

We salute Maestro Michael Morgan and the Oakland Symphony for redefining the American symphony orchestra with the multicultural music of this great city.



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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2016, 8 PM  
PARAMOUNT THEATRE, OAKLAND



VÂN-ÁNH (VANESSA) VÕ,  
*dan tranh zither*

MICHAEL MORGAN,  
*music director and conductor*

# OAKLAND SYMPHONY PRESENTS NOTES FROM VIETNAM

SPONSORED IN PART BY CALIFORNIA WASTE SOLUTIONS

ANTONIN DVOŘÁK  
*Carnival Overture*

BENJAMIN BRITTEN  
*Variations and Fugue on a  
Theme of Purcell, Op. 34  
(The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra)*

Michael Urie, *narrator*

INTERMISSION

PQ PHAN  
*Flash*

ARR. BY VÂN-ÁNH (VANESSA) VÕ  
*Traditional Vietnamese Medley  
Trống Cơm (The Rice Drums)  
Tùng Quân – Đàng Đàng Cung (King Parade)  
Lý Ngựa Ô (The Black Horse)*

Vân-Ánh Võ, *Đàn Tranh (zither)*  
The VAV Young Ensemble

VÂN-ÁNH (VANESSA) VÕ  
*Lullaby for a Country (World Premiere)*

1. Love
2. Yearning
3. Sorrow
4. New Dawn

Vân-Ánh Võ, *Đàn Tranh (zither), đàn Bầu (monochord), and vocal*

(World Premiere; supported by grants from The National Endowment for the Arts and *Women's Philharmonic Advocacy*)

Season Media Sponsors: Oakland Magazine, KDFC, East Bay Express  
Season Guest Artist Accommodations provided by: Oakland Marriott City Center  
The 2015/16 season of Oakland Symphony is generously funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; the California Arts Council, a state agency; the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; and the City Council and the City of Oakland's Cultural Funding Program.



**Michael Morgan, Music Director & Conductor**  
**Bryan Nies, Assistant Conductor**

**FIRST VIOLIN**

Dawn Harms,  
*Concertmaster*  
 Vivian Warkentin,  
*Asst. Concertmaster*  
 Basma Edrees,  
*Assoc. Concertmaster*  
 Kristina Anderson  
 Patrice May  
 Carla Picchi  
 Ellen Gronningen  
 Deborah Spangler  
 Emanuela Nikiforova  
 Natasha Mikhijani  
 Hee-guen Song  
 Stephanie Bibbo

**SECOND VIOLIN**

Liana Bérubé,  
*Principal*  
 David Cheng,  
*Asst. Principal*  
 Candace Sanderson  
 Sharon Calonico  
 Baker Peeples  
 Adrienne Duckworth  
 Sergi Goldman-Hull  
 Cecilia Huang  
 Robert Donehew  
 Alison Miller

**VIOLA**

Tiantian Lan,  
*Principal*  
 Margaret Titchener,  
*Asst. Principal*  
 Betsy London  
 David Gilbert  
 Darcy Rindt  
 Patricia Whaley  
 Stephanie Railsback  
 Katy Juneau

**CELLO**

Daniel Reiter,  
*Principal*  
 Joseph Hébert  
 Michelle Kwon  
 Rebecca Roudman  
 Elizabeth  
 Vandervennet  
 Michael Graham  
 Jeff Parish  
 Paul Rhodes

**STRING BASS**

Patrick McCarthy,  
*Principal*  
 Carl Stanley,  
*Asst. Principal*  
 Randall Keith  
 Andy Butler  
 David Arend  
 Abraham Gumroyan

**FLUTE**

Alice Lenaghan,  
*Principal*  
 Rena Urso-Trapani  
 Amy Likar

**PICCOLO**

Amy Likar

**OBOE**

Andrea Plesnarski,  
*Principal*  
 Robin May  
 Denis Harper

**ENGLISH HORN**

Denis Harper

**CLARINET**

Diane Maltester,  
*Principal*  
 Ginger Kroft

**BASSOON**

Deborah Kramer,  
*Principal*  
 David Granger

**FRENCH HORN**

Meredith Brown,  
*Principal*  
 Eric Achen,  
*Asst. Principal*  
 Alicia Telford  
 Alex Camphouse  
 Ross Gershenson

