

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pasadena Symphony Association

Pasadena Symphony & POPS

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**PASADENA SYMPHONY PRESENTS BEETHOVEN PASTORAL SYMPHONY
NO. 6 WITH NICHOLAS MCGEGAN**

Pasadena CA – Experience Beethoven’s love of nature with Nicholas McGegan as your guide with the Pasadena Symphony’s performance of *Beethoven’s “Pastoral” Symphony No. 6* on Saturday, March 21, 2015 at **Ambassador Auditorium** with both matinee and evening performances at **2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.**

The Los Angeles Times celebrated McGegan to be “in fact the sunniest conductor in classical music!” and the *Crescenta Valley Weekly* said “if performances under McGegan are any indication, the Pasadena Symphony seems to be on the cusp of a golden age.”

Themes of spiritual renewal, pastoral landscapes, dramatic storms and startling beauty pull you into Beethoven’s sonic painting of the great outdoors. The prodigiously talented Geneva Lewis continues The Pasadena Symphony’s tradition of showcasing the stars of tomorrow here today with **Mozart’s** stunningly beautiful *Violin Concerto No. 3*. Heralded as one of the world’s top 20 young violinists, Geneva Lewis is a current student of the Pasadena Symphony’s community partner, the Colburn Community School for Performing Arts.

Performances are accompanied by a popular pre-concert discussion that gives the audience insights into the music and musicians one-hour before curtain. Audiences are invited to luxuriate in the lively Sierra Auto Symphony Lounge, yet another addition to the delightful and elegant concert experience the Pasadena Symphony offers. Located in the beautiful outdoor plaza at the Ambassador Auditorium, audiences can enjoy a deliciously prepared menu specially created for the evening by Claud and Co, fine wines, and sparkling conversation before the concert and during intermission. Menu highlights include hot and sour soup with shredded vegetables, Chinese chicken salad, chicken and vegetable pot stickers and scrumptious smoked salmon spring rolls plus almond cookies.

The Ambassador Auditorium is located at 131 South St. John Avenue, Pasadena, CA. Ticket prices start at \$35 and may be purchased online at www.pasadenasympphony-pops.org or by calling (626) 793-7172.

IF YOU GO:

- **What:** The Pasadena Symphony presents Beethoven 6
- **Conductor:** Nicholas McGegan, Principal Guest Conductor

- **Soloist:** Geneva Lewis, violin
- **When:** Saturday, March 21 at 2:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m.
- **Where:** Ambassador Auditorium | 131 South St. John Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91105
- **Cost:** Tickets start at \$35.00
- **Parking:** Valet parking with wheelchair access is available on Green Street for \$15. Handicap and general parking is available next to the Auditorium at the covered parking structure for \$10. Additional handicap parking is also located at the above-ground parking lot adjacent to the Auditorium (entrance on St. John Ave.) for \$10. Parking purchased onsite is cash only.
- **Symphony Lounge:** Located on the plaza at Ambassador Auditorium. Open before the concert and during intermission.
- **Pre-Concert Discussion:** Pre-concert discussion with Nicholas McGegan begins one hour before curtain and is available to all ticket holders.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Nicholas McGegan

“If the performances under Nic McGegan are any indication, the Pasadena Symphony seems to be on the cusp of a golden age. Long may it last.” praised Ted Ayala of the Crescenta Valley Weekly of Principal Guest Conductor of the Pasadena Symphony. As he embarks on his fourth decade on the podium, Nicholas McGegan — long hailed as “one of the finest baroque conductors of his generation” (London Independent) and “an expert in 18th-century style” (The New Yorker) — is increasingly recognized for his probing and revelatory explorations of music of all periods.

Through 27 years as its music director, McGegan has established the San Francisco-based Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and Philharmonia Chorale as one of the world’s leading period-performance ensembles, with notable appearances at Carnegie Hall, the London Proms, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and the International Handel Festival, Göttingen where he was artistic director from 1991 to 2011. Throughout his career, McGegan has defined an approach to period style that sets the current standard: serious and intelligent, but never dogmatic. More recently, Philharmonia Baroque is branching out under his leadership. Calling the group’s recent recording of the Brahms Serenades “a truly treasurable disc,” James R. Oestreich in The New York Times made special note of the performance’s “energy and spirit.”

McGegan’s ability to engage players and audiences alike has made him a pioneer in broadening the reach of historically informed practice beyond the world of period ensembles to conventional symphonic forces. His guest-conducting appearances with major orchestras — including the New York, Los Angeles, and Hong Kong Philharmonics; the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Toronto and Sydney Symphonies; the Cleveland and the Philadelphia Orchestras; and the Northern Sinfonia and Scottish Chamber Orchestra — often feature Baroque repertoire alongside Classical, Romantic, 20th-century and even brand-new works: Mendelssohn, Sibelius, Britten, Bach and Handel with the Utah

Symphony; Poulenc and Mozart with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra; Mahler and Mozart with the Pasadena Symphony Orchestra; and the premiere, in 2012, of Stephen Hough's *Missa Mirabilis* with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, paired with Haydn, Brahms and Mendelssohn.

