

2024-25 Hal & Jeanette Segerstrom
Family Foundation Classical Series

PINES OF ROME

Preview Talk at 7 p.m.
KUSC midday host Alan Chapman
Thursday, Feb. 6, 2025 @ 8 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 7, 2025 @ 8 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 8, 2025 @ 8 p.m.

Carl St.Clair, conductor
Jeffrey Biegel, piano
Pacific Symphony

BERNSTEIN *Slava! A Political Overture*

**ADOLPHUS
HAILSTORK** Piano Concerto No. 3:
The way things really are—World Premiere
Jeffrey Biegel, piano

—INTERMISSION—

VIET CUONG *Marine Layer—World Premiere*

RESPIGHI *Pines of Rome*
The Pines of the Villa Borghese
Pines Near a Catacomb
The Pines of the Janiculum
The Pines of the Appian Way

The 2024-25 season piano soloists are generously
sponsored by The Michelle F. Rohé Fund

This concert is being recorded for broadcast
on Jul. 6, 2025 on Classical California KUSC.

Performance at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jeffrey Biegel, piano



In an age when many artists' fortunes begin with a meteoric ascent and quickly cool with the inexorable free-fall, pianist Jeffrey Biegel has managed to buck that trend, fashioning a career of steady success studded with concerts at major venues with major orchestras, a GRAMMY®-

winning recording, and more than 25 commissioned works by living composers.

His life takes its roots from age three, barely able to hear or speak, until corrected by surgery. The 'reverse Beethoven' phenomenon explains his lifelong commitment to music, having heard only vibrations in his formative years. The pandemic year of 2020 focused on Biegel composing original *Waltzes of Hope*, *Sonatina*, and *Three Reflections: JFK, RBG, and MLK* for solo piano, and for piano and orchestra, orchestrations by Harrison Sheckler. 2021 saw the world premieres of his *Reflection of Justice: An Ode to Ruth Bader Ginsburg* with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's *Remembering Ruth Bader Ginsburg* for mezzo-soprano, piano, and orchestra in tribute to the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, featuring mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves. Also, the world premiere of Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's *Shadows*, newly arranged for piano and seven players with the Idaho State Civic Symphony.

In 2022, he premiered Jim Stephenson's Piano Concerto, Daniel Perttu's *A Planets Odyssey* for piano and orchestra, Farhad Poupel's *The Legend of Bijan and Manijeh* for piano, orchestra, and chorus, his own concerto, *Three Reflections: Freedom (JFK), Justice (RBG) Equality (MLK)*, and Christopher Marshall's Thanksgiving Variations on "We Gather Together." For 2023, the 50-state Rhapsody National Initiative began with the Utah Symphony leading a three-season effort with Peter Boyer's *Rhapsody in Red, White & Blue*, with a world premiere recording of the new *Rhapsody* with Peter Boyer conducting the London Symphony Orchestra for a Naxos digital release earlier this year. The 2024-25 season foresees a new work for piano and orchestra by Adolphus Hailstork to be performed with Pacific Symphony, Carl St.Clair conducting (February 6-8, 2025), and GRAMMY-winning singer/songwriter, Melissa Manchester's *AWAKE* for piano and orchestra.

Considered the most prolific artist of his generation, Moravian College in Bethlehem, PA, conferred the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humane Letters upon Jeffrey Biegel in 2015, for his achievements in performance, recordings, chamber music, championing new music, and as a composer, arranger, and educator. In 2019, Kenneth Fuchs' Piano Concerto: *Spiritualist* with the London Symphony Orchestra led by JoAnn Falletta received a GRAMMY® Award for Best Classical Compendium, featuring Biegel as its soloist. In 2019, the first digital recordings were released on Biegel's Naturally Sharp label: *Cybrecital: An Historic Recording, A Pianist's Journey*, and the September 2021 release of George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* in the 1924 version with the Adrian Symphony Orchestra, Bruce Kiesling conducting.

Biegel created the first consortium of orchestras in 1998 for Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's *Millennium Fantasy* premiered with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in 2000, followed with Charles Strouse's *Concerto America* with the Boston Pops; Lowell Liebermann's Concerto No. 3 with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra; William Bolcom's *Prometheus* for piano, orchestra and chorus, with Pacific Symphony and the Pacific Chorale; Richard Danielpour's *Mirrors* with Pacific Symphony; Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's *Shadows* with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra; Jake Runestad's *Dreams of the Fallen* with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and Symphony Chorus of New Orleans; Lucas Richman's Piano Concerto: *In Truth* with the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra, recorded with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra; and Kenneth Fuchs' Piano Concerto: *Spiritualist* with the Springfield Symphony Orchestra (MA). He also premiered and recorded Giovanni Allevi's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra and commissioned Christopher Theofanidis's Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra with the Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra, the *Peanuts Concerto* by Dick Tunney, based on music by Vince Guaraldi, Jimmy Webb's Nocturne for Piano and Orchestra and, PDQ Bach's *Concerto for Simply Grand Piano and Orchestra* by Peter Schickele with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. Bringing new music to youth orchestras saw the world premiere of Daniel Dorff's Piano Concerto with the Etowah Youth Orchestra, conducted by Michael Gagliardo.

