

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2018

Contact: Peter Rodgers, Director of Marketing

Phone: (608) 260-8680 x226

Mobile: (415) 713-0235

Email: prodgers@madisonsymphony.org

Web: madisonsymphony.org

Photos: <https://goo.gl/wyqExu>

The Madison Symphony Orchestra Announces its 2018–2019 Overture Concert Organ Series

Madison, Wis. May 14, 2018 – The Madison Symphony Orchestra invites audiences to experience the magic of its Overture Concert Organ in the 2018–2019 subscription series. Subscriptions are available now, and single tickets go on sale to the public Saturday, August 18, 2018.

MSO Principal Organist Greg Zelek introduces with great joy the first series he has crafted as Curator of the MSO's Overture Concert Organ. "Our organ in Overture Hall is one of the finest concert organs in America, and each of our invited artists will thrill both organ and classical music enthusiasts alike. All three guests will be making their Madison debuts, and I promise that they will both entertain and inspire, while bringing the magic of the Mighty Klais to life."

The 2018–2019 concert organ series opens on **Tuesday, September 18, 2018** with Principal Organist **Greg Zelek** performing a variety of "organ favorites," including one of his favorite works, **Guilmant's *First Organ Sonata***.

The series continues on **Tuesday, October 23, 2018** with **Paul Jacobs**, Chair of the Juilliard Organ Department and teacher to Principal Organist Greg Zelek, performing an **All-Bach** program in his Overture Hall debut.

Chelsea Chen resumes the 2019 organ subscription series on **Tuesday, February 19, 2019**. Her program is filled with transcriptions, including movements from ***The Planets*** by **Holst**, the last movement of **Saint-Saëns'** famous ***Organ Symphony***, as well as her own composition, **Taiwanese Suite**.

A dynamic collaboration concludes the 2018–2019 organ series on **Tuesday, April 16, 2019**. Join Principal Organist **Greg Zelek** and cellist **Thomas Mesa** in a concert of arrangements of music for cello and organ, including Tchaikovsky's flashy ***Pezzo Capriccioso***.

For more information about the 2018–2019 organ series and subscriptions, please visit

www.madisonsymphony.org/organseason18-19

Support for all Overture Concert Organ programs is provided by the Diane Endres Ballweg Fund. With a gift from Pleasant T. Rowland, the Madison Symphony Orchestra commissioned the Overture Concert Organ, which is the stunning backdrop of all MSO concerts.

ABOUT THE MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Madison Symphony Orchestra celebrates its 93rd season in 2018–2019 and its 25th season under the leadership of Music Director John DeMain. The MSO has grown to be one of America's leading regional orchestras, providing Madison and south-central Wisconsin with cultural and educational opportunities to interact with great masterworks and top-tier guest artists from around the world. Find more information at madisonsymphony.org. For more Overture Concert Organ information, visit madisonsymphony.org/organ.

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PROGRAM PREVIEWS & ARTIST BIOS

Tuesday, September 18, 2018, 7:30 p.m.
Overture Concert Hall

Greg Zelek, Organ

PROGRAM

Vierne, Final from Symphony No. 1, Op. 14

Bach, Trio Sonata in D Minor, BWV 527

Elgar, Salut d'amour, Op. 12

Franck, Final, Op. 21

Guilmant, Sonata No. 1 in D minor, Op. 42

About Greg Zelek

Praised for his “effortless facility on the instrument” (*South Florida Classical Review*), Greg Zelek (26) is increasingly recognized as one of the most exciting young organists in the American organ scene. Greg has been the Principal Organist of the Madison Symphony Orchestra and Curator of the Overture Concert Organ Series since September 2017. Greg holds the Wayne Curtis & Maybelle Slavens Hall and Francis Vincent & Lettie von Kalweit Dunnebacke Curatorship, which is endowed by anonymous friends of the Symphony.

In addition to concertizing throughout the United States and with the Madison Symphony Orchestra, Greg regularly performs with orchestras as both a soloist and professional ensemble member. In 2017, he performed with the Florida Orchestra and was the featured guest soloist with the Ridgewood Symphony in 2016. Greg was the organist in the Metropolitan Opera's 2014 production of Faust. He also performed twice that year with the New World Symphony, including in a performance of Lukas Foss's Phorion under Michael Tilson Thomas. In 2012, Greg played Strauss's Alpine Symphony with the MET Orchestra in Carnegie Hall conducted by Semyon Bychkov and performed Poulenc's Organ Concerto with the Miami Symphony Orchestra in 2011.

A recipient of the inaugural Kovner Fellowship, Greg received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees, as well as an Artist Diploma, from the Juilliard School. A native of Miami, Florida, Greg was most recently the Music Director and Organist at the Episcopal Church of St. Matthew and St. Timothy in New York City. Greg, who is Cuban-American and a native Spanish speaker, became the Music Director and Organist of Corpus Christi Catholic Church in Miami at age 15, and has served as the summer organist for San Pedro Apostol Church in Ramales de la Victoria, Spain.

