

MONTEREY

SYMPHONY



80 YEARS

2025-2026 SEASON

JAYCE OGREN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

===== | **USA250** | =====

*West Side
Story and
Lincoln
Portrait*



BERNSTEIN COPLAND
DAWSON SNIDER

MAY 16-17, 2026

SUNSET CENTER, CARMEL

Sponsored by
Sponsored by Bill and Kathy Sharpe

Jayce Ogren, Music Director and Conductor

The Star-Spangled Banner
[running time 3']

Music by John Stafford Smith (1750-1836)
Lyrics by Francis Scott Key (1779-1843)

Marmoris [8']

Co-commissioned by University of
Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance
and the Monterey Symphony

Sarah Kirkland Snider (b.1973)

**Symphonic Dances from
*West Side Story*** [24']

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

- I. Prologue (Allegro moderato)
- II. Somewhere (Adagio)
- III. Scherzo (vivace e leggiero)
- IV. Mambo (Meno Presto)
- V. Cha-cha (Andantino con grazia) Meeting
- VI. Scene (Meno mosso)
- VII. Cool Fugue (Allegretto)
- VIII. Rumble (Molto allegro)
- IX. Finale (Adagio)

————— INTERMISSION [20'] —————

Lincoln Portrait [14']

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

Negro Folk Symphony [36']

William Dawson (1899-1990)

- I. *The Bond of Africa*
- II. *Hope in the Night*
- III. *O, Le' Me Shine*

The May concert will be rebroadcast on KAZU's HD2 Classical station
on June 6th and 7th, 2026, both at 4 PM.

Program Notes

By Christopher Anderson-Bazzoli

March 21-22, 2026 – Concert Synopsis

JAYCE OGREN'S INSIGHTFUL EXAMINATION OF AMERICAN MUSIC continues in this wide-ranging program exploring the musical character of the nation on the approach of its 250th birthday. The concert opens with a profound arrangement of our National Anthem by Italian-American composer Luigi Zaninelli. Sarah Kirkland Snider, a composer with “an unerring knack for breathtaking beauty” (*The New Yorker*), presents an anticipated new work, *Marmoris* – an ancient Latin word that means “the shimmering surface of the sea.” Next up is Leonard Bernstein’s effervescent *Symphonic Dances* from *West Side Story* followed by icon Aaron Copland’s *Lincoln Portrait*, narrated by surprise honorable guests from Monterey. The season concludes with William Dawson’s *Negro Folk Symphony*, a 1934 work that reflects Black experience in America and has an enigmatic conclusion, representing an unresolved struggle.

The Star-Spangled Banner (1814)

Music by John Stafford Smith (1750-1836)

Arr. Luigi Zaninelli (b. 1932)



In recent seasons, the Monterey Symphony has performed America’s national anthem in multiple arrangements and interpretations. This concert

presents a unique and stirring arrangement from 1975 by Italian-American composer Luigi Zaninelli. Born in New Jersey in 1934, Zaninelli studied at the renowned Curtis Institute of Music with another Italian-American, Gian Carlo Menotti – composer of the popular Christmas opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors*.

Zaninelli’s arrangement of the anthem opens with a warm brass choir of French horns, trombones, and tuba. There is a tinge of darkness creating a sonic veil between the listener and the familiar melody. Light begins to enter in woodwinds and the bright bell tones of the glockenspiel. The increasing complexity between the lead melody and the inner voices brings a level of harmonic density that approaches jazz. The final strains build to full pomp and circumstance, including a dramatic drum roll and cymbal crashes befitting its ceremonial significance.

Marmoris (2025)

Co-commissioned by University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance and the Monterey Symphony

Sarah Kirkland Snider (b. 1973)



Based in Princeton, New Jersey, composer Sarah Kirkland Snider writes music of direct expression and vivid narrative that has been hailed as “rapturous” (*The New York Times*), “groundbreaking” (*The Boston Globe*), and “ravishingly beautiful” (*NPR*). Snider’s works have been commissioned by many distinguished orchestras and chamber ensembles including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, London’s Philharmonia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, eighth blackbird, and Roomful of Teeth, among many

Orchestras bring together musicians from all different backgrounds and perspectives to listen to each other, empathize, and cooperate in the creation of a shared human experience that transcends political, cultural, and ideological differences.

others. Recent works include *Forward Into Light* for the New York Philharmonic, *Drink the Wild Ayre* for the renowned Emerson String Quartet, and *Mass for the Endangered*, a prayer for the environment for choir and ensemble that has been performed by dozens of choirs the world over. Her most recent recording is *The Blue Hour*, a multi-composer song cycle performed by vocalist Shara Nova (a frequent Snider collaborator), and Boston-based chamber orchestra A Far Cry.

