

Fresno Philharmonic

Masterworks V

Sat Mar 12, 7:30pm



Daniel R. Martin Masterworks V

Enigma Variations

Saturday, March 12, 2022 7:30 PM

William Saroyan Theatre

Rei Hotoda, *conductor*

Jorge Montilla Moreno, *clarinet*

CONTRERAS	Mariachitlán Melt: Concerto for Clarinet
FROELICH	I. White Ice II. Grey Matter III. Black Steel
ELGAR	Enigma Variations, Op. 36

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2021-2022 Major Support provided by

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Artist Biographies



Rei Hotoda

Conductor

Conductor Rei Hotoda has been hailed as an inexhaustible dynamo with a deep commitment to reimagining the 21st century concert experience. Her vision can be seen through her thought-provoking programming, passionate allyship to marginalized artists, advocacy for arts education, and an unwavering commitment to presenting the music of our times.

Her success as the Music Director of the Fresno Philharmonic since 2017 has resulted in the extension of her tenure through the 2025 season. She has worked tirelessly to build first-time and unique connections with the Fresno community with an eye toward reaching different audiences with a new music concert series, *Proxima*, and special concerts at Bitwise South Stadium. She has reimagined the pre- and post-concert experience by creating the ever-popular *Green Room* and *Stay Tuned* series. Her programming continues to push through the preconceived notions of the classical concert going experience, offering audiences works by often marginalized composers and today's leading voices in the field. Through her tireless efforts, she has successfully broken down the barriers that often exist between artist and listener and repositioned the Fresno Philharmonic as a leader in the community it serves.

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As a champion of today's living composers and an artist that is dedicated to amplifying marginalized voices, Rei's innovative programming and interdisciplinary collaborations continue to position her as a leader in the industry. Highlights of her 21/22 season include presentations of works by black, indigenous, Hispanic, and women composers, including Juan Pablo Contreras, Gabriela Lena Frank, Adolphus Hailstork, Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate, George Walker and Jessie Montgomery. The world premieres of John Wineglass' *Alone/Together* and Kenneth Froelich's *Melt* with the Fresno Philharmonic as well as those by Derek Bermel, Cynthia Lee Wong and Judah Adashi for her debut with ROCO, punctuate her season. For her debut with the Reno Chamber Orchestra she will conduct two seminal American works and marry the worlds of dance and opera when she conducts a reimagining of Copland's *Appalachian Spring* featuring contemporary dancers choreographed by Seattle-based choreographer Alexander Ung alongside Bernstein's opera *Trouble in Tahiti*. Her Silk Road-inspired program with the Oklahoma City Philharmonic features Aghaei & Jacobsen's *Ascending Bird*, Dinuk Wijeratne's *Tabla Concerto* with Sandeep Das and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, speaks to Rei's desire to introduce audiences to world cultures and challenge them to think outside of the Western concert-going model.

Rei is also an active and critically-acclaimed keyboardist and embraces her time conducting from the piano and harpsichord. One of her many recent highlights was leading the Fresno Philharmonic from the piano in Beethoven's monumental *Triple Concerto* as part of the orchestra's *Beethoven@250* and from the harpsichord in Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3* as part of their *Digital Masterworks* series. This season she will conduct both the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and the Fresno Philharmonic from the keyboard in Mozart's *Concerto for Two Pianos in E-flat major*.

Rei has appeared as a guest conductor with many of today's leading ensembles, including the Symphony Orchestras of Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, Dallas, Detroit, Toronto, Winnipeg, Hawaii and Utah as well as the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, among others. Her interpretations of such epic centerpieces of the classical canon such as Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 8* and Britten's *War Requiem*, make her one of the most sought-after conductors of today. She is a tireless advocate for the music of our time, and most recently conducted the world premieres of Kevin Day and Dinuk Wijeratne as well as works by seminal composers such as Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate, Jessie Montgomery and Hawaiian composer, Michael-Thomas Foumai to much acclaim.



Jorge Montilla Moreno

Clarinet

Jorge Montilla is internationally considered one of the best clarinetists in Latin-America and one of the world's best Eb Clarinet players. He has an extensive repertoire including the major works for the clarinet and he has been appointed to premiere solo works by important composers such as Paul Desenne, Diana Arismendi, Roberto Cedeño Laya, Fidel Rodríguez, Mischa Zupko, Alfred Prinz, Ken Froelich, Alexandre Eisenberg, Víctor Varela, and Efrain Amaya.

