



**SAN FRANCISCO  
SYMPHONY**  
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(High resolution images of Juraj Valčuha and the SF Symphony are available for download from the San Francisco Symphony's [Online Photo Library](#))

**JURAJ VALČUHA CONDUCTS THE SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY IN RICHARD STRAUSS'S  
*DON JUAN* AND SUITE FROM *DER ROSENKAVALIER*, MAY 12-14 AT DAVIES SYMPHONY  
HALL**

**Concerts also include Prokofiev's Suite from *The Love for Three Oranges* and Webern's *Im Sommerwind***

**SAN FRANCISCO, APRIL 18** – Juraj Valčuha leads the San Francisco Symphony (SFS) in two large-scale works by Richard Strauss, *Don Juan* and Suite from *Der Rosenkavalier*, May 12-14 at Davies Symphony Hall. The concerts also include Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges* Suite and Webern's *Im Sommerwind*. All works are scored for large orchestra, their musical drama informed by poetic narratives.

Slovakian conductor Juraj Valčuha made his debut with the SFS in May 2013 and returned in October 2014 to conduct works by Stucky, Rachmaninoff, and Bartók, prompting the *San Francisco Chronicle* to note his “sharp-edged baton technique and an alert presence that makes for terrific ensemble precision.” Valčuha has been Chief Conductor of the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI, Torino since 2009, and has a growing career as a guest conductor of both symphonic and operatic works.

Music featured on these concerts is inspired by stories told through poetry. Richard Strauss's *Don Juan*, written in 1888 when Strauss was just 24 years old, was heartily received by audiences of the day and contributed greatly to his popularity as a composer. It is a tone poem based on the poem *Don Juans Ende* by Nikolaus Lenau, which depicts the

famous lover Don Juan and his search for the ideal woman. The quest can never be realized, and Don Juan seeks his death by challenging a ghost to a duel. In a program note, Michael Steinberg observed: "The fountain of sixteenth notes that opens *Don Juan* and the headlong melody it releases exemplify an exhilarating orchestral virtuosity entirely characteristic of its composer...Strauss had the gift of painting a character before us, seemingly in one stroke."

*Der Rosenkavalier*, with libretto by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, is Richard Strauss's most popular comic opera and was premiered in 1911 at the Dresden Court Opera. The Suite was arranged for orchestra in several later versions; Opus 59 was arranged by conductor Arthur Rodzinski, who performed it in New York in 1944. From Steinberg's program note: "To summarize: *Der Rosenkavalier* is about an aristocratic married lady in her early thirties, wife of Field Marshal von Werdenberg, who loses her seventeen-year-old lover (who is also her cousin) when he falls in love with a bourgeois girl his own age. But of course there is more to it than that—it is about what Flaubert called 'sentimental education,' the incalculable powers of eros, social climbing, the subtle messages of language, the mysterious passage of time, grace under fire. Not least, it is about gorgeous singing and fragrant orchestral textures."

Prokofiev's *The Love of Three Oranges* is based on the Italian play *L'amore della tre melarance* by Carlo Gozzi. The initial version, set in French and performed in Chicago in 1921, took some time to become accepted, although Prokofiev's later Suite gained popularity more rapidly. Webern's *Im Sommerwind* was written in 1904 just weeks before he met and became a pupil of Arnold Schoenberg. Subtitled "Idyll for Large Orchestra," *Im Sommerwind* was inspired by a poem of the same name by German socialist thinker Bruno Wille. The early work is warmly Romantic and is different from Webern's more stark later style.

**Juraj Valčuha** studied composition and conducting in Bratislava, Saint Petersburg with Ilya Musin, and in Paris. He made his debut with Orchestre National de France in 2005, and regularly conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra in London, Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Swedish Radio Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, and Orchestre de Paris. He recently made debuts with the Berlin Philharmonic and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Europe, and in the US with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, and National Symphony Orchestra, among others. On the operatic stage, he has led productions of Wagner's *Parsifal* with the Hungarian State Opera, Puccini's *Turandot* at Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, and Janáček's *Jenůfa* at the Teatro Comunale of Bologna. He made his San Francisco Symphony debut in 2013 as a Shenson Young Artist.

In the 2015-16 season Valčuha conducts the New York Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Czech Philharmonic, and the HR and NDR Radio Symphony orchestras in Frankfurt and Hamburg. In the 2016-17 season, he will make his debut with the Chicago Symphony and will conduct the San Francisco Symphony in concerts March 16-18, 2017 with Gil Shaham as violin soloist.

**Calendar editors, please note:**

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## **SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY, JURAJ VALČUHA CONDUCTING**

[Thursday, May 12, 2016 at 2 pm](#)

[Friday, May 13, 2016 at 8 pm](#)

[Saturday, May 14, 2016 at 8 pm](#)

Davies Symphony Hall  
201 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA

**Juraj Valčuha** conductor  
**San Francisco Symphony**

<b>PROKOFIEV</b>	<i>The Love for Three Oranges</i> Suite, Opus 33b
<b>R. STRAUSS</b>	<i>Don Juan</i> , Opus 20
<b>WEBERN</b>	<i>Im Sommerwind</i>
<b>R. STRAUSS</b>	Suite from <i>Der Rosenkavalier</i> , Opus 59

**Audio Program Notes:** Listen to a free podcast about Prokofiev's *The Love Of Three Oranges*, hosted by [KDFC's Rik Malone](#). All podcasts are archived, and can be downloaded or streamed from [sfsymphony.org/podcasts](https://www.sfsymphony.org/podcasts) and from the [iTunes store](#).

**Pre-Concert Talk:** Elizabeth Seitz will give an "Inside Music" talk from the stage one hour prior to each concert. Free to all concert ticket holders; doors open 15 minutes before.

**Broadcast / Archived Stream:** A broadcast of these performances will air Tuesday, May 24 at 8 pm on Classical KDFC 90.3 San Francisco, 104.9 San Jose, 89.9 Napa, and [kdfc.com](https://www.kdfc.com) where it will be available for on-demand streaming for 21 days following the broadcast.

**Pre-Order Food and Drinks:** Concertgoers may pre-order drinks and snacks [here](#) by 11am the day of a performance to arrange to have them ready at Davies Symphony Hall either before the concert or at intermission.

**Tickets:** \$15-\$165.

Tickets are available at [sfsymphony.org](https://www.sfsymphony.org), by phone at 415-864-6000, and at the Davies Symphony Hall Box Office, on Grove Street between Van Ness Avenue and Franklin Street in San Francisco.

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