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Hope *for* BEAUTY

November 16 | 5:00 pm
St. John the Divine

Alastair Willis, Conductor

Bruce Adolphe (AYE-dolf)
I Too Bleed, and Hope for Beauty
ROCO WORLD PREMIERE COMMISSION
---17 minutes---

Edward Elgar
Sospiri, op. 70
---4.5 minutes---

 **Manuel de Falla** (de FIE-uh)
El Amor Brujo
---22 minutes---

Ledah Finck
Quiescence
ROCO WORLD PREMIERE COMMISSION
---2 minutes---

Jason Gerraughty (GARE-uh-tee)
Compress/Ignite
ROCO WORLD PREMIERE COMMISSION
---3 minutes---

Giya Kancheli (Kan-CHEL-ee)
A Little Daneliade
---8 minutes---

Brian Raphael Nabors (NAY-bers)
Iubilo
ROCO WORLD PREMIERE COMMISSION
---2 minutes---

This evening's music will include the pieces above, not necessarily in this order, with a Take 5 (short intermission) and possible surprises.

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Min-Jeong Koh
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Chair

Maiko Sasaki
Founding Consortium
Chair

Nathan Williams
Principal
Jeanie Flowers
in loving memory of
Dan Flowers
Chair

Clarinet/ Bass Clarinet

Rebecca Powell Garfield
Kathy & Ed Segner
Chair

Brook Ferguson
Principal
Mary Margaret &
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Chair

Flute/Piccolo

***Hyeok Kwon**
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Chair

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Shino Hayashi
The Deshpande-Helmer Family
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Alecia Lawyer
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Nikki & Doug Richnow
Chair

Oboe/ English Horn

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Jo Ann & Bob Fry
Chair

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Kit Gwin
Chair

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Matt Dane
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Lorento Golofeev
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Chair

***Anabel Detrick**
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Chair

Rasa Kalesnykaite
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Susie & Mel Glasscock
Chair

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Susan Whitfield
Chair

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Principal
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Violin II



Alastair Willis,
Conductor
Consortium

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Grammy nominated conductor Alastair Willis is currently the Music Director of the South Bend Symphony Orchestra.

In past seasons, Willis has guest conducted orchestras around the world including the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Mexico City Philharmonic, Orquestra Sinfonica de Rio de Janeiro, Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, China National Orchestra (Beijing), and Silk Road Ensemble (with Yo-Yo Ma) among others. His recording of Ravel's "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges" with Nashville Symphony and Opera for Naxos was Grammy nominated for Best Classical Album in 2009.

Last season Willis was re-engaged by the Seattle Symphony, Gyor Philharmonic, The Symphonia Boca Raton, Pacific Northwest Ballet and Orchestra Seattle/Seattle Chamber Singers, and made his debut with the Philharmonie Südwestfalen. This season he returns to the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, Victoria Symphony B.C., Pacific Northwest Ballet, The Symphonia Boca Raton, and makes his debuts with Peninsula Music Festival, Fox Valley Symphony, La Porte Symphony, Salute to Vienna, and Seattle's Music of Remembrance.

Previous positions include Music Director of the Illinois Symphony, Principal Guest Conductor with the Florida Orchestra's Coffee Concert series, Associate Conductor of the Seattle Symphony, Assistant Conductor with the Cincinnati Symphony and Pops Orchestras, and Music Director of the Cincinnati Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Born in Acton, Massachusetts, Willis lived with his family in Moscow for five years before settling in Surrey, England. He received his bachelor's degree with honors from England's Bristol University, an Education degree from Kingston University, and a Masters of Music degree from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. Willis currently resides in Seattle.

