

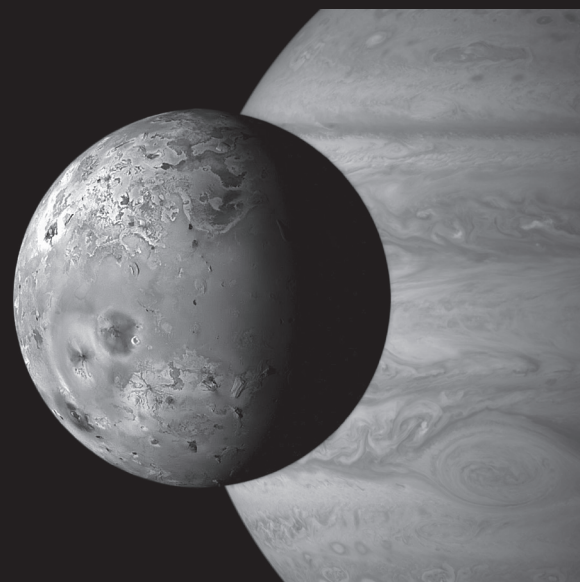
PROGRAM

ANNA CLYNE **PIVOT**

BRUCH **Scottish Fantasy, Op. 46**
I. Prelude: Grave.
Adagio cantabile
II. Allegro
III. Andante sostenuto
IV. Finale: Allegro guerriero
Stefan Jackiw, violin

- INTERMISSION -

HOLST **The Planets, Op.32**
Mars, the Bringer of War
Venus, the Bringer of Peace
Mercury, the Winged Messenger
Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity
Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age
Uranus, the Magician
Neptune, the Mystic



2022-23 Hal & Jeanette Segerstrom
Family Foundation Classical Series

THE PLANETS

Preview Talk with Alan Chapman @ 7 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 17 @ 8 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 18 @ 8 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 19 @ 8 p.m.

Karen Kamensek, conductor

Stefan Jackiw, violin

Women of Pacific Chorale

Robert Istad, artistic director

Visuals by Adrian Wyard

Pacific Symphony

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COSTA MESA
—
TRIBUTE PORTFOLIO

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RADIO STATION



**This concert is being recorded for broadcast on
January 22 at 8 p.m. on Classical KUSC.**

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

ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR



Grammy® Award-winning conductor Karen Kamensek's expansive artistry coupled with her deep commitment for championing composers of the 20th and 21st century is reflected in her work in both the opera house and on the concert stage. Recently, she

made a triumphant return to the Metropolitan Opera to lead the Olivier Award-winning production of Glass' *Akhnatén*—for which she won a 2022 GRAMMY®—and was asked to step in at the last minute to conduct the company's production of Verdi's *Rigoletto* to much critical acclaim. Her ability to adroitly and simultaneously straddle this diverse repertoire is a testament to her remarkable versatility as a musician.

Kamensek's 2022–23 season is one of no less than 10 debuts and several high-profile and welcome returns with a wide range of repertoire, including numerous world premieres by some of today's leading musical voices. In August, she made her debut with the Norwegian Opera and Ballet leading Bernstein's *Wonderful Town*. In September, she returned to the BBC *Proms*, this time with the English National Opera Orchestra, for a unique project that combines music, dance, theatre, video, audio soundscapes, and haute couture at Printworks London. Works by Handel and Philip Glass collide in a spectacle conceived by counter-tenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, which includes a world premiere by Philip Glass. Also in September, Karen made her debut with the Calgary Philharmonic conducting a program that includes works by Debussy, Moussa, and Scriabin. The world premiere of Geoffrey Gordon's *Eolian*, A Concerto for Harp and Orchestra with harpist Eline Groslot is on tap for her debut with the Brussels in November. The program also includes works by Pépin, Glass, and Debussy. Her debut with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in November will be punctuated by the world premiere of a Flute Concerto by Vivian Fung. Anna Clyne's *PIVOT* and Holst's *The Planets* bookend a program for her debut with the Pacific Symphony in November. She will lead Orchestre national d'Île-de-France for the first time in December in a program that includes arias and duets from Offenbach's *La Périchole*, *La Grande-Duchesse de Gérolstein*, and *La Vie Parisienne* with soprano Anäik Morel and tenor Loïc Félix. She begins 2023 with her first appearance with the London Philharmonic Orchestra at Royal Festival Hall in London in January with an eclectic program that includes the world premiere of *The Peacock Pavane* by David Bruce. She brings January to a close with her debut with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin at the Ultraschall Festival, for a program featuring York Höller's Concerto for Cello, Piano and Orchestra with cellist Marie-Elisabeth Hecker and pianist Martin Helmchen. Her final debut of the season is with the Minnesota Opera in May when she leads the company in a production of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, in collaboration with stage director Keturah Stickann.