**TRUMPET**

William Harvey,  
*Principal*  
 Leonard Ott  
 John Freeman

**TROMBONE**

Bruce Crisp,  
*Principal*  
 Thomas Hornig

**BASS TROMBONE**

Steven Trapani

**TUBA**

Scott Choate,  
*Principal*

**PIANO**

Ellen Wassermann

**HARP**

Randall Pratt,  
*Principal*

**TIMPANI**

Tyler Mack, *Principal*

**PERCUSSION**

Ward Spangler,  
*Principal*  
 Allen Biggs  
 Jim Kassis  
 Kevin Neuhoff

**PERSONNEL MANAGER**

Carl Stanley

**LIBRARIAN**

Paul Rhodes

**TECHNICAL DIRECTOR**

Seth Ducey



## VÂN-ÁNH (VANESSA) VÕ, DAN TRANH ZITHER

Vân-Anh (Vanessa) Võ is one of the finest performers of Vietnamese traditional instruments in the world, as well as a rapidly emerging composer. She dedicates her life to creating music by blending the wonderfully unique sounds of Vietnamese instruments with other music genres, and fusing deeply rooted Vietnamese musical traditions with fresh new structures and compositions.

In 1995, Vân-Anh won the championship title in the Vietnamese National *Đàn Tranh* (Zither) Competition. Since settling in the San Francisco Bay Area in 2001, Vân-Anh has focused on collaborating with musicians across different music genres to create new works, bringing Vietnamese traditional music to a wider audience and preserving her cultural legacy through teaching. In 2002, Vân-Anh released her first CD, *Twelve Months, Four Seasons*. In 2009, she released *She's*

*Not She*, with award-winning composer Bao Đổ. In 2013, she released her third CD, *Three-Mountain Pass*, with the Kronos Quartet as her guest artist. This work has brought positive reviews and high praises by NPR, BBC "The World," the *L.A. Times* and others.

Vân-Anh has also been collaborator and guest soloist with the Kronos Quartet, Yo-Yo Ma, Southwest Chamber Music, Oakland Symphony, jazz artists, rap artists, and other world music artists. Additionally, she was co-composer and arranger for the soundtracks of the Oscar®-nominated and Sundance Best Documentary Grand Jury Prize winner, *Daughter from Danang* (2002), the Emmy® Award-winning film *Bolivia 52* (2008), and *A Village Called Versailles* (2009), the winner of multiple "Best Documentary" and "Audience Favorite" awards. She has presented her music at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, on NPR, at Houston Grand Opera, Yerba Buena Performing Arts Center, many World Music festivals throughout the U.S., and the London Olympic Games 2012 Music Festival. She has been invited and participated as a screening judge in the World Music category for both the 2015 & 2016 Grammy® Awards. In addition to the zither (*đàn tranh*), Vân-Anh also performs as soloist on the monochord (*đàn Bầu*), the bamboo xylophone (*đàn Trùng*), traditional drums (*trống*) and many other traditional instruments.

Recently, in collaboration with Asian Americans for Community Involvement, a NGO which has served refugees for 40 years in Santa Clara County, Vân-Anh has been awarded \$40,000 from Creative Work Fund to work on her next coming production, which is scheduled to premiere at the Kennedy Center in March, 2016. *The Odyssey – from Vietnam to America* aims to highlight the incredible power of the human spirit, the value of freedom and the will to survive of the Vietnamese Boat People. Beyond that, *The Odyssey...* also wants to deliver the message of Forgiveness, Peace and Unity.

For more information, please visit [www.vananhvo.com](http://www.vananhvo.com)

## NARRATOR

## MICHAEL URIE, NARRATOR



Born on August 8, 1980, in Dallas, Texas, actor Michael Urie attended the Juilliard School in New York City and, in 2002, won the prestigious John Houseman Prize for Excellence in Classical Theatre. Urie's big break came in 2006, when he landed a role on the popular ABC show *Ugly Betty*. He played Marc St. James, Betty's flamboyantly gay and impeccably dressed nemesis and fellow staff member of *Mode* magazine. The series ran until 2010 and garnered wide acclaim, including Golden Globe and Emmy awards. Urie resides in New York City.