Featured *Artist*

Bruce Adolphe, *Composer*

Composer Bruce Adolphe — known to millions of Americans from his public radio show *Piano Puzzlers*, which has been broadcast weekly on Performance Today since 2002 — has created a substantial body of chamber music and orchestral works inspired by science, visual arts, and human rights. Mr. Adolphe has composed several works based on writings by neuroscientist Antonio Damasio: *Body Loops* (piano and orchestra); *Memories of a Possible Future* (piano and string quartet); *Self Comes to Mind* (solo cello and two percussionists); *Obedient Choir of Emotions* (chorus and piano); and *Musics of Memory* (piano, marimba, harp, guitar). Yo-Yo Ma premiered *Self Comes to Mind* in 2009 at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. Mr. Adolphe's other science-based music include *Einstein's Light* for violin and piano, recently recorded by Joshua Bell and Marija Stokich on Sony Classical, and his tribute to NASA scientist and astronaut Piers Sellers, *I saw how fragile and infinitely precious the world is*, which received its world premiere at the Off the Hook Arts Festival in Colorado in 2018 and was performed at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in March, 2019. Among his human rights works are *I Will Not Remain Silent* for violin and orchestra and *Reach Out, Raise Hope, Change Society* for chorus, wind quintet, and three percussionists. Mr. Adolphe is the resident lecturer and director of family concerts for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and the author of several books, including *The Mind's Ear* (OUP). He contributed the chapter "The Musical Imagination: Mystery and Method in Musical Composition" to the recently published book *Secrets of Creativity: What Neuroscience, the Arts, and Our Minds Reveal* (OUP, 2019), an anthology of writings by neuroscientists and artists.



Buller *Points*


by Mark Buller


Hope for BEAUTY





I. Buce Adolphe: *I Too Bleed, and Hope for Beauty*

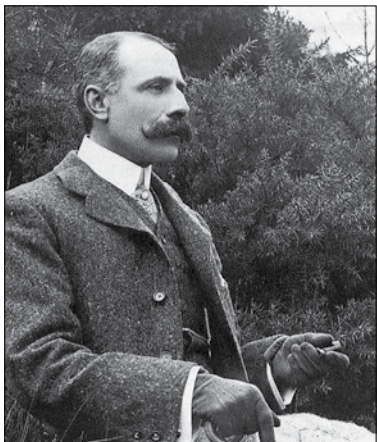
ROCO WORLD PREMIERE COMMISSION

 **Quick intro:** Commissioned by ROCO; this is the world premiere.

 **Tribute to a Heroine:** The composer writes: "Alma Rosé was born into the musical royalty of Vienna — her uncle was Gustav Mahler and her father was the renowned violinist Arnold Rosé — and she herself attained some fame as a violinist before the Nazis came to power. She became the conductor of the women's orchestra at Auschwitz and by the power of her spirit and determination, the ensemble became a path to survival. Through this orchestra, Alma Rosé saved the lives of nearly 50 prisoners who would otherwise have died in the Nazi gas chambers. Alma died of an illness, probably botulism, shortly before the camps were liberated. The title of this piece, *I too Bleed, and Hope for Beauty*, is a quote of Manca Svalbova, a young Slovak doctor at the Auschwitz hospital, and a close friend of Alma. The quote is Svalbova's way of describing the message conveyed by Alma's violin playing. *I too Bleed, and Hope for Beauty* is a tribute to Alma Rosé and to the enduring power of music, which, even the worst circumstances imaginable, offers hope and beauty."

 **Mixed Colors:** Adolphe's tonal palette here might seem understandably to skew toward darker harmonies, but listen to how he brightens things up by carefully mixing timbres: in the opening, the harp cuts through, at there are some beautiful moments where it is doubled by the vibraphone. Keep an ear out, too, for the solo violin, a moving tribute to Rosé.

 **Further Listening:** There's an encyclopedic series of CDs called "KZ Musik," documenting music by composers in concentration camps. The music ranges from symphonies and lieder to cabaret and jazz, from better-known composers (Victor Ullmann, Gideon Klein) to some whose names the producers aren't even sure of. It's a haunting experience, listening to these pieces.



I. Edward Elgar: *Sospiri*, op. 70

Quick intro: Written in 1914 and originally intended as a “companion piece” to his ever-popular *Salut d’amour*, a beautiful and rather light work. Originally, he’d intended to call it “Soupir d’amour” (“sigh of love”), but reportedly settled on the current title (“sighs”) when the piece turned out deeper and more heartfelt.

About Elgar: Born in 1857, Elgar was the very model of a proper English gentleman and his music is often considered to be quintessentially English (though his style is indebted perhaps more to music from the Continent). His Catholic faith (which occasionally caused him some trouble in Anglican England) inspired a number of major works, and he is best known for the first *Pomp and Circumstance* march.

