

Ryan Murray is the Director of Orchestra & Opera at California State University, Sacramento, as well as the Artistic Director of Music in the Mountains and the Principal Pops Conductor of the Modesto Symphony. He is also the Music Director and Conductor for the Auburn Symphony, and the conductor for the Sacramento Youth Symphony's premier orchestra. An award-winning opera conductor, Ryan has served as assistant conductor for opera productions at the Sacramento Philharmonic and is the past Music Director of Fresno Grand Opera.

Ryan is a past winner of the Vienna Philharmonic's prestigious Ansbacher Fellowship for Young Conductors and spent the summer in residence at the 2014 Salzburg Festival. Ryan was awarded second place in the 2019 American Prize for Professional Orchestral Conducting, and has garnered national recognition for his dynamic, compelling performances of contemporary opera as the winner of the 2017 American Prize in Opera Conducting.

With an enthusiasm for film scores, Ryan enjoys the unique challenges of conducting movies in concert and was recently added to the Disney & ICM Approved Conductors list. Recent and upcoming performances include Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*, Pixar Animation Studios' *Pixar in Concert*, and *Star Wars: A New Hope*.

Ryan holds degrees, summa cum laude, in bassoon and voice performance from Sacramento State and holds a master's degree, with distinction, in music business from the Berklee College of Music. Ryan has previously attended the Cabrillo Festival's Conductors Workshop and was one of just eight conductors worldwide to be invited to the Musiikin aika Masterclass in Finland. He previously attended the Contemporary Music Symposium led by Alan Gilbert featuring the New York Philharmonic, the Aurora Chamber Festival in Sweden, the Lucerne Festival's Conducting Masterclass in Switzerland, and the Eastman School of Music's Summer Conducting Institute.

Symphony Orchestra

Ryan Murray, conductor

with

Greg Johnson, saxophone

TUESDAY, 7:00 P.M.

MARCH 10, 2026

CAPISTRANO CONCERT HALL

PROGRAM

April in Paris E.Y. Harburg and Vernon Duke
arr. by Jimmy Carroll

Just Friends John Klenner and Sam Lewis
arr. by Jimmy Carroll
Sophia Sumpo, conductor

Laura Johnny Mercer and David Raskin
arr. by Joe Lipman
Jordyn Bonilla, conductor

Save Your Love for Me Buddy Johnson
arr. by Greg Johnson

Summertime George Gershwin
arr. Jimmy Carroll

Nova Greg Johnson

INTERMISSION

The Planets Gustav Holst
(1874-1934)
I. Mars
II. Jupiter

Capriccio Espagnol Niccolai Rimsky-Korsakov
(1844-1908)

PERSONNEL

Violin I

Joan Shalit *
Ali Chenari
Emily Kurulenko
Emily Svendsen
Annie Sullivan
Paolo Reyes
Sarah Murray Espinoza

Violin II

Natalie Albano +
Kayla Nhoung
Shane Duncan
Evelyn Tree
Kelly Jimenez
Adamari Guerrero
Yolanda Ochoa
Torrentes
Shari Gueffroy
Audrey Crooks

Viola

Tristan Corpuz +
Zachary Noakes
Cynthia Kallemeyn
Jayden Blattner
Andy Brosnan
Annette Orella

Harp

Jacquelyn Venter

Rhythm Section

Chet Chwalik, piano
Gabriel Carpenter, drumset
Jonathan Chavez-Ulloa, bass

Cello

William Masters +
Jordan Powell
Jason Bond
Abigail Cooper
Anna Hengst
Elizabeth Ungurjans
Laura Robb Martin
Jasmine Anibaba
Ben Caltacci

Bass

Allison Keller +
Jonathan Chavez-Ulloa
Jake Fox
Alejandro Giles
Bruno Alonso Bugarin
Mattie Rowlands

Flute

Soraya Roman ++
Kiele Miyata ++
Amelia Sharpe (picc.)

