

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Pasadena Symphony Association**

**Pasadena Symphony & POPS**

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**PASADENA SYMPHONY FINISHES SEASON  
WITH SPECTACULAR GRIEG PIANO CONCERTO**

**Pasadena CA** – The Pasadena Symphony concludes its exhilarating season with a bang on Saturday May 2, 2105. Hear award-winning Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Martinez performing the **Grieg’s** hugely popular piano concerto and taste the rapture and romance of *Romeo & Juliet* as summoned up by one of the greatest Russian masters, **Prokofiev** on at **Ambassador Auditorium** with matinee and evening performances at both **2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.**

The romantic Piano Concerto written by Edvard Grieg, “the Chopin of the North,” explores the expressive drama, joy, and adulation of Norwegian folk dances and festivities, written for his beloved wife Clara. Romantic programming weaves together the evening, as Sergei **Prokofiev’s** dramatic tragic interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* creates a virtual retelling of Shakespeare’s most famous work with excerpts that bring the passionate zest of the story to life. Christopher **Rouse’s** *Rapture*, unlocks the powerful bombastic strength of the entire orchestra with as Rouse describes, “a progression to an ever more blinding ecstasy!”

“As we look back, we’re inspired by this landmark season under the full artistic direction of Music Director David Lockington and Principal Guest Conductor Nicholas McGegan,” says Lora Unger, CEO of the Pasadena Symphony Association adding “we’ve made a pronounced impact on our audience and they’re enthusiastically responding to it... it sets the stage for even greater things to come next year as we expand our Classics Series to six concert weekends.”

Lauded by *The New York Times* as “compelling, elegant, and incisive,” Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Martinez is quickly establishing a reputation and earning praise as a versatile artist who combines “panache and poetry” (*Dallas Morning News*) with a “sense of grace and clarity” (*The Star Ledger*).

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 lunch and dinner menu specially created for the evening by Claud and Co, fine wines, and sparkling conversation before the concert and during intermission. Menu highlights include Vegetarian Italian wedding soup, Burratta cheese and arugula with crispy Prosciutto and

balsamic vinaigrette, and Penne pasta with chicken, spring shelling pea's garlic and basil pesto.

The Ambassador Auditorium is located at 131 South St. John Avenue, Pasadena, CA. Ticket prices start at \$20 and may be purchased online at [www.pasadenasympphony-pops.org](http://www.pasadenasympphony-pops.org) or by calling (626) 793-7172.

## IF YOU GO:

- **What:** The Pasadena Symphony presents Grieg Piano Concerto
- **Conductor:** David Lockington, conductor
- **Soloist:** Gabriela Martinez, piano
- **When:** Saturday, May 2 at 2:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m.
- **Where:** Ambassador Auditorium | 131 South St. John Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91105
- **Cost:** Tickets start at \$20.00
- **Parking:** Valet parking with wheelchair access is available on Green Street for \$15. ADA and general parking are available in the parking lots adjacent to the Auditorium on St. John for \$10. Additional ada 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.
- **Sierra Auto Symphony Lounge:** Located on the plaza at Ambassador Auditorium. Open before the concert and during intermission.
- **Pre-Concert Discussion:** Pre-concert discussion with David Lockington begins one hour before curtain and is available to all ticket holders.

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### David Lockington

In his 14th season as Music Director of the Grand Rapids Symphony, David Lockington has created a lasting legacy of artistic achievements and genuine community enrichment. 2005 marked Lockington's conducting debut at New York's Carnegie Hall. The New York Times commended the Grand Rapids Symphony, under his artistic leadership for being a model in the Classical music world. Lockington also earned a 2007 Grammy Award nomination and has led five recordings with Grand Rapids. The recordings have received high praise including the CD of Adolphus Hailstork's Second and Third symphonies, released internationally on the Naxos label in 2007. Additionally, 2008 saw the successful start of the Grand Rapids Symphony Youth Choruses. At his initiative, the Symphony has also reached out to new and diverse audiences through its annual community concert "Symphony with Soul," now in its 12th season.

Lockington's guest conducting engagements include appearances with the Saint Louis, Houston, Detroit, Seattle, Toronto, Vancouver, Colorado, Oregon, Phoenix, Indianapolis, Pacific, Nashville, San Diego, Kansas City and Columbus Symphonies; the Louisville Orchestra and National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa; the Buffalo, Rochester, Calgary

and Louisiana Philharmonics; and the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall. Internationally, he has conducted the China Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra in Beijing and Taiwan, led the English Chamber Orchestra on a tour in Asia and appeared with the Orquesta Sinfonica del Principado de Asturias in Spain and the Northern Sinfonia in Great Britain.

