity to experience the full arc of the composer's genius in chronological order. All nine symphonies reveal the evolution of Beethoven's voice as his confidence, ambition, and expressive power grew. These are works that not only transformed music, but reshaped the very understanding of art, drama, and human expression.

Week One (January 28-30, 2027) opens with one-night only pairings of the youthful First and Second Symphonies, followed by the ground-breaking "Eroica" and the radiant Fourth—works that mark Beethoven's early expansion of symphonic form and imagination.

The festival also features the orchestral world premiere of Tama Matheson's *Beethoven: I Shall Hear in Heaven*, an immersive theatrical portrait of Beethoven—his genius, struggle with deafness, and defiant creative spirit—woven from excerpts of Beethoven's concertos, sonatas, and symphonies.

Week Two (February 4-9) highlights Beethoven's distinctive later symphonies, rich in personality and technical mastery: the famous Fifth paired with the Sixth ("Pastoral"), and the epic Seventh with the humorous Eighth. The monumental Ninth, which brings together four stellar vocal soloists and the Pacific Chorale in its grand "Ode to Joy" conclusion, is performed three times. The opening work, Jake Runestad's *A Silence Haunts Me*, is a monologue in Beethoven's voice for choir, based on the composer's writings about confronting his own hearing loss.

"I find the Beethoven cycle of symphonies to be all the more important in this celebratory year for America. As a child of the Enlightenment, Beethoven advanced humanist and democratic ideals, with a hopeful, forward-looking vision. His music is the music of the time of the Declaration of Independence," says Shelley. "For the orchestra, the Beethoven Revolution Festival is a marathon challenge of epic proportions that will deepen our connection and push us to our full artistic and technical capacity. For listeners, it offers a profound, life-changing encounter with the composer's heart and mind through his music," he adds.

SPECIAL: EMANUEL AX PLAYS BEETHOVEN

Legendary pianist **Emanuel Ax** also visits Pacific Symphony for a special concert on January 16, 2027, to perform Beethoven's poetic Piano Concerto No. 4. A multi-award winner and storied performer, known in part for his GRAMMY®-winning recordings with Yo-Yo Ma, he brings a lifetime of insight to one of Beethoven's most intimate masterworks. Of his performance, *The New York Times* wrote, "Emanuel Ax offers Beethoven playing of rare clarity, humanity, and profound insight." Shelley frames it with striking contrasts: the shimmering sound world of Samy Moussa's *Elysium*, Mozart's vibrant "Paris" Symphony, and the electrifying jolt of Unsuk Chin's *Subito con forza*.

SHELLEY CONDUCTS NIXON IN CHINA

Pacific Symphony's annual semi-staged opera tradition continues under the direction of Alexander Shelley and stage director Elkhanah Pulitzer on April 8, 10, and 13, 2027, featuring full costumes, props, dynamic digital imagery, and innovative set design. A cornerstone event of the season, this production brings audiences inside history with the immediacy of live theater and the sonic force of a full symphony orchestra.

This season, the orchestra presents John Adams' Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *Nixon in China*, a work that examines power, ambition, ceremony, and the intimate human moments behind historic headlines. The opera dramatizes the week that changed the world—President Nixon's groundbreaking visit to Beijing in 1972—and brings to life the tension, diplomacy, and political theater of that moment through Adams' richly layered, emotionally charged score.

Shelley leads Pacific Symphony and the Pacific Chorale in this modern masterpiece, blending orchestral virtuosity with dramatic storytelling. In partnership with Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, the production also offers historical context and immersive visuals, providing audiences with a deeper understanding of the historic events that inspired the opera.

SPOTLIGHTING RENOWNED GUEST CONDUCTORS AND ARTISTS

Blind since birth, pianist **Nobuyuki Tsujii** has forged an extraordinary connection with music—a spiritual intimacy with the piano that audiences describe as transcendent. Now living in New York City, the Japanese pianist makes his Pacific Symphony debut with Rachmaninoff's gorgeous and fiendishly difficult Third Piano Concerto, November 19-21, a high-voltage showcase of virtuosity. Evoking a world of brilliant musical color, Shelley draws out the orchestra's distinctive voices in Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra to open, for a program that highlights two pivotal composers of the 20th Century who spent their final years in the U.S.