(5/14/18, 18–19 MSO Overture Concert Organ Series, Program Previews & Artist Bios, continued).

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Tuesday, October 23, 2018, 7:30 p.m.
Overture Hall

Paul Jacobs, Organ

PROGRAM

All-Bach

About Paul Jacobs

The only organist ever to have won a Grammy Award (for Messiaen's "Livre du Saint-Sacrement"), Paul Jacobs has been an important influence in the revival of symphonic works featuring the organ and is a true innovator in the advocacy of organ repertoire, performing and encouraging the composition of new works that feature the instrument.

Mr. Jacobs made musical history at the age of 23 when he played Bach's complete organ works in an 18-hour marathon performance on the 250th anniversary of the composer's death. He is a frequent concerto and recital soloist, featuring the concert organs of the San Francisco Symphony, the Montreal Symphony, the Pacific Symphony, the Edmonton Symphony, the Indianapolis Symphony, and the Lexington Philharmonic, among others. He appears frequently in New York and has been featured on NPR's Morning Edition, ABC-TV's World News Tonight, and BBC Radio 3.

Mr. Jacobs studied at the Curtis Institute of Music and joined the faculty of the Juilliard School in 2003. He was named chairman of the organ department in 2004, one of the youngest faculty appointees in the school's history. He received Juilliard's prestigious William Schuman Scholar's Chair in 2007 and an honorary Doctor of Music from Washington and Jefferson College in 2017.

(5/14/18, 18–19 MSO Overture Concert Organ Series, Program Previews & Artist Bios, continued).

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Tuesday, February 19, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
Overture Concert Hall

Chelsea Chen, Organ

PROGRAM

Ola Gjeilo, Sinfonietta

Grieg, First Peer Gynt Suite, Op. 46

Chen, Taiwanese Suite

Saint-Saëns, Finale from “Organ” Symphony No. 3

Ad Wammes, Miroir

Holst, Selections from *The Planets*

About Chelsea Chen

Organist and composer Chelsea Chen has electrified audiences throughout the United States, Europe, Australia, and Asia soloing with orchestras throughout the world including the Wuhan Philharmonic in China, the Jakarta Simfonia in Indonesia, and the Juilliard Percussion Orchestra in Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall

As a composer she is broadening the classical organ repertoire with her own works based on Asian folksongs. Her oeuvre of solo and chamber music pieces have been performed throughout the world.

The recipient of the 2009 Lili Boulanger Memorial Award and winner of the 2005 Augustana/Reuter National Organ Competition, Ms. Chen is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where she received both her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees. She was also a full scholarship recipient at Yale University, where she earned an Artist Diploma. In 2014 she became Organist and Artist-in-Residence at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Ms. Chen splits her time between Florida and New York, where she is also Artist-in-Residence at Emmanuel Presbyterian Church in Manhattan.

(5/14/18, 18–19 MSO Overture Concert Organ Series, Program Previews & Artist Bios, continued).

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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Tuesday, April 16, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
Overture Hall

Thomas Mesa, Cello
Greg Zelek, Organ

PROGRAM

Beethoven, 7 Variations from Mozart's *The Magic Flute*

Debussy, Beau Soir

Bach, Prelude from Cello Suite No. 2 in D Minor, BWV 1008; "Fiddle" Fugue in D minor, BWV 539

Tchaikovsky, Pezzo Capriccioso, Op. 62

Widor, Toccata from Symphony for Organ, No. 5, Op 42.

Schubert, Serenade

Haydn, Cello Concerto No. 1 in C major

About Thomas Mesa

Thomas Mesa, Cuban-American cellist, is the winner of the 2017 Astral Artists Auditions and the 2016 Sphinx Competition. He has performed in a wide variety of solo engagements across the United States including with The Cleveland Orchestra and the LA Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl as well as at the Mainly Mozart Festival, Carnegie Hall, The Supreme Court of the United States, and at the International Beethoven Project.

As an enthusiastic interpreter of music for choir and cello, Mr. Mesa was one of the featured instrumentalists on The Crossing Choir's album called "Bonhoeffer" that was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2017. As a chamber musician, Mr. Mesa has toured with Itzhak Perlman both nationally and internationally and is a member of St. Petersburg Piano Quartet who are in high demand for the most important series in America.

Mr. Mesa received his Bachelor's degree from the Juilliard School and his Master's degree from Northwestern University where he was the recipient of the Richard and Helen Thomas Fellowship and Graduate Program Honors for extraordinary contributions to the String Department. Currently, he is a doctoral candidate at the Manhattan School of Music in New York City.

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