Oboe

Hailey Nelson ++
Mary Kuvakos ++

Clarinet

Mia Kawakami +
Zephaniah Samuel
Kamden Kincaid (bass)

Bassoon

Jack Zill +
Emma Claire Ward

Horn

Anthony DePage +
Trinity Tran
Matthew Anselmi
Cesar Zarate

Trumpet

Mason Rogers +
Anthony Alvarez-
Chavez

Trombone

Gustavo Cano +
Michael Mencarini
Andres Franco

Tuba

Alex Daw +

Percussion

Jesse Barba (timp.)
Heaven La (timp.)
Evan French (timp.)
Trisha Pangan-
Kennedy
Lauren Fortes
Sophia Sumpo

* concertmaster / + principal / ++ co-principal

Selections from *Bird with Strings*

April in Paris, Just Friends, Laura, Summertime

Recorded in 1949–50, Charlie Parker's *Bird with Strings* project paired his improvisation with studio string orchestra, presenting jazz standards in a setting more often associated with popular and classical traditions. The album brought together members of the Great American Songbook with detailed orchestral arrangements by Jimmy Carroll and Joe Lipman. These selections reflect that collaboration, combining lyrical string writing with space for improvisation.

Save Your Love for Me

First popularized in the mid-twentieth century, this ballad blends jazz and blues traditions, shaped by clear melodic writing and steady harmonic movement.

Nova

A new composition from Sac State Faculty Greg Johnson. This tune features driving rhythm, exciting harmonic shifts, and a catchy melody that pulls the whole thing together. Johnson uses the full palate of colors available to the symphony orchestra with unique combinations of the different choirs of instruments.

The Planets

Gustav Holst was born in Cheltenham, England, into a musical family of Swedish descent. He studied at the Royal College of Music in London, where he formed a lifelong friendship with Ralph Vaughan Williams. Financial necessity led him to work as a trombonist before establishing a long career as a teacher at St. Paul's Girls' School and Morley College. He remained committed to music education throughout his life.

Holst composed *The Planets* between 1914 and 1917. The work reflects his interest in astrology rather than astronomy; each movement represents the astrological character associated with a planet. The suite was first performed privately in 1918 and publicly in 1920. Although Holst wrote in many genres, *The Planets* became his most widely recognized work.

I. Mars, the Bringer of War

Built on a persistent 5/4 rhythm, "Mars" relies on repeated patterns and brass scoring to create sustained momentum. Though completed before the end of World War I, it has often been linked to the conflict.

II. Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity

"Jupiter" features shifting meters and broad thematic material. Its central melody later became the hymn tune "Thaxted," contributing to the movement's continued presence in concert and ceremonial settings.

Capriccio Espagnol

Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov was a Russian composer, teacher, and member of the nationalist circle known as "The Five." He began his career as an officer in the Imperial Russian Navy and was largely self-taught before joining the faculty of the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Among his students were several composers who later shaped twentieth-century music.

Composed in 1887, *Capriccio Espagnol* draws on Spanish folk melodies and dance rhythms. Originally conceived as a violin feature, it developed into a five-movement orchestral suite. The work alternates dance sections with variations and highlights solo players throughout the ensemble. It remains a frequently performed example of late nineteenth-century orchestral writing and of Rimsky-Korsakov's approach to orchestration.

Dr. Greg Johnson is quickly becoming recognized as an important voice in the jazz community. His distinctive saxophone sound and compositional style has found its way into multiple genres of Jazz, Classical and Popular music.

As a saxophonist, Greg has appeared in concert and on over 40 mainstream recordings with jazz legends Curtis Fuller, Billy Taylor, Bob Mintzer and many more. He has toured and performed with notable Pop and Rock acts such as Saint Motel, Robin Thicke and Barry Manilow, Skip Martin, The Spinners, The O'Jays, Eddie Holman and Jim Peterik, at some of the biggest venues and festivals in the world.

Dr. Johnson has previously held positions at the University of Southern California, Marin School of the Arts and California State University Stanislaus. Praised for his relatable and organic approach to improvisation, composition, and ensemble direction, he keeps an active schedule as a clinician and guest composer/saxophonist.

Greg has released ten recordings under his name and has contributed to dozens more. His recent work has appeared on the Grammy ballot in six categories for his albums "Philosopher's Path" and "Visions of Kansas City."