German conductor **Ruth Reinhardt**, the newly appointed music director of the Rhode Island Philharmonic, makes her Pacific Symphony debut on December 3-5, 2026. She opens her program with another German's interpretation of American music, *American Prelude No. 1* by Detlev Glanert, which takes inspiration from Ives, Copland, and Bernstein. Reinhardt also leads the orchestra in Dvořák's luminous Sixth Symphony, performed by Pacific Symphony for the first

time. **Joyce Yang**, international piano sensation and local resident of Irvine, brings her artistry to Grieg's beloved Piano Concerto, with its sweeping chords and unforgettable melodies.

Conductor and impresario **Long Yu**, who *The New York Times* called "the most powerful figure in China's classical music scene," leads Rachmaninoff's *Symphonic Dances* on February 25–27, 2027. Maestro Yu is Artistic Director of the China Philharmonic Orchestra; Music Director of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra; Principal Guest Conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, co-director of Shanghai's Music in the Summer Air festival, and founder and Chair of the Artistic Committee of the Beijing Music Festival. The composer's final orchestral work is a powerful and richly textured score that blends haunting lyricism, rhythmic vitality, and moments of both nostalgia and triumph. Twenty-year-old pianist **Serena Wang** makes her Pacific Symphony debut for a performance of Qigang Chen's *Er Huang*, for Piano and Orchestra, bringing experience from her work with the China Philharmonic, China National Center for the Performing Arts Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic, among other international engagements.

Conductor **Markus Stenz** leads the orchestra in a program of bold colors and high drama, bookended by carnivals, on March 18-20, 2027. Berlioz's explosive *Roman Carnival* Overture leads to the breathtaking fireworks of Sibelius' Violin Concerto with guest violinist **Inmo Yang**. Born in South Korea, Yang is the first-prize winner of both the International Paganini and the Sibelius International Violin Competitions. Hailed by *The Boston Globe* for his "seamless technique and a tender warmth of tone," Yang has emerged as one of the most distinctive violinists of his time. Stravinsky's vivid *Petrushka* brings the carnival back with an immersive love triangle between a puppet, a ballerina, and her handsome suitor.

On April 29 - May 1, 2027, the soaring melodies of Tchaikovsky's virtuosic Piano Concerto No. 1 come alive at the hands as one of the current generation's most celebrated pianists makes his Pacific Symphony debut. **Aristo Sham** was the winner at the 2025 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, taking home both the gold medal and the audience award, where he was called "a card-carrying risk taker." In just two months' time, he was mentioned in more than 800 news articles, and his Cliburn performance videos were streamed 2 million times across 125 countries. **Joana Carneiro**, a renowned conductor in her native Portugal who is gaining demand across the globe, opens the concert with Copland's Suite from *Appalachian Spring*, which evokes the optimism and simplicity of rural America and features the iconic Shaker melody "Simple Gifts."

SEASON FINALE: AN AMERICAN IN PARIS

Gershwin's *An American in Paris* anchors this vibrant season finale on June 10-12, 2027, a joyful, jazz-inflected celebration bursting with color, motion, and Parisian flair. Leading to that exuberant close, soprano **Karen Slack** commands the stage in the West Coast premiere of the orchestral version of *African Queens*. The powerful new work shares the stories of seven great queens and warrior women from the African continent through arias composed by each member of the "Blacknificent 7" collective of Black contemporary composers: Jasmine Barnes, Damien

Geter, Jessie Montgomery, Shawn Okpebholo, Dave Ragland, Carlos Simon, and Joel Thompson.

African Queens originated as a composition for voice and piano. The orchestral version of *African Queens* was co-commissioned by the Naples Philharmonic and Pacific Symphony, under the direction of Shelley. Praised as "one of opera's strongest voices at present – both as a singer and a shaper of its culture" by *The Washington Post*, Slack has a voice of extraordinary beauty. The program also includes the luminous calm of Jennifer Higdon's *blue cathedral* and Ravel's *La valse*, a sumptuous, swirling dance that grows ever more intense and intoxicating.

