

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PHILHARMONIC

Young Artists Showcase

featuring Young Artist Solo Competition winners

Branden Muresan, Music Director & Conductor



Friday and Saturday, May 29 and 30, 2026 at 7:30 pm

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PHILHARMONIC

Young Artists Showcase

Branden Muresan, Music Director & Conductor

Piano Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25

Movement 1.....Felix Mendelssohn
featuring Hiroshi Corro, Piano

Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30

Movement 3.....Sergei Rachmaninoff
featuring Everett C. Leigh, Piano

Intermission

Presentation of Scholarships at Saturday's Concert

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21

Movement 1.....Frédéric Chopin
featuring Dominik Yoder, Piano

Firebird 1919 Suite.....Igor Stravinsky

Introduction

The Firebird and its Dance

Variation of the Firebird

The Princesses' Khorovod (Rondo)

Infernal Dance of King Kashchei

Lullaby

Finale



Special thanks to the Tustin Area Council for Fine Arts
for their continued sponsorship of the SoCalPhil
Young Artists Solo Competition

Find our past performances on YouTube!
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"Southern California Philharmonic"
More information at www.socalphil.org

Meet our Young Artists Winners in the Piano Category



Hiroshi Corro, an eighth-grade student at Walters Middle School in Fremont, California, began studying piano at age three with his mother and currently studies with Ms. Sandra Shen. In 2024 and 2025, he won first prize in many competitions, including the Etude Club Music Competition in Berkeley, the Avanti Steinway Piano Competition at Arizona State University, the San Francisco International Piano Competition, the California Association of Professional Music Teachers (CAPMT) Honors and Contemporary Competition, and the Golden State Youth Orchestra Concerto Competition. This fall, he will perform a Mendelssohn piano concerto with the Golden State Youth

Orchestra in San Mateo, California. He was also named First Alternate Winner in the 2023 Music Teachers' Association of California Concerto Competition and the 2024 Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) Solo Competition.

In the summer of 2023, Hiroshi attended the John Perry Summer Academy, participating in master classes with John Perry, Mina Perry, Sasha Starcevich, Boris Slutsky, and Jean-David Coen. In 2024, he studied with Dr. Steven Spooner and attended the PianoTexas Junior Program, where he worked with Igor Resnianski and Tamás Ungár. In 2025, he participated in the Southeastern Piano Festival in South Carolina and the Mannes Summer Music Festival in New York.

In addition to solo performance, Hiroshi enjoys chamber music and performing piano trios with string players. Recently, he performed Dvořák's Dumky Trio and will soon perform Mendelssohn's Piano Trio, Op. 49, in Berkeley, California. In his free time, he enjoys video games, skateboarding, and soccer, and he is fluent in both Spanish and Japanese.

Under the mentorship of Professor Ethan Dong since age nine, 15-year-old **Everett C. Leigh** has emerged as one of the leading young pianists of his generation. His artistry has earned praise from distinguished pedagogues including Boris Berman, William Grant Naboré, Robert McDonald, Inna Faliks, Stanislav Ioudenitch, Alessandro Deljavan, and Eric Lu.

Everett has won more than 50 international piano competitions, including the Bösendorfer and Yamaha United States–Arizona State University (USASU) International Piano Competition. He was named Pianist of the Year at the AD LIBITUM Warsaw International Piano Competition, won first prize twice at the Southern California Philharmonic (SoCalPhil) Young Artists Solo Competition, and earned top prizes at the Hong Kong International Piano Competition, the Pearl River Kayserburg International Youth Piano Competition, and the Vienna International Virtuoso Festival, where he also received the Best Performance Award. He has been featured in Maestro Magazine and by the World Online Music Competitions Organization (WOMCO).



As a soloist, Everett has performed with the SoCalPhil, Pacific Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Santa Barbara Symphony, and Glendale Youth Orchestra at venues including Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Soka Performing Arts Center, the Alex Theatre, and the Nixon Library.

