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**OAKLAND SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA SEASON FEATURES WINNERS OF
YOUNG COMPOSER AND CONCERTO COMPETITION WINNERS AND MUSIC
BY BEETHOVEN, BLOCH, SHOSTAKOVICH, DVORAK, PROKOFIEV,
GOTTSCHALK, IVES, BORODIN AND OTHERS**

**THREE CONCERTS NOV. 15, FEB. 21 AND MAY 22 FOLLOWED BY JUNE TOUR
TO CUBA**

Oakland, October 13, 2015 – Winners of the Young Composer Competition and the Concerto Competition will be featured as part of the three-concert 2015-2016 season of the Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra, Music Director **Michael Morgan** and Principal Conductor **Omid Zoufonoun** have announced. The home season runs November 15, 2015 through May 22, 2016, and will be followed by the Youth Orchestra's debut tour to Cuba. Concert details are listed below. Tickets for all Youth Orchestra performances are free of charge. For more information, visit www.OaklandSymphony.org .

OAKLAND SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA 2015-2016 SEASON SCHEDULE
Michael Morgan, Music Director
Omid Zoufonoun, Principal Conductor

Fall Concert

Sunday, November 15, 7:30 pm
San Francisco Conservatory of Music Concert Hall

PROGRAM: Verdi: *Nabucco* Overture; Bloch *Baal Shem* 2. "Nigun" (Improvisation)
with Jaclyn Thach, Violin; Shostakovich: Chamber Symphony; Prokofiev: Selections
from *Romeo and Juliet*

The season opens with an ambitious program including selections from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*, which is widely regarded as among the most brilliant modern ballet scores for its deep and nuanced emotional power and innate theatricality. Verdi's Overture to *Nabucco* is based on biblical stories from the books of Daniel and Jeremiah, about which the composer commented, "this is the opera with which my artistic career really begins." Composer-violinist Ernest Bloch was one of many international composers who made the Bay Area an important center for modern music in the mid-20th century, and his *Baal Shem* (1939) was composed between his time as Director of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and when he taught at UC Berkeley. Shostakovich's *Chamber Symphony* is a masterful arrangement of his eighth String Quartet by Rudolf Barshai.

Jaclyn Thach, a junior at Dougherty Valley High School, began playing the violin at the age of five under the tutelage of Gail Peterson. She currently studies with Dr. James Greening-Valenzuela. This is her fourth year with Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra. She also participates in her school's Chamber Orchestra, under the direction of Patricia Drury, and the Livermore-Pleasanton Youth Outreach Symphony. Before Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra, she played in Berkeley Youth Orchestra for three years.

As a violin soloist, Thach has won various local violin competitions such as the Contra Costa Young Artist Competition. In 2015, her chamber group, playing Mendelssohn's Piano Trio #1 in d minor, was a finalist in MTAC's VOCE competition, and was selected to play in a masterclass at Convention.

Winter Concert

Sunday, February 21, 2:00pm

San Leandro High School Performing Arts Center, 2250 Bancroft Ave, San Leandro, CA 94577

PROGRAM: Ives: *The Unanswered Question*; Smetana: *Moldau (Vltava, from Ma Vlast)*; Borodin: *Polovtsian Dances* from *Prince Igor*; Beethoven: *Symphony No.5 in C Minor*

Beethoven's iconic *Symphony* that changed the course of music history caps off a program of intriguingly iconoclastic works by other composers. Ives' *The*

Unanswered Question features the persistent inquisitiveness of a trumpet melody hovering over a background of contemplative strings. Smetana's *Moldau* is a tour-de-force musical journey along a river of the composer's Bohemian homeland. Similarly, Borodin used folk dances of his fatherland as evocative inspiration for the exotic closing scene of his opera, *Prince Igor*.

Spring Concert

Sunday, May 22, 2:00pm

Castro Valley Center for the Arts, 19501 Redwood Road, Castro Valley, CA

PROGRAM: Gottschalk: Symphony No.1 "A Night in the Tropics"; Dvořák: Symphony No.8 in G Major with Young Composer Competition Winner TBA and 2015 Concerto Competition Winner TBA

The season closes as the Youth Orchestra prepares for its June tour to Cuba. Extremely popular during his lifetime, American composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk's works embody his eclectic heritage and experiences as wide-ranging as memories of his upbringing in Louisiana in the mid 19th century and his travels to then-exotic locales including Cuba and Brazil. In a rehearsal of Dvořák's 8th Symphony, conductor Rafael Kubelik famously commented that "in Bohemia the trumpets never call to battle –they always call to the dance!" The Symphony that precedes Dvořák's more famous "New World" bubbles with Bohemian dance and folk tunes that make it one of his sunnier large-scale works.

About Omid Zoufonoun

Omid Zoufonoun is a conductor, guitarist, educator, and award-winning composer. His concert commissions aim to blend his Persian musical heritage, learned under the guidance of his father Ostad Mahmoud Zoufonoun, with western practices of counterpoint, harmony, and orchestration. Recent commissions include a Cello Sonata for the duet Martha & Monica, a guitar octet for the Guitar Foundation of America, a choral setting of four Rumi poems for the Pacific Mozart Ensemble, and a four-movement orchestral work for the Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra. Omid conducted the premiere of this latter work at the Scottish Rite Center, and a

professional premiere followed by the Oakland East Bay Symphony under the direction of Maestro Michael Morgan. As a conductor, his recent recording of Bill Horvitz' suite, *A Long Walk*, was featured as an Editor's Pick in *Downbeat* magazine.