



REGINA
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

Gordon Gerrard
Music Director

2021
2022
SEASON

ISSUE FIVE

ENCORE



SARAH SLEAN – THE MUSIC OF
JONI MITCHELL

FOR EARTH AND SKY
Presented by Nutrien

WELCOME TO THE 2021-2022 RSO SEASON



Photo: Chris Graham

Welcome back! After a long period of silence, your Regina Symphony Orchestra is thrilled to return to what we do best—making music for you.

Over the past 18 months, we all have largely been deprived of the chance to be in the same room with each other. The connections we forge between us are what make our community stronger, and the RSO cherishes its place in helping to strengthen these connections. Music is the best way we know to create a space for open dialogue, shared conversation, and for the exchange of important ideas. The 2021-22 season has been designed to do just this. We have taken the opportunity to reflect on our traditions, to make some exciting changes and to come back with a renewed sense of purpose. I hope you will find things in this season that reawaken your imagination, inspire your enthusiasm and challenge your ideas of what can be expressed by a symphony orchestra.

This has been a difficult time for the musicians of the RSO, as I'm sure it has been for many of you. I know I speak for all of my colleagues on the stage when I say that we are overjoyed to be able to share with you again. I hope you will take every opportunity you can find to get to know these wonderful musicians. They—along with you—make our community a richer place.

Yours very fondly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Gordon Gerrard".

Gordon Gerrard

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GORDON GERRARD

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Conductor Gordon Gerrard is among the new generation of music directors changing how orchestras work in Canada. Currently in his sixth season leading the Regina Symphony Orchestra, Gordon has distinguished himself as a leader in innovative and inclusionary programming. Trained first as a pianist and subsequently as a specialist in operatic repertoire, he brings a fresh perspective to the podium that has endeared him to audiences and musicians alike.

After an international search, Gordon was appointed Music Director of the Regina Symphony Orchestra, where he has taken bold steps reimagining the orchestra's programming, including its *Forward Currents Festival* dedicated to social change and community engagement. He was the Associate Conductor of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra for four seasons and Resident Conductor of Calgary Opera from 2007-2011. He has returned to Calgary Opera to lead productions of *La Bohème*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Lakmé* and the Canadian premiere of Mark Adamo's *Little Women*, which was recorded for

national broadcast on CBC's Saturday Afternoon at the Opera. In 2019, Gordon made his debut with Edmonton Opera leading the western Canadian premiere of Rossini's *Le Comte Ory*. Gordon has made appearances with many of Canada's leading orchestras, including Toronto, Kitchener-Waterloo, and Victoria. He has worked regularly with the National Ballet of Canada, and in 2016, he made his European debut at *Kammeroper Schloss Rheinsburg* in Germany.

Gordon is a passionate and gifted educator. He demonstrates his commitment to education through his regular work with the young artists at Calgary Opera, the Atelier Lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal and has spent many seasons working with students at the Banff Centre, Opera Nuova (Edmonton), UBC Opera (Vancouver) and Opera McGill (Montréal) and the Glenn Gould School in Toronto. This season sees Gordon returning to the Victoria Symphony, UBC Opera in Vancouver for Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* and to Calgary Opera for *La Traviata*.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Regina Symphony Orchestra acknowledges that we are on Treaty 4 Territory, which is the traditional territory of the Cree, Saulteaux, Dakota, Nakoda, and Lakota Peoples, and the homeland of the Métis. In the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration, we commit to moving forward in partnership with the Indigenous people who live here and across Canada.

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Carmen Constantinescu, Assistant
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Elizabeth Stirr
Carmelle Pretzlaw
Rudolf Sternadel
Katie Gannon
Karley Parovsky
Jeremy Buzash
Josias Snachez

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Heng-Han Hou✱✱
David Johnson•
Beatrice Hodgkins
Jeff Looysen
David Hopkinson
Amanda Contreras
Paulo Pallas

VIOLA

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Jonathan Achtzehner
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FOR EARTH AND SKY

