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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **OAKLAND SYMPHONY CONCLUDES 2015-2016 SEASON WITH CONCERT OF ADAMS, STRAVINSKY, BARBER AND RAVEL WITH ELECTRIC VIOLIN SOLOIST TRACY SILVERMAN, SOPRANO NICOLE JOSEPH AND THE OAKLAND SYMPHONY CHORUS**

#### **MAY 20 AT THE PARAMOUNT THEATRE**

Oakland, March 23, 2016 – The Oakland Symphony, Music Director and Conductor **Michael Morgan**, the Oakland Symphony Chorus and guest artists **Tracy Silverman**, electric violin, and soprano **Nicole Joseph** will conclude the Symphony's 2015-2016 season with a concert of music by **John Adams, Stravinsky, Barber and Ravel** Friday, May 20, at 8 pm at the Paramount Theatre. Mr. Silverman will perform John Adams' *The Dharma at Big Sur* for orchestra and electric violin and Ms. Joseph, who was the winner of the 2015 Toland Vocal Arts Competition, will sing Samuel Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*. Completing the evening will be Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* with the Oakland Symphony Chorus, Lynne Morrow, Director; and Ravel's *La Valse*. Pre-concert drinks, lobby entertainment and a talk begin at 7 pm and the concert is sponsored by Bell Investment Advisors. Tickets are priced \$20-\$75 and may be purchased at [www.oaklandsymphony.org](http://www.oaklandsymphony.org) .

Bay Area composer John Adams composed *The Dharma at Big Sur* for the opening of Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles in 2003, with Tracy Silverman as its electric violin soloist. In addition to an unusual solo instrument, its playful orchestration includes electronic samplers, ten gongs and two flower pots. *Dharma's* sinuous solo passages and descriptive orchestral writing emerge as if from a fog into crystal clear phrases in homage of American composers Lou Harrison and Terry Riley. Adams composed it to evoke what he calls the "shock of recognition" that happens when reaching the end of a continental land mass in a spectacular place like Big Sur, California. Barber's equally evocative musical memory of a summer evening, Stravinsky's neoclassical choral symphony and Ravel's ebullient, dance-hall romp are the perfect complements to Adams' concerto. The performance of *The Dharma at Big Sur* is underwritten by a grant from the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation.

## About the Artists

Redefining the role of the violin in contemporary music, Tracy Silverman has contributed significantly to the development and repertoire for the electric 6string violin and what he calls "21st century violin playing". "String playing must reflect our popular musical culture or risk becoming old-fashioned and irrelevant," says Silverman. The foremost concert electric violinist and the subject of new electric violin concertos commissioned specifically for him by John Adams, Terry Riley, Nico Muhly, Kenji Bunch, himself and upcoming by Daniel Bernard Roumain, Silverman was formerly first violinist with the groundbreaking Turtle Island String Quartet. Currently touring internationally as a soloist with orchestras, (LA Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Montreal Symphony, Adelaide Festival Orchestra, Cabrillo Festival; conductors Esa-Pekka Salonen, Marin Alsop, Neeme Jarvi, Giancarlo Guerrero, Leon Botstein among many others,) with his solo performances and as a collaborator with other artists and ensembles. A busy composer, '15-16 includes performances of Silverman's 2nd electric violin concerto, a return to Carnegie Hall to premier Nico Muhly's "Seeing Is Believing" with the American Symphony, as well as the publication of his instructional method "Strum Bowing". A long-standing advocate for music education, Silverman is an indemand clinician and on faculty at Belmont University in Nashville, TN.

Soprano Nicole Greenidge Joseph received her Masters and Specialist Degree in Voice from the University of Michigan, and Bachelors in Voice from Pacific Lutheran University. Opera credits include Gretel (*Hansel & Gretel*), Papagena (*Magic Flute*), Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*), Susanna (*Figaro*) and Musetta (*La Bohème*). In the 2015-2016 season, Ms. Joseph is pleased to be making her debut with Kentucky Opera as Beatrice in Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers*. As a concert soloist in the Detroit-area Nicole has performed with Motor City Lyric Opera, Flint Symphony, Oakland University, Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings, and Southern Great Lakes Symphony. Nicole has also performed with the McCall SummerFest, Siletz Bay Music Festival, Walla Walla Symphony, Portland Chamber Orchestra, Victoria Bach Festival and the Rye Chamber Music Series in New York. As a member of the Austin-based choral group Conspirare, Nicole was a featured soloist on their 2015 Grammy award-winning recording *Sacred Spirit of Russia*, and was also heard singing to critical acclaim the role of Mary/Carrie Kipling in John Muehleisen's *Pietà*. In 2014, Ms. Joseph was the First Place Winner of the inaugural James Toland Vocal Arts Competition and winner of a scholarship grant from the Career Bridges Foundation. She was also the Second Place Winner in the National Bel Canto Vocal Foundation Competition in 2009 and First Place winner in 2013, a Michigan District Winner in the 2010 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Second Place Winner in the 2013 Nicholas Loren Vocal Competition, a semi-finalist and People's Choice award winner in the 2014 American Traditions Competition, and a finalist in the 2014 Harold Haugh Light Opera Competition.

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