Montilla is one of the many fine musicians produced by Venezuela's "El Sistema", founded by José Antonio Abreu also known as the Foundation for the National Network of Youth and Children's Orchestras of Venezuela. El Sistema is a state foundation which oversees Venezuela's 125 youth orchestras.

Mr. Montilla is a graduate of Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he studied with Howard Klug. Other notable teachers include Luis Rossi, Eli Eban, James Campbell, Walter Boeykens, Antony Pay, and Ricardo Morales.

Former principal clarinet of the Simon Bolivar Symphony Orchestra, Montilla has appeared as soloist with the most important Venezuelan orchestras, the Indiana University Chamber Orchestra, the Vale Veneto Festival Orchestra in Brazil, the Youth Orchestra of Peru, the Longwood Symphony Orchestra, the Nuevo Mundo Festival Orchestra, the Ecuador National Symphony Orchestra and the Longy School of Music Conservatory orchestra. He has given recitals in important halls of Venezuela as well as in the USA, Martinique, France, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, China, Peru, Spain, Mexico, Italy, and Brazil together with leading

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important soloists and chamber music groups.

As a founding member and artistic director of the Caracas Clarinet Quartet, Mr. Montilla has concertized extensively throughout the world (South America, Europe, Asia, and the U.S.A.), he has recorded two CDs (the second featuring Paquito D'Rivera) and his many pieces for the CCQ have made him one of the pre-eminent composers/arrangers for clarinet ensemble today.

Montilla's pedagogical experience includes teaching at Arizona State University, Longy School of Music of Bard College, and he has been chairman of the clarinet department at the Conservatory of Music Simón Bolívar and clarinet professor at the Latin American Academy of Venezuela. He has also given master-classes, clinics, and workshops for important universities and music conservatories in Colombia, Chile, Barbados, Sta. Lucia, USA, Puerto Rico, China, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Peru, Spain, Mexico, and Brazil.

Jorge Montilla represents Rossi Clarinets, Rico Reeds, Clarinet Classics, and Gao's bells. His compositions and arrangements are published by Woodwindiana Editions, USA and Montilla Brothers Editions, USA.

Jorge Montilla is a columnist for the International Clarinet Association's magazine *The Clarinet* and keeps a hectic international career as soloist and clinician as a member of the QuatreKlammer management. He is currently assistant professor of clarinet at the University of Iowa.

Program Notes



Juan Pablo Contreras (b. 1987)

Mariachitlán

Photo courtesy of juanpablocontreras.com

Mexican composer Juan Pablo Contreras composed *Mariachitlán* in 2016 as a homage to his birthplace, the Mexican state of Jalisco, where mariachi music was born. He writes:

"The work recounts my experience visiting the Plaza de los Mariachis in Guadalajara, the capital of Jalisco, a place where mariachis play their songs in every corner and interrupt each other to win over the crowd.

"In *Mariachitlán*, traditional rhythms such as the *canción ranchera* (ranchera song) in 2/4 the *vals romántico* (romantic waltz) in 3/4 time and the *son jalisciense* (Jalisco song) that alternates between 6/8 and 3/4 time, accompany original melodies inspired by the beautiful landscapes of Jalisco. Mariachi instruments such as the trumpet, harp, and violin are featured as soloists in this work. Furthermore, the strings emulate the strumming patterns of vihuelas, while the contrabasses growl like guitarrones.

"Near the end of the piece, a policeman blows his whistle in an attempt to stop the party. However, the crowd chants *Mariachitlán*, gradually increasing in intensity, and is rewarded with more vibrant music that ends the work with great brilliance."

Contreras is a graduate of the University of Southern California, the Manhattan School of the Arts and the California Institute of the Arts. He is currently teaching orchestration and music theory at the USC Thornton School of Music. His music combines Mexican folk music with Western classical.

Program notes by:

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Kenneth Froelich (b. 1977)

Melt: Concerto for Clarinet

Described as “energetic, exciting, and rhythmically dynamic,” Kenneth Froelich’s music confronts the contradictions and struggles of the modern world. Froelich draws frequently for inspiration on his own life experience, whether reminiscing about a childhood playing video games in 1980s San Diego or exploring the joys and fears of fatherhood. From the relationship between man and technology to issues of mental health, his music examines issues we all encounter in our daily lives.

The composer wrote the following regarding MELT:

“At the most basic level, MELT is a traditional three movement concerto for clarinet and orchestra. It features an opening movement constructed in a rough ABA that - while not explicitly in sonata form - hints at the traditional structure. The middle movement is a traditional scherzo - although there is no hint of the 'trio' section that might be found in a standard concerto - and the final movement is meant to evoke a traditional 'finale with cadenza' even if the cadenza occurs quite a bit earlier than one might expect.