SUNDAY MATINEE SERIES

The four-concert Sunday Matinee series offers audiences an intimate and lively exploration of the classics. Just 90 minutes long, these informal programs begin at 3 p.m. and provide a perfect introduction to classical music: Alexander Shelley conducts Dukas' *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* and Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra* on October 25, 2026 and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 on February 7, 2027, as part of the Beethoven Revolution Festival. Joana Carneiro leads Copland's Suite from *Appalachian Spring* on May 2, 2027 and Shelley leads Holst's *The Planets* on May 23, 2027.

PACIFIC SYMPHONY ANNUAL SPECIALS

HANDEL'S GLORIOUS MESSIAH

A work of enduring significance that continues to resonate with audiences of all generations, Handel's revered oratorio *Messiah* is celebrated for its intricate instrumental textures and the exuberant "Hallelujah" chorus. The performance on December 6, 2026 with Pacific Chorale offers a profound musical experience that encompasses joy, contemplation, and the spirit of renewal.

LUNAR NEW YEAR

Alexander Shelly carries on Pacific Symphony's Lunar New Year tradition on February 13, 2027 with a concert celebrating the Year of the Goat. This annual cross-cultural celebration unites Eastern and Western traditions in a vibrant display of music and dance, reflecting the rich tapestry of our diverse communities.

NOWRUZ: IRANIAN NEW YEAR

Pacific Symphony marks the occasion of Nowruz, the Iranian New Year, with a special concert on March 27, 2027, led by Alexander Shelley for the first time. Nowruz, which heralds the start of spring, is recognized as a time of renewal and a celebration of nature's rejuvenation. The Symphony's performance embraces this spirit of new beginnings and the shared values of diverse cultures through the universal language of music.

HOLIDAY ORGAN SPECTACULAR

Celebrate the season with the king of instruments on December 22, 2026. The performance brings a magnitude of musical splendors with renowned organist Todd Wilson and members of Pacific Symphony engaging the audience in a delightful mix of sacred and holiday music.

SUBSCRIPTION AND TICKET INFORMATION

Pacific Symphony's 2026-27 Classical Series subscriptions are now available, offering up to 25% savings on packages of 4 to 12 concerts. Subscribers also save 20% on additional tickets, enjoy easy exchanges, and receive exclusive discounts—the best value and the best access for this landmark inaugural season.

Many of the season's most anticipated performances—including special events—are available with priority seating through subscriptions. Subscriptions can be purchased or renewed online, by phone, mail, or in person, with an optional payment plan charging in installments through September.

For details, call Patron Services at (714) 755-5799 (Mon–Fri, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.) or visit PacificSymphony.org. Groups of 10+ can contact group sales at (714) 876-2391.

About Artistic and Music Director Designate Alexander Shelley

One of the foremost conductors of his generation, Alexander Shelley is “a natural communicator, both on and off the podium” (*The Daily Telegraph*). A passionate and articulate advocate for the role of music in society, Shelley has spearheaded multiple award-winning and ground-breaking projects, unlocking creativity in the next generation and bringing symphonic music to new audiences.

With a conducting technique described as “immaculate, everything crystal clear” (*Yorkshire Post*), and with a “precision, distinction and beauty of gesture not seen since Lorin Maazel” (*Le Devoir*), Shelley is known for the integrity of his interpretations and for his creative programming, having led over 50 major world premieres, highly praised cycles of Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms symphonies, and operas, ballets, and multimedia productions.

Shelley appears regularly across six continents with the world's finest soloists, including Emanuel Ax, Joshua Bell, Renée Fleming, Hilary Hahn, Thomas Hampson, Daniel Hope, Lang Lang, and Itzhak Perlman. He is a regular guest with renowned orchestras of Europe, the Americas, Asia and Australasia, including Leipzig's Gewandhaus Orchestra, the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande; the Helsinki, Hong Kong, Luxembourg, Malaysian, Oslo, Rotterdam, and Stockholm philharmonic orchestras; and the São Paulo, Houston, Seattle, Baltimore, Indianapolis, Montreal, Toronto, Munich, Singapore, Melbourne, Sydney, and New Zealand symphony orchestras.

