

NEW THIS SEASON – PRE-CONCERT LECTURES!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The 25-minute lectures will begin promptly at 6:30 pm in the McCallum Theatre auditorium. Open seating. Please present your concert ticket for admission into the theatre.

ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 6:30 pm

Debussy: *Danse*, L. 69 "Tarantelle styrienne" (orch Ravel)

Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Major, Op. 26

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 27

CHRISTOPHER RUSSELL is Associate Professor and Chair of the Music Performance department at Azusa Pacific University (APU) in Southern California. He is conductor of the APU Symphony Orchestra and leads their graduate instrumental conducting program. The Los Angeles Times called him "a forcefully dramatic conductor with a strong technique."

Guest conducting appearances include the MasterWorks Festival in Ohio and Indiana, the Orquestra Sinfônica Heliópolis in São Paulo, Brazil, and orchestras in China including the Harbin Symphony, the Shenzhen City Philharmonic, and Zhengzhou's Yellow River Symphony. He has also conducted at Carnegie Hall, the Sydney Opera House, and famous concert halls in London, Vienna, Prague, Moscow, and Saint Petersburg. He has lectured and judged festivals in other Chinese cities including Beijing, Dalian, Hong Kong, and Qingdao.

A new music advocate, Russell has conducted numerous premieres including the first U.S. performances of works by Tansy Davies, Brett Dean, Jonathan Harvey, Anders Hillborg, Tristan Keuris, Magnus Lindberg, Per Nørgård, Kaija Saariaho, and Éric Tanguy. In 2008, he conducted the U.S. premiere of Esa-Pekka Salonen's *Stockholm Diary* for string orchestra with the APU Symphony.

Russell's musical interest also extends to performing rarely-heard older music including the U.S. or California premieres of many works from the early and mid-20th century including music by Havergal Brian, Rued Langgaard, Bohuslav Martinu, and Allan Pettersson. An advocate for conducting American music abroad, he conducted the Australian and Brazilian premieres of Ives' 2nd Symphony, the Austrian and Slovak premiere of Ives' *Decoration Day*, and Russian premiere of Peter Mennin's Symphony No. 5. Russell conducted the world premiere of the Symphony in A composed in 1878 by Leopold Damrosch with the APU Symphony which they recorded for the British record label Toccata Classics.

For over 20 years until 2019, he conducted the Orange County School of the Arts Symphony Orchestra where he regularly received accolades for the orchestra's quality and adventurous programming. The American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers has awarded him their prestigious Award for Programming of Contemporary Music for youth orchestras on ten occasions. Seven of those times, he was awarded first place in the United States.

He can be followed on Instagram @russellconductor





SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY

Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 6:30 pm

Sibelius: *Finlandia*, Op. 26

Sibelius: Violin Concerto in D Minor, Op. 47

Sibelius: Symphony No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 39

Dr. KRISTI BROWN-MONTESANO approaches graduate seminars, adult-education classes, podcasts, and pre-concert lectures with the same philosophy: that offering context – rigorously researched, provocative, and humanistic – empowers listeners and musicians to make their own meaningful connections to classical music. A faculty member at the Colburn School Conservatory of Music from 2003-22, she served as Chair

of Music History and helped shape the institution's degree programs. Today, Brown-Montesano is an Assistant Teaching Professor in Musicology at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. She also enjoys ongoing relationships with many of Southern California's most distinguished musical organizations, including the Los Angeles Opera, Los Angeles Philharmonic, La Jolla Music Society, and Philharmonic Society of Orange County.

A respected opera scholar, Brown-Montesano broke new critical ground with her book *Understanding the Women of Mozart's Operas* (University of California Press, 2007), re-evaluating source materials as well as common reception assumptions about the female roles in the Da Ponte operas and *The Magic Flute*. The book's feminist lens has attracted a growing audience of readers interested in the ethics of opera culture and production, prompting a new paperback edition in 2021.

While opera holds a special place in her scholarly work, Brown-Montesano has presented and published essays on a wide variety of topics including the use of classical concert music in film and television, music's role in the original Sherlock Holmes stories and later adaptations, and popular reception of J.S. Bach in postwar America from Glenn Gould to the Golden Record to Hannibal Lecter.

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