



**NEW CENTURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES
25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON**

**2016–2017 SEASON HIGHLIGHTED BY FIRST-EVER SAN FRANCISCO FESTIVAL;
DEBUT SOLO ARTIST, PIANIST INON BARNATAN; GUEST CONCERTMASTER
RAY CHEN AND REPEAT COLLABORATIONS WITH CHANTICLEER AND
PIANIST ANNE-MARIE MCDERMOTT**



San Francisco, CA – April 26, 2016 – New Century Chamber Orchestra announces its 2016–2017 25th anniversary season, including three subscription weeks in venues across the Bay Area and an inaugural three-concert San Francisco festival, the first of its kind in the organization’s history. A celebration of the achievements of both the ensemble and Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, who enters her final season as music director, the season features a debut appearance by internationally acclaimed

Israeli pianist Inon Barnatan; award-winning Australian/Taiwanese violinist Ray Chen as guest concertmaster, leading a program of works by Mozart, Britten and Elgar; a repeat collaboration with GRAMMY Award–winning Chanticleer following their sold-out performances in 2014; and the return of pianist Anne-Marie McDermott, performing as soloist in the seldom-heard jazz band version of Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue*. Highlighting the orchestra’s history of adventurous and varied programming, New Century will perform masterworks from the classical repertoire by Mozart, Mendelssohn, Stravinsky, Elgar and Britten, contemporary works by Webern and Glass, and a program of works that combines French classics by Fauré and Satie with songs by George Gershwin and Edith Piaf.

“Our silver anniversary season celebrates the extraordinary achievements that New Century has accomplished over the last quarter of a century,” said Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg. “Having the privilege of being music director for the past nine years has been a transformative experience. As my tenure as music director comes to a close, I leave with a great amount of pride for what we have achieved as an ensemble. New Century is firmly placed on the map as one of the best string orchestras performing and recording today, which is a testament to this group of dedicated and talented musicians that I am proud to call my family.”



The 25th-anniversary celebrations kick off **September 15–18, 2016** with a debut solo appearance by New York Philharmonic Artist-in-Association, Israeli pianist Inon Barnatan. Recently on tour with the San Francisco Symphony, Barnatan performed Copland’s Piano Concerto at Carnegie Hall and

was praised by *The New York Times* as a “brilliant pianist,” with Anthony Tommasini remarking, “it was hard to imagine a better performance than this.” A recipient of a 2009 Avery Fisher grant, Barnatan has performed throughout the world with some of the world’s foremost orchestras and returns to the Bay Area for a performance of Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 13 in C major, K. 415. The program also features works by 20th-century masters, including Anton Webern’s *Langsamer Satz* and Philip Glass’ *Symphony No. 3*, with Peter Heidrich’s *Happy Birthday Variations* rounding out the program in a fitting tribute to the birth of this important Bay Area musical ensemble.



The season continues **November 10–13, 2016** with a special guest appearance by Taiwanese/Australian violinist Ray Chen, who will lead New Century in a program of masterworks for string orchestra as part of the ensemble’s Guest Concertmaster Program. A winner of the prestigious Queen Elisabeth (2009) and Yehudi Menuhin (2008) Competitions, Ray Chen is establishing himself worldwide as one of the most sought-after young artists of his generation. He has released three critically acclaimed recordings, including his ECHO Klassik award-winning album *Virtuoso*, with *Gramophone* labeling him as “one to watch.” Ray Chen is followed by two million people on SoundCloud and continues to draw young followers through his use of social media platforms, broadening the reach of classical music among a wider audience. The program pairs Mozart’s *Divertimento in F major, K. 138*, and *Violin Concerto No. 3 in G major* alongside two major works by English composers: Britten’s *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* and Elgar’s *Introduction and Allegro*, op. 47.



Honoring the ensemble’s rich history of creative collaboration, New Century welcome the return of GRAMMY Award–winning men’s chorus Chanticleer **March 16–19, 2017** following their highly successful sold-out March 2014 “Atlantic Crossing” performances. Labeled by *The New York Times* as “the world’s reigning male chorus,” Chanticleer join New Century for another musical journey, heading this time through early 20th-century Paris with a program of European classical works and popular songs by some of the greatest composers and songwriters of that generation. Chanticleer has sold well over a million copies since they began releasing recordings in 1981 and are renowned for their artistic diversity—ranging from Renaissance music to jazz, gospel and pop—in addition to the commissioning and performance of new works. Representing a contrast of classical and popular music, New Century will perform works by French composers, including Fauré’s *Pavane* and Erik Satie’s *Gymnopédies*, in addition to selections from Stravinsky’s *Apollon musagète* and Gershwin’s *An American in Paris Suite*. Chanticleer are showcased in a selection of popular songs by the great French songwriter Edith Piaf as well as George Gershwin, Blossom Dearie and Chet Baker. The program will also include Ned Rorem’s *Four Madrigals*.

