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Images of Jonas Koh, the SFS Youth Orchestra, and Christian Reif are available for download in the [SFSYO Press Kit](#). Photo credit: Stefan Cohen

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES 2018–2019 SEASON

SFSYO's 2018 Concerto Competition winner Jonas Koh performs Emmanuel Séjourné's Concerto for Marimba and Strings, opening the season November 11 at 2pm

Orchestra embarks on 11th international tour in June 2019 with violinist Nicola Benedetti

Christian Reif concludes term as SFSYO Wattis Foundation Music Director after 2018–19 season

Other highlights of 2018–19 season include performances with SF Opera Adler Fellows, Dvořák's Symphony No. 7, *Mahlerwerk* by SFSYO alumnus Nathaniel Stookey, and Mahler's Symphony No. 1

SAN FRANCISCO, October 15, 2018 — The [San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra](#) (SFSYO) and Wattis Foundation Music Director [Christian Reif](#) open the 2018–19 season Sunday, November 11 at 2pm in Davies Symphony Hall with the SFSYO's 2018 Concerto Competition winner **Jonas Koh** performing Emmanuel Séjourné's Concerto for Marimba and Strings. Composed in 2005, Séjourné's work for marimba is one of few in the repertoire. "I have the rare opportunity to exhibit the capabilities of a beautiful instrument whose place in the modern world of music only continues to grow. Together with the Youth Orchestra, I aim to create a performance that deems Séjourné's piece as not only a great 'marimba concerto,' but a great piece of music," Koh says. The November 11 concert also includes **John Adams's** *The Chairman Dances* and closes with **Dvořák's** Symphony No. 7.

The SFS Youth Orchestra's 2018–19 season involves four additional concerts at Davies Symphony Hall, including the annual holiday concert performance of **Prokofiev's** *Peter and the Wolf*, featuring actor **Richard Dreyfuss** (*Jaws*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Madoff*) as narrator on December 9, 2018.

On March 3, 2019, Reif and the SFSYO perform a concert of music by **Mozart**, **Debussy**, and **Bizet**. Opening with the Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro*, the program continues with a selection of arias and ensembles from Mozart's opera, featuring members of the **San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program** as vocal soloists. The concert concludes with *Ibéria* from Debussy's *Images pour orchestra* and Bizet's *L'Arlésienne* Suite No. 2.

The May 19, 2019 program features music by Youth Orchestra alumnus **Nathaniel Stookey**, who was first commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony at age 17. The SFSYO performs Stookey's *Mahlerwerk*, a kaleidoscopic exploration of Mahler's music that pieces together fragments from each of the composer's nine symphonies. *Mahlerwerk* precedes the SFSYO's performance of **Mahler's** Symphony No. 1 on the May 19 concert, which opens with **Mendelssohn's** *Fingal's Cave* Overture.

To end the season and kick off the Orchestra's **11th international tour** in June 2019, the SFSYO performs a "Bon Voyage" concert on June 16 at Davies Symphony Hall, including **Detlev Glanert's** American Prelude No. 1, **Tchaikovsky's** Violin Concerto, and **Dvořák's** Symphony No. 7. The SFSYO is joined by violinist **Nicola Benedetti** for their summer tour, which includes performances at the **Elbphilharmonie** in Hamburg on June 26, and at the **Berlin Philharmonie** on June 29. In addition to the works by Glanert, Tchaikovsky, and Dvořák, the Orchestra will also reprise Mahler's Symphony No. 1 abroad. More details about the SFSYO's tour will be announced at a later date.

Christian Reif concludes his tenure as Resident Conductor and Wattis Foundation Music Director of the Youth Orchestra at the end of the 2018–19 season. Reif joined the San Francisco Symphony's artistic staff in the 2016–17 season, after serving two years as Conducting Fellow with the New World Symphony. As the Youth Orchestra's eighth music director, Reif has conducted the students in a wide range of works, from the world premiere of Iranian composer Anahita Abbasi's ... *within the shifting grounds* ... , to titans of orchestral repertoire, including the symphonies of Mahler, Shostakovich, Dvořák, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and Hindemith. As Resident Conductor, Reif also conducts the San Francisco Symphony in its other educational programs, SoundBox, and San Francisco Symphony subscription concerts. Most recently, Reif conducted the SFS in Holst's *The Planets* and, in the 18–19 season, he returns to lead the Symphony in Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5 and the world premiere of Andrew Norman's Cello Concerto, an SFS co-commission.

About Christian Reif

German conductor Christian Reif joined the San Francisco Symphony as Resident Conductor and Wattis Foundation Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra (SFSYO) in the 16–17 season. Reif joined San Francisco Symphony's artistic staff after two years as Conducting Fellow with the New World Symphony, where he worked closely with Michael Tilson Thomas. Recent highlights in the 18–19 season include debuts with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic. His 17–18 season included a debut with Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival, where he led the International Contemporary Ensemble in John Adams's *Grand Pianola Music*, and concerts with the Orchestre National de Lyon, Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, Bruckner Orchestra Linz, Lake Area Music, and Indianapolis and Berkeley symphonies. In the 16–17 season, Reif led the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz in Mozart's *Jupiter* Symphony and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with mezzo-soprano Michelle DeYoung and tenor Toby Spence for Heidelberg Spring International Music Festival. Previous performance highlights include leading The Juilliard School Orchestra, Israel Chamber Orchestra, Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra, Meiningen Court Orchestra, Georgian Chamber Orchestra, Salzburg Chamber Soloists and the Munich Chamber Opera in performances of Mozart's *La finta semplice*.



