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THE
SORAYA

NEWS RELEASE

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"...probably the most important conductor of our time"
— *Die Süddeutsche Zeitung*

Classical Nights Continue at The Soraya with the Debut of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Led by Nathalie Stutzmann, Music Director *Featuring Pianist Haochen Zhang*

Beethoven, Concierto para piano n.º 5 "Emperador"
Sinfonía Dvořák No, 9

Saturday, March 9 at 8pm. Tickets starting at \$49 available now at
[TheSoraya.org!](https://www.thesoraya.org)

(Los Angeles, CA) Feb 12, 2024 — **Nathalie Stutzmann** broke the gender barrier at the very pinnacle of classical music when she became only the second woman in history to lead a major American orchestra, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Now, in a program featuring Beethoven and Dvořák, Stutzmann — the orchestra's Music Director, leads Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-flat major, Op. 73, Emperor, known for being one of Beethoven's most demanding works, featuring Van Cliburn gold medal award-winning pianist **Haochen Zhang**. The concert also features Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 in E minor, From the New World.

Proclaimed "probably the most important conductor of our time" by *Die Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Stutzmann made big news in the opera pit in 2023 with her spectacular debuts in Wagner's *Tannhäuser* at the Bayreuth Festival. *BR Klassik* observed having "never experienced such a standing ovation at a pit debut in Bayreuth," while *Oper Magazin* described Nathalie as a true possessor of "the Bayreuth gene," *Abendzeitung München* "a revelation" and *Die Süddeutsche Zeitung* "a wonder." She also made "a splashy debut" and

“the coup of the year” for The New York Times with her unanimously acclaimed double debuts at the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

For tickets and interview requests, please contact:

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- ACCESS YOUR PRESS KIT [HERE](#).

For questions or ticket information, visit TheSoraya.org or call the Ticket Office at (818) 677-3000. Office hours are 11a-4p, Tuesday through Saturday.

About Nathalie Stutzmann, Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Nathalie Stutzmann is the Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the second woman in history to lead a major American orchestra. She is also Principal Guest Conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra.

Stutzmann made her spectacular debut at the 2023 Bayreuth Festival with Wagner's Tannhäuser, BR Klassik observed having "never experienced such a standing ovation at a pit debut in Bayreuth," with *Oper Magazin* describing her as a true possessor of "the Bayreuth gene." The 22-23 season also saw her acclaimed debut at the Metropolitan Opera with productions of both *Die Zauberflöte* and *Don Giovanni*; the *New York Times* declaring it "the coup of the year."

During the 23-24 season, she leads the Atlanta Symphony in twelve programs spanning some of her favorite core repertoire from Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms and Ravel through to the large symphonic forces of Mahler, Strauss and Tchaikovsky, along with a Bruckner festival marking the composer's 200th anniversary and a West Coast tour. With The Philadelphia Orchestra she returns to New York for her much anticipated Carnegie Hall debut.

As a guest conductor, Stutzmann makes her debut with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and returns to the London Symphony Orchestra for Bruckner's *Te Deum* and his 7th and 9th symphonies. She conducts Wagner's *Der Fliegende Holländer* for Teatro Regio Torino and returns to Bayreuth in the summer of 2024. Throughout the season, Stutzmann will have a strong presence at the Philharmonie Paris where she will appear with the Orchestre de Paris and Orchestre de Capitole de Toulouse, and also chair the jury for the La Maestra Conducting Competition.

Awarded the 2023 Opus Klassik "Concerto Recording of the Year" for her recording of Glière and Mosolov Harp concertos with Xavier de Maistre and WDR Sinfonieorchester, 2022 also saw the release of complete Beethoven Piano Concertos recorded with Haochen Zhang and The Philadelphia Orchestra. *Gramophone* praised it as a "a brilliant collaboration that I urge you to not miss" and *Classics Today* as a "modern reference version." Stutzmann is an exclusive recording artist for Warner Classics/Erato.

Stutzmann started her studies at a very young age in piano, bassoon, cello and studied conducting with the legendary Finnish teacher Jorma Panula.

As one of today's most esteemed contraltos, she has made more than 80 recordings and received the most prestigious awards. Recognised for her significant contribution to the arts, Nathalie was named "Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur," France's highest honour; and "Commandeur dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres" by the French government.

About the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Under the leadership of Music Director Nathalie Stutzmann, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) offers live performances, media initiatives and learning programs that unite, educate and enrich our community through the engaging and transformative power of orchestral music experiences.

Now in its 79th season, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra engages the diverse international community of Atlanta, bringing people together in harmony – including our youngest citizens, with extensive opportunities for youth and families to fall in love with music. Two hallmark education programs celebrate anniversaries this season: the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra celebrates 50 years, and the Talent Development Program – one of the longest-running musical education diversity programs in the country – turns 30.

The Orchestra's range and depth are featured in more than 150 concerts each year, including the flagship Delta Classical Series, Movies in Concert, Family Concerts, Coca-Cola Holiday series and many community and education concerts. The ASO presents many vibrant, wide-ranging events and artists through its Delta Atlanta Symphony Hall Live presentations. Outside of the concert hall, the ASO's Behind the Curtain video concert series enables the Orchestra to reach audiences beyond city limits.

The ASO performs with the world-renowned 200+ voice, all-volunteer ASO Chorus, originally founded in 1970 by Robert Shaw, and currently under the direction of Norman Mackenzie. The Chorus is featured on nine of the ASO's 27 Grammy Award winning recordings.

