



Pioneer Valley Symphony

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### The Pioneer Valley Symphony Announces Guest Conductors for Spring 2018 Season

GREENFIELD, MA (October 4, 2017) — The Pioneer Valley Symphony is pleased to announce guest conductors for three concerts during the upcoming season. Brief biographies of the guest conductors can be found at the end of the press release.

The PVS February 10, 2017 concert at Greenfield High School (7:30 pm) will be conducted by Cynthia Woods. Ms. Woods will lead the PVS Orchestra and Chorus in a program that includes Gwyneth Walker's *Three Days by the Sea* and Joaquin Rodrigo's *Fantasia para un gentilhombre*, featuring Christopher Ladd on guitar. She will conclude the concert by leading the PVS Orchestra's performance of Johannes Brahms' Symphony No. 3.

The PVS March 24, 2018 concert at John M. Greene Hall on Smith College's campus (7:30 pm) will be conducted by Jonathan Hirsh. Mr. Hirsh will lead the PVS Orchestra and Chorus in a program that includes Giuseppe Verdi's *Stabat Mater* and Beethoven's Symphony No. 8. In addition, the PVS will welcome violinist and South Hadley native, Sarah-Hadley Yakir for a performance of Edouard Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole*.

The PVS May 19, 2018 concert at Greenfield High School (7:30 pm) will be conducted by Tian Hui Ng. Mr. Ng will lead the PVS Orchestra in a program that includes Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol* and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4. Mr. Ng will also lead the PVS Orchestra and Chorus, along with violist and South Hadley resident Tanya Solomon, in a performance of Vaughan Williams' *Flos Campi*.

Previously, the PVS announced that its longtime music director, Paul Phillips, was stepping down upon accepting a position at Stanford University. The PVS is excited to have Maestro Phillips back on the podium on October 14, 2017, to open the PVS season and celebrate his two decade tenure with the PVS.

Our November 19, 2017 concert, featuring works for chorus and chamber choir, will be led by PVS Chorus Director Jonathan Harvey. Our popular Holiday Pops Concert on December 16, 2017, featuring the PVS Orchestra, Chorus and Youth Orchestra, will be directed by Chorus Director Jonathan Harvey, Assistant Conductor Luca Antonucci, and Youth Orchestra Director Steve Bathory-Peeler.

The PVS has begun its search for a new music director. It hopes to conclude the search in June 2018 and name a new music director for the beginning of the 2018-2019 season, its 80<sup>th</sup>.

## Cynthia Woods

Hailed as a conductor with *gusto and exuberance* (Jim McDonald, the Boston Musical Intelligencer) whose performances have *dynamic and immersing outcomes* (John Galigour, the Sun Valley News), and recognized for her *intelligent and out of the ordinary programming* (Vance Koven, Boston Musical Intelligencer), Ms. Woods has become a recognized and respected conductor in the Boston community and beyond. The Music Director for the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra, Ms. Woods is also a frequent guest conductor, having performed across the U.S., Europe and South America.



Ms. Woods began her conducting career with a literal bang, making her debut with Stravinsky's iconic masterwork *The Rite of Spring* and the massive 118-piece Worcester Consortium Orchestra. Since then she has gone on to a successful career, winning acclaim in all idioms, including opera, choral, chamber, and symphonic orchestra. She has collaborated with some of today's great artists, including Joan Tower, Lisa Bielawa, Alexander Korsantia and Gianni Gino di Marco, as well as serving as the Music Director for Oscar winning director Morgan Neville's (20 Feet from Stardom) new documentary on Amar Bose. Most recently, Ms. Woods conducted the world premiere of Conrad Pope's latest symphonic work, *The Little Match Girl*. An icon in the Hollywood world, Pope's credits include *My Life with Marylyn* and *Tim Vermeer*.

Along with her conducting activities, Ms. Woods is also a frequent speaker and writer. She has been a guest lecturer at institutions such as MIT and the Longy School of Music of Bard College, a panelist for radio shows such as WGBH's *Callie Crossley*, and a frequent contributor to *The Boston Herald's State of the Arts* blog. She was awarded a scholarship to study violin with the Grammy award winning Takacs String Quartet at the University of Colorado Boulder, received the Dean's Talent Award while doing her graduate studies at the Hartt School of Music and won a full fellowship to study composition at the prestigious Atlantic Center for the Arts. In addition to her current roles as Music Director and guest conductor, Ms. Woods is also the conductor for the Youth Reparatory Orchestra at the New England Conservatory, where she serves on the violin and conducting faculty.

## Jonathan Hirsh



Jonathan Hirsh graduated from Amherst College in 1986 and received his M.M. and D.M.A. in conducting from the University of Michigan. He has taught at the Sidwell Friends School in Washington, D.C., Amherst College, the University of Michigan, the University of California at Santa Cruz and Tufts University. As senior lecturer and director of choral and orchestral activities, Hirsh conducts the Smith Orchestra, Glee Club and Chamber Singers. A frequent guest conductor, clinician and adjudicator, Hirsh's repertoire and activities include choral works, oratorio, opera

and symphonic works. Under his baton, the Smith Orchestra made its Carnegie Hall debut in 2005 performing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Smith choral ensembles and the University of Michigan Men's Glee Club.

## Tian Hui Ng

The American Prize winning conductor Ng Tian Hui is Music Director of the Mount Holyoke Symphony Orchestra (USA). His innovative programming has been acknowledged with grants from institutions such as the Massachusetts Cultural Council, National Arts Council of Singapore, Singapore International Foundation, Women's Philharmonic, and WomenArts, in addition to other awards from the Oregon Bach Festival, the Dartington International Music Festival, the Yale School of Music, and the Singapore Government Public Service Commission.



An advocate of new music, he has assisted in and premiered new works by Pulitzer and Rome Prize winners such as Curt Cacioppo, Aaron Jay Kernis, Robert Kyr, David Sanford, and Joan Tower, and many young composers. He is particularly proud of his commissioning work, which has helped composers like Chen Zhangyi garner international prizes such as the London Symphony Orchestra Prize. His 2001 direction of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* was praised by the Birmingham Post (UK) for its "high orchestral quality" while his 2014 premiere of Mary D. Watkins's Civil Rights era opera, *Dark River*, was critically acclaimed in the United States.

Tian has conducted orchestras around the world including the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra (Czech Republic), Dartington Festival Orchestra (UK), Orchestra of the Royal Opera of Wallonie (Belgium), and the Oregon Bach Festival Orchestra (USA), and musicians from the London Symphony Orchestra (UK), Orquesta de Cadaqués (Spain), Scottish Chamber Orchestra (UK), Tempesta di Mare (USA), and Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (Canada). A versatile musician, he is equally at home in the realm of choral music and has conducted ensembles like the Stuttgart Chamber Choir (Germany), Carnegie Hall Festival Chorus (USA), Oregon Bach Festival Chorus (USA), Yale Schola Cantorum (USA), and the Young Person's Chorus of New York (USA). He has collaborated with internationally renowned artists such as Dashon Burton, Tyler Duncan, Marcus Eiche, Jamie-Rose Guarrine, Ayano Kataoka, Ilya Polataev, Gary Steigerwalt, Astrid Schween, Sara Davis Buechner, Hanna Elisabeth Müller, Nicholas Phan, James Taylor, Gilles Vonsattel and Soyoung Yoon.

In the 2017/2018 Season, Mr. Ng looks forward to music ranging from Brahms's *Violin Concerto*, to Olabode Omojola's new opera *Irin Ajo*, Holst's *Planets* and a concert celebrating the work of Mexican women.