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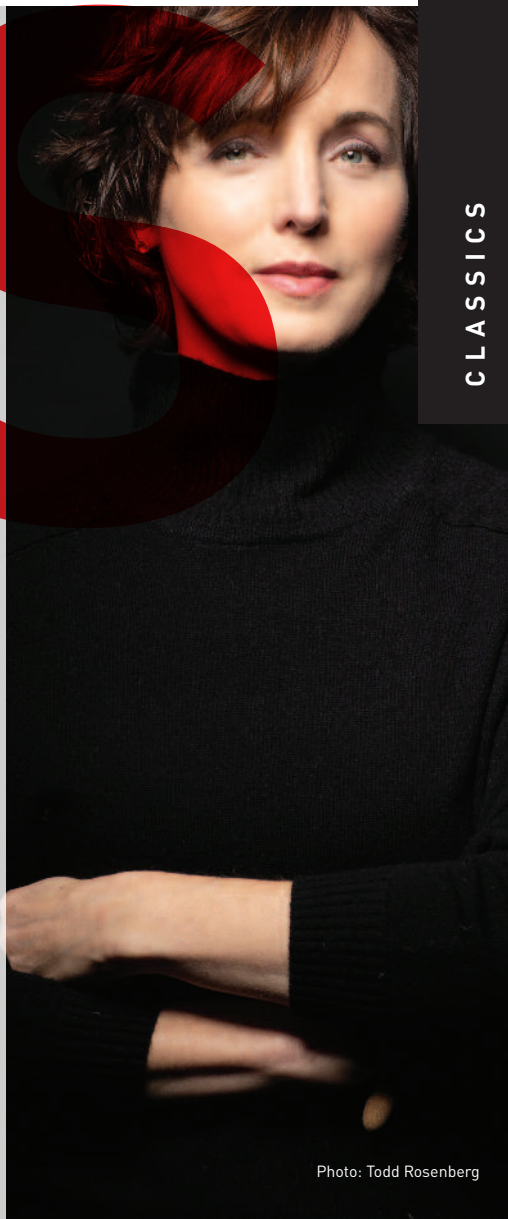
Tania Miller, conductor
Gordon Wolfe, trombone
Presented by Nutrien

Saturday, March 12, 2022
Conexus Arts Centre
7:30 pm

BEDRICH SMETANA *Má vlast*
II. Vltava (The Moldau)

JORDAN PAL *Scylla: Concerto for
Trombone and Orchestra*
I. Uninhabitable Earth
II. Silent Spring
III. Scylla

JEAN SIBELIUS *Symphony
No.5 in E-flat major, op.82*
I. Tempo molto moderato;
Allegro moderato - Presto
II. Andante mosso, quasi
allegretto
III. Allegro molto; Misterioso



CLASSICS

Photo: Todd Rosenberg

TANIA MILLER

BIOGRAPHY

Canadian Conductor Tania Miller has distinguished herself as a dynamic interpreter, musician and innovator. On the podium, Maestra Miller projects authority, dynamism and sheer love of the experience of making music. As one critic put it, she delivers calm intensity . . . expressive, colorful and full of life . . . her experience and charisma are audible." Others call her performances "technically immaculate, vivid and stirring".

Miller's 21-22 season features debuts with the World Orchestra Festival in Daegu, South Korea with concerts in Daegu, Hwaseong, and Seoul with the Virtuoso Chamber Orchestra. Miller recently debuted with the KBS Symphony Orchestra in Seoul and will debut this season with Calgary Opera. Recent engagements include L'Orchestre Symphonique de Québec, the Vancouver Symphony and London Symphonia and this season she will conduct the Vermont Symphony, Elgin Symphony and Rockford Symphonies among others. Miller has appeared as a guest conductor in Canada, the United States and Europe with such orchestras as the Bern Symphony Orchestra, NFM Wrocław Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Oregon Symphony, Ottawa's National Arts Centre Orchestra, Orchestre Métropolitain de Montréal, Vancouver Symphony, Naples Philharmonic, Hartford Symphony, Madison Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, Winnipeg Symphony, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Louisiana Philharmonic and numerous others.

Maestra Miller was Music Director of Canada's Victoria Symphony for 14 years, and was named Music Director Emerita for

her commitment to the orchestra and community. She has distinguished herself as a visionary leader and innovator with a deep commitment to contemporary repertoire and composers and has gained a national reputation as a highly effective advocate and communicator for the arts. An avid writer about music and the arts, her writing has been featured in the American Symphony Orchestra League's *Symphony Magazine*, Toronto's *Globe and Mail*, and *Better Humans*.

Maestra Miller will conduct Calgary Opera next season, and has previously conducted numerous productions as Artistic Director of Michigan Opera Works (*Rape of Lucretia*, *Semele*, *Dido and Aeneas*), as Conductor of Opera McGill in Montreal (*Tales of Hoffmann*, *Marriage of Figaro*), as Assistant Conductor of University of Michigan Opera (*Daughter of the Regiment*, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, *Le Rossignol*, *Magic Flute*) and as assistant to Michigan Opera Theatre's production of *Eugene Onegin*. She was Assistant Conductor of the Carmel Bach Festival for four seasons with Bruno Weil, and Assistant and Associate Conductor of the Vancouver Symphony from 2000-2004.

