

Silicon Valley Symphony

Michael Paul Gibson, Music Director and Conductor

Violin 1

Julian Brown,
*Concertmaster**
Beverly Blount
Susan Combs-Bauer
Diane Egli
Carolyn Lowenthal
Courtney Onodera
Eriola Pengo
James Tsai

Violin 2

Svetlana Terekhina*
Katja Battarbee
Nat Collins
Hilda Hodges
David Kyser
Eric Leong
Janie Wiens

Viola

Norin Saxe*
Scott Homer
Anton Petrenko
Irene Saxe

Cello

Peter Gelfand*
Jim Aikin
Debra Fenzel-Alexander
Robin Renegar
Sara Spieth**

Susan Williams-Gibson
Grace Worthington

Bass

Aaron Shual*
Nicholas James

Flute

David Ross*
Amy Streeper

Piccolo

Amy Streeper

Oboe

Claudia Engel*
David Bloom

English Horn

David Bloom

Clarinet

Laura Vandenberg*
Jerry McBride

Bassoon

Ron Bobb*
Matthew Thornton**

Horn

Gary France*
Brian Anderson**

Nathan Huie
Naomi Dushay

Trumpet

Ariel Jessup*
Nora Smith
Walker Beard
Chris Schalk

Trombone

Erik Dabel*
Keith Hunter

Bass Trombone

Israel Santiago

Tuba

Jay Perry*

Timpani

Kenny Lavoie*
Dominic Moisant

Percussion

Kenny Lavoie*
Dominic Moisant
Bart Raynaud
Shirley Huang

Harp

Celeste Everson Misfeldt

* denotes principal player. String players thereafter are listed alphabetically

** denotes associate principal player.

Join the Silicon Valley Symphony!

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www.siliconvalleysymphony.net

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Special Thanks to the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos and Rev. Mark Burnham for allowing SVS to rehearse and give concerts in the Sanctuary and for ads in PCLG publications. Marketing, Advertising, Tickets, and Recording by BACH to Music; Door Manager: Loretta Faulkner. Thanks to all our ushers. Thank You to Katja Battarbee for her original artwork for the concert, and creation of flyers and program.

A BIG THANK YOU to Tom Martwick, master cabinet maker and woodworker, for designing and building our new conductor's podium. Tom has donated his skill and the labor to the SVS. The new podium is a work of art and makes a huge difference to Michael. Please see his business card (on the reverse) and thank him yourself.



from the new world

Saturday
16 May 2009
8:00 p.m.

Silicon Valley Symphony

Julian Brown, violin soloist

Michael Paul Gibson
Musical director and conductor

Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos
Ticket Donation \$20/\$15/Children 12 and under free with adult

PROGRAM

The Hebrides, Op. 26 - Fingal's Cave

by Felix Mendelssohn

Pavane pour une infante défunte - Pavane for a dead princess

by Maurice Ravel

Méditation from Thaïs

by Jules Massenet

Julian Brown, Violin Soloist

Roman Carnival Overture Op. 9

by Hector Berlioz

intermission

New World Symphony, Op. 95 Symphony No. 9 in E minor

by Antonín Dvořák

The Hebrides, Op. 26 - Fingal's Cave (1829)

by Felix Mendelssohn



Felix Mendelssohn
1809 - 1847

Romantic composer Felix Mendelssohn visited in 1829 and wrote Die Hebriden (in English, Hebrides Overture Opus 26, commonly known as Fingal's Cave), inspired by the weird echoes in the cave. Mendelssohn's overture popularized the cave as a tourist destination. Other famous 19th-century visitors included author Jules Verne, poets William Wordsworth, John Keats and Alfred, Lord Tennyson, and Romantic artist J. M. W. Turner, who painted "Staffa, Fingal's Cave" in 1832. Queen Victoria also made the trip.

The playwright August Strindberg also sets scenes from his play A Dream Play in a place called "Fingal's Grotto." Scots novelist Sir Walter Scott

described Fingal's Cave as "...one of the most extraordinary places I ever beheld. It exceeded, in my mind, every description I had heard of it... composed entirely of basaltic pillars as high as the roof of a cathedral, and running deep into the rock, eternally swept by a deep and swelling sea, and paved, as it were, with ruddy marble, baffles all description."

playing in numerous orchestras and chamber ensembles. His violin heroes include Jascha Heifetz, Itzhak Perlman, and Maxim Vengerov.



Michael Paul Gibson is the Music Director, Conductor and founder of the Silicon Valley Symphony. He has been the Director of Music Ministry for the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos for the past five years. His job has been eliminated as of end of June 2009.