War on the Horizon: Elgar wrote *Sospiri* in the months leading up to World War I, and while it might be tempting to see this piece as descriptive of the upcoming conflict, historians might remind us that until the Archduke was assassinated and Germany declared war on Belgium, the drumbeat of war was not yet all-pervasive in Britain.

Keeping the Options Open: The piece is scored for strings, harp, and organ, but the harp can be replaced by piano, and the organ by harmonium. Since, in the words of one commentator, the organ/harmonium “muddles” the string sound, it is sometimes left out, though you might argue that the string/organ doubling creates a classically pleasant English sound. Speaking of which: doesn’t this piece sound almost choral? It really isn’t out of place performed in a church.

Further Listening: For context, listen to the earlier *Salut d’amour*; then, for a deeper dive into Elgar’s music, seek out some of his larger-scale music, which allows him to plumb further emotional depths: the Cello Concerto in E minor and the symphonies are great, as are even bigger pieces like *The Dream of Gerontius*.

III. Manuel de Falla: *El Amor Brujo*

Quick intro: Completed in 1915, one year after Elgar’s *Sospiri*; commissioned by Pastora Imperio, a famous flamenco dancer and not at all a spell in *Harry Potter*. Premiered in Madrid. Falla continued to make edits and alternate versions well into the 1920s.

The title: Translates to “Love, the Magician”.

Ballet, Soap Opera, or Scary Movie? Candela, a gypsy woman, has a problem: she’s being haunted every night by her late husband, who had died some years earlier, murdered by Lucia. Every night she must dance with the ghost (“Danza del terror”), a fact that Candela’s village knows and finds both scary and intriguing. Turns out (plot twist!) that her husband was having an affair with Lucia. This is a big problem, and the nice people of the village suggest a solution: they work up a hectic Ritual Fire Dance to expel him... but it doesn’t work. So, Candela has an idea: she tricks Lucia into coming over one night, using Candela’s current boyfriend as bait; when the ghost arrives, she pulls a switcheroo, and exchanges True Love’s Kiss with her new man. The magic of this Disney moment breaks the spell and the old man disappears, taking Lucia with him. How long until this inspires a weekly show on the CW?

A Reign in Spain: Falla lived at the perfect time: his career peaked right when the world was becoming more fascinated than ever with Spanish culture. Around the turn of the 20th century, composers from France (Debussy’s *Iberia*, Ravel’s *Rapsodie espagnole*) to Russia (Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Capriccio Espagnol*) and beyond were writing music tinged with Spanish influences. And Falla was able to provide the Real Thing.

Further Listening: Falla arranged several of the dances for solo piano; listen also to his *El sombrero de tres picos* (*The Three-Cornered Hat*).





IV. Ledah Finck: *Quiescence*

Meet Ledah: Ledah is a Baltimore-based musician who balances her creative work between a number of fields. She is a chamber musician (the experimental duo The Witches; the Bergamot String Quartet, the jazz ensemble Atlantic Extraction), an improviser, a violinist, and composer. Her

music blends experimental styles with classical, jazz, and the folk music of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

She Writes: “When we can’t see something, we often fear it. We know there are bears in these woods, and that they probably won’t hurt us, but we jump at the slightest stirring. Contrary to common belief, bears don’t actually hibernate. They enter a state of quiescence, a dormancy from which they still rise frequently during winters. So here we are, waiting in a calm, still aware of fear of the unknown rising slowly and gracefully from a hidden den in a beautiful forest.”

A Little rumble: I love the subtle addition of the bass drum to the string ensemble here: rather than the usual Sousa-esque heartbeat, the bass drum here adds a dramatic but delicate touch of color.

Further Listening: Speaking of quiescence, Max Richter’s *Sleep* has gained a cult following in the last few years. And visit YouTube to hear Ledah’s beautiful, idyllic and subtly virtuosic. *Afternoon Elegy* for solo violin. (It’s a terrific piece, and I found myself drawn in immediately. Do listen.)

V. Jason Gerraughty: *COMPRESS/IGNITE*



Meet Jason: Jason’s background as a brass player in New England community ensembles helped shape his desire to write music “of value to both amateur and seasoned listeners.” His music is energetic and forward-thinking, but allows the listener to enjoy the varied hues of the sound itself. He currently lives in California.