Ms. Miller has a Doctorate and Masters degree in Conducting from the University of Michigan. Ms. Miller received an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree from Royal Roads University, and an Honorary Fellowship Diploma from Canada's Royal Conservatory of Music for her commitment to leadership in community and music education. She was recipient of the 2017 Friends of Canadian Music award from the Canadian League of Composers for her dedication to the performance of contemporary music.

GORDON WOLFE

BIOGRAPHY



Hailing from Nelson, B.C., Gordon Wolfe has been a member of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra since 2001, taking on the role of Principal

Trombone in 2006. He won his first orchestral job with the Victoria Symphony in 1996 and, shortly thereafter, moved on to spend five seasons with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. In addition to working with these outstanding Canadian institutions, Gordon has had the privilege of performing with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Atlanta Symphony, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and the National Arts Centre Orchestra. Gordon studied with Canadian trombone icons Ian McDougall, Thomas Eadie, and Peter Sullivan during his studies at the University of Victoria and McGill University.

An accomplished chamber musician, Gordon was a founding member of the Central Park Brass, a privately funded brass quintet dedicated to performing free concerts for young people in the playgrounds of New York City's Central Park. In Toronto, he performs frequent recitals at the Royal Conservatory of Music and has performed for thousands of young students across Ontario as an ambassador of the Toronto Symphony's Preludes programme.

In demand as a soloist, Gordon has recently been featured with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Windsor Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Toronto, the Hannaford Street Silver Band and the Idaho State Wind Ensemble. As a highly respected educator, Gordon draws top students from across Canada to his trombone studio at the Royal Conservatory of Music's Glenn Gould School.

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PROGRAM NOTES FOR EARTH AND SKY

BEDRICH SMETANA *Má vlast*

The Vltava River runs 430 kilometers through the Czech Republic. Today this mighty river is home to nine hydroelectric dams and is crossed by 18 bridges.

In 1848, 24-year-old Bedřich Smetana stood upon one of those bridges-The Charles Bridge, which crosses over the Vltava in Prague-and prepared to lay down his life for his country. Or at least, lay down his life for what he hoped would be his country: Smetana's nascent Czech nationalism, in the "Springtime of the Peoples" of 1848, was part of the larger pattern of revolutions against the Austrian Empire where radicals, serfs, and the middle class briefly joined together to demand an end to the monarchy and the creation of independent, democratic nation-states.

In Prague, a citizens' army was formed to man the barricades on the Charles Bridge against the Austrian forces. The Austrians were led by Alfred Prince of Windisch-Grätz, whose wife had just been killed in the uprising. After that, the gloves came off: "They do not want to hear about the Grace of God? They will hear the grace of the cannon," the Prince declared. He declared martial law across Bohemia, and the uprising was quickly crushed. Smetana escaped the encounter with his life, and being at that point a figure of no importance whatsoever in the movement for Czech nationalism, also escaped the imprisonment or exile imposed on the more important revolutionaries. Prince Alfred could of course not have

known that of all the combatants in the citizens' army, it was the destitute young piano teacher Smetana who would become the single most significant exporter of Czech nationalistic culture. Not only that, but Smetana's most celebrated work is a description of the very river whose bridge he had defended.

Vltava is the second movement of Smetana's *Má vlast* (My Fatherland) suite. Given the themes of the piece and Smetana's life's work of Czech resistance to the Austrians, he would probably have objected to the fact that the work is now often known by its German name, *The Moldau*; but in either language, the music is seemingly worlds away from the chaos of the doomed barricade where Smetana fought as a young man. *Má vlast* was written nearly thirty years later, much of which Smetana had spent in Sweden. After the defeat of the Austrian army by the French at Solferino, however, he considered that the power of the Empire was waning, and it was high time to return home and take advantage of the more liberal political atmosphere to work on creating a distinctly Czech musical tradition.

Vltava is a depiction of the river not as it was, but as it ought to be: gently intertwining threads of melody, growing gradually in power but always retaining their essentially peaceful quality. Not just the river, but the Czech people are presented in their idealized form, as the river flows past a farmer's wedding in the countryside: joyful, pastoral, and free from Austrian oppression.

PROGRAM NOTES

FOR EARTH AND SKY CONTINUED

JORDAN PAL *Scylla: Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra*

This is the 'Age of Humans,' where mankind has become "a force of nature on a geological scale." This era will likely be regarded as the most reckless in human history. Consumerism, corporate greed, and environmental exploitation are largely responsible for climate change.