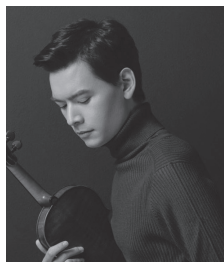
Return appearances include the Tiroler Symphonieorchester Innsbruck in January, as well the English National Opera for a revival of Glass' *Akhnatén*—the 2017 Olivier Award-winning production she first conducted with that company in March 2016.

Kamensek served as the Music Director of the Staatsoper Hannover from 2011–2016. She has also served as the 1st Kapellmeister at the Volksoper Wien (2000–2002), Music Director of the Theater Freiburg (2003–2006), Interim Music Director at the Slovenian National Theatre in Maribor (2007–2008), and Associate Music Director at the Staatsoper Hamburg (2008–2011).

Frequently in demand as a guest conductor with many of today's most prominent opera companies and orchestras, Ms. Kamensek's recent opera highlights include her debut and return performances with the English National Opera in Glass' *Akhnatén* and *Satyagraha*; her debut and return performances at the Metropolitan Opera of Glass' *Akhnatén* and Verdi's *Rigoletto*; her debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*; her debut with the San Francisco Opera conducting a new production of Floyd's *Susannah*; and her debut with the Royal Swedish Opera leading Victoria Borisova-Ollas' *Dracula*. Additionally, she made her debut with the Opéra National du Rhin in the world premiere of Glass ballet *Alice* choreographed by Amir Hosseinpour and Johnathan Lunn.

Recent orchestral highlights include a focus on living-composer Thea Musgrave for Kamensek's debut with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic as part of their highly-lauded Composer Festival; a live-to-film performance of Miloš Forman's iconic Oscar-winning film, *Amadeus*, marked her debut with the Oslo Philharmonic; and performances of Philip Glass/Ravi Shankar's collaboration *Passages* with master sitar player, Anoushka Shankar, outlined her first performances leading the Britten Symphonia in the Royal Albert Hall as part of the BBC *Proms*, as well as with the Orchestre Chambre de Paris in the Paris Philharmonie. Kamensek regularly collaborates with singers, directors, and instrumentalists from across the globe. She has worked with many renowned singers, including Joseph Calleja, J'Nai Bridges, Anthony Roth Costanzo, Andrzej Dobber, Elza van den Heever, Brandon Jovanovich, Thomas Johannes Mayer, Patricia Racette, Stuart Skelton and Klaus Florian Vogt. She has partnered with such groundbreaking directors as Guy Joosten, Harry Kupfer, Uwe Eric Laufenberg, Phelim McDermott, and Olivier Tambosi. She has led performances featuring critically-acclaimed instrumentalists such as Michael Barenboim, Gautier Capuçon, Renaud Capuçon, David Aaron Carpenter, Lynn Harrell, Louis Lortie, Olli Mustonen, Benjamin Schmid, and the "Jimi Hendrix of the bagpipes", Carlos Nuñez.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Stefan Jackiw is one of America's foremost violinists, captivating audiences with playing that combines poetry and purity with an impeccable technique. Hailed for playing of "uncommon musical substance" that is "striking for its intelligence and sensitivity" (*Boston Globe*), Jackiw has

appeared as soloist with the Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco symphony orchestras, among others.

In Summer 2021, Jackiw returned to the Cleveland Orchestra performing Prokofiev 2 with Rafael Payare, the Boston Symphony performing Mozart Concerto No. 5 with Alan Gilbert, and the Aspen Music Festival performing the Beethoven Triple Concerto, alongside Alisa Weilerstein, and Inon Barnatan. In the 2021-2022 season, he will premiere a new violin concerto by Conrad Tao with the Atlanta Symphony and the Baltimore Symphony; he will also return to the Indianapolis Symphony to perform the Korngold Concerto, and to the Oregon Symphony with the Schumann Concerto. In Europe, he will perform with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra and Alan Gilbert, and with Orchestre National de Lyon under Nikolaj Znaider.