In 2024, Shelley was appointed to become Pacific Symphony's third artistic leader, taking the title of Artistic and Music Director, beginning in the 2026-27 season. The 2025-26 season marked Shelley's 11th and final as Music Director of Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra (NACO). He has recently been appointed Principal Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra Ireland, beginning in 2026-27; this season, he assumes the position of Principal Conductor Designate, leading the orchestra at the National Concert Hall, Dublin. Since the 2024-25 season, Shelley has been the Artistic and Music Director of Artis-Naples, in Florida, where he provides artistic leadership for the Naples Philharmonic and oversees the entire

multidisciplinary arts organization. He has also served as Principal Associate Conductor of London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra since 2015.

To celebrate his 11-year tenure at NACO, Shelley led the orchestra in a semi-staged production of *Tosca*, featuring soprano Ailyn Pérez; Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5, "Emperor," with Lang Lang; Joshua Bell's *The Elements*, commissioned from five of today's leading American composers; Gershwin's Piano Concerto, with Hélène Grimaud; a Brahms and Schumann program featuring violinist James Ehnes; and the orchestra's first-ever performances of Mahler's Symphony No. 2, "Resurrection."

With the Naples Philharmonic, season highlights include *African Queens*, a powerful work for soprano and orchestra by seven American composers, sung by soprano Karen Slack; *Perú Negro* by Jimmy López, the composer's homage to his Afro-Peruvian heritage; the world premiere of a newly commissioned work by Raven Chacon, the first Native American to win a Pulitzer Prize for Music (2022); and Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra*.

Additional highlights this season include Shelley's debut with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, with James Ehnes giving the U.K. premiere of James Newton Howard's Violin Concerto No. 2. He also debuts with the Dortmunder Philharmoniker, with David Fray performing Schumann's Piano Concerto in A Minor.

During his tenure at NACO, Shelley's programming has been credited for turning the orchestra "almost overnight... into one of the more audacious orchestras in North America" (*Maclean's*). Together they have undertaken major tours of Canada, Europe, and to Carnegie Hall. In 2025, they embarked on a monumental tour, returning to Japan for the first time in 40 years and making their Republic of Korea debut. *Poema: Ad Astra*, the first volume of a NACO recording project pairing Strauss tone poems with contemporary works, was released in January 2025; the second volume is scheduled for release in fall 2025.

Shelley's operatic engagements have included productions with the Royal Danish Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, and Opéra National de Montpellier. His eight-year tenure as Chief Conductor of the Nürnberger Symphoniker, which concluded in 2017, was hailed as a golden era for the orchestra.

Born in London to concert pianists, Shelley studied cello and conducting in Germany and gained widespread attention when he was unanimously awarded first prize at the 2005 Leeds Conductors Competition, with the press describing him as "the most exciting and gifted young conductor to have taken this highly prestigious award."

About Pacific Symphony

The 2026-27 season marks the 48th anniversary for Pacific Symphony and the inaugural season for Alexander Shelley, who becomes the orchestra's third artistic leader with the title of Artistic and Music Director. The Symphony is ranked among the top orchestras in the U.S. by the League of American Orchestras and is the largest orchestra formed in the United States in the past 50 years.

With a purpose to lift the human spirit through the power of music, the Symphony is a cornerstone of the cultural landscape of Southern California, enriching lives and bringing communities together through creative and diverse programming. As the resident orchestra of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, the Symphony presents more than 100

concerts and events each year and a rich array of education and community engagement programs, reaching more than 300,000 residents of all ages.

Pacific Symphony features an expansive range of programming through the Classical Series, the beloved Pops Series led by Principal Pops Conductor Enrico Lopez-Yañez, SummerFest at the Great Park Live Amphitheater in Irvine, and engaging Family Musical Mornings concerts for young children and their families. Signature cultural concerts for Lunar New Year and Nowruz are joyful musical celebrations that promote understanding and appreciation of the arts from around the world—a priority for Pacific Symphony, which is dedicated to the power of music to unite and inspire. The Symphony in the Cities program brings free outdoor concerts and interactive musical activities to cities across Orange County, making live symphonic music accessible to all.

Founded in 1978, the Symphony was led for 35 years by Carl St.Clair, who was honored with the title of Music Director Laureate in the 2025-26 season. In this time, Pacific Symphony has gained national and international recognition, with recent highlights including a 2018 Carnegie Hall debut in celebration of composer Philip Glass; a five-city tour of China; and a PBS *Great Performances* broadcast of Peter Boyer's *Ellis Island: The Dream of America*. In 2024, Pacific Symphony released the world-premiere recording of *Fiat Lux*, a stirring new commission by composer Sir James MacMillan performed with long-time artistic partner Pacific Chorale. The Symphony has been recognized with multiple ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming and included among the country's five most innovative orchestras by the League of American Orchestras.