Fifteen-Second Summary: “On its surface, *COMPRESS/IGNITE* draws inspiration from the cycle used by diesel engines to harness combustion for energy. A piston rises in a chamber with vaporized fuel, gradually compressing the air/fuel mixture. As it’s compressed, the mixture gets hotter and hotter, until the fuel combusts, forcing the piston back down and powering another piston in the engine to repeat the process. Musically, the piece mimics this cycle with sections of proportional shifts in meter (referred to as “metric modulation”), followed by rapid *accelerandi*, seamlessly returning the piece back to the original tempo. The piece bears a passing genetic resemblance to Bizet’s famous Farandole, from *L’Arlesienne* Suite No. 2, most notably in both pieces’ use of a tenor drum to drive the momentum forward. A farandole is a folk dance in which participants form an interlocking line and wind through a space, much in the way that the pistons of an engine interlock to propel a vehicle forward.”

Day Job as Inspiration: “One may wonder how a piece about engine cycles fits the proscribed theme of “Hope For Beauty”. My day job is at a junkyard in the California desert, where I walk among the twisted, burnt, and in some cases bloody remains of vehicles, assessing their damage and totaling them for an insurance company. It’s depressing work, outdoors in the heat, interacting with people have just experienced a tragedy. Despite this, one can’t surround themselves with cars without marveling at the engineering that makes them work, especially when their inner workings are splayed out in front of you. There’s a kind of beauty in the way that you can see how these parts were meticulously designed to work together. One can’t help but see the similarities in which we as musicians collaborate to bring pieces to life.”

Further Listening: Honegger’s *Pacific 231*, which describes a locomotive. On SoundCloud, hear Jason’s *Fascinations* for percussion quartet and Balinese gamelan; there you’ll hear a similar rhythmic drive, though it’s a bit more measured than *COMPRESS/IGNITE*.



VI. Giya Kancheli: *A Little Daneliade*

Film Music: This piece is adapted from Kancheli's score for the 1986 Georgian film *Kin-Dza-Dza!*, which follows two earthlings transported to a barbaric alien planet, Pluke, whose social oddities parodically resemble those

of earth. Much as in *Gulliver's Travels*, the Plukians are separated almost arbitrarily into two social tiers, the lower of which is forced to be comically subservient to the upper.

Darmok and Jalad at Tanagra: Quick content warning: this piece contains strong language. The good news is that the language is Plukian! The Plukians generally speak only two words: "koo," which means... well, everything, and "kyu," which is sort of a general swear word. You'll hear the orchestra occasionally chant these words, so prepare to cover your kids' ears.

Through the Looking Glass: At times, there's a delicate sensibility to Kancheli's sound-world here, a sense of formal balance. Here especially, it's almost as if he's channeling Mozart – albeit Mozart on another planet. Say, for instance, the planet Pluke? Then it's as if Kancheli flips a switch, and we find ourselves in the middle of a traditional Georgian dance.

In memoriam: Kancheli passed away just last month, at his home in Tbilisi, Georgia. His music is truly unique, and you can't really go wrong with any of it. I recommend seeking out *Chiaroscuro* and *V&V*, both scored for violin and orchestra.



15 FIFTEEN FANFARES, INTERLUDES & FINALES PROJECT

VI. Brian Raphael Nabors: *Iubilo*

Meet Brian: Quickly becoming well-known in the orchestral world, Brian has recently collaborated with the orchestras of Detroit and Cincinnati. A recent winner of the Rapido! Composition Contest, this season sees the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra premiere a work of his.

In His Own Words: "Commissioned in honor of ROCO's 15th season *Fifteen Project*, *Iubilo* is a 2-minute fanfare exploring pure, musical manifestations of joy and celebration. Explored through the work are flourishing gestures and flamboyant textures to capture the free, energetic attributes exuded through joy. Each respective instrument has its part to play in creating this tapestry of exuberance."

About the title: "Iubilo" is Latin for "I sing/shout joyfully."

Further Listening: Michael Torke's *Javelin*, a similarly exciting fanfare. And head to Brian's website to listen to another of his new pieces: a fun concerto for Hammond organ, vocal quartet, chorus and orchestra.