Before the outbreak of COVID-19, Jackiw was scheduled to appear with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Oslo Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and Antwerp Symphony, among others. He also recently performed with the Helsinki Philharmonic, Bournemouth Symphony, RTE Dublin, and Baltimore and San Diego Symphonies. In July 2020, he launched Stefan's Sessions, a virtual masterclass series exploring major works with up-and-coming violinists. This free online series has reached thousands of viewers.

Jackiw tours frequently with his musical partners, pianist Conrad Tao and cellist Jay Campbell, as part of the Junction Trio. He also enjoys collaborating with pianist Jeremy Denk with whom he has toured the complete Ives Violin Sonatas, which the pair recorded for future release on Nonesuch Records. He also recently recorded Beethoven's Triple Concerto with Inon Barnatan, Alisa Weilerstein, Alan Gilbert and Academy St. Martin in the Fields.

Highlights of recent seasons include his debut at The Cleveland Orchestra's Blossom Music Festival with Juraj Valcuha, with whom he also reunited for performances in Dallas, Detroit, and Luxembourg; performances of Prokofiev's Second Violin Concerto at Carnegie Hall with Mikhail Pletnev, as part of a multi-city tour with the Russian National Orchestra; as well as performances with the St. Louis Symphony under Nicholas McGegan, the Minnesota Orchestra under Ilyich Rivas, the Rotterdam Philharmonic under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, the Indianapolis Symphony under Krzysztof Urbanski, and the Pittsburgh Symphony under Juraj Valčuha. He also gave the world premiere of

American composer David Fulmer's Violin Concerto No. 2 "Jubilant Arcs", written for him and commissioned by the Heidelberg Festival with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie under Matthias Pintscher. Further afield, Jackiw has appeared with the Tokyo Symphony at Suntory Hall under the direction of Krzysztof Urbanski, and the Seoul Philharmonic under Mario Venzago. He has also toured Korea, playing chamber music with Gidon Kremer and Kremerata Baltica, and toured with the Australian Chamber Orchestra play-directing Mendelssohn.

Jackiw has performed in numerous major festivals and concert halls around the world, including the Aspen Music Festival, Ravinia Festival, Caramoor International Music Festival, Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, New York's Mostly Mozart Festival, the Philharmonie de Paris, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, the Celebrity Series of Boston, and the Washington Performing Arts Society. Born to physicist parents of Korean and German descent, Stefan Jackiw began playing the violin at the age of four. His teachers have included Zinaida Gilels, Michèle Auclair, and Donald Weilerstein. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University, as well as an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory, and is the recipient of a prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant. Jackiw plays a violin made in 1750 in Milan by G.B. Guadagnini, on generous loan from a private collection. He lives in New York City.



Women of Pacific Chorale. Founded in 1968, PACIFIC CHORALE is internationally recognized for exceptional artistic expression, stimulating American-focused programming, and influential education programs. Pacific Chorale presents a substantial performance season of its own at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts and is sought regularly to perform with the nation's leading symphonies. Under the inspired guidance of Artistic Director John Alexander, Pacific Chorale has infused an Old World art form with California's hallmark innovation and cultural independence. Pacific Chorale is comprised of 180 professional and volunteer singers. In addition to its long-standing partnership with Pacific Symphony, the Chorale has performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Disney Hall on numerous occasions. Other noted collaborations include the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, the Boston Symphony, the National Symphony, and the Long Beach, Pasadena, Riverside, and San Diego symphonies. John Alexander and the Chorale have toured extensively in Europe, South America, and Asia.

Pacific Chorale, the seventh largest-budgeted chorus in the United States, has received numerous awards, including Chorus America's prestigious "Margaret Hillis Achievement Award for Choral Excellence" and the first national "Educational Outreach Award." Most recently, Pacific Chorale received the 2005 ASCAP Chorus America Alice Parker Award for adventurous programming.

Pacific Chorale appears in an average of 30 performances annually, which are heard by nearly 40,000 audience members. The Chorale's reach is extended through radio broadcasts of its concerts on KMZT, 105.1 FM in Los Angeles. Pacific Chorale's outstanding performances can be heard on seven CDs; their newest recording, *Christmas Time Is Here*, was recently released on the Gothic Records label



Robert Istad is Artistic Director of Pacific Chorale.