Credit: Kristen Loken

Reif is currently a member of Germany's prestigious Conductor's Forum (Dirigentenforum) and included on their list of "Maestros of Tomorrow." A dedicated and enthusiastic educator, he has also taught piano, coached instrumentalists and works with singers as a répétiteur. Reif completed his Master of Music in Conducting at The Juilliard School under Alan Gilbert in 2014, after studying with Dennis Russell Davies at the Mozarteum Salzburg. For his outstanding achievements at The Juilliard School, Reif received the Charles Schiff Conducting Award.

About Jonas Koh

Percussionist **Jonas Koh** is the winner of the 2018 San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra Concerto Competition. Koh was born in Bellevue, Washington, but spent most of his early years in Korea until moving to Fremont, California at the age of 8. Koh began taking marimba lessons from Tammy Chen, and after two years, began studying with Galen Lemmon, percussion instructor at San Jose State University. Koh joined the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra in 2016, after which he began study under Jacob Nissly, Principal Percussion of the SFS. Koh has won first place in the marimba, snare drum, and timpani categories of the CAPAS Annual Competition at Fresno and 1st place in the United States Open Music Competition. He also won first place at the 2018 Great Plains International Marimba Competition. Koh's side interests include reading, dancing, and listening to music.



Credit: Stephan Cohen

About the SFSYO



Credit: Stefan Cohen

Now in its 36th season, the [San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra](#) (SFSYO) is recognized internationally as one of the finest youth orchestras in the world. Founded by the [San Francisco Symphony](#) in 1981, the SFSYO's musicians are chosen from more than 300 applicants in annual auditions. The SFSYO's purpose is to provide an orchestral experience of pre-professional caliber, tuition-free, to talented young musicians from the greater Bay Area. The more than 100 diverse musicians, ranging in age from 12 to 21, represent communities from throughout the Bay Area. The SFSYO rehearses and performs at Davies Symphony Hall under the direction of Wattis Foundation Music Director Christian Reif, whose first season with the Orchestra was 2016–2017, and who concludes his term after the Orchestra's 2018–19 season. Jahja Ling served as the SFSYO's first Music Director, followed by David

Milnes, Leif Bjaland, Alasdair Neale, Edwin Outwater, Benjamin Shwartz, and Donato Cabrera, who stepped down at the conclusion of the 2015-16 season.

As part of the SFSYO's innovative training program, musicians from the San Francisco Symphony coach the young players each Saturday afternoon in sectional rehearsals, followed by full orchestra rehearsals with Reif. SFSYO members also have the opportunity to work with many of the world-renowned artists who perform with the SFS each week. SFS Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas, SFS Conductor Laureate Herbert Blomstedt, Sir Simon Rattle, Kurt Masur, Valery Gergiev, Leonard Slatkin, Yo-Yo Ma, Isaac Stern, Yehudi Menuhin, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Midori, Joshua Bell, Gil Shaham, Sarah Chang, and many others have worked with the SFSYO. Of equal importance, the students are able to talk with these prominent musicians, asking questions about their lives, their professional and personal experiences, and about music. The SFSYO has toured internationally on ten different occasions, garnering rave reviews and critical acclaim for its artistry. Its alumni have won positions in many major orchestras throughout the US and in Europe.

Calendar editors, please note:

Tickets to the SF Symphony Youth Orchestra's 2019–2019 season are on sale at www.sfsymphony.org, (415) 864-6000, and at the Davies Symphony Hall Box Office, located on Grove Street between Franklin and Van Ness.

All concerts are at Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

[Sunday, November 11, 2018 at 2 pm](#)

Christian Reif conductor
Jonas Koh marimba
San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

John ADAMS *The Chairman Dances*
Emmanuel SÉJOURNÉ Concerto for Marimba and Strings (2015 revision)
DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Opus 70

Tickets: \$55 reserved seating, \$20 general admission.

ANNUAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA HOLIDAY CONCERT

[Sunday, December 9, 2018 at 2 pm](#)

Christian Reif conductor
Richard Dreyfuss narrator
San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

TCHAKIOVSKY Selections from *The Nutcracker*
DVOŘÁK Slavonic Dance, Op. 72 No. 2 in E minor
BIZET Farandole from *L'Arlésienne* Suite No. 2
DURUFLÉ *Ubi caritas et amor*
PROKOFIEV *Peter and the Wolf*
Peter Dreyfuss narrator
MARKS (arr. NORRIS) "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" (sing-along)
PIERPOINT (arr. ROMERO) "Jingle Bells" (sing-along)
TRADITIONAL (arr. DRAGON) "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" (sing-along)

Tickets: \$25-\$90; half price for ages 17 and under.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

[Sunday, March 3, 2019 at 2 pm](#)

Christian Reif conductor
Vocalists from **San Francisco Opera Adler Fellowship Program**
San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

MOZART Overture, arias, and ensembles from *The Marriage of Figaro*
DEBUSSY *Ibéria* from *Images pour orchestre*
BIZET *L'Arlésienne* Suite No. 2

Tickets: \$55 reserved seating, \$20 general admission.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

[Sunday, May 19, 2019 at 2 pm](#)

Christian Reif conductor
San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

MENDELSSOHN *Fingal's Cave* Overture [*Hebrides Overture*], Opus 26
Nathaniel STOOKEY *Mahlerwerk*
MAHLER Symphony No. 1 in D Major

Tickets: \$55 reserved seating, \$20 general admission.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

Sunday, June 16, 2019 at 8 pm (“Bon Voyage”)

Christian Reif conductor
TBD violinist
San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

Detlev GLANERT	<i>American</i> Prelude No. 1
TCHAIKOVSKY	Violin Concerto in D major, Opus 35
DVOŘÁK	Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Opus 70

Tickets: \$55 reserved seating, \$20 general admission. Website link to be published.

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The SFSYO's 2018-19 season concerts are made possible through the generosity of Bank of America.

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The March 3 concert is presented in partnership with the San Francisco Arts Commission.

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