Active in opera as well as the concert hall, McGegan was principal conductor of Sweden's perfectly preserved 18th-century theater Drottningholm from 1993 to 1996. He has also been a frequent guest conductor with opera companies including Covent Garden, San Francisco, Santa Fe and Washington.

His discography of more than 100 releases includes the world premiere recording of Handel's *Susanna*, which garnered both a Gramophone Award and a GRAMMY® nomination, and recent issues of that composer's *Solomon*, *Samson* and *Acis and Galatea* (the little-known version adapted by Felix Mendelssohn). He is also credited with the first performance in modern times of Handel's masterly but mislaid *Gloria*. Under its own label, Philharmonia Baroque Productions (PBP), in addition to the Brahms recording Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra has recently released five acclaimed archival recordings: Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'été* and selected Handel arias with the late Lorraine Hunt Lieberson; Haydn Symphonies No. 88, 101 and 104, nominated for a GRAMMY® Award; Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* and other concerti with Elizabeth Blumenstock as violin soloist; Handel's *Atalanta* with soprano Dominique Labelle in the title role; and Brahms' beloved *Serenades*.

Mr. McGegan is committed to the next generation of musicians, frequently conducting and coaching students in residencies and engagements at Yale University, the Juilliard School, Harvard University, the Colburn School, Aspen Music Festival and School, and the Music Academy of the West.

Born in England, Nicholas McGegan was educated at Cambridge and Oxford and taught at the Royal College of Music, London. He was made an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the Queen's Birthday Honours for 2010 "for services to music overseas." His awards also include the Halle Handel Prize; an honorary professorship at Georg-August University, Göttingen; the Order of Merit of the State of Lower Saxony (Germany); the Medal of Honour of the City of Göttingen, and an official Nicholas McGegan Day, declared by the Mayor of San Francisco in recognition of two decades of distinguished work with Philharmonia Baroque.

Geneva Lewis, Violin

Geneva Lewis, originally from Auckland, New Zealand, is a merit scholarship student at the Colburn Community School of Performing Arts where she studies with Aimée Kreston, Concertmaster of the Pasadena Symphony. Geneva made her orchestral debut at age 11, and has since matured into an exceptional violinist.

Geneva's powerful performances have awarded her first-prize wins in numerous competitions, including the Brentwood Concerto Competition, Parness Concerto Competition, Southern California Junior Bach Festival Complete Works Audition, and The American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition. She was presented with the 'Discovery Prize' in the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Concerto Competition and

won the Doublestop Foundation's "Artist in You" Instrument Loan Competition. With her piano quartet, Geneva reached the semi-finals of the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. As a soloist, Geneva has performed with the Brentwood Westwood Symphony Orchestra, Antelope Valley Symphony Orchestra, Culver City Symphony, Pasadena POPS, twice with the Sierra Summer Festival Orchestra and at such venues as the Mozarteum in Salzburg and Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. In 2012, Geneva was cast alongside Emmy-Award winning actress Mariette Hartley as the young virtuoso violinist, Erica Morini, in the LA Times Critic's Choice, *The Morini Strad*.

Geneva was recently selected as one of the world's top 20 young violinists in the Menuhin International Violin Competition, and will compete in the final rounds of the competition in late February 2014. Geneva will make her solo debut with the Pasadena Symphony in their 2014-2015 concert season. She plays on a Terry Borman violin (1991).

ABOUT THE PASADENA SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION

Recent Acclaim for the Pasadena Symphony and POPS

"The Pasadena Symphony signals a new direction...teeming with vitality...dripping with opulent, sexy emotion." *Los Angeles Times*.

"...full of pulsating energy from first note to last... the strings were lushly resonant, the wind principals were at the top of their games, and the brass rang out with gleaming vigor." –*Pasadena Star News*.

Formed in 1928, the Pasadena Symphony and POPS is an ensemble of Hollywood's most talented, sought after musicians. With extensive credits in the film, television, recording and orchestral industry, the artists of Pasadena Symphony and POPS are the most heard in the world.

The Pasadena Symphony and POPS performs in two of the most extraordinary venues in the United States: Ambassador Auditorium, known as the *Carnegie Hall of the West*, and the luxuriant Los Angeles Arboretum & Botanic Garden. Internationally recognized, Grammy-nominated conductor, David Lockington, serves as the Pasadena Symphony Association's Music Director, with performance-practice specialist Nicholas McGegan serving as Principal Guest Conductor. The multi-platinum-selling, two-time Emmy and five-time Grammy Award-nominated entertainer dubbed "The Ambassador of the Great American Songbook," Michael Feinstein, is the Principal Pops Conductor, who succeeded Marvin Hamlisch in the newly created *Marvin Hamlisch Chair*.

A hallmark of its robust education programs, the Pasadena Symphony Association has served the youth of the region for over five decades through the Pasadena Youth Symphony Orchestras (PYSO) comprised of five performing ensembles, with over 250 gifted 4th-12th grade students from more than 50 schools all over the Southern California region. The PYSO Symphony often performs on the popular television show *GLEE*.

The PSA provides people from all walks of life with powerful access points to the world of symphonic music.

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