## THE VA'V YOUNG ENSEMBLE & SŨ VIỆT ENSEMBLE

With its members ranging from ages 7 to 18, the VA'V Young Ensemble & SŨ VIỆT Ensemble is dedicated to sharing traditional Vietnamese music with the new generation. By performing thousand-years old folk songs to pop music with a traditional twist, they hope to inspire young people to embrace their culture and heritage. The members join together from San Francisco, San Jose, and Fremont with Vân-Anh (Vanessa) Võ to provide the younger generation a glimpse of what traditional music is like. Over the past five years, the Ensembles

### Performers:

Nicole Huynh	Thuy Nhi Pham
Andrea Huynh	Kira LueSang
Audrey Do	Tyrene Bailey
Kieu-Thu Vu	Katrina Culman
Lan-Thuy Nguyen	Nha-Vinh Tran
	Mong-Lanh Nguyen

have grown in number, developed in musical expertise, and performed across the U.S. in many Vietnamese cultural and modern contemporary productions, such as the San Francisco Legion of Honor, the World Festival of Vietnamese Traditional Music in Seattle and Vietnam (and will perform at the upcoming festival in Paris, 2017), and the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. The Ensembles have also had the pleasure of working with several renowned musicians from all around the Bay Area and have an upcoming performance with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra. The VA'V Young Ensemble hopes to continue to grow and inspire other young musicians.

Eugenia Truong	Vionna Huang
Kelly Nguyen	Ashley Hua
Emily Quach	Alison Hua
Hoang-Anh Nguyen	Mahathi Jayaraman
Huyen-Nga Nguyen	Kai Monno
Linh-Chi Tran	Pallavi Balay
Christopher Lam	Anjali Gard
Jacqueline Lan	Vivek Gard
Athena Le	

## COMPOSER



### P.Q. PHAN

P.Q. Phan was born in 1962 in Đà Nẵng, Vietnam. Since 1976, while studying architecture, he taught himself to play the piano, compose, and orchestrate. In 1982, he immigrated to the United States and began his formal musical training. He earned his DMA in Composition and a second Masters degree in Ethnomusicology from University of Michigan.

During his more than 35 years of composing, P.Q. Phan, a Rome Prize winner, has written more than 100 works, including two grand operas, a requiem, more

than 10 symphonic works, 6 concertos, 10 works for chamber orchestra, and a large song cycle for mezzo soprano and chamber orchestra. His music has been performed in the most prestigious halls throughout the globe, including Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Hall, the *Concertgebouw*, Sydney Opera Hall, *Takemitsu* Opera Hall, and *Ha Noi* Grand Hall.

Dr. Phan has received numerous commissions, including from the American Composers Orchestra, *Ensemble Alternance*, the Cleveland Chamber Symphony, the Greater East Lansing Symphony, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Indiana University, the Kronos Quartet, the Samaris Piano Trio, etc.

Recently premiered by the IU Opera Theater, his grand opera *The Tale of Lady Thị Kính* was hailed as "...this first-of-its kind operatic retelling of *Our Benevolent Buddha* ... can be compared with a finely cut gemstone whose beauty reveals itself through the eye of the beholder." He recently completed *A Vietnamese Requiem*, a 35-minute work for 4 vocal soloists, chorus and chamber orchestra, employing Vietnamese Buddhist text, and dedicated to the approximately 10 million Vietnamese victims of wars in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

A frequent guest composer and lecturer in Asia, Dr. Phan Quang Phuc is Professor of Music in Composition at Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University. He has previously taught at University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and at Cleveland State University.