He is the founding Music Director of the Menlo Park Chorus, and conducted the group from 1998 - 2005. He is the Music Director of the Bay Area Little Symphony, and Bay Area Music Foundation, and past Music Director of the Foothill Orchestra. While serving in the United

States Air Force, Gibson played in the Norad Band and Air Force Academy Band. He founded and was Music Director for the Colorado Springs Chamber Music Society from 1971 - 1974, which received tremendous local recognition, attracted audiences of 1200, appeared in a 30 minute TV show on KRDO Television, and did numerous radio broadcasts on KRDO Radio. Gibson has created many electronic music compositions and arrangements.

Maestro Gibson has had master classes with Georg Solti and Carlo Maria Giulini working with the Chicago Symphony, Neville Marriner with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Pinchas Zukerman at San Francisco State University, and Peter Schickele (PDQ Bach) with the Denver Symphony. He studied orchestral conducting with Bernard Rubenstein (NU), John Miller (Denver Sym.), and Lazlo Varga (SFSU); instrumental conducting from John Paynter(NU); and choral conducting with Margaret Hillis (Chicago Symphony Chorus) at Northwestern University from which he holds Bachelor of Music Education and Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting degrees. He played trombone in the Denver Symphony, Bohemian Club Orchestra, and the San Francisco 49ers Band. He also offers expertise in business, operating his own company, BACH to Music. Please visit his web site, www.bach2music.com/mpg for details and resume.



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Curiously enough, passages which modern ears perceive as the musical idiom of African-American spirituals may have been intended by Dvořák to evoke a Native American atmosphere. In 1893, a newspaper interview quoted Dvořák as saying "I found that the music of the negroes and of the Indians was practically identical", and that "the music of the two races bore a remarkable similarity to the music of Scotland". Most historians agree that Dvořák is referring to the pentatonic scale, which is typical of each of these musical traditions.

In a 2008 article in the Chronicle of Higher Education, prominent musicologist Joseph Horowitz asserts that African-american spirituals were a major influence on the 9th symphony, quoting Dvořák from an 1893 interview in the New York Herald as saying, "In the negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music."

Despite all this, it is generally considered that, like other Dvořák pieces, the work has more in common with folk music of his native Bohemia than with that of the United States. Leonard Bernstein averred that the work was truly multinational in its foundations.



Julian Brown became concertmaster of the Silicon Valley Symphony Orchestra last year (2008) and is also part-time concertmaster of the California Pops Orchestra, with which he performed earlier this year to critical acclaim the solo violin part from the movie score of "Schindler's List". More recently with the Silicon Valley Symphony he played the solo violin part in Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade.

Born in the UK, he has followed a multi-faceted career as musician, radio producer, science writer, software engineer, and scientist. He taught himself to play the violin at age 8 and several years later took up formal lessons with the British violin teacher, Anthony Saltmarsh. After studying physics at Cambridge,

England he worked at the BBC in London as a radio producer making talks and documentaries about science and technology.

After leaving the BBC, Brown worked as a science writer and wrote several popular science books including "Minds, Machines, and the Multiverse", a mind-stretching account of the history and science of quantum computing. In 1998 he came to the US and worked for several years as a software engineer before joining Stanford University where he has worked for the last six years in a brain research lab. Throughout these times Brown has pursued a second life as an active musician

The grandson of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, he was born to a notable Jewish family which later converted to Christianity. He was recognised early as a prodigy, but his parents were cautious and did not seek to capitalise on his abilities. Indeed his father was disinclined to allow Felix to follow a musical career until it became clear that he intended to seriously dedicate himself to it.

Mendelssohn was an accomplished artist, including drawing, watercolors, and oil painting. His enormous correspondence shows that he could also be a witty writer in German and English — sometimes accompanied by humorous sketches and cartoons in the text.

Mendelssohn suffered from bad health in the final years of his life, probably aggravated by nervous problems and overwork. The death of his sister Fanny on May 14, 1847 caused him great distress. Less than six months later, on November 4, Felix himself died in Leipzig after a series of strokes. His grandfather Moses, his sister Fanny and both his parents had died from similar apoplexies. We now celebrate the 200th anniversary of his birth.

