

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Pasadena Symphony Association**

**Pasadena Symphony & POPS**

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January 30, 2019

**For artist images and bios visit:** <https://pasadenasympphony-pops.org/press-release-tchaikovsky-spectacular>

**VAN CLIBURN WINNER OLGA KERN BRINGS FIRE TO THE PASADENA SYMPHONY'S RED-HOT TCHAIKOVSKY SPECTACULAR**

*Pasadena CA* – **Music Director David Lockington** returns to the podium next month to conduct the **Pasadena Symphony's Tchaikovsky Spectacular** at **Ambassador Auditorium** on Saturday, **February 16** with performances at 2pm and 8pm. This all-Tchaikovsky program features **Van Cliburn winner Olga Kern**, a direct descendant to Tchaikovsky himself, performing his wildly popular Piano Concerto No. 1, plus his exhilarating Fifth Symphony, exploring a romantic world of destiny, fate and shocking climaxes. The Pasadena Symphony's ode to romance arrives just in time to celebrate with your Valentine.

Joining the orchestra for this exclusive performance, Russian-American pianist Olga Kern will take center stage for Tchaikovsky's dazzling First Piano Concerto. "An absolute whiz at the piano," (*New York Times*), Kern rose to international acclaim when she became the first woman in over thirty years to win Gold Medal at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. Her vivid stage presence, passionately confident musicianship and extraordinary technique continue to captivate fans and critics alike. To learn more about Olga and her ancestral connection to Tchaikovsky, come early for Insights – a free pre-concert dialogue with Music Director David Lockington that begins one hour prior to each concert.

Make it an occasion to remember and treat your Valentine to a one-of-a-kind experience with lunch or dinner in the luxurious Symphony Lounge, yet another addition to the delightful and elegant concert experience the Pasadena Symphony offers. A posh setting along Ambassador Auditorium's beautiful outdoor plaza, the lounge will offer specialized Valentine's themed menus at each concert from Claud & Co, fine wines by Michero Wines serving Riboli Family Wines, plus music before the concert and during intermission.

All concerts are held at Ambassador Auditorium, 131 South St. John Ave, Pasadena, CA. Subscription packages starting as low as \$99 are still available. Single tickets start at \$35 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 Tchaikovsky Spectacular  
David Lockington, *conductor*  
Olga Kern, *piano*

Tchaikovsky *Piano Concerto No. 1*  
Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 5*

- **When:** Saturday, February 16, 2019 at 2:00pm and 8:00pm

- **Where:** Ambassador Auditorium | 131 South St. John Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91105

- **Cost:** Tickets start at \$35.00

- **Parking:** Valet parking is available on Green Street for \$20. General parking is available in two locations: next to the Auditorium (entrance on St. John Ave) at the covered parking structure for \$10 and directly across the street at the Wells Fargo parking structure (entrance on Terrace at Green St). ADA parking is 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. Opens at 12:30pm before the matinee and 6:00pm before the evening performance.

- **Pre-Concert Discussion:** Pre-concert discussions with David Lockington begins one hour before curtain and is available to all ticket holders at no cost.

## **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 300 gifted 4<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students from more than 50 schools all over the Southern California region. The PYSO has toured internationally at prestigious venues in New York, Vienna, and most recently San Jose, Costa Rica. They regularly perform throughout Southern California and have appeared 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.

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

### **David Lockington Conductor**

David Lockington began his career as a cellist and was the Principal with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain for two years. After completing his Bachelor of Arts degree at the University of Cambridge where he was a choral scholar, Mr. Lockington came to the United States on a scholarship to Yale University where he received his Master's Degree in cello performance and studied conducting with Otto Werner Mueller. He was a member of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra and served as assistant principal cellist with the Denver Symphony Orchestra for three years before turning to conducting.

Over the past thirty years, David Lockington has developed an impressive conducting career in the United States. A native of Great Britain, he served as the Music Director of the Grand Rapids Symphony from January 1999 to May 2015, and is currently the orchestra's Conductor Laureate. He has held the position of Music Director with the Modesto Symphony since May 2007 and in March 2013, Mr. Lockington was appointed Music Director of the Pasadena Symphony. He has a close relationship with the Orquesta Sinfonica del Principado de Asturias in Spain, where he was the orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor from 2012 through 2016, and in the 15/16 season was named one of three Artistic Partners with the Northwest Sinfonietta in Tacoma, Washington.