25th Anniversary Festival

The season concludes with a weeklong San Francisco festival that celebrates the ensemble’s illustrious 25-year history in three separate, one-night-only programs. The opening night of the festival on **May 16, 2017** pays homage to the orchestra’s Featured Composer Residency Program, which has seen the creation of eight commissioned works for string orchestra since the

program was founded by Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg in 2008. Each Featured Composer will be showcased, with selections by William Bolcom, Clarice Assad, Mark O'Connor, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Lera Auerbach, Michael Daugherty, Derek Bermel and Jennifer Higdon. The Featured Composer Residency Program was established to give structure to the organization's longstanding commitment to the creation and performance of new music. Each season, New Century works with a different composer, who creates at least one new work for the orchestra with Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg as concertmaster, soloist and muse. New Century also performs at least one existing piece by the Featured Composer to represent a wider range of his or her work and to ensure the longevity of past compositions.



The festival continues on **May 18, 2017** with a farewell tribute to Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, who will take the stage for her final concerto appearance as music director with New Century, performing two of her signature works: Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor and Piazzolla's *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*. Nadja launched her tenure with New Century in 2008 with Piazzolla's Argentinian tango work, with Joshua Kosman of the *San Francisco Chronicle* stating that it made a "magnificent impression" with the solo part "played with ferocious beauty." For the first time ever, New Century audiences will hear Nadja perform Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor with the ensemble, a work that has become synonymous with her career as a major solo artist and which she has performed to critical acclaim with the world's top orchestras. Rounding out the program is Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 10, a work written when the composer was only 14 years old. Through Nadja's leadership, the orchestra founded a Featured Composer program, commissioning a total of eight new works and expanding the string orchestra repertoire; embarked upon three extensive national tours, garnering record-breaking audiences and national critical acclaim; recorded three live recordings on Nadja's own NSS music label; cultivated vibrant partnerships with some of the Bay Area's most celebrated arts organizations, such as the San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Girls Chorus and Chanticleer; and further enhanced the orchestra's national footprint through a rapidly increased national radio presence.

The 25th-anniversary season celebrations conclude on **May 20, 2017** with a festival closing night that features the rarely-performed jazz band version of *Rhapsody in Blue* in an all-Gershwin program. In their largest concert of the season, New Century and Nadja will celebrate their birthday with a variety of friends, including pianist Anne-Marie McDermott, who returns for the first time since 2013. Called an "exquisite player" by the *San Jose Mercury News*, Anne-Marie McDermott was praised for her 2013 debut performance of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 12 with New Century, which was labeled as a "standout show." Further works by Gershwin include the *American in Paris* Suite and a selection of his most popular songs.



Subscriptions to the New Century Chamber Orchestra are on sale now. Three-concert subscriptions range from \$78 to \$165; festival passes range from \$52 to \$155. Call (415) 357-1111, ext. 305, or visit www.ncco.org to purchase.

Single tickets range in price from \$29 to \$61 and will go on sale August 1, 2016 through City

Box Office: www.cityboxoffice.com and (415) 392-4400. Discounted \$15 single tickets are available for students with a valid ID.

Open Rehearsal tickets are \$15 general admission and can be purchased through City Box Office beginning August 1, 2016: www.cityboxoffice.com and (415) 392-4400.

For further information on New Century, please visit www.ncco.org. Media contacts are listed at the end of the release.

NEW CENTURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA 2016–2017 SEASON CALENDAR

Silver Season Opening September 15–18, 2016

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, *Concertmaster*
Inon Barnatan, *Piano*

Open Rehearsal

Wednesday, September 14, 10am, Kanbar Performing Arts Center, San Francisco

Performances

Thursday, September 15, 8pm, First Congregational Church, Berkeley

Friday, September 16, 2pm, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Saturday, September 17, 8pm, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Sunday, September 18, 5pm, Osher Marin JCC, San Rafael

Anton Webern: *Langsamer Satz*

W.A. Mozart: Piano Concerto No. 13 in C Major, K. 415/387b

Philip Glass: Symphony No. 3

Peter Heidrich: *Happy Birthday Variations*

Ray Chen Leads

November 10–13, 2016

Ray Chen, *Guest Concertmaster & Soloist*

Open Rehearsal

Wednesday, November 9, 10am, Kanbar Performing Arts Center, San Francisco

Performances

Thursday, November 10, 8pm, First Congregational Church, Berkeley

Friday, November 11, 8pm, First United Methodist Church, Palo Alto

Saturday, November 12, 8pm, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Sunday, November 13, 5pm, Osher Marin JCC, San Rafael

W. A. Mozart: Divertimento in F major, K. 138

Benjamin Britten: *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* for String Orchestra, op. 10
W. A. Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 3 in G Major
Edward Elgar: *Introduction and Allegro* for Strings, op. 47

Americans in Paris

March 16–19, 2017

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, *Concertmaster*
Chanticleer