Pacific Symphony's education and community engagement programs have been recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts, expanding access to orchestral music and fostering a lifelong connection to the arts. Musicians partner with elementary schools to enhance music education programs through the Frieda Belinfante Class Act program. Arts-X-press is a summer arts immersion program for middle school students, and Heartstrings provides free tickets to the Symphony, music instruction, and customized music and wellness programs in partnership with local schools, nonprofits, and social service agencies.

Pacific Symphony also nurtures the next generation of musicians through its renowned youth ensembles, including the Pacific Symphony Youth Orchestra, Youth Wind Ensemble, Santiago Strings, and Youth Concert Band. These groups have toured internationally, earned prestigious awards, and provided young artists with opportunities to excel.

By combining artistic excellence with a commitment to education and accessibility, Pacific Symphony continues to enrich lives, foster new talent, and create meaningful connections throughout Southern California. Its innovative programs ensure music remains a vital part of the community's cultural fabric.

CALENDAR LISTINGS:

2026-27 HAL AND JEANETTE SEGERSTROM FAMILY FOUNDATION CLASSICAL SERIES

All concerts take place at the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall at Segerstrom Center for the Arts. Programs, artists, prices, dates, and availability are subject to change.

SPECIAL EVENT: OPENING NIGHT CELEBRATION VIOLIN VIRTUOSO JOSHUA BELL & ALEXANDER SHELLEY

September 24, 2026 at 8 p.m.

Alexander Shelley, conductor
Joshua Bell, violin

JESSIE MONTGOMERY: *Banner**
LALO: *Symphonie Espagnole*
KEVIN PUTS: "Earth" from *The Elements**
BERNSTEIN: Overture to *Candide*
TOWER: *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman*
PRICE: Andante Moderato*
KORNGOLD: *Kings Row* Suite*
BARTÓK: Romanian Folk Dances
GERSHWIN: Overture to *Girl Crazy**

A New Era Begins

GRAND OPENING: SHELLEY CONDUCTS MAHLER 2ND

October 1, 2 & 3, 2026 at 8 p.m.

Alexander Shelley, conductor
Miah Persson, soprano**
Dame Sarah Connolly, mezzo-soprano**
Pacific Chorale, Robert Istad, artistic director

MAHLER: Symphony No. 2, "Resurrection"

Symphony to the Screen

SHELLEY CONDUCTS SORCERER'S APPRENTICE AND STRAUSS

October 22, 23 & 24, 2026 at 8 p.m.

Matinee: October 25, 2026 at 3 p.m. (*Sorcerer's Apprentice* and *Also sprach Zarathustra* only)

Alexander Shelley, conductor
James Ehnes, violin

DUKAS: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*
JAMES NEWTON HOWARD: Violin Concerto No. 2
STRAUSS: *Also sprach Zarathustra*

Fire and Brilliance

TSUJII PLAYS RACHMANINOFF'S MIGHTY 3RD

November 19, 20 & 21, 2026 at 8 p.m.

Alexander Shelley, conductor
Nobuyuki Tsujii, piano**

BARTÓK: Concerto for Orchestra
RACHMANINOFF: Piano Concerto No. 3

Leading Women

HOLIDAY CLASSICS: GRIEG PIANO CONCERTO

December 3, 4 & 5, 2026 at 8 p.m.

Ruth Reinhardt, conductor**
Joyce Yang, piano

DETLEV GLANERT: *Three American Preludes*–Prelude 1*
GRIEG: Piano Concerto
DVOŘÁK: Symphony No. 6*

SPECIAL EVENT

EMANUEL AX PLAYS BEETHOVEN

January 16, 2027 at 8 p.m.

Alexander Shelley, conductor
Emanuel Ax, piano

SAMI MOUSSA: *Elysium**
MOZART: Symphony No. 31, “Paris”
UNSUK CHIN: *Subito con forza**
BEETHOVEN: Piano Concerto No. 4

BEETHOVEN REVOLUTION FESTIVAL [Week 1]

Alexander Shelley, conductor

THE YOUNG REVOLUTIONARY

January 28, 2027 at 8 p.m.