### CAMERON AKIOKA

Cameron (Cami) Akioka is currently a sophomore at Palo Alto High School in California. She began studying piano at the age of seven and currently studies with Olya Katsman, with whom she has worked for five years. Cami was selected as a winner in the San Francisco Chopin Competition in 2012 and 2015. Last

February, she won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the California Association of Professional Music Teachers Concerto Competition held in Los Angeles. She placed 3<sup>rd</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> alternate) at the Music Teachers Association of California Concerto Competition in March of 2015. Cami won First Prize, as well as the Audience Prize, at the Sturm-Page Piano Scholarship Competition in 2014, held in Walnut Creek, California. In 2013, she won first prize in the Solo Competition at the California Association of Professional Music Teachers (CAPMT) State convention held in Los Angeles and was selected as 1<sup>st</sup> alternate at the Northern California Honors Auditions for CAPMT last year. At the 2012 Music Teachers Association of California (MTAC) Piano Solo Competition, Cami won first prize at the state convention held in San Diego. She was the winner in the Menuhin-Dowling Young Artist Competition in 2012 and 1<sup>st</sup> runner up in 2013. She has competed at the Junior Bach Festival for the past four years and has been selected as a winner each year. Cami also enjoys performing chamber music and is currently a member of the Trio Volare Piano Trio with the Young Chamber Musicians in Burlingame.

Along with her love of music, Cami is an avid soccer player and enjoys tennis, art and reading.

## PRE-CONCERT LOBBY PERFORMERS



### MUSE ORCHESTRA

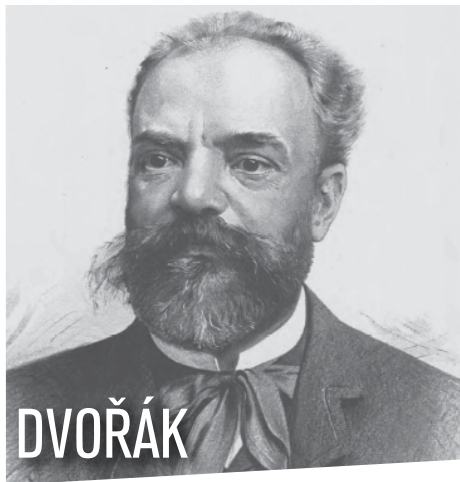
The after-school MUSE Orchestra is one component of Oakland Symphony's MUSE (Music for Excellence) Education Program. Aimed at 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders, the MUSE Orchestra is open to all Oakland students as an opportunity to participate in an All-City Honors Orchestra. The tuition-free program is fully sponsored by the Symphony and hosted by Franklin Elementary School and the Oakland Unified School District.

This weekly program is designed to serve as a first training ground for the orchestral experience. Students are taught orchestral skills such as: how to be a team player, preparing for a concert performance, listening to others, looking at the conductor while playing music, note and rhythmic reading, creative practice

ideas, marking valuable notations in the music, scales and minimal music theory, and organizational skills. The students are given several opportunities to perform during the school year, which allows them to practice the skills they are learning.

During the 2015-16 season, participating students unite from the following 11 Oakland schools to form the MUSE Orchestra: Cleveland, Franklin, Glenview, Kaiser, Manzanita, and Sequoia Elementary Schools; Connections Academy, Bret Harte, Claremont, Edna Brewer, and Montera Middle Schools

Symphony musicians lead as Mentors: Amy Likar (flute/winds), Hande Erdem (violin, viola), Candy Sanderson (violin, trumpet, clarinet, sax, trombone) and Beth Vandervernet (cello, violin). Alumni MUSE students assist in the leadership role as Student Mentors.



DVOŘÁK

### *Carnival Overture, Op. 92* ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

The *Carnival Overture* was originally the second in a trilogy of overtures called *Nature, Life and Love*. (The other two were subsequently titled *In Nature's Realm* and *Othello*.) Finished in September, 1891, the *Carnival* was first performed the following April in Prague under the composer's direction.

When Dvořák sent the three overtures, the *New World* Symphony and other works to his publisher, he described them as "my best orchestral works." This opinion, while shared by most, is not unanimous. Julius Harrison, for one, complained that in the *Carnival Overture*, "woodwind, brass and percussion seem intent on slaying each other, so desperate is their fight for survival, so heartless their conduct towards the strings."