Mr. Istad regularly conducts and collaborates with Pacific Chorale, Pacific Symphony Orchestra, Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, Sony Classical Records, Yarlung Records, Berkshire Choral International, and Long Beach

Symphony Orchestra. Pacific Chorale under his leadership can be heard on two forthcoming recordings: "Ecstasies Above: The Music of Tarik O'Regan" on Yarlung Records (2020), and "Mahler's Eighth Symphony" with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Gustavo Dudamel on Deutsche Grammophon (2020).

Istad has prepared choruses for a number of America's finest conductors and orchestras, including: Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Carl St.Clair and the Pacific Symphony Orchestra, as well as conductors Esa-Pekka Salonen, John Mauceri, Keith Lockhart, Nicholas McGegan, Vasily Sinaisky, Sir Andrew Davis, Bramwell Tovey, John Williams, Eugene Kohn, Giancarlo Guerrero, Marin Alsop, George Fenton, and Robert Moody. Istad is also Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at California State University, Fullerton. He was recognized as CSUF's 2016 Outstanding Professor of the Year. At CSU Fullerton, Istad conducts the University Singers and manages a large graduate conducting program in addition to teaching courses in conducting, performance practice and literature. Recently, he and the University Singers performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Pacific Symphony Orchestra, Andrea Bocelli, Kathleen Battle, recorded albums with Yarlung Records and with composer John Williams and Sony Classical.

He and his singers performed a concert of Tarik O'Regan's music for Distinguished Concerts International New York at Carnegie Hall in November 2015. They have performed at numerous regional and national ACDA conferences including the 2018 ACDA Western Division Conference and 2013 ACDA National Conference in Dallas, Texas. They

also performed for the 2013 National Collegiate Choral Organization National Conference in Charleston, SC. Istad and the CSUF University Singers have performed all over the world, including a 2017 performance in Russia's famous Glinka Cappella, a 2015 residency and performances in Paris, France, engagements at the 2012 Ottobeuren Festival of Music in Germany, the 2012 Eingen Festival of music in Germany, a 2010 performance for UNESCO in Pisa, Italy, and in 2008 at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, Hungary.

Istad is former Artistic Director of Long Beach Camerata Singers and Long Beach Bach Festival. Under his leadership, Long Beach Camerata Singers became recognized as one of the leading arts organizations of the Long Beach Performing Arts Center, created a performing partnership with Long Beach Symphony Orchestra and Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, as well as performed with Pacific Symphony Orchestra, and Long Beach Opera. Istad received his Bachelor of Arts degree in music from Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, his Master of Music degree in choral conducting from California State University, Fullerton and his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral music at the University of Southern California. He studied conducting with Dr. William Dehning, John Alexander and Dr. Jon Hurty.

Istad is Vice-President of the California Choral Director's Association, on the Executive Board of Directors of Chorus America, serves as Dean of Chorus America's Academy for Conductors, and is in demand as an adjudicator, guest conductor, speaker and clinician throughout the nation.



Adrian M Wyard is a Seattle-based visual artist, and former designer and program manager at Microsoft.

He has over 20 years experience working in digital media, including computer graphics, photography and videography, as well as software design. Wyard also has a Master's degree in the

history of science from Oxford University, and has been a longtime appreciator of classical music. For larger projects numerous world-class collaborators play key roles, including animators, illustrators, photographers, programmers, and 3D artists.

For more information please see: www.visuals-live.com and www.facebook.com/adrian.wyart.art

PROGRAM NOTES

Anna Clyne

PIVOT for String Quartet and Orchestra

Born: 1980, London, UK

Composed: 2021

Premiered: Aug. 7, 2021 at the Edinburgh International Festival with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dalia Stasevska

Most recent Pacific Symphony

performance: This is a Pacific Symphony premiere

Instrumentation: solo string quintet, two flutes including piccolo, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns, one trumpet, one trombone, and strings

Estimated duration: Approx. 5 minutes



Described as a “composer of uncommon gifts and unusual methods” in a *New York Times* profile and as “fearless” by NPR, GRAMMY-nominated Anna Clyne is one of the most in-demand composers today, working with orchestras, choreographers, filmmakers, and visual artists around the world. Born in London, Clyne demonstrated her musical gifts early and was composing by age 11. After earning a first-class Bachelor of Music degree with honors at the University of Edinburgh, she studied at the Manhattan School of Music in New York. In recent years she has served as composer-in-residence with the Baltimore and Chicago Symphony orchestras, L’Orchestre national d’Île-de-France, and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, as well as currently with the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra. Her music has made her a citizen of the world.