In addition to his current posts, since his arrival to the United States in 1978 Mr. Lockington has held positions with several other American orchestras, including serving as Assistant Conductor of the Denver Symphony Orchestra and Opera Colorado, and Assistant and Associate Conductor of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. In May 1993 he accepted the position of Music Director of the Ohio Chamber Orchestra, assumed the title of Music Director of the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra in September 1995 and was Music Director of the Long Island Philharmonic for the 96/97 through 99/2000 seasons.

Mr. Lockington's guest conducting engagements include appearances with the Saint Louis,

Houston, Detroit, Seattle, Toronto, Vancouver, Oregon and Phoenix symphonies; the Rochester and Louisiana Philharmonics; and the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall. Internationally, he has conducted the Northern Sinfonia in Great Britain, the Israel Chamber Orchestra, the China Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra in Beijing and Taiwan, and led the English Chamber Orchestra on a tour in Asia.

Recent and upcoming guest conducting engagements include appearances with the New Jersey, Indianapolis, Utah, Pacific, Colorado, Nashville, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Stamford, Tucson and Kansas City symphonies, the Florida and Louisville Orchestras, the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa and the Buffalo, Calgary and Oklahoma Philharmonics. Mr. Lockington's summer festival activities include appearances at the Grand Teton, Colorado Music, Interlochen, Chautauqua and Eastern Music festivals.

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## **Olga Kern** **Piano**

Russian-American pianist Olga Kern is now recognized as one of her generation's great pianists. She jumpstarted her U.S. career with her historic Gold Medal win at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in Fort Worth, Texas as the first woman to do so in more than thirty years.

First prize winner of the Rachmaninoff International Piano Competition at seventeen, Ms. Kern is a laureate of many international competitions. In 2016 she served as Jury Chairman of both the Seventh Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition and the first Olga Kern International Piano Competition, where she also holds the title of Artistic Director. Ms. Kern frequently gives masterclasses serves on the piano faculty of the Manhattan School of Music. Ms. Kern has been chosen as the Virginia Arts Festival's new Connie & Marc Jacobson Director of Chamber Music, beginning with the 2019 season.

For the 2018-19 season, Kern will perform with the Moscow Philharmonic, Santa Fe Symphony, and the St. Louis Symphony, as well as opening Pacific Symphony's season. Olga will also be featured soloist with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, both in Glasgow and on their Spring 2019 US tour. She will appear in recitals in Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Southern California, Zurich, and Milan.

In recent seasons, Kern served as Artist in Residence for the San Antonio Symphony's 2017-18 season, had her Chinese debut with the National Youth Orchestra of China tour, performed

concerts with Detroit Symphony, Pacific Symphony, Colorado Symphony, the State of Mexico Symphony Orchestra, Stuttgart Philharmonic and Tivoli Symphony Orchestra, and opened the Baltimore Symphony's 2015-2016 centennial season with Marin Alsop. Other season highlights include returns to the Royal Philharmonic with Pinchas Zukerman, Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice with Giancarlo Guerrero, a month-long tour of South Africa for concerts with the Cape and KwaZulu Natal philharmonics, an Israeli tour with the Israel Symphony and recitals with Renée Fleming in Carnegie Hall. Ms. Kern's performance career has brought her to many of the world's most important venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, Salzburger Festspielhaus, La Scala in Milan, Tonhalle in Zurich, and the Châtelet in Paris.

Ms. Kern's discography includes Harmonia Mundi recordings of the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Christopher Seaman (2003) and her Grammy Nominated recording of Rachmaninoff's Corelli Variations and other transcriptions (2004), among others. She was also featured in the award-winning documentary about the 2001 Cliburn Competition, *Playing on the Edge*, as well as *Olga's Journey, Musical Odyssey in St. Petersburg* and *They Came to Play*.

In 2012, Olga and her brother, conductor and composer, Vladimir Kern, co-founded the "Aspiration" foundation whose objective is to provide financial and artistic assistance to musicians throughout the world and in 2017, Ms. Kern received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. This honor recognizes Americans who "embody the spirit of America in their salute to tolerance, brotherhood, diversity, and patriotism," with other honorees including Rosa Parks, Buzz Aldrin, Coretta Scott King, and Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

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