Everett is the only junior piano soloist appointed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), and his United Nations Plaza performance was featured in a United Nations documentary. He is president of the Opus Music Foundation and founder of EverEverest, a nonprofit supporting underserved students through entrepreneurship and educational opportunities. EverEverest's sponsorship of the 2024 and 2025 FosterLove Galas helped raise more than \$1million annually for foster youth. Everett has also received three consecutive Presidential Gold Volunteer Service Awards and recognition from the United States Congress and Senate.

His artistic interests extend into BioMus, an exploration of music, artificial intelligence, engineering, and neuroscience. In 2025, he was invited to perform at the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics (CCRMA) at Stanford University and at the Poland Contemporary Art Festival. He is also a champion swimmer and a Taekwondo black belt.



Dominik Yoder displayed an unusual passion and determination for music from a very young age, beginning piano studies at the age of two on his own initiative. His playing has been described as “authoritative and lyrical, with a powerful technique spiced by an impish sense of humor.”

Among his recent achievements are Second Prize in the 2025 Hartford International Chopin Competition, Fourth Prize in the 2025 Fajariah International Piano Competition, and Second Prize in the 2024 Los Angeles International Liszt Competition. Earlier honors include the Gold Medal in the 2018 Kosciuszko Foundation Competition for Young Pianists in Washington, D.C., and the Grand Prize in the 2018 Redlands Competition, which led to a concerto performance with orchestra. In addition, he has received First Prize in more than a dozen local, regional, and state competitions.

In 2022, Dominik received the Wybitny Polak (“Outstanding Pole”) Award from the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Los Angeles.

Dominik has performed in Żelazowa Wola, the birthplace of Frédéric Chopin, as well as elsewhere in Poland, Puerto Rico, Germany, and throughout the United States. He has appeared as a solo recitalist and has performed with the Culver City Symphony Orchestra, Brentwood Symphony Orchestra, Southwest Youth Chamber Music Festival Orchestra, and the Hollywood Orchestra at the Redlands Bowl.

He has also appeared on Polish television and radio and has participated in master classes with Natalia Troull, Dina Joffe, Eteri Andjaparidze, Edward Wolanin, Alexander Korsantia, Boris Berman, Dmitry Rachmanov, Wojciech Kocjan, Jura Margulis, and Antoinette Perry. Dominik currently studies with his mother, Roza Yoder, and Polish pianist Edward Wolanin.

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The SoCalPhil thanks you for your patronage this season!

We are busy putting together the 2026-2027 season

Don't miss a beat!

Join us for the first concert of the season on

Friday, October 9 and Saturday, October 10, 2026!!

About Tonight's Program



Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847) was a German composer, pianist, and conductor whose melodic gift, formal elegance, and emotional warmth made him one of the most beloved figures of the Romantic era. Although born to a prosperous and cultured Jewish family, he was baptized Lutheran as a child to shield him from the era's anti-Semitism, allowing him to enjoy an exceptionally privileged upbringing.

His gifts were staggering. By his mid-teens he had already composed masterworks, most notably the String Octet in E-flat major (1825) and the overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1826), the latter written at just seventeen and displaying a fully formed, wholly original voice. These works alone would have secured a lasting reputation.

One of his most significant cultural achievements came in 1829, when he conducted a revival of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in Berlin — the first performance since Bach's death — almost single-handedly sparking the 19th-century Bach revival and reshaping how Western music understood its own history.

As a composer, Mendelssohn excelled in virtually every form: his violin concerto in E minor remains a cornerstone of the repertoire, his oratorios *St. Paul* and *Elijah* were enormously popular in his lifetime, and his five symphonies — particularly the *Italian* and *Scottish* — radiate charm and craftsmanship. His *Songs Without Words* for solo piano defined a new intimate genre.