Open Rehearsal

Wednesday, March 15, 10am, Kanbar Performing Arts Center, San Francisco

Performances

Thursday, March 16, 8pm, First Congregational Church, Berkeley

Friday, March 17, 8pm, First United Methodist Church, Palo Alto

Saturday, March 18, 8pm, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Sunday, March 19, 5pm, Osher Marin JCC, San Rafael

George Gershwin: *An American in Paris Suite*

Igor Stravinsky: *Apollon musagète*

Gabriel Fauré: *Pavane*

Erik Satie: *Gymnopédies*

Ned Rorem: *Four Madrigals*

Songs of Piaf, Gershwin, Dearie, Baker

25th Anniversary Festival

I: Opening Night: New Century Creations

Tuesday, May 16, 2017, 8pm, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Works by:

Derek Bermel

Ellen Taaffe Zwilich

Jennifer Higdon

William Bolcom

Clarice Assad

Mark O'Connor

Michael Daugherty

Lera Auerbach

II: Farewell to Nadja

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, *Soloist & Concertmaster*

Thursday, May 18, 2017, 8pm, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Felix Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 10 in B minor

Felix Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in E Minor, op. 64 (arr. Tognetti)

Astor Piazzolla: *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*

III: Silver Jubilee Celebration

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, *Music Director*

Anne-Marie McDermott, *Piano*

Saturday, May 20, 2017, 8pm, Herbst Theatre, San Francisco

Gershwin: *An American in Paris Suite*

Gershwin: *Rhapsody in Blue* (Original Version for Jazz Band)

Gershwin: Selected songs

ABOUT NEW CENTURY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

The New Century Chamber Orchestra, one of only a handful of conductorless ensembles in the world, was founded in 1992 by cellist Miriam Perkoff and violist Wieslaw Pogorzelski. The 19-member string ensemble, including San Francisco Bay Area musicians and those who travel from across the U.S. and Europe to perform together, makes musical decisions collaboratively. World-renowned violin soloist, chamber musician and recording artist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg leads from the concertmaster chair. She joined the ensemble as music director and concertmaster in January 2008, bringing to New Century “a new sense of vitality and determination, as well as an audacious swagger that is an unmistakable fingerprint of its leader,” according to *Gramophone* magazine. This season marks her ninth with the orchestra and continues an illustrious line of concertmasters including Stuart Canin (1992–1999) and Krista Bennion Feeney (1999–2006).

In addition to performing classic pieces of chamber orchestra repertoire and commissioning new works, New Century breathes new life into rarely heard jewels of the past and performs world premieres. Salerno-Sonnenberg and New Century have made three successful national tours together. The 2011 performances in the Midwest, the East Coast and Southern California garnered record-breaking audiences and national critical acclaim. In January and February 2013, New Century followed with a highly successful eight-state national tour, the largest and most ambitious artistic undertaking in the organization’s history. In addition to touring efforts, New Century’s national footprint has also continued to grow with a rapidly increasing national radio presence.

The orchestra has released seven compact discs, the most recent its *From A to Z: 21st Century Concertos*. The orchestra’s first concert DVD, *On Our Way: Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and the New Century Chamber Orchestra*, released in May 2012, weaves together documentary footage and concert footage from a February 2011 performance at the Broad Stage in Santa Monica.

For more information on New Century, please visit <http://www.ncco.org>.

ABOUT NADJA SALERNO-SONNENBERG

One of the leading violinists of our time, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg is best known for her exhilarating performances, passionate interpretations, musical depth and unique charisma. A highly acclaimed soloist and recording artist, Nadja has also gained recognition in the orchestral arena. Her first six seasons with New Century were hailed as a tremendous success by audiences and critics alike—“a marriage that works,” in her words, that renews enthusiasm for “one of the most burnished and exciting ensembles in the Bay Area,” according to Rich Scheinin of the *San Jose Mercury News*.

A powerful and innovative presence on the recording scene, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg continues to enrich the collection of her record label NSS Music, which she started in 2005. The label’s roster of artists include pianist Anne-Marie McDermott, horn player John Cerminaro, pianist/composer Clarice Assad, Marin Alsop, the American String Quartet, the Colorado Symphony and Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo, as well as the New Century Chamber Orchestra.

An American citizen, Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg was born in Rome and emigrated to the United States at the age of eight to study at The Curtis Institute of Music. After continuing on to study with Dorothy DeLay at The Juilliard School, Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg’s professional career began in 1981 when she won the Walter W. Naumburg International Violin Competition. In 1983 she was recognized with an Avery Fisher Career Grant, and in 1988 was *Ovation*’s Debut Recording Artist of the Year. In 1999 she was honored with the prestigious Avery Fisher Prize, awarded to instrumentalists who have demonstrated “outstanding achievement and excellence in music.” In May of that same year, Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg was awarded an honorary Master of Musical Arts from New Mexico State University, the first honorary degree the University has ever awarded.

For more information on Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg, please visit:

www.nadjasalernosonnenberg.com

www.nssmusic.com

PHOTO CREDITS

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