We have entered a time of uncertainty. The world around us is changing. Economic priorities undermine the health of our environment and the welfare of its inhabitants. As global temperatures climb, mankind faces its greatest challenge yet: we are uncomfortably stuck between that proverbial "rock and a hard place," between choosing economy over climate, or climate over economy.

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus was forced to choose between Scylla and Charybdis - between two equally dangerous situations. 'Scylla for Trombone and Orchestra' is my climate odyssey, embodying the choice we as a species face: climate catastrophe or a sustainable future; inaction or proaction; disbelief or faith. 'Scylla' journeys from the future - an inhospitable world, the result of centuries of human neglect - to present-day crossroads where mankind must make climate change its priority.

The work opens where humanity has burnt through the near \$20 trillion worth of fossil-fuel deposits left. High

CO² levels have plunged the planet back into a primordial hell. The global mean sea level has risen over 200 vertical feet, engulfing coastal habitats, and leaving much of the planet unlivable. An impending storm, the size of Australia, rages off in the distance. As it approaches, the offstage solo trombone bellows an alarming foghorn-like call. The orchestra swirls and swells, laments and toils as the soloist joins the orchestra onstage. Movement II - present day - a lyrical, languishing and seemingly innocuous intermezzo - a silent spring where "beauty belies the terrifying implications" of climate change - gradually fades to black. The finale, a fervent, vivid and swift closer, builds to a dramatic conclusion, reminding us of the choices we face and the inimitable beauty we stand to lose.

In past pieces, I sought to promote environmentalism by celebrating nature's phenomena, but difficult subject matter requires a direct approach. It is time for "swift and unified global action" before we lose everything we had tomorrow.

Program note by Jordan Pal

JEAN SIBELIUS *Symphony No.5 in E-flat major, op.82*

For anyone looking for a metric by which to judge when you've truly made it in the world, look no further than the genesis of Jean Sibelius' 5th Symphony: when you are paid by the government to produce your own

birthday present, to celebrate the newly declared national holiday of your birth, you have arrived. However, popularity did little for Sibelius' inner turmoil, or to soften the blow of the war on the horizon. He finished the first version of the piece in time for its premiere on his 50th birthday, the 8th of December 1915.

The fact that the version premiered in 1915 is radically different than the one heard in concert halls today comes down to the fact that Sibelius had a streak of self-criticism deeper and more vicious than perhaps any other major composer. Many blame this harshness for his complete withdrawal from publicly publishing or even talking about his music for the last thirty years of his life: after his seventh symphony, he told his friends that "If I cannot write a better symphony than my Seventh, then it shall be my last." Apparently, he couldn't; he destroyed what he had produced of an Eighth symphony in what his wife Aino described as "a great auto-da-fe" of manuscripts, which he burned in a laundry basket in the dining room.

Luckily he had not yet reached the point of total destruction at the point that he wrote the Fifth; instead, he revised it into a very different piece, condensing the four movements of the first version into three and replacing the old finale with a new one. Given what was going on in his life during the period of the revisions, it would have been understandable if Sibelius had produced a work similar in tone to his bleak, interior, and frankly upsetting

Fourth symphony. Because of the First World War, Sibelius lost all revenue from his German publisher, Breitkopf and Härtel. Then, in 1917, the Bolsheviks took power in Russia and Finland declared long-awaited independence from Russia, kicking off a civil war. Many of his friends were killed, his brother was arrested, and his house was searched twice by the pro-Soviet Red Guard; consequently, Sibelius and his family took refuge in an insane asylum in Helsinki.

But the fifth symphony is not an expression of abject circumstances. It is, instead, a transcendence of them. Although Sibelius threw out much of the musical content of his original concept of the work, he held tight to one image, recorded in his diary in 1915: "Today at ten to eleven I saw 16 swans. One of my greatest experiences. Lord God, that beauty!" The mystical nature of the swans ties in with the other reason he was so intent on getting the symphony right: "It is as if God Almighty had thrown down pieces of a mosaic from heaven's floor," he said, "and asked me to find out what was the original pattern." A sacred mandate, the swans bridging the gap between the squalidity of war on Earth and the perfection of the divine-- no wonder Sibelius was so intent on leaving behind the most perfect possible version of the Fifth symphony. It stands today as one of Sibelius' most popular symphonies, a monument to the triumph of spirit over circumstance.