Dvořák provided the following program for the work: "A lonely wanderer reaches a city at nightfall while a street carnival is in full swing. Instruments clang on all sides, mingling with the gay laughter of the revelers. The violins set up a wild cry as the wanderer is whirled into the Bohemian revel. Then the hubbub subsides as the spectator follows a pair of straying lovers, and a pastoral theme brings a recollection of the tranquil scenes from Nature's realm. The peaceful mood is shattered by a return of the merry-makers, and the opening section is resumed and concluded."



BRITTEN

### *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Henry Purcell, Op. 34* (*The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*)

#### BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913-1976)

In 1945 the British Ministry of Education commissioned Britten to compose the score for a documentary film called *The Instruments of the Orchestra*, with a narration by Eric Crozier. The Crown Film Unit's production was first shown at the Empire Theater in London on November 29, 1946. During the recording session, according to the sound engineer, Britten "was sort of jumping about and laughing with pleasure at hearing what he'd done."

By then, Britten's film music had already been played in the concert hall under the title *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*. Sir Malcolm Sargent and the Liverpool Philharmonic gave the first live performance on October 15, 1946, in Liverpool.

The music is also known as *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Henry Purcell*, because Britten used a theme from the seventeenth century composer Purcell. Purcell's dance tune, a hornpipe, is from his incidental music to Aphra Behn's play called *Abdelazar*, or *The Moor's Revenge*, which first appeared in 1695. In Britten's work, there are six statements of the theme by various choirs of the orchestra, then thirteen variations on the theme by various single instruments, and

a giant fugue at the end. Britten said the work "is affectionately inscribed to the children of John and Jean Maud: Humphrey, Pamela, Caroline and Virginia, for their edification and entertainment." Britten's music has been used in at least two ballets, with choreography by Jerome Robbins and Frederick Ashton.

-Notes by Charley Samson, copyright 2016.



Photo by: Christine Jade

### *Lullaby for a Country* – World Premiere

#### VÂN-ÁNH (VANESSA) VÕ

Supported by grants from:



wophil.org

*Lullaby for a Country* is inspired by lullaby tunes from the 54 ethnic groups in Vietnam. Personally, I grew up with lullabies that my mom sang to me. I heard people around me singing them a lot, and I sang them to my daughters. It's traditional in Vietnam that all moms will sing lullabies for their children.

The Vietnamese lullabies, although in different dialects, all show the same common themes of providing comfort to children, giving encouragement, and longing for loved ones. Lullabies have been used to pass on the values and teachings of the culture to support the children of the next generation. These lullabies represent the deepest sense of comfort, calm, and inner

strength that many Vietnamese have called upon in order to overcome the seemingly insurmountable psychological and emotional challenges in life.

*Lullaby for a Country* consists of four movements: **LOVE – YEARNING – SORROW – NEW DAWN**

**LOVE** starts with a soft voice singing over the pad of strings. The music is inspired by a southern Vietnamese lullaby.

#### *RU CON NAM BỘ*

Àu O'

Vi dầu cầu ván đóng đinh

Cầu tre lắt lẻo ở ầu ở

gập ghềnh khó đi

Àu O'

Khó đi mẹ dắt con đi

Chỉ con thi trường học

O' ầu, mẹ thi trường đời

O' ầu ở... ở ầu ở

#### **LULLABY**

Oh my dear little child, just sleep,  
And I am here for you  
I know the road is not easy,  
But I will take your hands, and walk you

Oh my dear little child  
Hold my hands and I guide you  
You know you have to take school exams  
But I have to take the test of life  
Oh my little child... Oh my little child

The lullaby is continued to nurture the child's soul with the sound of *dàn Bau*, the Vietnamese one-string instrument. Like the human voice, *dàn Bau* expresses different levels of emotion in its seamless sound.

**YEARNING** is structured in a much freer form and musical scale. It carries the desires that each of us has in our mind and body.

**SORROW** is another form of lullaby which will give lost souls a chance to find their way back.

**NEW DAWN** takes us to the land of hope, which helps us to pass through the most difficult times in life.

- Notes by Vân-Ánh (Vanessa) Võ