Clyne has executed commissions for major international arts institutions including the Barbican, Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, Los Angeles Philharmonic, MoMA, Philharmonie de Paris, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, San Francisco Ballet, and the Sydney Opera House. Her music has opened the Edinburgh International Festival, The Last Night of the Proms, and the New York Philharmonic’s 2021–2022 season. She has collaborated on creative projects across the music industry, including *Between the Rooms*, a film with choreographer Kim Brandstrup and LA Opera, as well as the *Nico Project* at the Manchester International Festival, a stage work about pop icon Nico’s life, and her music has been programmed by artists including Björk.

During its inaugural year in 2021, *PIVOT* was performed both in Edinburgh and in St. Louis, where one radio commentator noted that “it pivots from one lively tune to another while always sounding distinctly Celtic.” In a composer’s note on her website, Clyne states:

PIVOT is inspired by my experiences at the Edinburgh Festival where I enjoyed an array of fantastic performances across the arts. It is this variety that I have tried to capture in PIVOT which, as the title suggests, pivots from one experience to another. The PIVOT is also a former name of the 200-year-old folk music venue and pub in Edinburgh, The Royal Oak.

PIVOT quotes fragments of The Flowers of Edinburgh, a traditional fiddle tune of eighteenth century Scottish lineage that is also prominent in American fiddle music and thus bridges between Edinburgh and St. Louis, where this music was premiered. Thank you to Aidan O’Rourke for his guidance on folk fiddle bowings and ornaments, which are incorporated into PIVOT.

Max Bruch

Scottish Fantasy

Born: Jan. 6, 1838, Cologne, Germany

Died: Oct. 2, 1920, Friedenau, Berlin, Germany

Composed: Winter of 1879 to 1880

Premiered: February 22, 1881, in Liverpool, with the composer conducting

Most recent Pacific Symphony

performance: February 4, 2017.

Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall. David Danzmayr conducting

Instrumentation: solo violin, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four French horns, two trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, and strings

Estimated duration: Approx. 30 minutes



Max Bruch’s violin music has everything that Romantic and modern audiences could ask for in a classic concerto: singing lines, passionate phrasing, extreme dynamics, overarching drama, double- and triple-stops. But Bruch’s popularity did not equate with success during his lifetime; his first concerto seemed almost cursed by its own popularity. He composed it when he was 28, more than a decade before the *Scottish Fantasy*, and found both listeners and musicians clamoring for it to the almost total exclusion of his later compositions, which boast the same qualities.

“Nothing compares to the laziness, stupidity and dullness of many German violinists,” he wrote to his publisher. “Every fortnight another one comes to me wanting to play the First Concerto; I have now become rude, and tell them: ‘I cannot listen to this concerto anymore—did I perhaps write just one? Go away, and play my other concertos, which are just as good, if not better.’” That phrase “other concertos” references his *Scottish Fantasy*, which has all the breadth and virtuosity of a concerto for violin, though it is more rhapsodic in form.

Always an admirer of great violin playing, Bruch had been lavish in praising the Spanish virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate, whom he met in 1871 when returning from a trip to Switzerland. In 1877, when Bruch conducted Sarasate in his first violin concerto, the public’s response—and, more importantly, Bruch’s—was overwhelmingly positive. Sarasate wanted to commission a work from the composer, and Bruch was eager to write for him. In a letter to his friend Otto Goldschmidt, an esteemed pianist, Bruch wrote, “Yesterday, when I thought vividly about Sarasate, the marvelous artistry of his playing re-emerged in me. I was lifted anew and I was able to write, in one night, almost half of the *Scottish Fantasy* that has been so long in my head.”

From these beginnings, things deteriorated rapidly. The prickly Bruch was more than a little annoyed when Sarasate did not leap at the chance to meet with him to consult on the commission. It was customary for soloists to work with concerto composers, but it was also a time of new-found fame and glamour for star instrumentalists. The friction between Bruch and Sarasate looks suspiciously like a clash of egos, and it prompted Bruch to pack up his score and seek another star violinist to advise him: Joseph Joachim.

