MEDIA ADVISORY
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USC THORNTON FALL CONCERT PREVIEW

USC Thornton's fall events calendar highlights a spectacular semester of music, from the Baroque to the cutting-edge.

“The Triumph of Life” is the jubilant title of USC Thornton’s first official concert of the 2017-18 academic year, marking the return of maestro Carl St.Clair as he leads the USC Thornton Symphony through a spirited program of Mahler and Prokofiev (Friday, Sep. 8th at Bovard Auditorium, 7:30PM). It’s a fitting theme, however, for an entire semester of music at USC Thornton.

USC THORNTON ORCHESTRA PROGRAM

The symphony returns Sep. 22nd under the baton of Sharon Lavery to perform two iconic pieces of “revolutionary” dance music – Ravel’s Daphnis et Chloe: Suite No. 2 and Stravinsky’s legendary The Rite of Spring. Guest conductor Uriel Segal will lead the symphony’s annual Concerto Night (Oct. 13), with performances by clarinetist Erik Abramovitz and, cellist Benjamin Lash, and pianist Soyeon An, while the USC Thornton Chamber Orchestra presents an celebration of Shostakovich and Russian music on Nov. 10th.

On Oct. 6th, The USC Thornton Wind Ensemble will perform a new piece by Wind Ensemble Composition Contest winner Kenny Regan and, later in the month, will premiere new works by faculty members Frank Ticheli and Boyle Hood in “A Night of Firsts” (Oct. 27). Joseph Pereira leads the extraordinary students of the USC Thornton Percussion Ensemble in program of works by living composers on Nov. 6th.

The fall Chamber Music Festival will include performances by Winds & Percussion (Nov. 27), Vocal Arts (Nov. 28) and Strings (Nov. 28-29) students over five concerts.

FACULTY RECITALS

This semester will include a faculty recital by Thomas Hooten (Oct. 24), principal trumpet of the LA Phil, as well as a French-themed collaborative recital (Sep. 28) featuring Karen Dreyfus, director of Chamber Music, and faculty performers Bernadene Blaha, Glenn Dicterow, Kevin Fitz-Gerald, Ben Hong, Thomas Hooten, Bing Wang, and Michele Zukovsky, in addition to students.
CHORAL & SACRED MUSIC

The USC Thornton Chamber Singers will team with the Concert Choir for an Oct. 20th concert – the Concert Choir will celebrate the work of prolific Cuban composer Electro Silva, while the Chamber Singers will perform music by Polish composers, as well as Morten Lauridsen, Craig Hella Johnson, and others. On Oct. 27th, the Apollo Men’s Chorus and Oriana Women’s Choir join forces for a wide-ranging program, while the University Chorus will head to St. John’s Episcopal Church on Nov. 17th for an all-American concert narrated by KUSC’s Brian Lauritzen.

OPERA & EARLY MUSIC

The celebrated USC Thornton Opera looks to the Baroque for inspiration, presenting four performances of Handel’s scintillating opera seria, Alcina (Nov. 16-19). Rotem Gilbert leads the Baroque Sinfonia in concerts of Italian (Oct. 6) and French (Dec. 1) period music, while the USC Collegium Workshop performs Iberian songs from the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries under Adam Knight Gilbert (Nov. 5).

NEW MUSIC

New music is alive and well at USC, with Donald Crockett leading the Thornton Edge in two concerts (Oct. 4 & Nov. 15), as well as an evening of performances showcasing new solo, chamber, and vocal works by student composers (Nov. 5). The Polish Music Center looks to a contemporary composer for its Paderewski Lecture-Recital (Oct. 15), featuring the dynamic Cracow Duo performing works by Marcel Chyrzynski, who will lecture about his creative process.

JAZZ

Everyone’s favorite big band, the USC Thornton Jazz Orchestra, presents a special tribute to Ella Fitzgerald (Oct. 30), led by Bob Mintzer, on the occasion of her 100th birthday. The Concert Jazz Orchestra follows with its popular Star Wars Night on Nov. 6th, performing music from John Williams’ iconic film scores, arranged by students and alumni. Jason Goldman leads the Jazz Honors Combo in an evening of standards and original compositions (Oct. 9). And ALAJE, the USC Thornton Afro-Latin American Jazz Ensemble, lights up Carson Center on Nov. 13th with the sounds and rhythms of Cuba and Brazil.

Our Thursday Jazz Night series kicks off Sep. 28th. Due to the closure of the Ground Zero Performance Café venue, many of the Jazz Night concerts have been rescheduled and relocated to Carson Center. Check our website calendar for the latest listings.

POPULAR MUSIC

And no semester would be complete without the enthusiastic talents of Thornton’s incredible Popular Music students. First-Year (Oct. 11 & Nov. 29) and Second-Year (Oct. 13 & Dec. 1) students will showcase their work throughout the semester, while Third-Year students will close out the fall lineup on Dec. 2nd.
WINTER GALA

The entire Thornton community is invited to come together for the school’s annual Brightest & Best Winter Gala on Dec. 9th, which will feature spectacular performances by over 250 student singers and instrumentalists. The fundraising event provides substantial support for student scholarships – and reservations can now be made online.

Most USC Thornton concerts, events, and masterclasses are free and open to the public. Please bookmark music.usc.edu/events for up-to-date listings.

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About the USC Thornton School of Music

For more than 125 years, the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music has prepared students to excel as performers, composers, industry leaders and educators on stages and in studios around the world. Founded in 1884 and today the oldest continually operating cultural institution in Los Angeles, USC Thornton is internationally recognized as one of the finest conservatories and music schools in the U.S. By blending the rigors of a traditional conservatory-style education with the benefits of a leading research university, USC Thornton offers a curriculum designed to prepare students for successful careers in the 21st century. For more information, go to music.usc.edu.