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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE January 9, 2018  
Press Room



Images of Jonathan Biss and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra are available for download from the [Cal Performances online press room](#).

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS  
THE SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA  
WITH PIANIST JONATHAN BISS**

**FEATURING WEST COAST PREMIERES OF  
BEETHOVEN-INSPIRED PIANO CONCERTOS  
BY TIMO ANDRES AND SALVATORE SCIARRINO,  
AS WELL AS GEORGE TSONTAKIS' *O MIKROS, O MEGAS*  
FRIDAY–SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9–11, 2018**

The orchestra's visit is part of the Berkeley **RADICAL *Blurring Boundaries*** programming strand, which features inventive artistic hybrids that cut across cultures and disciplines, accepted definitions of classical and contemporary, and even time and space.

A pre-performance talk is planned in advance of the Saturday evening performance.

**Berkeley, January 9, 2018** — Cal Performances at UC Berkeley welcomes the **Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra** (SPCO) with pianist **Jonathan Biss**, in three programs featuring the West Coast premieres of new works from the SPCO's Beethoven/5 project. The collaboration encompasses a five-year plan to commission five composers to write new piano concertos, each inspired by one of Beethoven's. For two of the Berkeley performances, Biss and the orchestra perform one of these commissions, paired with its companion Beethoven concerto. The first program includes Timo Andres' Pulitzer Prize-nominated *The Blind Banister* and Beethoven's Second Concerto and the second pairs a new concerto by Salvatore Sciarrino with Beethoven's Concerto No. 4; the final concert includes George Tsontakis' *O Mikros, O Megas*, along with Beethoven's *Emperor* Concerto. A celebrated Beethoven interpreter, Biss is in the midst of a nine-year, nine-disc recording cycle of all the composer's piano sonatas. He directs Beethoven's Second Concerto and Fifth Concerto (in the Friday and Sunday performances) from the keyboard (Joshua Weilerstein conducts other works, and some of the music is performed without a conductor). The performances are Friday–Saturday, February 9–10 at 8pm, and Sunday, February 11 at 3pm in Zellerbach Hall. As part of the orchestra's residency Cal Performances has arranged for Biss and artistic director and principal violin of SPCO Kyu-Young Kim to lead master classes for UC Berkeley music students on Thursday, February 8.

In the spirit of the performances grouped under this season's Berkeley RADICAL *Blurring Boundaries* programming strand, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra's Beethoven/5 project proposes a novel, inclusive, multi-layered vision of classical music for the 21st century. The project collapses centuries by connecting music of the present with timeless works from the canon, and introduces classical music fans to the work of contemporary composers within a familiar context. It also provides audiences new perspectives on the familiar but enigmatic figure of Beethoven.

The concert on Friday, February 9 at 8pm pairs Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 2 with the West Coast premiere of Timo Andres' Pulitzer Prize-nominated *The Blind Banister*. Andres' composition, his third piano concerto, is inspired by the cadenza in Beethoven's manuscript. Mendelssohn's *Italian* Symphony completes the program.

The concert on Saturday, February 10 at 8pm unites Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 with the West Coast premiere of Salvatore Sciarrino's new *Il sogno di Stradella* (*The Dream of Stradella*), an

homage to the innovative Baroque composer Alessandro Stradella. The program also includes Ives' *The Unanswered Question*, and Haydn's ominous Symphony No. 49, *The Passion*. A pre-performance talk is planned in advance of the concert at 7pm in Zellerbach Hall, with Matías Tarnopolsky, Cal Performances' executive and artistic director, and Professor Nicholas Mathew, UC Berkeley Dept. of Music. The talk is free to concert ticket holders.

The SPCO's Berkeley residency concludes with a concert on Sunday, February 11 at 3pm featuring the West Coast premiere of *O Mikros, O Megas (This Tiny World, This Enormous World)* by George Tsontakis, who has a long history of collaboration with the orchestra that includes three previous world premieres. Tsontakis' work is scored for piano with strings only, and is inspired by the writings of contemporary Greek poet Odysseas Elytis. Ravel's *Le tombeau de Couperin* and Beethoven's *Emperor Concerto* round out the program.

### **Ticket Information**

Tickets for *The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra* on Friday–Saturday, February 9–10 at 8pm, and Sunday, February 11 at 3pm in Zellerbach Hall range from \$48–\$86 (prices subject to change). Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at [calperformances.org](http://calperformances.org), and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to [calperformances.org/discounts](http://calperformances.org/discounts).

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### **CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE: CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Friday, February 9, 8pm**  
**Saturday, February 10, 8pm**  
**Sunday, February 11, 3pm**

**Zellerbach Hall**  
Bancroft Way at Dana Street  
UC Berkeley campus

***Orchestra***  
**The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra**  
**Jonathan Biss**, piano and director  
**Joshua Weilerstein**, conductor

**Programs:**  
Friday, February 9, 8pm  
Beethoven/Piano Concerto No. 2  
Timo Andres/*The Blind Banister* (West Coast Premiere)

Mendelssohn/Symphony No. 4, *Italian*

Saturday, February 10, 8pm

Haydn/Symphony No. 49, *The Passion*

Salvatore Sciarrino/*Il sogno di Stradella (The Dream of Stradella)* for Piano and Orchestra  
(West Coast Premiere)

Ives/*The Unanswered Question* (1908; rev. 1930–35)

Beethoven/Piano Concerto No. 4

Sunday, February 11, 3pm

Ravel/*Le tombeau de Couperin*

George Tsontakis/*O Mikros, O Megas (This Tiny World, This Enormous World)* (West Coast Premiere)

Beethoven/Piano Concerto No. 5, *Emperor*

**Berkeley RADICAL:** This performance is part of Cal Performances' Berkeley RADICAL *Blurring Boundaries* strand. These artists are dissolving the very boundaries of their art forms, creating performances that cut across cultures and disciplines, accepted definitions of classical and contemporary, and even time and space. More information at [calperformances.org/berkeley-radical-blurring-boundaries](http://calperformances.org/berkeley-radical-blurring-boundaries).

### **Pre-performance Talk**

**Saturday, Feb 10, 7pm**

**Zellerbach Hall**

A conversation with Matías Tarnopolsky, Cal Performances' executive and artistic director, and Prof. Nicholas Mathew, UC Berkeley Dept. of Music. Free to ticket holders.

**Tickets:** \$48–\$86 (prices subject to change)

### **Master Classes**

**Thursday, Feb 8**

**125 Morrison Hall, 3-6pm**

Jonathan Biss and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra artistic director and principal violin Kyu-Young Kim Free lead master classes for UC Berkeley music students. Free and open to the public.