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## **Sarasota Orchestra December Concerts Celebrate American Voices and Holiday Cheer**

**SARASOTA, FL – November 15, 2021** – Sarasota Orchestra’s December programs include its annual holiday-themed Great Escapes and its second Masterworks of the season, plus chamber music and the next installment of Discover Mozart.

### **Great Escapes 2: Holiday Lights**

Sarasota Orchestra’s classic holiday tradition offers regular concert-goers and newcomers alike the chance to savor the joy of the season through music. Broadway conductor William Waldrop leads the Orchestra in a program of seasonal favorites, including “Feliz Navidad,” *Festive Sounds of Hanukkah*, and *Christmas at the Movies*.

William Waldrop recently finished a highly celebrated run as Music Director and Conductor of the Broadway revival of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Cats* at the Neil Simon Theatre in New York City. He has conducted productions of Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera* in Las Vegas, Los Angeles and Pittsburgh (National Tour). In 2014 Waldrop completed a 30-city tour as the Music Director and Conductor of the revival of *Evita*. His most recent symphonic engagements include concerts with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, The Florida Orchestra, the Tucson Symphony Orchestra and the Long Beach Symphony. Equally comfortable on the podium with the orchestra on stage or conducting from the pit, Maestro Waldrop has been hailed for his “dynamic conducting” and has been praised in cities all over the U.S. and abroad.

Sarasota Orchestra's Great Escapes series programs feature a mix of light classics and popular favorites. In this series, conductors share stories and commentary throughout each performance.

***When/Where:***

December 1 | 5:30pm | Holley Hall

December 2 | 7:30pm | Holley Hall

December 3 | 5:30pm | Holley Hall

December 4 | 8:00pm | Holley Hall

December 5 | 4:00pm | Holley Hall

***How:*** Tickets from \$42, available at [www.SarasotaOrchestra.org](http://www.SarasotaOrchestra.org) or (941) 953-3434

**Masterworks 2: American Voices**

Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring* is the cornerstone of this Sarasota Orchestra program featuring new works and treasured classics. The program opens with a work written by guest conductor Teddy Abrams – his Overture in Sonata Form. Pianist Conrad Tao solos in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1, and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Ellen Reid's *Petrichor* invites listeners into an immersive soundscape.

Teddy Abrams is the widely-acclaimed Music Director of the Louisville Orchestra and Music Director and Conductor of the Britt Orchestra, as well as an established pianist, clarinetist, and composer. An advocate for the power of music, Abrams has fostered interdisciplinary collaborations with organizations including the Louisville Ballet, the Center for Interfaith Relations, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Speed Art Museum, and the Folger Shakespeare Library. Recent guest conducting highlights include engagements with the San Francisco, Houston and Vancouver Symphonies and at the Kennedy Center. He has a longstanding relationship with the Indianapolis Symphony, and recently conducted them with Time for Three for a PBS special. He served as Assistant Conductor of the Detroit Symphony from 2012-2014.

Soloist Conrad Tao has appeared worldwide as a pianist and composer, and has been dubbed a musician of "probing intellect and open-hearted vision" by *The New York Times*, who also cited him "one of five classical music faces to watch" in the 2018-19 season. He made his Los Angeles Philharmonic debut performing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1, which he will perform on this program, and has appeared with such prestigious orchestras as The Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and Boston Symphony. Tao is a recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, and was named a Gilmore Young Artist—an honor awarded every two years highlighting the most promising American pianists of the new generation.