Program notes by Anna Norris



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Lucas Waldin, conductor
Sarah Slean, vocalist

Saturday, March 19, 2022
Conexus Arts Centre
7:30 pm



SARAH SLEAN

BIOGRAPHY

Signed to Atlantic/Warner Records at the tender age of nineteen, 4-time Juno nominee and modern-day Renaissance woman Sarah Slean has since released 11 albums in over 10 countries worldwide – but perhaps the most astonishing aspect of her artistry is its breadth. Over her 25-year career, Slean has published two volumes of poetry, starred in short films and a movie musical (spawning two Gemini Award nominations), penned award-winning chamber works, held numerous exhibitions of her paintings, and shared the stage with 10 of the country's professional orchestras. Classically trained from the age of 5, she routinely collaborates with cutting-edge contemporary classical ensembles like The Art of Time and has been invited to sing world premieres by Canada's leading living composers. She composes orchestral arrangements for her own music as well as for her pop colleagues (Dan Mangan, Hawksley Workman) and her recent collaborative recording with the Symphony Nova Scotia was just nominated for both an East Coast Music Award and a Juno Award in the Classical Album category (2021). Sarah is also a recent alumna of the prestigious Canadian Film Centre's screen composing residency (2017-8) and just earned her first Canadian Screen Award (2021). She can also be heard on the CBC's national hybrid pop/classical radio program "About Time" as an occasional host.

Citing such diverse influences as Leonard Bernstein, philosophy, Joni Mitchell, Buddhism and Bach, her

music borrows aspects of cabaret, pop, and orchestral: all knit together by the startling poetry of her lyrics, unique arranging and piano-playing, and that voice, described by the CBC as "a 19th century Kate Bush". In addition to headlining theatres across Canada, Sarah has also toured Europe, the US and Scandinavia and has opened internationally for such artists as Bryan Ferry, Rufus Wainwright, Alanis Morissette, Andrew Bird, Feist, Ron Sexsmith, and Chris Isaak. Her 11th solo recording "Metaphysics", released in 2017, is described as a "breathtaking amalgamation of Slean's dramatic orchestral arranging and her signature take on songwriting". In 2021-2022, Sarah will be composing the music for the stage musical adaptation of the award-winning film "Maudie".



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LUCAS WALDIN

BIOGRAPHY



Lucas Waldin is a dynamic and versatile conductor whose performances have delighted audiences across North America. He has collaborated with

some of today's most exciting artists including Carly Rae Jepsen, Ben Folds, The Canadian Brass and Buffy Sainte-Marie, in addition to conducting presentations such as *Disney in Concert*, *Blue Planet Live*, *Cirque de la Symphonie*, and the ground-breaking symphonic debut of R&B duo Dvsn as part of the global Red Bull Music Festival.

Waldin has been a guest conductor for numerous orchestras in the U.S. and Canada, including the Houston Symphony, the Dallas Symphony, the Grant Park Festival Orchestra, the Modesto Symphony, the Louisiana Philharmonic, the Vancouver Symphony, the Calgary Philharmonic and the Toronto Symphony.

Having joined the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra as Resident Conductor in 2009, Waldin was subsequently appointed *Artist-in-Residence and Community Ambassador* - the first position of its kind in North America. He appeared with the ESO over 150 times and conducted in Carnegie Hall during the orchestra's participation in the 2012 Spring for Music festival. In

recognition of his accomplishments, he was awarded the Jean-Marie Beaudet Award in Orchestral Conducting and received a Citation Award from the City of Edmonton for outstanding achievements in arts and culture. A native of Toronto, Canada, Waldin holds degrees in flute and conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Jazz Trio

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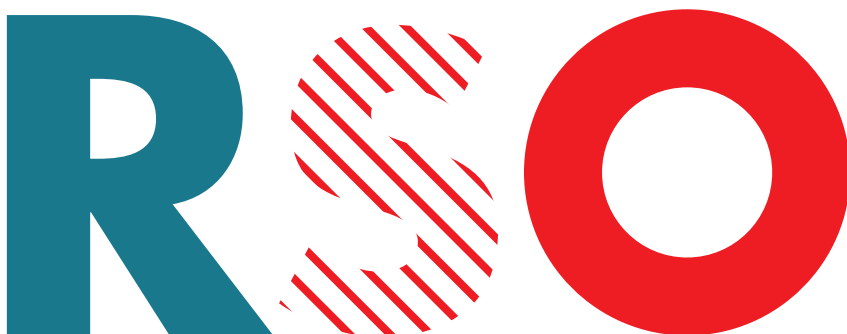
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