However - and perhaps more importantly - MELT is a composition about climate change. Each of the movements is designed to give the impression of a single individual - an observer - watching as the world melts around them. In context, the observer is the solo clarinet while the melting imagery is portrayed by the orchestra.

The first movement, 'White Ice,' is a direct portrayal of this concept, capturing in music an image of a glacier slowly melting. The clarinet line is beautiful and soaring, but with hints of mourning for the loss of the glacier's majesty.

'Grey Matter,' the second movement, is a reference to the expression of one's 'brain being melted.' The movement is an expression of frustration and shock relating to current climate change policy, as well as an opportunity to let the performer 'melt some brains' in the audience through sheer virtuosity!

The third movement, 'Black Steel,' relates to images of steel girders melting and charring in wildfires - the most direct effect of climate change on my home state of California. This movement is simultaneously the darkest and most cyclical of the three, relying upon multiphonics and sheer repetition to twist the sound of the orchestra and the clarinet together in a mad cycle intent on repeating until nothing is left. This whole composition is an expression of my personal feelings of helplessness and frustration watching climate change slowly unfold over my own lifetime."

MELT was composed for clarinetist Jorge Montilla and the Fresno Philharmonic.

Kenneth Froelich and his wife, clarinetist Jennifer Ostwalt, are raising their child, Felix, in Fresno, California, under the watchful eye of Albina, a cat who lives with them. The three humans are black belts in Tae Kwon Do and enjoy playing board games, watching science-fiction television, and pretending the Padres won't blow a solid lead in the eighth inning. Kenneth is Professor of Music Composition at California State University, Fresno.

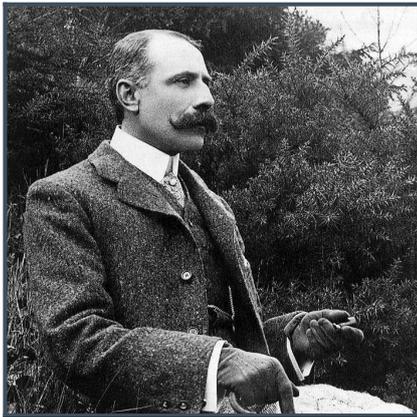
Froelich’s music has been performed in over a dozen nations, including the United States, Canada, China, and throughout Europe and South America. In 2014, his Symphony No. 1: Dream Dialogs was recorded by the Brno Philharmonic and released on Ablaze Records’ Orchestral Masters, Vol. 2. He has been featured in performances by CMASH, the California EAR Unit, the Indianapolis Symphonic Orchestra, Conundrum, Heretic Opera, and the Orpheus Ensemble of Fresno.

Froelich has been honored with awards from ASCAP, the National Association of Composers/USA, Meet the

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Composer, the Percussive Arts Society, the American Composers Forum, and the Society of Composers Inc. He received Doctorate and Masters degrees from Indiana University and a Bachelor of Music summa cum laude from the University of Southern California.

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Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

Enigma Variations Op. 36

If you look at photographs of Edward Elgar, read about his tastes or listen to his music, he projects the stereotype of Imperial Britain's aristocracy or, as composer Constant Lambert described Elgar, "[the image of]... an almost intolerable air of smugness, self-assurance and autocratic benevolence..." His military bearing, walrus moustache, country gentleman's dress - all very proper and Edwardian - matched his conservative, violently anti-Liberal ideas. His style appeared to have been fostered and fully sanctioned by the equally conservative Royal College of Music.

The reality was very different: Elgar was born to a lower middle-class family and never served in the army. Worst of all, his father was a music store owner, or as the British used to say, "in trade." And he was a Catholic. He was nervous, insecure, and prone to depression and hypochondria; he always carried a chip on his shoulder for not being "fully accepted." Musically, he was completely self-taught. But to the chagrin of Britain's music establishment, Elgar - an "outsider" - was the first English composer since Henry Purcell (1659-1695) to achieve world fame. It was the *Enigma Variations*, composed in 1899 when he was 42 that propelled him out of his parochial obscurity to worldwide recognition.

Elgar had begun the Variations as a private amusement for his wife, Alice, whom he adored. He created musical portraits of their friends, later turning them into a proper orchestral composition at her suggestion. The expressive and stately theme was his own, but Elgar claimed that he had employed a second, hidden theme along with the main obvious one. This second theme has remained a mystery to this day, although in later years Elgar said that it was derived from a melody "...so well-known that it is strange no one has discovered it."

