MOEST MUSSORSKY
Night on Bald Mountain
with Student Instrumentalists from
Oakland East Bay Symphony's
MUSE Orchestra, MUSE VIVO Orchestra,
and MUSE In-School Mentoring Program.

ERNEST BLOCH
Schelomo, Hebraic Rhapsody for
Cello and Orchestra
with Matthew Linaman, Cello
(Winner of 2013 Young Artist Competition
Senior Division)

MARY FINEMAN
It's About Love (World Premiere)
New Visions/New Vistas Commissioning Project,
supported by a grant from The James Irvine Foundation
1. And The World Spins ‘Round, ‘Round
   (a song without words)
2. Morning Prayer (Chickadee)
3. I Thought I Saw You
4. It’s About Love
with Wesla Whitfield, Vocalist

INTERMISSION

ANTONÍN DVORÁK
Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Opus 70
I. Allegro maestoso
II. Poco adagio
III. Scherzo: Vivace
IV. Finale: Allegro

Season Media Sponsors: Oakland Magazine, Oakland Tribune, East Bay Express, KDRC.
Season Guest Artist Accommodation provided by: Oakland Marriott City Center
The 2013-2014 season is supported by grants from the California Arts Council,
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, the National
Endowment for the Arts, and the City of Oakland’s Cultural Funding Program.
The student musicians participating in tonight’s concert hail from schools across Oakland and each one has been touched by the Symphony’s extensive MUSIC for Excellence (MUSE) program. These student musicians take part in either the MUSE Orchestra (4th-6th graders) or the MUSE VIVO Orchestra (7th-12th graders), or participate in the MUSE In-School Mentoring program.

The after-school MUSE Orchestra and MUSE VIVO Orchestra are open to all Oakland students, to give everyone the equal opportunity to participate in an all-city orchestra experience. The music students in the MUSE In-School Mentoring program work in small groups with professional musicians of the Symphony who serve as their musical mentors, as a complement to the public school music curriculum. MUSE mentors work with music teachers and students in their instrumental music classes.

Student musicians of the Oakland Spirit Orchestra performed in the Paramount Theatre lobby before the concert. Music Director Alison Streich, working with students in the MUSE Practice Lab in West Oakland, has avowed that the aim of the 30-piece Oakland Spirit Orchestra is to uplift the spirits of the world through music and kindness.

MUSE programs are tuition-free to all participants, and are sponsored by Oakland East Bay Symphony and hosted by the Oakland Unified School District.
WESLA WHITFIELD, VOCALIST

Wesla Whitfield has a deep love for the musical treasures known as The Great American Popular Songbook. Her sound and approach place her in the intriguing area that borders on both jazz and the great standards of pop music. She started piano lessons at age seven, sang in church, and studied voice - “classical, of course” - at about age 14.

Wesla has appeared twice on Garrison Keillor’s national show, “Prairie Home Companion,” singing with the legendary trumpeter, Joe Wilder, on ‘Weekend Edition’ with Susan Stamberg, ‘On Fresh Air’ with Terry Gross, and on ‘All Things Considered’ with Robert Siegel. In other radio appearances, Wesla and Mike were recent guests on the highly revered Marian McPartland PBS ‘Piano Jazz’ series. In October 1998, Wesla debuted her one-woman, autobiographical show at the Kaufman Theater on 42nd street in New York to massive critical acclaim.

Wesla, with her husband/pianist/arranger, Mike Greensill, performs annually throughout the country. Together Mike and Wesla have opened at Michigan’s Meadowbrook, New Jersey’s Garden State Art Center and Flint Center in Cupertino for such notables as George Burns, Michael Feinstein and Frankie Laine. Their latest CD, “Best Thing for You – Live from the Razz Room,” recorded in May of 2011 during their annual run at the Razz Room in San Francisco, was released in November 2011.

As invited members of the repertory company and the ongoing salute to American Popular Song at Lincoln Center, Whitfield and Greensill perform often in New York as well as prominent Boston, Philadelphia and St. Louis venues. Together Whitfield and Greensill conducted master classes at Notre Dame De Namur in Belmont and colleges in Napa Valley and throughout the country as well as teaching privately. In the Bay Area, their ongoing vocal workshop series provides vocalists from all over the country with invaluable instruction in the interpretive skills so necessary and integral a part of the Great American Popular songbook.

THEODORA MARTIN, PIANO

Theodora Martin is double majoring in music and English at UC Berkeley. She currently is studying piano with Martha Wasley, and previously studied with Professor Hans Boeppl.

With orchestras, she has performed Grieg’s Piano Concerto in A-minor, Chopin’s Concerto No. 1, and Prokofiev’s Concerto No. 2. She is the first prize recipient of several competitions, including the Music Teachers’ Association of California Concerto finals, the Marilyn Mindell Competition, the Young Artist’s Beethoven Competition, the International Russian Music Competition, and the American Fine Arts Festival (AFAF) Concerto Competition.