He served as conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, elevating it to European prominence. Overworked and devastated by his sister Fanny's sudden death, Mendelssohn died in Leipzig in 1847, aged just thirty-eight.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943) was a Russian composer, pianist, and conductor whose richly melodic, emotionally expansive music made him one of the last great voices of the Romantic tradition. Born into a noble family in Novgorod province, he trained at the Moscow Conservatory under the demanding Nikolai Zverev and later Alexander Siloti, emerging as both a formidable pianist and a composer of exceptional promise.

His early career was shadowed by a devastating failure: the premiere of his *First Symphony* in 1897 was catastrophically received, plunging him into a prolonged creative crisis and depression. He recovered only after undergoing hypnotherapy with physician Nikolai Dahl, to whom he dedicated his celebrated *Second Piano Concerto* (1901) - a work of sweeping lyricism that announced his full return and remains among the most beloved concertos ever written.



The years between 1900 and 1917 were enormously productive, yielding the Second and Third Piano Concertos, the Second Symphony, the symphonic poem *Isle of the Dead*, and the choral masterpiece *The Bells*. His musical language — characterized by long, arching melodies, lush harmonies, and brooding intensity — was distinctly personal and immediately recognizable.

The Russian Revolution forced him into permanent exile in 1917. Settling eventually in the United States, he largely abandoned composition, focusing on a spectacular concert career as one of the finest pianists of the century. His late works, including the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (1934) and the *Fourth Piano Concerto*, revealed undiminished creative power.

He died in Beverly Hills, California, in 1943, just days before his seventieth birthday.



Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) was a Polish composer and pianist whose intimate, poetry-infused music for solo piano redefined the instrument's expressive possibilities and established him as one of the most original voices in the history of Western music. Born in the Duchy of Warsaw, he displayed extraordinary musical gifts from childhood, performing publicly by age seven and composing with remarkable sophistication in his early teens.

Warsaw could not contain his ambitions, and in 1830 he left Poland for Vienna and then Paris, never to return to his homeland. The Russian suppression of the Polish uprising of 1830–31 affected him deeply, and a fierce, aching patriotism runs through much of his music, most explicitly in his Polish dances — the mazurkas and polonaises — which elevated folk idioms into high art.

Paris suited him perfectly. He moved in the highest artistic and intellectual circles, counting Liszt, Berlioz, Delacroix, and Heine among his associates. Though he rarely performed in large concert halls, preferring intimate salon settings, his reputation spread across Europe. His long, turbulent relationship with the writer George Sand, lasting from 1838 to 1847, was among the most celebrated romances of the Romantic era.

His output was almost exclusively for solo piano, encompassing nocturnes, études, preludes, ballades, scherzos, waltzes, and concertos. The études alone revolutionized piano technique while achieving the status of pure art. Suffering from tuberculosis for much of his adult life, Chopin died in Paris in 1849, aged thirty-nine, leaving a body of work of incomparable refinement and depth.

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21 — despite its numbering, was composed before No. 1. The writing is deeply personal, suffused with the longing and melancholy that defined his early style, and widely believed to reflect his unrequited love for the singer Konstancja Gładkowska.

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971) was a Russian-born composer widely regarded as one of the most influential figures in 20th-century music. Born in Oranienbaum, Russia, he studied under Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, whose tutelage proved foundational to his early development.

Stravinsky burst onto the international stage with three ballet scores commissioned by impresario Sergei Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes: *The Firebird* (1910), *Petrushka* (1911), and *The Rite of Spring* (1913). The premiere of *The Rite of Spring* famously provoked a riot in the Paris audience, stunned by its dissonant harmonies, irregular rhythms, and savage energy. The work permanently altered the course of Western music.

Following World War I, Stravinsky embraced Neoclassicism, drawing on Baroque and

Classical forms while filtering them through a modern sensibility. Works like *Pulcinella* (1920) and the *Symphony of Psalms* (1930) exemplified this cooler, more restrained aesthetic. He also composed operas, chamber music, and piano works throughout this period.

After settling in the United States in 1939 — eventually becoming a citizen in 1945 — Stravinsky entered yet another stylistic phase, adopting twelve-tone serialism in his later years, demonstrating a remarkable willingness to reinvent himself.

