

Pasadena Community Orchestra

Bethany Pflueger, Conductor



Friday, January 23, 2026, 8:00 pm
Pre-Concert Discussion at 7:15 pm

First Church of the Nazarene of Pasadena

Program

Fanfare for the Common Man Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

Ancient Airs & Dances Suite No. 2 Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)

Laura Soave

Danza Rustica

Campanae Parisienses – Aria

Bergamasca

Intermission

Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67 Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Nic Arnzen, Narrator

Imperial March from *Star Wars Suite for Orchestra* John Williams (b.1932)

PROGRAM NOTES – PCO CONCERT, JANUARY 23, 2026

Aaron Copland is often called the “Dean of American composers”, taught generations of American musicians, and won the Pulitzer Prize in 1945 for *Appalachian Spring*. Conductor Eugene Goossens requested American composers to create fanfares in response to the U.S. entry into World War II. In all, 10 were written, but Copland’s *Fanfare for the Common Man*, stood out, and remains widely played today. It features only brass and percussion, notably the timpani and tam-tam, and its bold simple themes conjure an atmosphere of strength and optimism.



Ottorino Respighi was a modern “Renaissance man” – a performer, conductor, editor, professor, and musicologist. Past generations of musical style held a special fascination for him. His three suites of *Ancient Airs and Dances* are influenced by Renaissance (15-17th century) music. The four movements of Suite No. 2 are creative arrangements of lute and viol music by composers who are little-known today: Fabritio Caroso, Jean-Baptiste Besard, Marin Mersenne and Bernardo Giononcelli. So now you know! Respighi arranged these lively dances with modern harmonies and orchestrations, contrasting moods, and varied textures, while maintaining an impression that the music is really very old. Ambiguity in style is part of what makes this music so delightful.

Peter and the Wolf is based on a Russian folk story composed by **Sergei Prokofiev** in 1936 for Moscow Children’s Musical Theater. The music is accompanied by a narration of the story, and many well-known figures have performed it: Sting, Sir Ben Kingsley, Boris Karloff, Bill Clinton, Alice Cooper, and Eleanor Roosevelt. Tonight, we are thrilled to have an important local figure, Nic Arnzen, to perform with the Orchestra. Read more about Nic below.



Peter and the Wolf tells the story of a young boy named Peter who captures a wolf. Each character in the story is represented by a different instrument in the orchestra, helping children learn to pick out their unique sounds. Peter is represented by the string instruments, the bird by the flute, the duck by the oboe, the cat by the clarinet, Grandfather by the bassoon, and the wolf by the French horns. In the tale, Peter defies his grandfather's warnings, goes into the forest, and with the help of his animal friends, captures the wolf before the hunters arrive. With vivid orchestral colors, playful humor, and memorable tunes, *Peter* delights audiences young and old.

John Williams doesn't need any introduction! As the most Oscar-nominated living composer with 54 nominations, his music is recognized and loved by movie audiences everywhere. He has won five times, for *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Jaws*, *Star Wars*, *ET*, and *Schindler's List*. The simple but chilling bass theme from *Jaws* instantly recalls the drama of that movie.



But his best-known music is from *Star Wars*, which instantly conjures the fantastic universe created by George Lucas. The *Imperial March* we hear this evening is from a suite that Williams arranged for the concert stage. It features driving rhythms, powerful trumpets, trombones and horns, with percussion providing a military feel. Williams uses minor chords and dissonance to make a mood that is heroic but also evokes the sinister Empire. He uses the compositional device of the *leitmotif*, first associated with the German romantic composer Richard Wagner. Each major Star Wars character has its own theme, and in the movie soundtracks these themes reinforce elements of the story on screen – a combination that completely immerses the audience in the Star Wars universe.



About tonight's narrator. Nic Arnzen spent the last 30 years as an actor, writer and producer. His film and television credits include *Never Been Kissed*, *Rookie of the Year*, *Days of our Lives*, and *The Bold and the Beautiful*. Nic moved his family to Altadena in 2012 and shifted from entertainment to fatherhood and most recently to community organizer. He is in his third term on the Altadena Town Council and currently serves as Chair of the Council. He is also president of the Altadena Coalition of Neighborhood Associations (ACONA) and founded Altadena Pride which will be celebrating its 5th anniversary this year. Nic, his husband Ray and their three children lost their home, schools, and place of worship in the Eaton fires, but remain undeterred as they rebuild with hope, purpose, and incredible community connection. He sends all good healing thoughts to his fellow survivors in the area.

Program notes by Stephen Unwin, PCO Board member

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PCO wants to know what you think so we can create the best concert experiences for everyone. Please complete our survey on your phone (or at home) using the QR code or following the URL below. Thank you for being part of our music community! Survey closes on February 6. <https://tinyurl.com/bddmep59>



PERSONNEL

CONDUCTOR

Bethany Pflueger

VIOLIN I

Hong-Yi Hiroki Hon*

Concertmaster

Jane Yu*

Co-Concertmaster

Ilana Amos

Alex Birkhold

Curtis Horton

Deanna Kitamura

Frank Mori

David Lee Ruest

VIOLIN II

David Daniels*

Acting Principal

Armand Asatoorian

Martina Chen

Jenna Elliott

Daniel Hooper

Joe Kertes

Tim McElrath

Hani Nejadriahi

Oliver Truong

Erica Zabowski

VIOLAS

Tammy Cогnetta*

Elizabeth Giles

Rachel Goodrich

Mary House

Yoji Sierra

Anna Xan Urso

Kris Wittry

CELLOS

Kristin Nyquist*

Lara Ausubel

Ryan Fogal

Angela Kang

Michael Pinkham

Angelina Reddy

Elizabeth Wood

BASSES

Keith Brown*

Masis Parunyun

David Tranchina

FLUTES

Chase Rizkalla*

Olga Bergh

Irene Kim

OBOES

Aubree Cedillo*

Alex Banbury

CLARINETS

Richard Holloway*

Kaitlyn Davidson

Jess Joswick

BASSOONS

Ilana Marks*

Don Fisher*

HORNS

Emily Kramer

Mariela Lee

Sam Park-Beaty

Michael Turf

TRUMPETS

Mathew Harwich*

Bruce Haines

Joel Stoup

TROMBONES

Chuck Jacks*

Eric Kirchhoff

Olivia Nava

TUBA

Felix Diaz

PERCUSSION

Caleb Conner*

Derrick Jaramillo

Therese Laux

Brendan Moriak

HARP

Paul Baker*

STAGE MANAGER

Gary Green

LIBRARIAN

Thom Fountain

Olga Bergh

*Principal or Guest

Artist

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Fridays at 8:00pm. Pre-Concert Discussion at 7:15 pm

March 13 - featuring the YAC Winner in the Junior Division

May 8 - featuring the YAC Winner in the Open Division

Saturday, June 6, 6:30pm - Annual Concert in the Park, at Sierra Madre Memorial Park

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