



**SAN FRANCISCO
SYMPHONY**
MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS • MUSIC DIRECTOR



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Images of Elena Ariza, the SFS Youth Orchestra and Donato Cabrera are available for download in the [SFSYO Press Kit](#)

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA 2015-2016 SEASON OPENS NOVEMBER 1 AT DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL

Donato Cabrera conducts his seventh and final season as SFSYO Music Director and SFS Resident Conductor

Highlights of the season include a performance by concerto competition winner Elena Ariza November 1; annual holiday concerts of *Peter and the Wolf*, December 13; and hosting the Bay Area Youth Orchestra Festival at Davies Symphony Hall, January 17, 2016

SFS musicians, violinist Chen Zhao and violist Katie Kadarauich are guest soloists in Mozart's Sinfonia concertante in E-flat major for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra, May 15, 2016

SAN FRANCISCO, October 6, 2015 — The [San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra](#) (SFSYO) and Wattle Foundation Music Director [Donato Cabrera](#) open their 2015-16 season on Sunday, November 1 at 2pm at Davies Symphony Hall, Cabrera's seventh and final season with the Orchestra. The opening concert of the year, November 1, features Elena Ariza, winner of the Youth Orchestra's 2015 Concerto Competition, in Dvořák's Cello Concerto in B minor. Ariza has been a member of the SFSYO since 2011 and Principal Cello since 2014. The Orchestra performs two holiday concerts of *Peter and the Wolf*, December 13, and additional concerts on March 20 and May 15, 2016. It will host and perform in the Bay Area Youth Orchestra Festival at Davies Symphony Hall on January 17, 2016 at Davies Symphony Hall, along with four other Bay Area Youth Orchestras. Violinist Chen Zhao and violist Katie Kadarauich, musicians of the San Francisco Symphony, perform as soloists in Mozart's Sinfonia concertante in E-flat major for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra in the final concert on May 15, 2016. Both are both strongly connected to the Youth Orchestra — Zhao as a member of the SFSYO Coaching Team, and Kadarauich as an SFSYO alumna.

Donato Cabrera will step down as Music Director of the SFSYO and Resident Conductor of the SFS following the 2015-16 season to keep pace with the demands of his growing international career. Under his seven-year tutelage, the SFSYO has solidified their stature and reputation as what Germany's *Der Tagesspiegel* called "one of the world's best youth orchestras." Their achievements together include a successful 2012 tour which won a 2011-12 ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming of American Music on Foreign Tours. From that tour, a critically acclaimed live recording from the Berlin Philharmonie of Mahler's Symphony No. 1 was released on [SFS Media](#). Cabrera led the Orchestra in its ninth tour of Europe this past summer of 2015, performing celebrated concerts in Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Milan's Sala Verdi, Prague's Smetana Hall, and again in Berlin's Philharmonie. "When I first heard the SFSYO, I thought it would be an honor to conduct an orchestra of this caliber," says Cabrera. "Becoming the Music Director of the SFSYO fourteen years later was a closing of a circle that I will forever cherish. It has also been an unforgettable experience to serve as Resident Conductor of the SFS, working closely with Michael Tilson Thomas as his cover conductor here and abroad on multiple international tours, programming and conducting the Adventures in Music, Concerts for Kids, and Music for Families concerts, and conducting the SFS on many other occasions." Said Tilson Thomas: "We are grateful to Donato for the musicianship and leadership he has brought to the San Francisco Symphony for these seven years. We celebrate his accomplishments with the Youth Orchestra and wish him all the best as he continues to advance in his career." A search for his successor is underway.

About the SFSYO

The [San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra](#) (SFSYO) is recognized internationally as one of the finest youth orchestras in the world. Founded by the [San Francisco Symphony](#) in 1981, the SFSYO's musicians are chosen from more than 300 applicants in annual auditions. The SFSYO's purpose is to provide an orchestral experience of pre-professional caliber, tuition-free, to talented young musicians from the greater Bay Area. The more than 100 diverse musicians, ranging in age from 12 to 21, represent communities from throughout the Bay Area. The SFSYO rehearses and performs at Davies Symphony Hall under the direction of Wattis Foundation Music Director Donato Cabrera. Jahja Ling served as the SFSYO's first Music Director, followed by David Milnes, Leif Bjaland, Alasdair Neale, Edwin Outwater and Benjamin Schwartz.

As part of the SFSYO's innovative training program, musicians from the San Francisco Symphony coach the young players each Saturday afternoon in sectional rehearsals, followed by full orchestra rehearsals with Cabrera. SFSYO members also have the opportunity to work with many of the world-renowned artists who perform with the SFS each week. SFS Music Director Michael Tilson Thomas, SFS Conductor Laureate Herbert Blomstedt, Sir Simon Rattle, Kurt Masur, Valery Gergiev, Leonard Slatkin, Yo-Yo Ma, Isaac Stern, Yehudi Menuhin, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Midori, Joshua Bell, Gil Shaham, Sarah Chang, and many others have worked with the SFSYO. Of equal importance, the students are able to talk with these prominent musicians, asking questions about their lives, their professional and personal experiences, and about music. The SFSYO has made ten international tours.