Since September 2007 Mr. Lockington has served as music director of the Modesto Symphony Orchestra in California. In May 2012, he was named principal conductor of Spain's Orquesta Sinfonica del Principado de Asturias. Prior to leading the Grand Rapids Symphony, Mr. Lockington held the music directorships of the Long Island Philharmonic, New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, Cheyenne Symphony and Ohio Chamber Orchestra. For three years he held the post of assistant conductor with the Denver Symphony Orchestra and Opera Colorado. Mr. Lockington was also associate conductor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

Mr. Lockington began his career as principal cellist with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. After completing his Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Cambridge, he came to the U.S. on a scholarship to Yale University, where he received his master's degree in cello performance and studied conducting with Otto Werner Mueller.

### **Gabriela Martinez, Piano**

Lauded by *The New York Times* as "compelling, elegant, and incisive," Venezuelan pianist Gabriela Martinez is quickly establishing a reputation and earning praise as a versatile artist who combines "panache and poetry" (*Dallas Morning News*) with a "sense of grace and clarity" (*The Star Ledger*).

Ms. Martinez has already amassed an impressive list of recital, concerto, and chamber music performance credits. Since making her orchestral debut at age seven, she has appeared as soloist with orchestras such as the Chicago, Houston, New Jersey, Fort Worth, Pacific, and San Francisco symphonies, the Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, MDR Rundfunkorchester, Nurnberger Philharmoniker, Symphonisches Staatsorchester Halle, Tivoli Philharmonic, and Simón Bolívar Youth Symphony Orchestra. An avid chamber musician, she has collaborated with numerous musicians and ensembles including Itzhak Perlman and the Takács and Calder quartets. Ms. Martinez has performed under conductors Gustavo Dudamel, Lawrence Foster, James Gaffigan, Dirk Brossé, Klauspeter Seibel, Giordano Bellincampi, Diego Matheuz, Christian Vasquez, Guillermo Figueroa, Susanna Mälkki, Andrew Manze, Matthias Pintscher, Anne Manson, James Conlon, Charles Dutoit, Egmon Colomer, and Pedro and Cristobal Halffter, among others.

Among the many venues where she has appeared are Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, and Alice Tully Hall in New York; Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco; Bass Hall in Fort Worth; Palace of Versailles in Paris; Grosses Festspielhaus in Salzburg; Semperoper in Dresden; Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen; the Verbier, Ravinia, Rockport Chamber Music, and Dresden music festivals; the Snow and Symphony Festival in St. Moritz; Festival de Radio France et Montpellier; Spoleto Festival dei Due Mondi; the Mostly

Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center; and the Tokyo International Music Festival. She has performed both as soloist and chamber musician in more than 60 concert halls in the U.S. and Germany, as well as in The Netherlands, Tel Aviv, Rome, Venice, London, Brussels, Caracas, and Bogotá.

Ms. Martinez has won numerous national and international prizes and awards. Her most recent accomplishments include first prize and audience award at the Anton G. Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Dresden. She was a semifinalist at the 12th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, where she also received a Jury Discretionary Award. Her wide-ranging career includes world premieres of new music, live performance broadcasts, and interviews on TV and radio. Ms. Martinez's performances have been featured on MDR Kultur (Germany), NHK (Japan), Radio France (France), RAI (Italy), and Deutsche Welle (Germany); on such U.S. outlets as WQXR, WNYC, NPR, CNN, PBS, 60 Minutes, ABC, and From the Top; and on numerous TV and radio stations in Venezuela.

Born in Caracas in 1984, Ms. Martinez began her piano studies with her mother Alicia Gaggioni, and studied with Miyoko Lotto at the Perlman Music Program. She earned her Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from The Juilliard School as a full scholarship student of Yoheved Kaplinsky, and worked on her doctorate with Marco Antonio de Almeida in Halle, Germany. Committed to teaching and arts advocacy, Ms. Martinez was a member of Ensemble ACJW as a Fellow in The Academy—a program of Carnegie Hall, The Juilliard School, and the Weill Music Institute in partnership with the New York City Department of Education. Passionate about education, Ms. Martinez teaches privately in New York City and is on the Concert Artist Faculty at Kean University in New Jersey.

## **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 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> 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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