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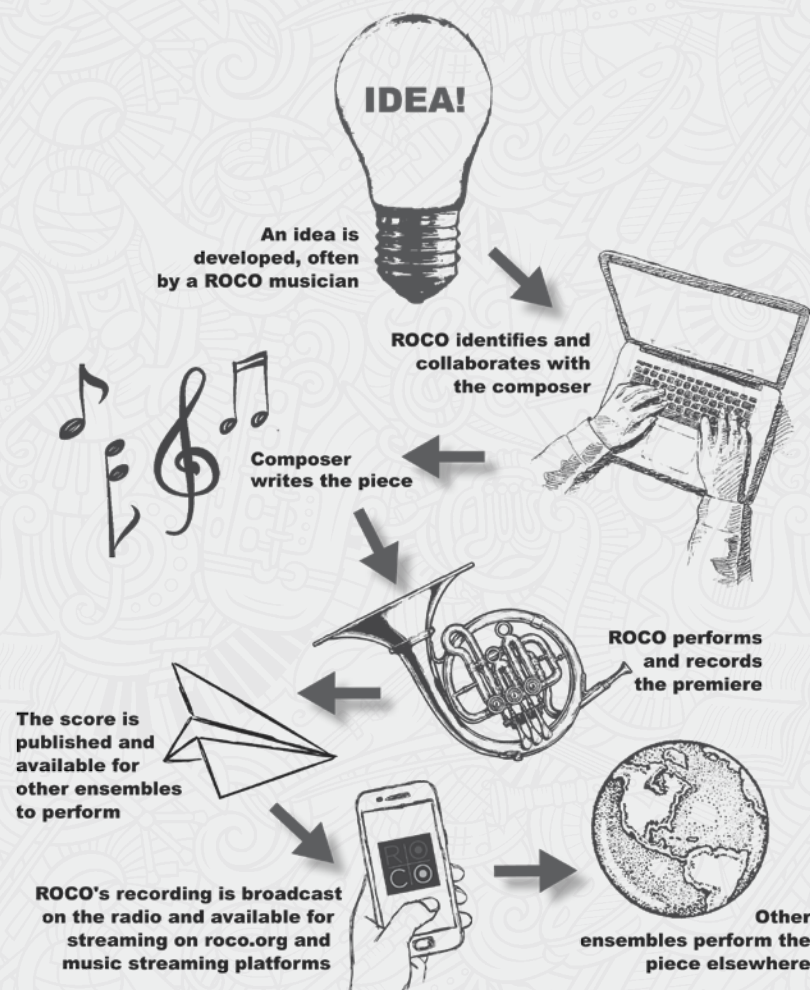
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re•sound:

verb, 1. fill a place with sound; be loud enough to echo

Every new piece of music starts quietly with an idea, which grows louder when it is premiered, and eventually reverberates through audiences and the world as it is performed again and again. ROCOC has commissioned and performed the world premiere of nearly 80 new works over our history, making us the 3rd highest commissioner of new music in the United States. By the end of our 2019-2020, 15th Anniversary Season, we will have performed 100 world premiere commissions.

re•sound:

verb, 2. sing the praises of

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The Deshpande-Helmer Family



Drew Helmer and Salil Deshpande have been long time supporters of ROCO, sponsoring cellist Shino Hayashi's chair. Their sons, Dashiell and Pierson, enjoyed their time in ROCOrooters when they were younger and have now graduated and join their dads in the audience at ROCO concerts.

Drew joined ROCO's Board of Directors in 2017 and earlier this year stepped into the role as Chair and we are so thankful for his leadership and the friendship of their whole family!

15 FIFTEEN FANFARES, INTERLUDES & FINALES

PROJECT Curated by MARK BULLER

FIFTEEN Project: In celebration of Season 15, Mark Buller has curated an incredible list of diverse composers to write fifteen Fanfares, Interludes, and Finales commissioned and sprinkled throughout the season.