[Donato Cabrera](#) has been the Resident Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony and the Wattis Foundation Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra since 2009. In his final season with the San Francisco Symphony Cabrera will conduct the San Francisco Symphony's eighth annual *Día de los Muertos* concert, a celebration of Latino music and culture with singer and actress Lila Downs on November 7, as well as SFS's acclaimed *Adventures in Music* and *Concerts for Kids* educational concerts throughout the season. In 2014, Cabrera was appointed Music Director of the Las Vegas Philharmonic Orchestra, which this year expands its season under his leadership. He has been Music Director of the California Symphony and the New Hampshire Music Festival since 2013. A champion of new music, Donato Cabrera was a co-founder of the New York based American Contemporary Music Ensemble. He made his Carnegie Hall debut leading the world premiere of Mark Grey's *Ātash Sorushan*. In 2002, Cabrera was a Herbert von Karajan Conducting Fellow at the Salzburg Festival. He has served as assistant conductor at the Ravinia, Spoleto (Italy), and Aspen Music Festivals, and as resident conductor at the Music Academy of the West. Cabrera has also been an assistant conductor for productions at the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Los Angeles Philharmonic. From 2005-2008, he was Associate Conductor of the San Francisco Opera and in 2009, he made his debut with the San Francisco Ballet. Cabrera was the rehearsal and cover conductor for the Metropolitan Opera production and DVD release of *Doctor Atomic*, which won the 2012 Grammy® Award for Best Opera Recording. He holds degrees from the University of Nevada and the University of Illinois and has also pursued graduate studies in conducting at Indiana University and the Manhattan School of Music.

Elena Ariza, 17 years old, is a senior at Menlo School in Atherton. Born into a musical family, Ariza started piano lessons at age three and cello lessons at four. She studies cello with Eric Sung at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM) Pre-College Division. In 2015, Ariza was featured as both a soloist and a chamber musician on NPR's "[From the Top](#)". She performed in the Weill Recital Hall in Carnegie Hall twice as the winner of both the American Fine Arts Festival and the American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition in 2012.

Ariza has won numerous solo and concerto competitions, such as the Music Teachers National Association's California State Competition, Menuhin-Dowling Competition, Pacific Musical Society Annual Competition, Mondavi Young Artists Competition, all three age categories in the Chinese Music Teachers Association's International Youth Music Competition, and the Diablo Valley Orchestra and South Valley Symphony Concerto Competition, among others. As a chamber musician, she has participated in SFCM's Chamber Music Program since 2008 and currently plays in the Cambiata String Quartet which was featured on "From the Top" and won 1st place in the Sacramento State Chamber Music Competition in 2015. She has also played in the AYE Piano Trio since 2013 in the Young Chamber Musicians program, led by Susan Bates. Recently, the AYE Trio won 1st prize in the Galante Prize Chamber Music Competition and 2nd prize in the ENKOR International Chamber Music Competition. In addition, Ariza was named as the winner of Ensemble San Francisco's Chamber Music Student Competition and performed with the ESF members. She has been an active participant in Master Classes, summer programs like Aspen Music Festival and School, the Music@Menlo Chamber Music Festival and Institute, and the Yellow Barn Chamber Music Festival and School, and in organizing concerts for charity.

Calendar editors, please note:

Tickets to the 2015-2016 season are on sale at www.sfsymphony.org, (415) 864-6000, and at the Davies Symphony Hall Box Office, located on Grove Street between Franklin and Van Ness.

- All concerts are at Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, unless otherwise noted

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

[Sunday, November 1, at 2pm](#)

Donato Cabrera conductor

Elena Ariza cello

San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

Dvořák Cello Concerto in B minor

Ravel *Alborada del gracioso*

Copland *Appalachian Spring*

Tickets: \$54 reserved seating, \$15 general admission.

PETER AND THE WOLF with the SFS YOUTH ORCHESTRA

[Saturday, December 13, 2015 at 1pm and 4pm](#)

Donato Cabrera conductor

San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

Prokofiev *Peter and the Wolf*, Opus 67

Holiday Favorites with audience sing-a-long and a celebrity narrator.

Tickets: \$15-\$65; half price for ages 17 and under.

BAY AREA YOUTH ORCHESTRA FESTIVAL with the SFS YOUTH ORCHESTRA

[Sunday, January 17, 2016 at 3pm](#)

Alasdair Neale Festival Music Director and Festival Orchestra Conductor

El Camino Youth Symphony

Marin Symphony Youth Orchestra

Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra

San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

Young People's Symphony Orchestra

Jindong Cai conductor

Ann Krinitsky conductor

Omid Zoufonoun conductor

Donato Cabrera conductor

David Ramadanoff conductor

Tickets: \$70 reserved seating, \$25 general admission, half price for 17 and under in general admission only

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

[Sunday, March 20, 2016 at 2pm](#)

Donato Cabrera conductor

San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

Rossini

Overture to *William Tell*

Schubert

Symphony No. 5

Sibelius

Symphony No. 6

Tickets: \$54 reserved seating, \$15 general admission.

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

[Sunday, May 15, 2016 at 2pm](#)

Donato Cabrera conductor

Chen Zhao violin

Katie Kadarrauch viola

San Francisco Symphony Youth Orchestra

Mason Bates

Devil's Radio

Mozart

Sinfonia concertante in E-flat major for Violin, Viola, and Orchestra

Bartók

Concerto for Orchestra

Tickets: \$54 reserved seating, \$15 general admission.

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