About Haochen Zhang, Pianist

Since his gold medal win at the Thirteenth Van Cliburn International Piano Competition in 2009, Haochen Zhang has captivated audiences in the United States, Europe, and Asia with a unique combination of deep musical sensitivity, fearless imagination, and spectacular virtuosity. In 2017, Haochen received the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, which recognizes talented musicians with the potential for a major career in music.

Haochen has already appeared with many of the world's leading festivals and orchestras including the BBC Proms with Long Yu and the China Philharmonic; the Munich Philharmonic with the late Lorin Maazel in a sold-out tour in Munich and China; The Philadelphia Orchestra with Yannick Nézet-Séguin; the Sydney Symphony and David Robertson in a China tour; and the NDR Hamburg and Thomas Hengelbrock in a tour of Tokyo, Beijing, and Shanghai.

Highlights of this season include performances with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Nathalie Stutzmann, a US tour with the Atlanta Symphony also with Stutzmann, a debut with the Melbourne Symphony, performances with Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Orchestra Santa Cecilia, a tour of Asia with Orchestre de Chambre de Paris and extensive recital and orchestral performances throughout China.

In recent seasons, Haochen debuted with the New York Philharmonic and Lucerne Festival Orchestra, performed with the Filarmonica della Scala, NHK Symphony Orchestra and Staatskapelle Berlin, toured Asia with The Philadelphia Orchestra, and performed with the Dover Quartet at Kennedy Center. He has given extensive recital and concerto tours in Asia with performances in China, Hong Kong, and Japan. In October 2017, Haochen gave a concerto performance at Carnegie Hall with the NCPA Orchestra, which was followed by his recital debut at Carnegie's Zankel Hall.

In 2019, Haochen released his debut concerto album on BIS Records performing Prokofiev's second piano concerto and Tchaikovsky's first piano concerto with the Lahti Symphony Orchestra under Dima Slobodeniouk. His debut solo album was released by BIS in February 2017, which includes works by Schumann, Brahms, Janacek, and Liszt. These were followed by a recording with The Philadelphia Orchestra of the complete Beethoven concerti and a solo album of Liszt's Transcendental Etudes.

Haochen Zhang has performed with Munich Philharmonic, London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Frankfurt Radio, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, Israel Philharmonic, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Sydney Symphony, Japan Philharmonic, Singapore Symphony, Mariinsky Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, Taiwan Philharmonic, and Hong Kong Philharmonic orchestras, among others. In recital, he has performed at Spivey Hall, La Jolla Music Society, Cliburn Concerts, and Wolf Trap Discovery Series, among others.

Haochen is an avid chamber musician, collaborating with colleagues such as the Dover, Shanghai, Tokyo, and Brentano Quartets. He is frequently invited by chamber music festivals in the United States including the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and La Jolla Summerfest.

Haochen's performances at the Cliburn Competition were released to critical acclaim by Harmonia Mundi in 2009. He is featured in Peter Rosen's award-winning documentary chronicling the 2009 Cliburn Competition, *A Surprise in Texas*.

Haochen is a graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia where he studied under Gary Graffman. He has also been studying periodically with Andreas Haefliger in Vienna. He was previously trained at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and the Shenzhen Arts School, where he was admitted in 2001 at the age of 11 to study with Professor Dan Zhaoyi.

About the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)

The Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for The Performing Arts (The Soraya) is an award-winning, state-of-the-art 1,700-seat theatre designed and built by HGA Architects and Engineers and opened in January 2011 as the Valley Performing Arts Center (VPAC). Through a transformative gift by Younes and Soraya Nazarian the venue was renamed as The Soraya in 2017. Vibrant programming has served to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley and its 1.8 million residents, and as one of the top arts and culture venues in Southern California. Since its inaugural season, The Soraya has presented over 500 artists and companies across the genres of music, dance, theater and film and is a highly in demand location for filming and rental events.

The Soraya's 2023/2024 Season boldly advances the expansive sound of orchestras both traditional and contemporary; the freestyle vibe of jazz; an array of dance luminaries, and a cultural bounty drawn from the musical well of global voices. The Soraya continues its vigorous commitment to innovating, excelling, and amplifying access by offering a wide variety of performances that reflect Los Angeles' many distinctive communities and featuring new and original work and artists from the local region as well as nationally and around the world.

Located on the vibrant campus of California State University Northridge (CSUN), The Soraya and the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication share an integral link that enhances student access and opportunities in the arts and performing arts. A \$5 million contribution from record producer and former California Lieutenant Governor Mike Curb was pivotal in ensuring the completion and opening of The Soraya in 2011. For his founding support and in acknowledgment of the integral relationship between the Mike Curb College and The Soraya, Mike Curb is recognized as one of The Soraya's Cornerstone Benefactors. This partnership fosters academic and artistic excellence, elevating the talents and the future growth of CSUN's students through master classes, student tickets, concerts of student ensembles, and students appearing alongside renowned artists such as Wynton Marsalis, Aida Cuevas, and Martha Graham Dance Company.

What: Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
Nathalie Stutzmann, Music Director/Conductor
Haochen Zhang, piano

Program:

- *Beethoven, Concierto para piano n.º 5 "Emperador"*
- *Sinfonía Dvořák No. 9*
Performance Underwritten By Colburn Foundation; Kathleen P. Martin.

When: Saturday, March 9 at 8pm

Where: Younes and Soraya Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts (The Soraya)
18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330

Tickets: Tickets start at \$49
Website: TheSoraya.org
Phone: 818-677-3000

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