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NEW WEST SYMPHONY CELEBRATES MUSICAL MILESTONES WITH “BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY & CARMEN” ON APRIL 5 & 6

In celebration of New West Symphony’s 30th anniversary, this program honors musical milestones: Bizet’s Carmen, Smetana’s Moldau, Bach Cantatas and popular hits

*Guest artists include Angels Vocal Art, Pepperdine Chamber Choir,
Los Robles Children’s Choir and vocal soloists*



Thousand Oaks, CA, March 12, 2025 – On April 5 and 6, New West Symphony (NWS) celebrates its 30th anniversary by honoring musical milestones of iconic works: Bizet’s *Carmen* and Smetana’s *Moldau* (150 years); Bach Cantatas 1, 124 and the Easter Oratorio (300 years); and *Rhinestone Cowboy*, *Mamma Mia* and *Bohemian Rhapsody* (50 years).

Guest artists include **Angels Vocal Art, Pepperdine Chamber Choir, Los Robles Children’s Choir** and **vocal soloists**.

“Presenting these wonderful works continues our vision of engaging with fans of all eras of music. I love supporting the next generation of performers, and partnering with the Pepperdine Chamber Choir and Los Robles Children’s Choir shows off their talent, enriches our programs and community, and makes me proud. It is also a great joy to welcome Angels Vocal Art into the New West

Symphony family,” said Music Director **Michael Christie**. “With all of these musical forces, along with our audiences, I will particularly enjoy presenting iconic pop music favorites in special arrangements for these performances.”

“Since its first proud downbeat 30 years ago, we relied on the patrons who initially had the vision, heart and sheer determination to help nurture the New West Symphony into what it is today,” said CEO **Natalia Staneva**. “As we celebrate our anniversary and look towards the future of our organization with anticipation and pride, we pause to recognize those who have firmly and lovingly guided our vibrant organization. At these concerts, we recognize Foundations, Season Sponsors and Tribute Sponsors and honor the memories of the late William Bleuel on April 5 and Miriam Wille on April 6.”

NWS’ April concerts are generously sponsored by **Linda & David Catlin** and **Visit Simi Valley**.

Meet the Artists

Prior to the concert weekend, NWS hosts **Meet the Artists on Thursday, April 3 at 2 p.m.** at **University Village Thousand Oaks**. Meet the Artists provides a unique “behind the scenes” experience with interviews and intimate performances, hosted by Maestro Christie with guest artists: Kristof Van Grysperre, piano; Laura Zahn, mezzo-soprano; Evan K. Brown, tenor; and John Allen Nelson, baritone. The free event begins with a dessert reception at 1 p.m. Reservations are required by calling University Village at 805.241.3300 at least 48 hours in advance.

The event is also livestreamed on the NWS Facebook page and YouTube channel. More info at newwestsymphony.org/meet-the-artists.

New West Symphony presents “Bohemian Rhapsody & Carmen”

Saturday, April 5 at 7 p.m. - Bank of America Performing Arts Center (BAPAC)
2100 E. Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Thousand Oaks

Sunday, April 6 at 3 p.m. - Rancho Campana Performing Arts Center (RCPAC)
4235 Mar Vista Drive, Camarillo

Michael Christie, conductor

Laura Zahn, Carmen

Evan K. Brown, Don José

John Allen Nelson, Escamillo

Angels Vocal Art, Kristof Van Grysperre, artistic director

Pepperdine Chamber Choir, Dr. Ryan Board, director

Los Robles Children’s Choir, Emma Roche, director

Bizet: Selections from *Carmen* (1875)

Smetana: “Moldau” from *Ma Vlast* (1875)

J.S. Bach: Selections from Cantatas – “Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern,” “Jesum lass ich nicht von mir” and “Preis und Dank” (1725)

Bohemian Rhapsody, Rhinestone Cowboy, Mamma Mia (1975)

Ticket prices range from \$40-\$134. Tickets for students and children are \$15. Subscribers to the **2025 Masterpiece Series** receive up to 20% off single ticket prices and other discounts, free ticket exchanges, invitations to exclusive events and other benefits. Choose-Your-Own packages (pick any 3 concerts) are also available for a 10% discount off single ticket prices. For full performance details and to order tickets, visit newwestsymphony.org or call **866.776.8400**.