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Karim Al-Zand
Alejandro Basulto
Mark Buller
Ledah Finck**

**Isabelle Ganz
Jason Gerraughty
Desmond Ikegwonu
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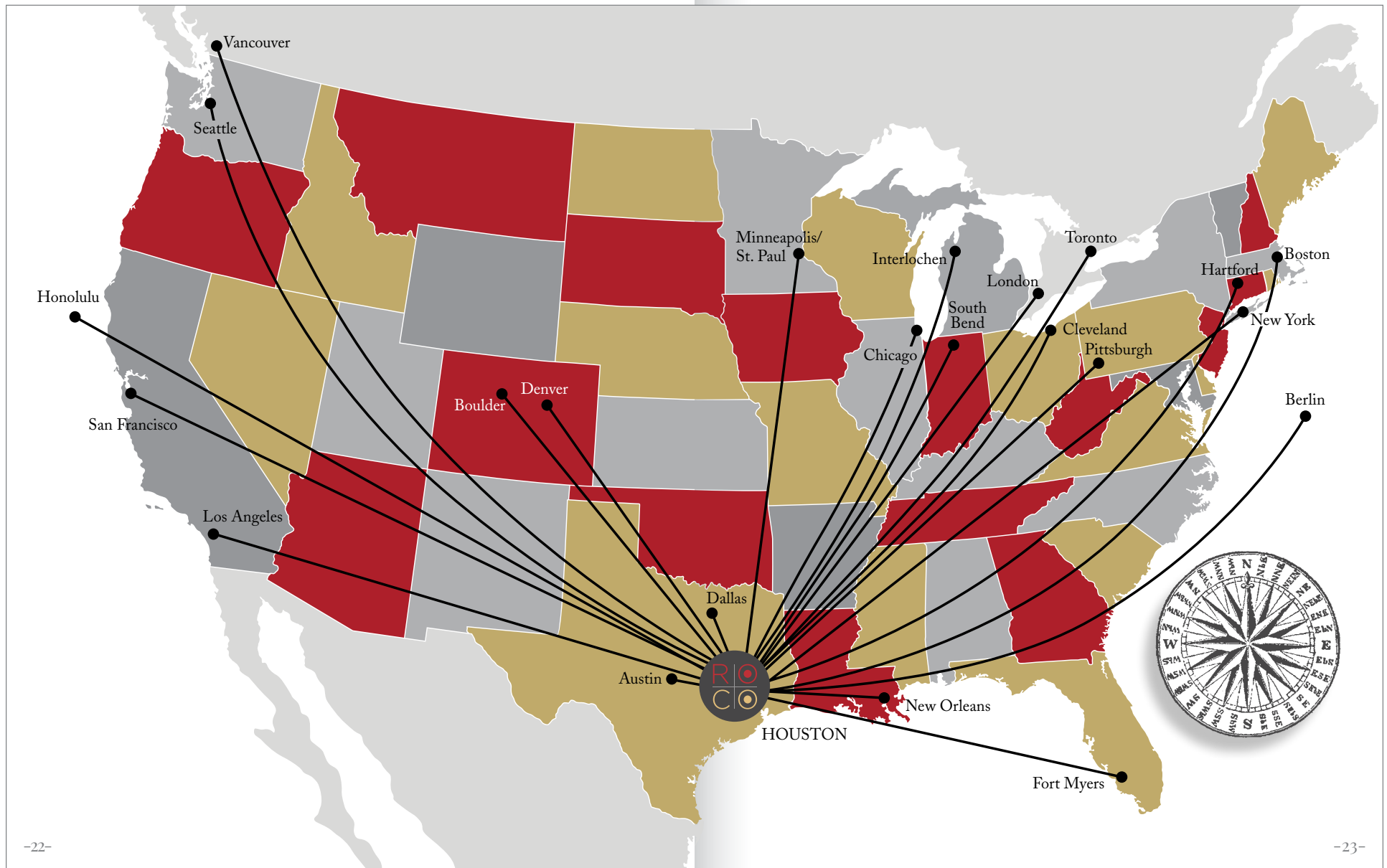
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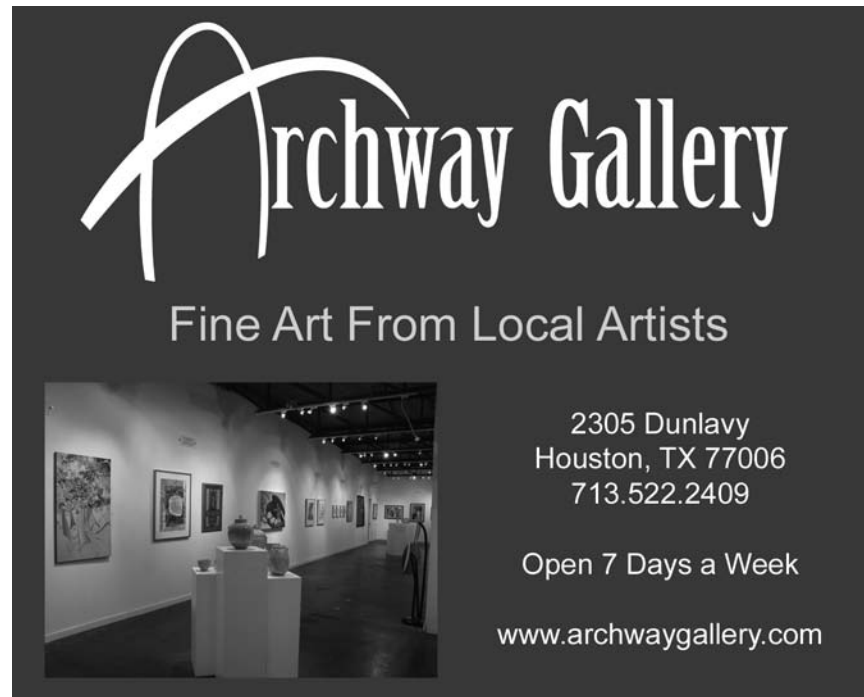
