



MASTERPIECE CONCERT PROGRAM NOTES: "A NEW ERA"

The Cape Symphony Orchestra presents "[A New Era](#)" at the [Barnstable Performing Arts Center](#) at 4:00 PM on September 20 and 3:00 PM on September 21, 2025.

Ticketholders are invited to a discussion of the concert program, led by Assistant Conductor Joe Marchio one hour before each performance.

THE CAPE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Guest Conductor [David Charles Abell](#)

Guest Artist Sofia Hernández-Williams, Cello

PICCOLO

Wendy Rolfe (doubling flute)

FLUTE

Erika Rohrberg
Mariellen Sears

OBOE

Jillian Honn
Mary Cicconetti

ENGLISH HORN

Laura Schaefer

CLARINET

Mark Miller
Janice Smith

BASS CLARINET

Marguerite Levin

FRENCH HORN

Clark Matthews
Neil Godwin
Dave Rufino
Virginia Morales

TRUMPET

Kyle Spraker
Toby Monte
Sam Thurston
Liz Jewell

TROMBONE

Robert Hoveland
Michael Tybursky

BASS TROMBONE

Cameron Owen

TUBA

Jarrod Briley

VIOLIN I

Jae Cosmos Lee, Concertmaster
Eun-Mi Lee
Benjamin Carson
Jiuri Yu
Lino Tanaka
Norma Stiner
Aleksandra Labinska
Tessa Sacramone
Bryce Martin
Nate Kim

VIOLIN II

Heather Goodchild Wade
EmmaLee Holmes-Hicks
Melissa Carter
Kaede Kobayashi-Kirker
Marc Benador
Igor Cherevko
Svitlana Kovalenko
Deborah Bradley
Lary Chaplan
Maya Lynn

THE CAPE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, continued

BASSOON

Rachel Juszczak
John Fulton

CONTRA BASSOON

April Verser

TIMPANI

Michael Weinfield-Zell
Casey Voss

PERCUSSION

Paul Gross
Michael Iadevaia
Dan Hann
Piero Guimaraes
Brandon Levesque

HARP

Maria Spraker

PIANO

Pei-yeh Tsai

VIOLA

Danielle Farina
Sachin Shukla
Irina Naryshkova
Lilit Muradyan
Sara DeGraide
Susan Gable
Nissim Tseytlin
Oleg Soloviev

CELLO

Jacques Wood
Velleda Miragias
Eleanor Blake
Liz Schultze
Michael Czitrom
Luigi Polcari
Alex Badalov
Norma Kelley

DOUBLE BASS

Carion Chu
Pete Walsh
Luke Rogers
Caroline Samuels
Samantha Donato



CONCERT PROGRAM: "A NEW ERA"

JOHN STAFFORD SMITH (1750-1836)

The Star-Spangled Banner, Arr. John Williams

GEORGE WALKER (1922-2018)

Pageant and Proclamation

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS (1835-1921)

Cello Concerto No. 1 in A Minor, Op.33

- I. Allegro non troppo*
- II. Allegretto con moto*
- III. Allegro non troppo*

Intermission (20 minutes)

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 68

- I. Un poco sostenuto; Allegro*
- II. Andante sostenuto*
- III. Un poco allegretto e grazioso*
- IV. Adagio; Più andante; Allegro non troppo, ma con brio*

ABOUT TODAY'S PROGRAM

Every Cape Symphony Orchestra concert season opens with *The Star-Spangled Banner* (music by John Stafford Smith). This is John Williams's arrangement. "John Williams spun gold out of the familiar contours of The Star-Spangled Banner," says conductor David Charles Abell. "Serving as Grand Marshall of the 2004 Rose Bowl parade, he created a special arrangement of the national anthem in a key which is perfect for orchestra, but impossible to sing in. So I'd recommend not trying, unless you're a coloratura soprano! Just as in his superlative film music, Williams varies the rhythms and harmonies of the Banner in unexpected ways. Pay particular attention to the unusual chords under "And the rockets' red glare..."

Groundbreaking, Pulitzer Prize-winning American composer and pianist **George Walker (1922–2018)** earned a Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin at 18, studied piano and composition at the Curtis Institute, and in 1956 was the first Black recipient of a Doctoral degree from the Eastman School of Music. He received a Fulbright Fellowship and studied composition with

Nadia Boulanger in Paris, returning to the US to a distinguished career in academia. He retired from Rutgers University in 1992.

Pageant and Proclamation (1997) was commissioned by the New Jersey Symphony for the inauguration of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. It is a rousing and optimistic piece. “The motive used in *Pageant and Proclamation* came to me when I was in the shower,” said Walker in an interview with Ethan Iverson. “I cannot explain why I sang those five notes.”