Jeffrey Biegel studied at The Juilliard School with Adele Marcus, herself a pupil of Josef Lhevinne and Artur Schnabel, and is currently on faculty at the Conservatory of Music at Brooklyn College.

PROGRAM NOTES

Leonard Bernstein

Slava! (A Political Overture)

Born: Aug. 25, 1918 in Lawrence, MA

Died: Oct. 14, 1990 in New York City

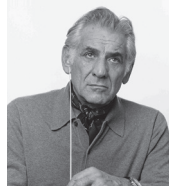
Composed: 1977

Premiered: Oct. 11, 1977 in Washington, D.C. by its dedicatee, Mstislav Rostropovich, inaugurating his first season as conductor of The National Symphony Orchestra

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: Feb. 2, 2019, in the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall with Carl St.Clair conducting

Instrumentation: three flutes including piccolo, three oboes including English horn, four clarinets including bass clarinet and e-flat clarinet, three bassoons including contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, percussion, piano, soprano sax, electric guitar, prerecorded tape, and strings

Approximate duration: 6 minutes



The idea of musical superstardom, which began with 19th-century classical soloists like Paganini and Liszt, matured with 20th-century celebrity conductors like Toscanini and Stokowski. But in the post-World War II era, Leonard Bernstein and his friend and colleague

Mstislav Rostropovich became exemplars of a different kind of musical fame, using their international standing to promote human values as well as music. For example, none of Bernstein's many triumphs is better remembered than that of Christmas Day 1989, when he conducted Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* at East Berlin's Schauspielhaus to celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall having conducted the same work in West Berlin the previous day.

Rostropovich, too, fought fearlessly throughout his life for democratic values and freedom of expression through music. His personal circumstances, which were far different from Bernstein's, made speaking out far riskier for him. But the values they shared as artists and as advocates for global human rights—Rostropovich as a political dissenter in Soviet Russia who defected to the United States, Bernstein as an American Jew—forged a bond between them that is evident in *Slava!*, Bernstein's joyful birthday tribute to Rostropovich that Bernstein composed in 1977.

Listeners who know their Russian music or who aced their social studies courses will recognize the word "slava" as both the Russian word for "glory" and as Rostropovich's nickname—indeed, as the common diminutive for names like Mstislav with the "slav" syllable. There is a traditional Russian folk melody for the word, and in this theme and others it recurs in music by Russian composers and others, notably in Beethoven's second Razumovsky quartet. But it is most familiar to operagoers from the thrilling coronation scene in Mussorgsky's *Boris Gudonov*, when a crowd of onlookers sings it over and over against a background of pealing bells. Small wonder that Rostropovich, a political and musical hero who also happened to be the greatest cellist of the latter half of the 20th century, was called Slava by everyone who knew him.

Bernstein's commission for this work marked Rostropovich's first season as music director of the National Symphony Orchestra in 1977, and Slava himself conducted the premiere. The assignment called for a "rousing new overture," and for it Bernstein borrowed thematic materials from his musical *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*, which had been introduced in Philadelphia during America's bicentennial celebrations. The show fared poorly there and on Broadway—one of the few Bernstein musicals that was not a smashing success—but the melodic materials he borrowed from it were apt for *Slava!*, both in mood and in their thematic relation to Washington politics (the National Symphony is based in Washington, D.C.).

Marked "fast and flamboyant," the overture opens with brass-heavy razzle-dazzle that modulates as if to quicken the pulse of a political crowd. In fact, a canon in 7/8 time merges with a parody of political oratory and eventually with a brief statement of the traditional Russian melody for the word "slava." As with all of Bernstein's overtures, *Slava!* packs superabundance of music into a brief piece; in this case, it all lasts less than five minutes.

Adolphus Hailstork

Piano Concerto No. 3: The way things really are

Born: 1941 in Rochester, NY

Composed: 2024

Premiered: This is a world premiere

Instrumentation: two flutes including piccolo, one oboe, one clarinet, one bassoon, two horns, three trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, percussion, and strings and solo piano

Approximate duration: 20 minutes



In his full name—Adolphus Cunningham Hailstork III—we can sense personal and cultural history going back generations. But to followers of American classical music, he's known more simply as Adolphus Hailstork, a distinguished composer and educator who has achieved success in a broad range of genres.

Hailstork's catalog includes works showcasing chorus, solo voice, solo piano, and organ, as well as chamber ensembles, band, and orchestra. His works have been performed by prestigious ensembles such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic, under the batons of leading conductors such as James DePreist, Daniel Barenboim, Kurt Masur, and Lorin Maazel. The composer's music has been recorded by a variety of ensembles for the Naxos and Albany Records labels.