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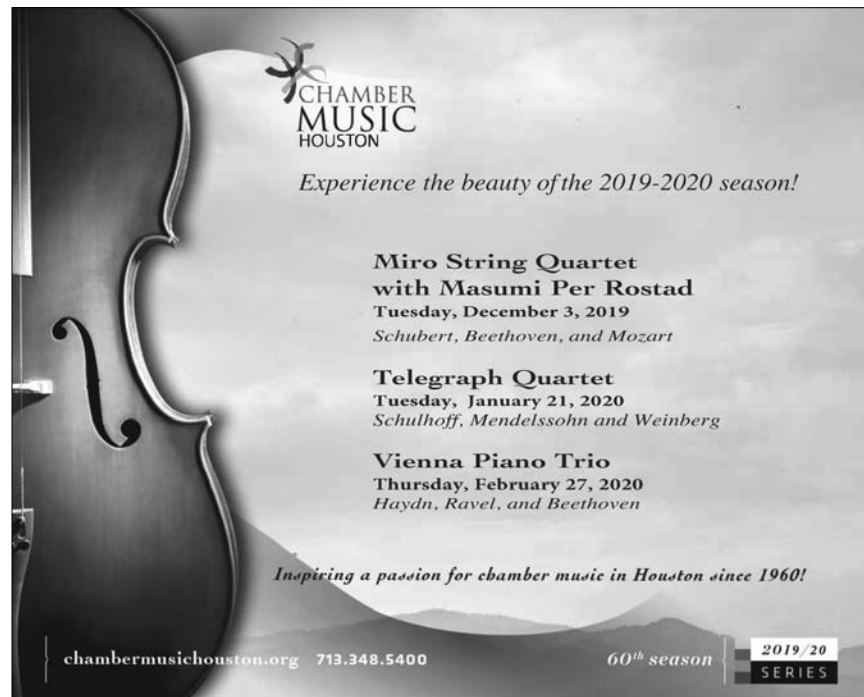
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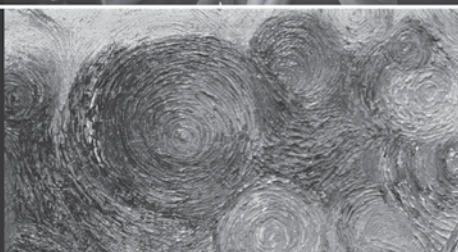
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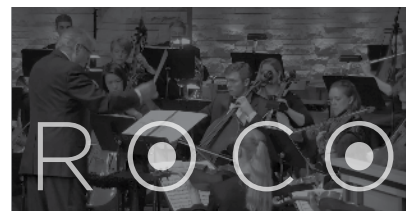