David Charles Abell says: “*Pageant and Proclamation* is really difficult for the orchestra—you wouldn’t necessarily know just by listening, since many of the themes are pretty and melodic. It’s hard for the conductor as well; there are rarely two measures in a row with the same number of beats! Of course there is grandeur as well as melody: brass fanfares, percussion flourishes, and a big payoff near the end when the trombones and trumpets quote snippets of “When the Saints Go Marching In” and “We Shall Overcome” in a resounding fortissimo. I want to be sure those moments get their full due!”

Sofia Hernández-Williams takes the stage as our soloist for French Romantic composer **Camille Saint-Saëns’s Cello Concerto No. 1 in A Minor** (1872), a masterpiece of technical virtuosity and lyrical charm. Saint-Saëns, too, was a precocious talent; he made his concert debut at age ten. As a composer, he is often seen as a bridge between the Classical and Romantic eras, combining Classical tradition with Romantic expression.

“It’s a really great piece,” says Sofia of the concerto, “very passionate and dramatic. There’s a lot of emotional energy!” She notes that its three sections are played as one continuous movement, which is “not a common thing for a concerto. Most movements are separated, almost like different pieces.” How will we tell one from another? Listen for changes in tempo, says Sofia, and for themes from the first movement to recur in the third.

“All three movements are connected into one long ‘story’ which begins in restless minor-key drama,” adds David Charles Abell. “The second movement is a charming minuet; Saint-Saëns knew and loved the music of the Baroque and earlier periods. I think that here he is evoking the grace of 18th-century French court life. The first movement’s turbulent main theme comes back in the finale, followed by an extraordinary passage which starts on the very bottom note of the ‘cello and ascends all the way up to unbelievably high harmonics. Talk about drama! The whole piece ends triumphantly in A major with a passionate new theme.

“I like to picture Saint-Saëns as the ultimate cosmopolitan boulevardier strolling around late 19th-century Paris,” David continues. “He was known to be elegant, well-groomed and charming, but I know he must have worked extremely hard on his compositions while not at the

café. One of the joys of performing his music is that it balances itself—Saint Saëns knew how to orchestrate in a way which allowed featured instruments (like the ‘cello) to always be heard.”

Intermission

Your Cape Symphony Orchestra will now perform **Johannes Brahms’s Symphony No. 1 in C Minor**. Unlike other celebrated composers, Brahms was well into adulthood (43) when he completed his first symphony, in 1876. He had already composed several highly acclaimed orchestral works, but a full symphony was a decades-long struggle for the famously perfectionist composer.

In Vienna, Brahms’s Symphony No. 1 was nicknamed “Beethoven’s Tenth.” Beethoven’s influence is clear – Brahms said himself that “any ass could see” it – but this is no mere impersonation. David Charles Abell takes us through it:

The piece describes a huge arc, beginning in emotional turmoil and ending in serenity, then triumph. It’s an intense and satisfying journey. If you listen carefully, you’ll hear a rising theme in the violins at the very beginning of the symphony. It rises gradually, by half-steps, struggling upwards. Fritz Steinbach, a conductor who Brahms greatly admired, described it as ‘a fruitless search for transcendence.’ By the end of the first movement, the search seems to have been given up.

The second movement is passionate in a calmer way. Acute listeners will notice the rising theme reappearing from time to time. By the end of the movement, transcendence seems to have been achieved.

I imagine that Brahms must have conceived the third movement during one of his daily woodland walks. He believed that musicians needed to connect with nature. When a pianist asked him how she could improve her performances, he responded, “walk constantly in the forest.”

The finale opens in dramatic fashion, with great stormy gestures. Soon, the sun comes out and the horns play the famous “Alphorn tune,” conceived while Brahms was walking in the mountains. He notated the melody on a postcard to Clara Schumann, with words that can be sung to it: “Hoch auf’m Berg, tief im Thal, grüß ich Dich viel tausendmal!” (“High on the mountain, deep in the valley, I greet you many thousand times over!”). Don’t you wish that you had a friend who sent you postcards like that?



Following a pregnant pause, we hear Brahms's tribute to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, a gorgeously simple melody in C major. The energy builds and builds until, finally, the symphony ends in glory, assuring Brahms's position as Beethoven's worthy successor.

Thank you for attending "A New Era." We hope you've enjoyed the concert and that we'll see you again soon!

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References for these Program Notes include scholarworks.smith.edu; ethaniverson.com; londoncelloinstitute.co.uk; *Classical Music: The Rough Guide*; bso.org, floridaorchestra.org, and theclassicreview.com.