BEETHOVEN: Overture to *Coriolan*
BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 1
BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 2

HERO & INNOVATOR

January 29, 2027 at 8 p.m.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3, “Eroica”
BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 4

SPECIAL THEATRICAL EVENT – I SHALL HEAR IN HEAVEN

January 30, 2027 at 8 p.m.

Play written and performed by actor Tama Matheson: *Beethoven: I Shall Hear in Heaven**

BEETHOVEN REVOLUTION FESTIVAL [Week 2]

MIGHTY FIFTH & PASTORAL

February 4, 2027 at 8 p.m.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 5
BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 6, “Pastoral”

DANCE AND DELIGHT

February 5, 2027 at 8 p.m.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 7
BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 8

ODE TO JOY

February 6, 2027 at 8 p.m.

RUNESTAD: *A Silence Haunts Me*

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 9, "Choral"

February 7, 2027 at 3 p.m. (matinee)

RUNESTAD: *A Silence Haunts Me*

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 9, "Choral"

February 9, 2027 at 8 p.m.

RUNESTAD: *A Silence Haunts Me*

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 9, "Choral"

Memory and Longing

LONG YU CONDUCTS RACHMANINOFF

February 25, 26 & 27, 2027 at 8 p.m.

Long Yu, conductor**

Serena Wang, piano**

QIGANG CHEN: *Er Huang*, for Piano and Orchestra

RACHMANINOFF: *Symphonic Dances*

Virtuosity and Fantasy

YANG PLAYS SIBELIUS

March 18, 19 & 20, 2027 at 8 p.m.

Markus Stenz, conductor

Inmo Yang, violin**

BERLIOZ: *Roman Carnival* Overture

SIBELIUS: Violin Concerto

STRAVINSKY: *Petrushka*

The Week That Changed the World

SHELLEY CONDUCTS NIXON IN CHINA

April 8, 10 & 13, 2027 at 8PM

Alexander Shelley, conductor

Elkhanah Pulitzer, stage director

Pacific Chorale, Robert Istad, artistic director

Cast to be announced

JOHN ADAMS: *Nixon in China**

From Appalachia to Russia

TCHAIKOVSKY'S PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1

April 29 & 30, May 1, 2027 at 8 p.m.

May 2, 2027 at 3 p.m. (matinee) (*Suite from Appalachian Spring* only)

Joana Carneiro, conductor**

Aristo Sham, piano**

COPLAND: Suite from *Appalachian Spring*
TCHAIKOVSKY: Piano Concerto No. 1

Celestial Cinema

SHELLEY CONDUCTS JOHN WILLIAMS AND THE PLANETS

May 20, 21 & 22, 2027 at 8 p.m.

May 23, 2027 at 3 p.m. (matinee) (*The Planets* only)

Alexander Shelley, conductor
Jess Gillam, alto saxophone**
Women of the Pacific Chorale, Robert Istad, artistic director

JOHN WILLIAMS: *Star Wars* – Suite for Orchestra*
JOHN WILLIAMS: “Escapades” from *Catch Me If You Can**
HOLST: *The Planets*

Love and Dance

SHELLEY CONDUCTS AN AMERICAN IN PARIS

June 10, 11 & 12, 2027 at 8 p.m.

Alexander Shelley, conductor
Karen Slack, soprano

HIGDON: *blue cathedral*
VARIOUS: *African Queens* (West Coast Premiere)*
RAVEL: *La valse*
GERSHWIN: *An American in Paris*

OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS

HANDEL’S GLORIOUS MESSIAH

December 6, 2026 at 3 p.m.

Pacific Chorale, Robert Istad, artistic director

HANDEL: *Messiah*

HOLIDAY ORGAN SPECTACULAR

December 22, 2026

Todd Wilson, organ

Members of Pacific Symphony

LUNAR NEW YEAR

February 13, 2027 at 8 p.m.

Alexander Shelley, conductor

Programming and artists to be announced

NOWRUZ

March 27, 2027 at 8 p.m.

Alexander Shelley, conductor

Programming and artists to be announced

**The first performance by Pacific Symphony*

***Artist debut with Pacific Symphony*

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