Snider provided the following program note for *Marmoris*:

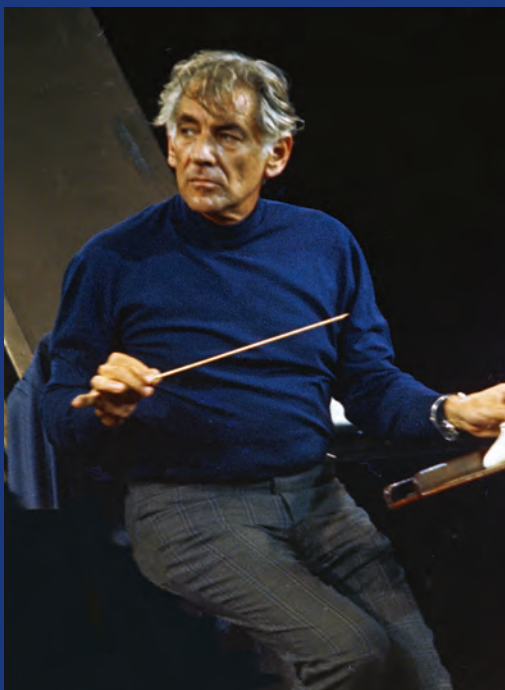
‘Marmoris’ is an ancient Latin word that means “the shimmering surface of the sea.”

Writing this piece in the months prior to the 2024 U.S. election, I found comfort in thinking about the world of the orchestra. Orchestras bring together musicians from all different backgrounds and perspectives to listen to each other, empathize, and cooperate in the creation of a shared human experience that transcends political, cultural, and ideological differences. The orchestra has often reminded me of an ocean in this way – a seemingly living, breathing thing consisting of myriad unique lifeforms pulsing, swaying, and churning in concert.

This piece reflects upon the forces in life that hold and enclose us, those vast similitudes that connect us and remind us we are a part of something much larger than our daily human struggles might allow us to perceive.

Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story* (1960)

Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)



As a composer, conductor, and educator, American musical icon Leonard Bernstein made it his mission to bridge the gap between the ivory tower and the man in the street. Nowhere did he succeed more strikingly than with *West Side Story*, the 1957 collaboration with lyricist Stephen Sondheim and choreographer Jerome Robbins. A variation on *Romeo and Juliet* set on Manhattan's Upper West Side, the Broadway musical's eclectic score features fugues and arias, as well as mambo and cha-chas.

West Side Story's orchestrators Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal arranged the *Symphonic Dances* as a suite that expands the modest Broadway pit ensemble to a large symphony orchestra. "Lenny knew it should certainly begin," Ramin said, "with the famous signature tritone on which so much of the show's music is based." Accordingly, the *Prologue* opens with that distinctive melodic interval in an aggressive upward "rip" for trumpets

and trombones. Swing rhythms, along with finger snaps by the orchestra, introduce the show's rival gangs, the Sharks and the Jets. A police whistle disrupts the tense episode.

"The order of the rest of the suite," Ramin continues, "is based on 'feel' rather than on the plot." A lyrical French horn introduces the soaring melody of *Somewhere*, expressing the song's plea for love and tolerance. Its famous two-note motif develops into the *Scherzo*, a charming dance with an unmistakable kinship to Copland's *Appalachian Spring*. Congas and timbales signal the *Mambo*, the scene in which star-crossed lovers Tony and Maria first see each other. The *Cha-cha* then enters as a courtly dance variation on Tony's celebrated aria "Maria," featuring the tritone interval in a softer setting. *Cool Fugue* may be Bernstein's greatest example of a rigorous classical form transformed into a popular style while the *Rumble* turns the gentle swing rhythms from the *Prologue* into violent stabs.

"After the *Rumble*," Ramin says, "Lenny inserted a flute solo unique to these symphonic dances, which makes a dramatic and beautiful change to *I Have a Love* (the only music in the suite that is not a dance in the show)." The song's touching melody becomes the basis for a richly-voiced string serenade in the *Finale*. The two-note "Somewhere" motif echoes softly bringing the suite, and the show's tragic story, to a poignant conclusion.

Lincoln Portrait (1942)

Aaron Copland (1900-1990)



Aaron Copland spent much of the 1940s composing works in support of America's World War II effort. His iconic *Fanfare for the Common Man* evoked direct patriotism while his sentimental *Letter from Home* sought to comfort the public in difficult times. In 1942 he received a commission from conductor André Kostelanetz for a patriotic work based on an "eminent American." Looking around for a suitable subject, Copland happened on a paperback biography of Abraham Lincoln by one Lord Charnwood, an author whose name he didn't recognize. "I thought it was so odd," Copland said, "for an English Lord to want to write a biography of Lincoln. I got some of the things quoted in my *Lincoln Portrait* from that book. So that was a lucky chance..."

A *Lincoln Portrait* has become one of Copland's most performed works. It features narrated excerpts from several of Lincoln's major speeches including the 1862 State of the Union Address and the 1858 debates with Senator Stephen Douglas. "The composition is roughly divided into three main sections," Copland says. "In the opening section I wanted to suggest something of the mysterious sense of fatality that surrounds Lincoln's personality.