Beyond composition, he was a formidable conductor and a compelling intellectual presence, documented in books co-authored with Robert Craft. His lifelong restlessness, moving between nationalism, Neoclassicism, and serialism, made him not just a composer but a mirror of the entire modern era. He died in New York City in 1971.

The Firebird Suite (1919) is Stravinsky's own condensed concert version of his 1910 ballet score, trimmed from the original to make it practical for standard orchestras. He reduced the ensemble size and selected the most vivid episodes: the Introduction, the Firebird's Dance, the Firebird's Variations, the Princesses' Rondo, and the celebrated Infernal Dance, Berceuse, and Finale. The 1919 suite became the most frequently performed version, its luminous orchestration and dramatic arc making it a concert hall staple worldwide.



Meet the SoCalPhil



Maestro Branden Muresan is a native of San Juan Capistrano, California, where he still resides and teaches. He began studying violin performance at age six under the tutelage of Merillee Walker and Noumi Fischer. After earning his Associate in Arts from Saddleback College, he continued his studies at San Diego State University, where he was honored to be taken as a student by Igor and Vesna Gruppman, former students of Jascha Heifetz and David Oistrakh. At San Diego State University, he earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Violin Performance. In 2000, he completed a Master of Music degree in Instrumental and Orchestral Conducting under the instruction of Donald Barra.

Branden began performing on the violin professionally at age 16 and has since become a well-orchestral violinist from Baja California to Los Angeles. His most notable performances include appearances with The Irish Tenors in Mexicali, at Luciano Pavarotti's final professional concert, on tour with Il Divo, and, most recently, with Dionne Warwick. Currently, he is assistant conductor for the Long Beach Ballet Orchestra.

Professor Muresan began offering private violin lessons when he was 18, and many of his students eventually have pursued advanced music degrees at such prestigious institutions as the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach, Longy Conservatory of Music of Bard College, California Institute of the Arts, University of California, San Diego, University of San Diego, and the University of Utah. Professor Muresan began teaching at Grossmont College in 2001, at University of San Diego in 2003, and at MiraCosta College in 2009. He was later honored to join the faculty of his alma mater, Saddleback College, where he currently serves as an adjunct professor.

This season marks Maestro's 12th season as Conductor and Music Director of the SoCalPhil. As a conductor, Maestro Muresan founded the East San Diego County Civic Youth Orchestra program in 2003, an organization that thrives to this day. After appearing in several guest conducting engagements, he was invited to establish and lead a new adult orchestra program in Poway, as well as the Four Seasons Youth Orchestra in Newport Beach. He also served as interim conductor of the Saddleback College Orchestra during the 2011–2012 season.

In 2009, Maestro Muresan was appointed conductor of the MiraCosta College Symphony Orchestra, and in 2012 he was selected to conduct the Southern California Philharmonic. Both ensembles have flourished under his leadership and artistic direction.



Jessica Haddy has been the concertmaster of the Southern California Philharmonic since 2016. She was a featured soloist for the ensemble performing works by Bruch, Beethoven and Rimsky Korsakov. As a soloist, Jessica has been invited to perform at the Laguna Beach Sunset Serenades and the Hortense Miller Estate concert series. She has given concerts with pianists, harpists, string quartets, guitarists, and jazz ensembles throughout Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Diego. She was honored to perform a concert in the Western White House in San Clemente owned by former President Richard Nixon.

While working in Los Angeles during 2000-2010, Jessica appeared in music videos with Elton John, Sheryl Crow, Sting, Il Divo, and Randy Travis. Jessica was also the violinist for the first musical stage production of *Quadrophenia* written by Pete Townshend of The Who. In 2017, Jessica became the concertmaster and manager for the ballet company, *Dance to Your Hearts Delight* performing the *Nutcracker* at the Downey Theater the first weekend of December each year. Krutz Strings company based in Kansas City named Jessica Brand Ambassador in 2018, launching a social media campaign to feature string artists in the United States for the company. Each year, Jessica represents the company at NAMM convention in Anaheim.