It was Joachim who was soloist at the *Fantasy's* premiere in Liverpool in 1881. But Joachim, too, ignited Bruch's temper. Bruch lambasted Joachim's performance, finding that his lack of preparation and passion "annihilated" the work. Overstatement? Perhaps. But remember, Bruch was still seeking to bring his composing career out from the shadow of his Concerto No. 1, and he had every reason to hope that the spectacular *Scottish Fantasy* would do just that.

Like Donizetti's opera *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy* is informed by the writing of Sir Walter Scott—at least in its moody introduction, which depicts "an old bard contemplating the ruins of a castle, and the glorious times of old." But unlike Donizetti, persuasively conveys a sense of Scottish ambience in the music. German-born and -bred, Bruch had long felt a special affection for Scotland, and in 1863, at age 25, he published his arrangements of *Twelve Scottish Songs* for voice and piano.

In the *Fantasy's* four movements (rather than a concerto's customary three), each movement is based on a Scottish folk song with centuries-old roots. In the adagio cantabile first movement, we hear a luxuriously slow-paced approach to "Through the Wood Laddie"; the second movement goes more up-tempo with "The Dusty Miller," a tune dating back to the time of Shakespeare and King James VI. In the third movement, with its moderate pace (marked *andante*), we reach an impassioned rendition of "I'm A'Doun for Lack O' Johnnie"—a song of love and remembrance that, in Bruch's hands, does not need words to break our hearts. This is the emotional core of the *Fantasy*, which ends with the equally passionate call to Scottish national pride, "Scots Wha Hae"—sometimes called the unofficial Scottish national anthem.

Questions of authenticity aside—there is no beginning or end to that discussion—the sound of the *Scottish Fantasy* is surely enough to make us all *feel* Scottish. Bruch pays real respect to the ancient traditions of Scottish fiddle players with music full of double- and triple-stops. It digs deeply into the strings, yet also manages to turn sprightly, like sun breaking through the mist on the moors. It also gives a prominent role to Scotland's beloved harp; in fact, the *Fantasy's* original title (in German) designated it as a work for solo violin and harp with orchestra.

Gustav Holst *The Planets*

Born: Sept. 21, 1874, Cheltenham, UK

Died: May 25, 1934, London, UK

Composed: 1914 to 1917

Premiered: February 22, 1881, in Liverpool, with the composer conducting

Most recent Pacific Symphony

performance: February 4, 2017.

Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall. David Danzmayr conducting

Instrumentation: solo violin, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four French horns, two trumpets, three trombones, one tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, and strings

Estimated duration: Approx. 30 minutes



Are the heavens for artists to understand, or do they lie within the realm of science? Like so many of the great classical thinkers, the ancient Greek mathematician Pythagoras saw no separation between the two. On the scientific side, he defined the numerical ratios by which vibrating strings produce tones that are octaves apart. But he also speculated about "music of the spheres," the subtle sounds of heavenly bodies expressing the ineffable qualities of the Greek Zodiac according to orbital ratios. Composing "for large orchestra" between 1914 and 1916, the English composer Gustav Holst placed himself firmly in this Pythagorean tradition, giving us one of the most remarkable of all orchestral suites: *The Planets*.

Is it possible *not* to have a great time listening to this music? Probably not. In *The Planets*, Holst sustains our rapt attention for seven movements spanning almost an hour with no content other than the personalities and moods represented by each orb. Every movement is intensely colorful and specific, with each planetary subject so clearly in view that we feel ready to land our NASA module on the surface. Yet there is no story line, no overarching form... nothing but mood and the richness of the melodic subjects and rhythmic figures that Holst employs, including many folk songs from his beloved England.

Expansive in every sense, *The Planets* is catalogued as a "Suite for Large Orchestra" and a chorus of female voices. Holst uses these resources to the hilt, giving the suite a sense of astronomical space and the swirling energy of a spiral nebula. Though he denied any connection to the classical Zodiac other than the personified planets, that connection by itself is enough for the music to conjure strong images of the mythological deities associated with each. We hear seven movements in all: Mars, the Bringer of War; Venus, the Bringer of Peace; Mercury, the Winged Messenger; Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity; Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age (purportedly Holst's favorite!); Uranus, the Magician; and Neptune, the Mystic. Earth is not among those profiled; nor is Pluto, which was discovered and then ejected from the planetary club after Holst composed. In the end, after our tour of the skies, we are left at the edge of all that we know, looking out at a thrilling but unfathomable universe.