The Elgar friends and their peculiarities are portrayed in the 14 variations, each of which is headed by a nickname or initials, making some of the identities a puzzle as well - although by now scholars have figured out the lot:

- CAE: Elgar's wife Caroline Alice, whose inspiration contributed to a romantic and delicate touch to the theme.
- HDSP: H.D. Steuart-Powell, amateur pianist and chamber music partner of Elgar. The detached, rapid staccato note replicates the sound of the piano.
- RBT: R.B. Townshend, author, eccentric and actor with a "funny voice."
- WMB: William M. Baker, a country squire and neighbor. The variation suggests that the man fancied the hunt.
- RPA: Richard Arnold, son of poet Matthew Arnold, music lover, conversationalist and party wit. The contrast in the two parts of the variation suggests Arnold was eloquent on both serious and frivolous topics.
- Ysobel: Isabel Fitton, an amateur violist with hopeless fingering difficulties.
- Troyte: Arthur Troyte Griffin, well-known architect and terrible amateur pianist. The pounding of the timpani says it all.
- WN: Miss Winifred Norbury, owner of an eighteenth-century house with a nervous laugh, both of which Elgar loved. It leads without pause to:

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- Nimrod (the Bible's great hunter): A.J. Jaeger ("hunter" in German), an editor at Novello, Elgar's publisher. Jaeger's encouragement and support were crucial for Elgar in his major debut. His love for Beethoven is hinted at in a quote from the *Pathétique* sonata. This, the second longest of the variations, is traditionally performed as a separate piece to memorialize the death of an orchestra musician.
 - Dorabella: Dora Penny, a frequent visitor with hesitant speech, whose nickname derived from Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.
 - GRS: George R. Sinclair, organist; actually, the variation is a musical description of Dan, Sinclair's bulldog, falling into the river, paddling out and barking.
 - BGN: Basil G. Nevinson, amateur cellist and close friend.
 - ***: Lady Mary Lygon and a second, earlier, younger flame who had left Elgar heartbroken; one went to Australia, the other to New Zealand, hence the steamer engine thump and the quote from Mendelssohn's *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage*. The second part of the variation, a clarinet solo, suggests a wrenching farewell.
 - EDU: Edo, the nickname for Elgar himself, known only to his closest friends; his self-portrait sounds quite heroic.
-

Program notes by:
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Orchestra Roster

VIOLIN I

Stephanie Sant'Ambrogio,
Concertmaster
Calvin Lewis
Lianna Elmore
John Morrice
Jay Zhong
Gabrielle Wunsch
Brynn Albanese
Rudolfina Sjostrand
Rebecca Ward
Julia Copeland
Sarah Coyle
Claire Tatman

VIOLIN II

Caitlin McSherry, *Principal*
Cynthia Stuart
Darren Sagawa
Gaylene Debra Joe
Barbara Schaefer
Dagenais Smiley
Matthew Oshida
Lisa Lhee
Shawyon Malek-Salehi

VIOLA

Joshua Newburger, *Acting Principal*
Rosalind Gratz
Lynn Grants
Jeffrey Sandersier

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Heather Gardner
Michael Molnau
Tianna Heppner
Matthew Smoke

CELLO

Gerald Miller, III, *Principal*
Isaac Pastor-Chermak
Alicja Blanquart
Judy Robinson
Alana Shannon
Dieter Wulforth
Kelvin Diaz Inoa
Yoo-Jung Chang

BASS

Andy Butler, *Principal*
Jon Keigwin
Heidi Franklin
Keith Bionde
Benjamin Green
Sheldon Schlesinger

FLUTE

Janette Erickson, *Principal*
Pam Ellzey
Colleen Fernandez

OBOE

Marissa Honda, *Acting Principal*
Kathy Oh
Cathy Del Russo

CLARINET

Peter Nevin, *Principal*
Larry Honda
Lea Steffens

BASSOON

Leyla Zamora, *Acting Principal*
Katherine Ruiz
Wendy LaTouche

HORN

Elisha Wells, *Acting Principal*
Jennie Blomster
Sarah Ference
Christine Geiger

TRUMPET

Jonah Levy, *Acting Principal*
Ron Franklin
Joseph Farkas

TROMBONE

Bruce Chrisp, *Principal*
Dillon MacIntyre
Steve Trapani

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TIMPANI

Tim Dent, *Acting Principal*

PERCUSSION

Tammy van der Paardt, *Acting Principal*

Craig Cory

Matthew Darling

HARP

Laura Porter, *Principal*

PIANO/ORGAN

Jason Sherbundy, *Acting Principal*



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