Note: New West Symphony is offering free tickets to first responders and families who have been displaced due to the recent wildfires in the region. Please call the Box Office at 866.776.8400 to reserve. The offer is valid for up to 4 tickets per household; based on availability.

Coming Up...

Summerfest 2025

Sunday, June 29, 2025 | Rancho de las Palmas, Moorpark, CA

Celebrate America, NWS' 30th anniversary and community at the third annual Summerfest fundraising dinner and concert. Support the Symphony while feasting on a sumptuous gourmet buffet under the evening stars, followed by a concert headlined by an all-star rock band and vocalists. Proceeds benefit the Symphony's artistic and educational programs. Tickets go on sale later this spring.

About Laura Zahn

A rising dramatic mezzo-soprano, Laura Zahn has been praised for her "warm, voluptuous voice." In the current season Zahn is scheduled to make several role debuts in the dramatic repertoire, including Santuzza (*Cavalleria Rusticana*), Zita (*Gianni Schicchi*) and The Witch (*Hansel and Gretel*), as well as her international debut in Hong Kong singing highlights from *Carmen* and a house debut with Opera Delaware. Zahn holds degrees from The Boston Conservatory and Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. laurazahnmezzo.com

About Evan K. Brown

Evan K. Brown is an emerging heroic tenor known for his commanding presence, passionate interpretations and a voice that is "unfailingly vigorous" (*Texas Classical Review*). He has captivated audiences in a variety of roles, including the title role in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Rodolfo in *La bohème*, and Hermann in *Queen of Spades*. In 2024, Brown joined the Glimmerglass Festival, where he covered the role of Canio in *Pagliacci*. evankbrown.com

About John Allen Nelson

Irish-American baritone John Allen Nelson is known for his "deliciously hearty sound" with "uniformity from top to bottom" paired with his clean musicality. His "full body approach" to acting makes him an audience favorite. In 2024, Nelson debuted in his home state of Minnesota at Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra as the bass soloist in Mozart's *Vespers* and returned to Pacific Symphony as Schaunard in *La bohème*. johnallennelson.net

About Angels Vocal Art, Kristof Van Grysperre, artistic director

Based in Arcadia, CA, Angels Vocal Art (AVA) has dedicated its mission to cultivating and developing the skills of rising operatic artists by offering advanced training, career guidance and professional

performance opportunities. By providing emerging talent with a full operatic background, training and understanding, AVA complements this with the leadership of a high-quality music and direction coaching team as well as a full professional orchestra. angelsvocalart.org

About Pepperdine Chamber Choir, Dr. Ryan Board, director

The Pepperdine Chamber Choir is Pepperdine University's top-tier vocal ensemble. This auditioned group of music and non-music majors performs demanding vocal ensemble repertoires of diverse styles and presents concerts locally, nationally and internationally. Often featured at important campus events, the Pepperdine Chamber Choir regularly tours the US and abroad. The Chamber Choir is regularly a featured group at the Prague Choral Festival. seaver.pepperdine.edu

About Los Robles Children's Choir, Emma Roche, director

The mission of Los Robles Children's Choir is to strive for excellence in choral singing by awakening and encouraging the artistry in each child. This exploration of the children's artistic essence takes place in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. The performances give the singers an opportunity to share their musical achievements and artistic sensitivities with an audience under the artistic direction of Emma Roche. singingchildren.org

About Music Director Michael Christie

Named New West Symphony's Artistic and Music Director in December 2018, GRAMMY® Award-winning conductor Michael Christie is a thoughtfully innovative conductor, equally at home in the symphonic and opera worlds, who is focused on making the audience experience at his performances entertaining, enlightening and enriching. Deeply committed to bringing new works to life, he has championed commissions by leading and emerging composers. michaelchristieonline.com

About New West Symphony

Founded in 1995 and celebrating its 30th Anniversary season in 2025, the New West Symphony (NWS) is a professional orchestra that draws players from the rich talent pool of professional LA-area musicians. NWS is a resident company of the Bank of America Performing Arts Center in Thousand Oaks and also performs at the Rancho Campana Performing Arts Center in Camarillo. The organization presents six Masterpiece Series concerts annually, performing major works from the symphonic repertoire with internationally-acclaimed guest artists. NWS also provides education and engagement opportunities for the communities it serves through [Symphonic Adventures](#) for youth and the [Laby Harmony Project](#) for underserved students. newwestsymphony.org

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