Also, near the end of that section, something of his gentleness and simplicity of spirit." Copland employs his signature "prairie" texture and simple, austere themes. The opening oboe motif develops into the piece's main theme first heard in the trombone.

"The quick middle section," Copland says, "briefly sketches in the background of the times he lived." In a fast *Allegro* tempo, Copland employs the melody of *Camptown Races*, a Stephen Foster song used by the 1860 Lincoln Presidential campaign. Copland continues: "This merges into the concluding section where my sole purpose was to draw a simple but impressive frame about the words of Lincoln himself."

It features narrated excerpts from several of Lincoln's major speeches including the 1862 State of the Union Address and the 1858 debates with Senator Stephen Douglas.

Negro Folk Symphony (1934, rev. 1952)

William Dawson (1899-1990)



Born in Anniston, Alabama, William Dawson ran away from home at age 13 to study music as a pre-college student at the Historically Black Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University). After learning multiple instruments, performing with the choir, and composing original works, Dawson graduated from Tuskegee in 1921. He returned there six years later as director of its music department, a position he held until 1955. Under his directorship, the 100-member Tuskegee choir gained international fame, performing at the White House, Carnegie Hall, and on national radio programs. Dawson passed away in 1990 and was laid to rest at Tuskegee University Cemetery.

In his *Negro Folk Symphony* of 1934, Dawson intended to claim a place for Black music within the Classical music tradition. "I wanted to show how the Negro folk music of America could be elevated to the highest musical forms." For Dawson, Negro wasn't a derogatory term, but, to the contrary, a dignified term that encompassed the rich heritage of his race. Following the model of Dvořák's *From the New World*, Dawson composed a symphony in the Romantic tradition built around original themes derived from Negro spirituals. "I've only woven them into symphonic form," he said. "I want my music to be heard not as a Negro work but as a symphony."

The first movement, *The Bond of Africa*, opens with a French horn theme that represents "the link broken by the slave trader between the Negro of Africa and his descendants in America." An *Allegro con brio* ("Fast and with spirit") tempo brings a fascinating expansion of the theme. After travelling to Africa, Dawson made revisions to the symphony in 1952 giving it a new rhythmic vitality exemplified by the introduction of syncopated triplet rhythms within the duple meter.

The second movement, *Hope in the Night*, brings an introspective, elegiac tone expressing the idea of endurance through suffering. It begins with a long, wistful theme for English horn and builds to a majestic statement for the full orchestra with the theme soaring high in violins. A pair of oboes present an animated second theme that becomes a duet for flute and French horn.

The third movement, 'O, Let Me Shine,' takes its name from the spiritual that Dawson quotes, heard first in the oboe. In its shape and character, it shares a kinship with the "broken-link" theme from the first movement. A celebratory atmosphere of emancipation and cultural acceptance pervades the movement, including a call-and-response section reminiscent of gospel music. African-inspired percussion instruments, xylophone and clave, drive this work to its exciting conclusion.

Negro Folk Symphony premiered with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski on November 3, 1934. Despite enthusiastic audiences, rave reviews, and several additional performances in its first two years, the piece sadly dropped out of the repertory. However, this American masterpiece has recently enjoyed a resurgence of interest and critical acclaim, fueled by multiple performances and new recordings.

Christopher Anderson-Bazzoli

MUSICOLOGIST



Christopher Anderson-Bazzoli's innovative compositions for the concert stage, his deeply-felt scores for the studio and indie film worlds, and his skilled musical direction for artists from across the pop music spectrum earned him a reputation as a musician with a collaborative spirit and a broad vision.

His current release, *Continent's End*, received "Critic's Choice" from *Opera News*. The nine-song concert work for mezzo-soprano and piano on poems by California iconoclast Robinson Jeffers (1887-1962) "perfectly embodies with its unpredictable harmonic twists and turns and its multi-tonality Jeffers' hyper-masculine, pantheistic, often erotic poetry"

(*Raphael's Music Notes*). Nominated for an Emmy Award at age twenty-one, Anderson-Bazzoli composed scores for twenty feature and short films including the Venezuelan thriller *Ellipsis* (Fox) and the technology documentary *Revolution OS* (7th Art), among others. He received a Sundance Composer Fellowship and served as copyist, music librarian, or orchestrator on over three hundred films and TV shows including Disney's *Encanto*, *The Lion King* (2019), and *Top Gun Maverick*. As a conductor he worked with top recording artists Michael Bublé, Dr. Dre, Christina Aguilera, and She & Him (Zoëy Deschanel and M. Ward) and served as editor and copyist for eminent composer-conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen.

While growing up in Pacific Grove, California, Christopher Anderson-Bazzoli learned tuba at age eleven, graduated from Stevenson School, and later earned a B.A. in Tuba and an M.A. in Music Composition from UCLA. In 2022 he relocated from Los Angeles to Carmel with his wife Donna Eshelman, a neuromuscular therapist and choreographer.



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