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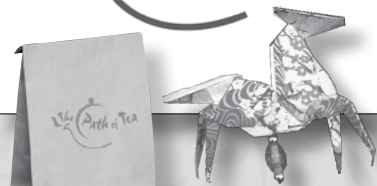
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Calendar COMING of AGE



SEASON 15
2019-2020

➤ YULETIDE BRUNCH
AND BRASS

December 9 • 10:00 am
Czech Center Museum Houston

➤ BEER & BRASS

January 9 • 6:00 pm
Saint Arnold Brewery

➤ PETER AND THE RAPTOR

January 11 • 10:30 am and 11:30 am
Houston Museum of Natural Science

➤ AGE OF AQUARIUS

January 30 • 6:00 pm Reception
7:00 pm Concert • Rienzi

➤ BEAUTY IS IN THE EYE

February 8 • 5:00 pm
St. John the Divine

➤ UNRAVELED

February 22 • 5:00 pm • MATCH

➤ WE WERE THE MUSIC

March 5 • 6:00 pm Galleries open
7:00 pm Concert
Holocaust Museum Houston

➤ PERSONALITIES

April 4 • 5:00 pm • MATCH

➤ EXPLORATIONS

April 18 • 5:00 pm
First Congregational Church of Houston

➤ EYE OF THE WORLD

May 2 • 5:00 pm • St. John the Divine

➤ IN CONCERT

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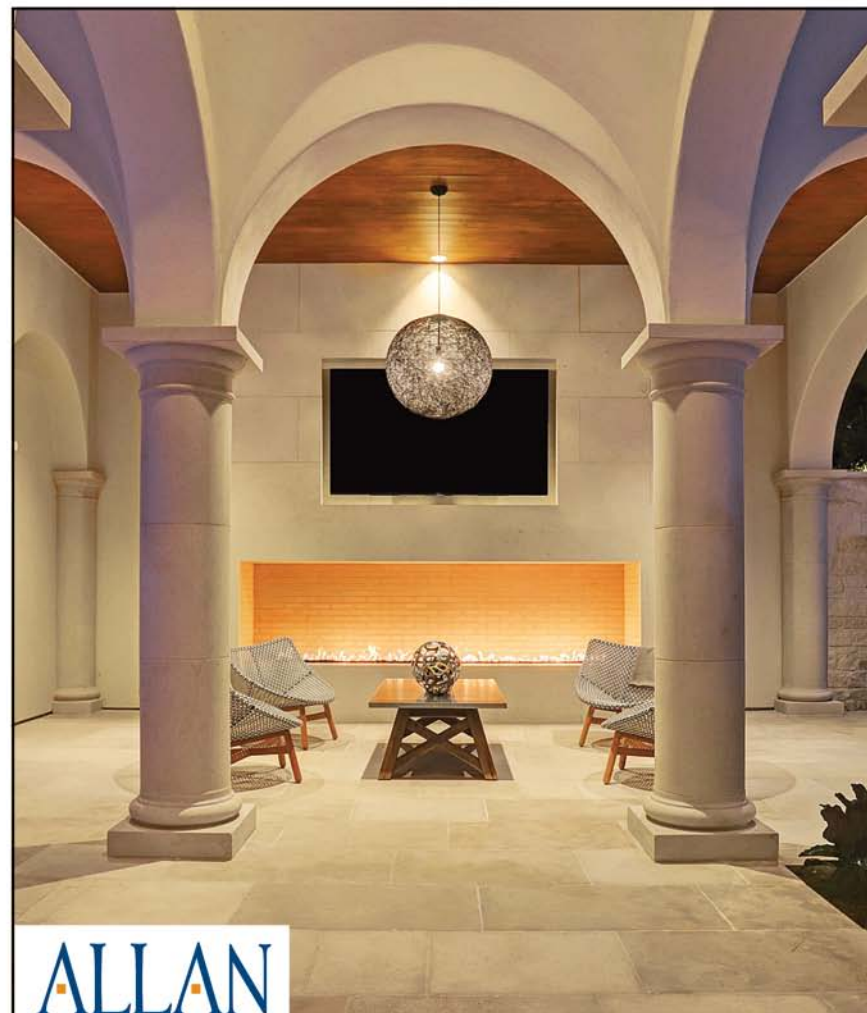
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