**When/Where:**

December 10 | 8:00pm | Van Wezel

December 11 | 8:00pm | Van Wezel

December 12 | 2:30pm | Van Wezel

**How:** Tickets from \$35, available at [www.SarasotaOrchestra.org](http://www.SarasotaOrchestra.org) or (941) 953-3434

**Chamber Soirée 4: Sarasota String Quartet**

Sarasota String Quartet presents a selection of works intended to display the unlimited potential of these four instruments. Friedrich Schiller's poem "The Gods of Greece" inspires the collection of works on the program. In Schubert's "Rosamunde" Quartet, the composer quotes himself, sampling the art song he originally based on Schiller's verse. Mozart's String Quartet No. 14, nicknamed "Spring," is the first of six quartets he dedicated to Haydn, who had crystallized the form and fashion of the Classical string quartet with 68 of his own. The architecture and landscaping at the Dumbarton Oaks estate in Washington, D.C. sparked *Plan & Elevation* by Pulitzer Prize-winning American composer Caroline Shaw. The work is a reimagination of the string quartet's potential and a mark of Shaw's unique voice as one of today's most celebrated young composers.

In collaboration with Florida Studio Theatre, the program opens with a dramatic reading of Schiller's "The Gods of Greece" by actor Kim Crow.

**When:** December 19, 4:00pm

**Where:** Holley Hall

**How:** Tickets from \$38, available at [www.SarasotaOrchestra.org](http://www.SarasotaOrchestra.org) or (941) 953-3434

**Discover Mozart 2: Winter Dreams**

In the second installment of Sarasota Orchestra's Discover Mozart series, Mozart's "Paris" Symphony is one of several familiar works in a program the Orchestra promises will rejuvenate and uplift. Led by guest conductor Sameer Patel, the program of shorter works for chamber orchestra includes Debussy's impressionist Petite Suite along with scenes from Respighi's "Adoration of the Magi." Up-and-coming violinist Geneva Lewis joins for Massenet's "Méditation" from *Thaïs* and the icy "Winter" concerto from Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*.

Sameer Patel serves as Associate Conductor of the Sun Valley Music Festival and recently concluded an acclaimed tenure as Associate Conductor of the San Diego Symphony. Recent performances include Puccini's *Tosca* with Houston's Opera in the Heights, as well as

concerts with the orchestras of Toronto, St. Louis, Detroit, New Jersey, Phoenix, Knoxville, Naples and Jacksonville. He has also appeared with the National Symphony Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the Chicago Sinfonietta. As the product of public school music education, Patel dedicates time in his schedule each season to working with youth orchestras and All-State orchestras around the country. Patel's work has led to recognition from the Solti Foundation U.S., which granted him three consecutive Career Assistance Awards.

New Zealand-born violinist Geneva Lewis is the recipient of a 2021 Avery Fisher Career Grant and winner of the Grand Prize at the 2020 Concert Artists Guild Victor Elmaleh Competition. Other recent accolades include being named a Finalist at the 2018 Naumburg Competition and a Performance Today Young Artist in Residence. Lewis is currently in the Artist Diploma program as the recipient of the Charlotte F. Rabb Presidential Scholarship at the New England Conservatory studying with Miriam Fried. She has collaborated with such acclaimed artists as Kim Kashkashian, Ida Kavafian, Mitsuko Uchida, and the Borromeo String Quartet, among others. She is also a regular participant of the Marlboro Music Festival.

**When:** December 22, 7:30pm

**Where:** Sarasota Opera House

**How:** Tickets from \$27, available at [www.SarasotaOrchestra.org](http://www.SarasotaOrchestra.org) or (941) 953-3434

### **About Sarasota Orchestra:**

Since 1949, Sarasota Orchestra has inspired and entertained music-lovers across the region and visitors from around the world. As the oldest continuing orchestra in the state of Florida, each year the 76-member Orchestra performs more than 100 classical, pops, chamber music, and community outreach concerts. Sarasota Orchestra's acclaimed music education program includes the Sarasota Youth Orchestras, established in 1959. Sarasota Orchestra is also the parent program of the world-renowned Sarasota Music Festival, founded in 1965. For further information, please visit [www.SarasotaOrchestra.org](http://www.SarasotaOrchestra.org).

### **Images Available:**

- High-resolution photography is available at [www.sarasotaorchestra.org/download](http://www.sarasotaorchestra.org/download)

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