Especially in recent years, Hailstork's compositions have been linked to topical themes. For example, *The World Called*, based on Rita Dove's poem *Testimonial*, for Soprano, Chorus and Orchestra, was commissioned by The Oratorio Society of Virginia and premiered in 2018, and *Still Holding On*, an orchestral work commissioned by The Los Angeles Philharmonic and premiered in February of the following year. Commissioned by the Harlem Chamber Players in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre, Hailstork's *Tulsa 1921* for Mezzo-Soprano, Harp, Percussion and Strings premiered on June 19th, 2021 in New York City. His Piano Concerto No. 3 bears a subtitle—*The Way Things Are*—that invites us to think about our place in the world as we listen. It was commissioned by Pacific Symphony.

Viet Cuong

Marine Layer

Born: 1990 in West Hills, CA

Composed: 2024

Premiered: This is a world premiere

Instrumentation: three flutes including piccolo, two oboes including English Horn, two clarinets including bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, two trombones including bass trombone, tuba, timpani, percussion, piano, and strings

Approximate duration: 15 minutes



The Vietnamese-American composer Viet Cuong is a composer-in-residence of Pacific Symphony. His “alluring” (*The New York Times*), “arresting” (*Gramophone*), “irresistible” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), and “exhilarating” (*Chicago Tribune*) music has been performed on six continents by musicians and ensembles such as the

New York Philharmonic, Eighth Blackbird, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Sō Percussion, Alarm Will Sound, Atlanta Symphony, Sandbox Percussion, Albany Symphony, PRISM Quartet, and Dallas Winds, among many others. Cuong’s music has been featured in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, National Gallery of Art, and the Library of Congress.

Cuong has earned numerous awards, including the Barlow Prize, William D. Revelli Prize, and ASCAP Morton Gould Composers Award. As Assistant Professor of Music Composition and Theory at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, he imparts his knowledge in composition, orchestration, and music theory. He holds degrees from Princeton University, the Curtis Institute of Music, and the Peabody Conservatory, studying under mentors like Jennifer Higdon and Kevin Puts. His commitment to fostering contemporary music is evident in recent works like *Vital Sines* and *Re(new)al*, showcasing his collaborative spirit.

Viet Cuong’s music is often whimsical and rich in surprises for listeners, who have described his style as “imaginative” and even “wildly inventive.” What might the world premiere of *Marine Layer* hold in store for us?

Michael Clive is a cultural reporter living in the Litchfield Hills of Connecticut. He is program annotator for Pacific Symphony and has written numerous articles for magazines and newspapers in the U.S. and U.K. and hundreds of program notes for orchestras and opera companies. Operahound.com

Michael Clive also wrote the Lunar New Year Program Notes on page 5.

Ottorino Respighi

Pines Of Rome, P. 141

Born: Jul. 9, 1879 in Bologna, Italy

Died: Apr. 18, 1936 in Rome

Composed: 1924

Premiered: Dec. 14, 1924 in Rome by the Augusteo Orchestra conducted by Bernardino Molinari

Most recent Pacific Symphony performance: Sep. 24, 2016, in the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall with Carl St.Clair conducting

Instrumentation: three flutes including piccolo, three oboes including English horn, three clarinets including bass clarinet, three bassoons including contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, celesta, piano, organ, two soprano buccine, two tenor buccine, two bass buccine, and strings

Approximate duration: 23 minutes



Born in 1879, the Bolognese master Ottorino Respighi lived most of his life in the 20th century (he died in 1936). But in the charm and tonal elegance of his music we can hear 19th- and 20th-century esthetics colored by his infatuation with earlier days: music of the late Renaissance and early Baroque periods, from the 16th

through the 18th centuries. Respighi’s music is graceful, courtly and opulent; it often seems to iridesce with shifting colors. The rhythms are whirling or stately. The sound beguiles us like an antique music box.

Respighi began his career as a violinist and violist, studying first with his father and then at the Liceo Musicale in Bologna, but historical and composition studies were also included in his curriculum. After graduating in 1899, he became principal violist in the orchestra of the Russian Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg. There he studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov, one of the great masters of orchestral color, whose influence can be heard in all of Respighi’s most popular works. Returning to Italy, he became first violinist in the Mugellini Quintet, but devoted himself mainly to composing from 1909 onward.

The Pines of Rome is the second of Respighi’s three most popular orchestral suites, which also include *The Fountains of Rome* and *Roman Festivals*. All three showcase his gift for creating music that seems vividly and specifically visual, a goal sought by many of the Baroque composers he so admired. In the first movement of *The Pines*, we are treated to a view of the sumptuous Villa Borghese, where rambunctious children are playing and soldiers are marching amid the pines. Next we are transported to a subterranean catacomb in Campagna, with its eerie vaults and priestly chanting deftly evoked by low orchestral voicing, organ and trombones. In the third movement, the nocturnal feeling is accented by the sound of a nightingale among the pines of Janiculum Hill.

As Respighi’s Roman travelogue progresses, we realize that not only has he transported us through the city of Rome, but through a day as well: starting with children at play on a sunlit afternoon, through the night, and finally to the Via Appia, where *The Pines of Rome* ends in the brilliance of a Roman sunrise.