As part of the AFAF prize, she performed Brahms’s Second Concerto with the Kostroma Symphony in Russia this past July. She also attended the International Piano Festival in Naleczow, Poland, where she took piano lessons with renowned Professor and Chopin Competition juror Katarzyna Popowa-Zydron. She performed Chopin’s E minor Concerto with the Lublin Chamber Orchestra, and won Third Prize in the festival’s international competition.
It’s About Love
MARY FINEMAN (B. 1951)

“T’s About Love is a song cycle for voice and orchestra that explores different facets of love. In deciding which of my pieces to choose for this commission, I knew instinctively that these four songs would lend themselves to orchestration. I had often heard a different ending in *It’s About Love* that wasn’t even possible for me to play on piano. *Morning Prayer* (also called *Chickadee*) had fragments of melodies that always made me think of woodwinds. And *I Thought I Saw You*, though deeply pianistic, had an introduction which I felt could be well served, again, by additional instruments.

“Once I selected the four pieces, I was able to step back and see the unifying theme of love; whether love of nature and the sacredness of the everyday, love that endures despite loss, or love of the world. My next step I believed was to come to terms with that fact and know that I wasn’t disloyal to my original work if I changed the palette of sound to new colors. What’s more, the addition of new writing could only enhance the original versions. I went from being a composer who very stubbornly did not want to change a single note of her original score, to someone who revelled in the excitement of new material and new timbres.”

- Notes by Mary Fineman

Mary Fineman is an Oakland pianist, singer-songwriter, and composer. Originally from Baltimore, Mary studied music theory with Grace Newsom Cushman, and moved to Montréal to study piano with Philip Cohen and Lauretta Altman. She taught at Concordia University in Montréal and later at Temple Junior College in Texas. She worked as a freelance accompanist for instrumentalists and singers, and improvised for dancers for many years.

Like many musicians, Mary has always heard music playing in her head. After visiting a gifted energetic healer in 2003, she began hearing her own music—relentlessly. She started composing, began vocal studies with Cary Sheldon and Marcelle Dronkers, and has been performing her songs and piano pieces ever since. With the opportunity presented by the New Visions/New Vistas Commissioning Project and with the assistance of mentor composer Elinor Arner, she brings four of her pieces to orchestral life in collaboration with the Oakland East Bay Symphony under Michael Morgan.

Mary has performed at Piedmont Piano Company, Chapel of the Chimes, Goat Hall, and Opera at the Nave, as well as at Sherman Clay and Grace Presbyterian Church with the Piano Composers of the Contra Costa Performing Arts Society. She has performed at numerous fundraisers, private events, and house concerts here and in Canada, as well as West Coast Songwriter events at the Freight and Salvage.

Mary is involved in the on-going recording of her more than forty songs and piano pieces, and teaches at her studio in Oakland. Three of the songs being performed by Oakland East Bay Symphony tonight have been recorded by Mary on her solo CD “Everyday Secrets.” She has kept a journal about her year of orchestration which can be found on her website.

“My heartfelt gratitude goes to Michael Morgan. A special thank you is due to musicians Dan Reiter, Allan Crossman, and John Schott. I have been blessed by the continued encouragement of family and many good friends, from Janice to Jill, and Stan Nakahara and Mary Seman. Last, but not least is my husband and son, Larry and Michael Piazza, my father Jerome and my mother, Jeanette Fineman, who took me to years of piano lessons!”

- Notes by Mary Fineman

Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Opus 70

ANTONIN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

long before his triumphs in this country, Dvořák...had prospered in England. After his first visit in 1884, he said: “I am convinced that England offers me a new and happier future, and one which I hope may benefit our entire Czech art.” During his second visit to England, he was elected an honorary member of the Royal Philharmonic Society of London, which immediately asked him for a new symphony. Dvořák set to work on what would be his seventh symphony in mid-December, 1884. “Wherever I go,” he wrote to a friend, “I think of nothing but my work, which must be capable of moving the world—and may God grant that it will!”

Sometime during January, 1885, Dvořák reported: “I have just finished the second movement of my new symphony, and am again so happy and contented in my work as I always have been and, God grant, may always be, for my slogan is and shall be: God, Love and Country! And that alone can lead to a happy goal.”

The Symphony was finished in mid-March, and duly performed in London at St. James Hall on April 22, 1885. The regular conductor of the Royal Philharmonic, Sir Arthur Sullivan, relinquished the podium so that Dvořák could introduce his own work. According to the composer, the concert was “immensely successful and at the next performance will be a still greater success.” One eyewitness claimed that “the enthusiasm at the close of the work was such as is rarely seen at a Philharmonic concert.”

Sir Donald Francis Tovey wrote: “I have no hesitation in setting Dvořák’s Seventh Symphony along with the C major Symphony of Schubert and the four symphonies of Brahms as among the greatest and purest examples in this art form since Beethoven…. The solemn tone of the close is amply justified by every theme and every note of this great work, which never once falls below the highest plane of tragic music, nor yet contains a line which could have been written by any composer but Dvořák.”

Biographer Alec Robertson writes that the opening movement is “as austere and gloomy in its orchestration as it is tragic in its thoughts.” He regards the second movement as “Dvořák’s loveliest slow movement—which means one of the loveliest in the whole of music.” Another biographer, John Clapham, refers to the “masterly D minor scherzo, enhanced here and there with delightful countermelodies, (which) gives way to a highly imaginative and beautifully colored trio.”