Her event music company, Haddy Music, performs at events and has been featured at several music festivals, including the Coast Film festival in 2023. Haddy Music is highly reviewed and was featured in *Riviera Magazine's* Best of OC for event music.

A Laguna Beach resident, Jessica teaches viola/violin online and in person. Her students have positions as soloists and concertmasters in their school and youth orchestras, and many of them have won prizes in their schools and in international and local concerto competitions. In 2021, she became the strings director at the Waldorf school of Orange County and has been the strings coach and conductor at Corona Del Mar middle and high school since 2017.

In 2025, Jessica started Haddy Music Strings Hub, a course on violin studies for adults. Details about the course can be found at www.haddy-music.com.

Jessica would also like to thank her husband Ryan and daughter Ravelle for all their love and support!

Southern California Philharmonic Musicians

First Violin

Jessica Haddy***
Simeon Brown**
Daphne Artis
Terry Blalock
Joyce Chen
Cole Grace
Karen Harms
Andrew Hsu
Lixing Min+
Benjamin Park
Kenneth Park
Carmel Shahriary
Kim Stephens-Doll

Second Violin

Stefano Stefan*
Ian Chen
Sophie Chen
Marjorie Criddle+
Elliot Rice Epstein
Chris Esser
Manami "Mimi" Fisher
Shawn Joseph
Jenny Kriakov+
Beth McCormick
Kristina Morse
Miles Park
Jamie Rosario
Pamela Samuel
Avi Schwartz+
Susan Teitelbaum
Ana Varela+
Greg Wesley

Viola

Tobin Gomez*+
Linda Jin*
Eric Chang+
Megan Eng
Jon Goldman+
Liz Porter
Harry Pachchala

Cello

Nancy Korb*
W. P. Harvey*
Alex Boddy-Drum
Sarah Chaney+
Emily Chien+
Jasmine Cordon
Catherine Croisette+
Priscila Forbes+
Jason Greenberg
Vivien Ide
Jessie Keller+
Cara Lam
Daniel Louie
Alysha Madon+
Mike Malouf
Pauline Merry
Joanne Noh
David Pendergrast
Kathleen Robinson+
John Wilkerson
Natalie Wong

Bass

Nathaniel Gaber*
Easton Siedel+
Bob Stephens-Doll

Flute

Betty Whyte*
Randy Smith

Piccolo

Ann Goldman

Oboe

Ann Ludwig*+
Amelia Russo-Neustadt *+
Bennet Kai Imai*
Angel Canal
Lisa Chattler+

Clarinet

Daryl Golden*
Oma Skyrus*

Bassoon

Theresa Harvey*
Stan Tyler

Horn

Tod Beckett-Frank*
Frank Fox
Roger Gottfried
Brien Heitz
Kathy Lowe

Trumpet

Timothy Shevlin*
Stephen Farkas
Carl Privette+

Trombone

Craig Chorbagan*
Jared McCarthy
David Ludwig +

Bass Trombone

John Lowe

Tuba

Jason Trimble*

Percussion

Greg Ozment*
Andrea Avazian
Daniel Harris
Haley Jean MacKay

Harp

Chiara Solar

Piano

Melissa X. Marius*

*** Concertmaster * Principal/Co-principals **Assistant Principal +Leave of Absence

In Memoriam / Tributes

Karen Harms, in memory of Dr. Richard Harms
Rich's favorite piece: Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

Tricia & Rich Matzinger, in memory of Barbara & John Echternach
The Echternachs' favorite song: "What a Wonderful World" by Louis Armstrong

Karen Asahino Selleck, in memory of Myrtle & Steve Asahino
The Asahinos' favorite song: "Hawaiian Wedding Song"

K. Richard Tait, in memory of Kenneth Tait
Kenneth's favorite piece: Beethoven's 7th Symphony

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Visit www.socalphil.org for info on the 2026-2027 season SoCalPhil Young Artist Solo Competition!!