Pavane pour une infante défunte - Pavane for a dead princess (1899) by Maurice Ravel



Maurice Ravel
1875 - 1937

The piece evokes the dignified elegance of a reception at the royal Spanish court as a young princess moves gracefully through the steps of the pavane, a slow processional dance that enjoyed great popularity in the courts of Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

This antique miniature is not meant to pay tribute to any particular princess from history, but rather expresses a nostalgic enthusiasm for Spanish customs and sensibilities which Ravel shared with many of his contemporaries (most notably Debussy and Albéniz) that is evident in some of his other works such as the Rhapsodie espagnole and the

Boléro. By some accounts, Ravel may have been thinking about Princess Margarita, a daughter of King Philip IV of Spain, but this is far from certain.

Ravel dedicated the Pavane to his patron, the Princesse de Polignac. The Spanish pianist Ricardo Viñes gave the first performance on April 5, 1902. The Pavane was warmly welcomed by the public, but received much more subdued reviews from Ravel's fellow musicians. Indeed, Ravel himself complained that it "lacked daring". Subsequent performances tended to be much too slow and plodding. In one instance, Ravel attended just such a

performance, and afterward mentioned to the pianist that it was called "Pavane for a Dead Princess", not "Dead Pavane for a Princess".

Méditation from Thaïs (1893) **by Jules Massenet**

Julian Brown, violin soloist



Jules Massenet
1842- 1912

Méditation is a symphonic intermezzo and is performed between the first and second scene in the second act of the opera, Thaïs. It is during this point in the Opera where, Athanaël tries to convince Thaïs to leave her life of luxury and pleasure and find salvation through God. It is during this time of reflection that the meditation is played by the orchestra. After the Méditation is finished Thaïs tells Athanaël that she will follow him.

The piece is in D major and is approximately five minutes (although there are a vast number of interpretations that stretch the piece to over six minutes.) Massenet may also have written the

piece with religious intentions; the tempo marking is *Andante Religioso*. Which means that it should be played religiously and at walking tempo. The piece opens with a short introduction by the harps and the solo violin quickly comes in with the melody. After the violin plays the melody twice the piece goes into an *animato* section (therefore the tempo picks up) and gradually gets more and more passionate (Massenet wrote *poco a poco appassionato* which means more passionately little by little.)

The climax is reached at the *poco piu appassionato* (which means a little more passion) and then it is followed by a short *cadenza* like passage from the soloist and then returns to the main theme. After the theme is played twice the soloist ends playing harmonics on the upper register of the violin while the harps and string quietly play below the solo line.

Roman Carnival Overture Op. 9 (1843) **by Hector Berlioz**

Le carnaval romain, ouverture pour orchestre (English: Roman Carnival Overture) Opus 9. Composed in 1843 and first performed at the Salle Herz, Paris on 3 February 1844. A stand-alone overture intended for concert performance, made up of material and themes from Berlioz's opera *Benvenuto Cellini*, including some music from the opera's carnival scene - hence the overture's title. It is scored for large orchestra, is in the

key of A major, and features a prominent and famous solo for the cor anglais.

New World Symphony, Op. 95 Symphony No. 9 in E minor (1893) **by Antonín Dvořák**

- * I. *Aadgio; Allegro molto*
- * II. *Largo*
- * III. *Scherzo: Molto Vivace*
- * IV. *Allegro con fuoco*



Antonín Dvořák
1841- 1904

The Symphony No. 9 in E Minor "From the New World" (Op. 95), popularly known as the New World Symphony, was composed by Antonín Dvořák in 1893 during his visit to the United States from 1892 to 1895. It is by far his most popular symphony, and one of the most popular in the modern repertory.

Dvořák was interested in the Native American music and African-American spirituals he heard in America. Upon his arrival in America, he stated: "I am convinced that the future music of this country must be founded on what are called Negro melodies. These can be the foundation of a serious and original school of composition, to be developed in the United States. These beautiful and varied themes are the product of the soil. They are the folk

songs of America and your composers must turn to them."

The symphony was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, and premiered on December 16, 1893 at Carnegie Hall conducted by Anton Seidl. A day earlier, in an article published in the New York Herald on December 15, 1893, Dvořák further explained how Native American music had been an influence on this symphony: "I have not actually used any of the [Native American] melodies. I have simply written original themes embodying the peculiarities of the Indian music, and, using these themes as subjects, have developed them with all the resources of modern rhythms, counterpoint, and orchestral color."

In the same article, Dvořák stated that he regarded the symphony's second movement as a "sketch or study for a later work, either a cantata or opera ... which will be based upon Longfellow's [The Song of] Hiawatha" (Dvořák never actually wrote such a piece). He also wrote that the third movement scherzo was "suggested by the scene at the feast in Hiawatha where the Indians dance".