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- **Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's Concerto for Cello and Orchestra, Which Premiered to Acclaim in March 2020, To Receive Two Online Performances This Season with Soloist Zuill Bailey: January 23 with Boulder Philharmonic and March 28 with Santa Rosa Symphony**
- **Zwilich Is the Santa Rosa Symphony's Artistic Partner January – May 2021, with Five Works on Five Virtual Concerts**
- **Buffalo Philharmonic Features Prologue and Variations on Virtual Concert Program on February 9**
- ***Contemporary Voices*, a Recording by the Pacifica Quartet Featuring Zwilich's Quintet for Alto Saxophone and String Quartet, Is Nominated for a 2021 Grammy Award**



Ellen Taaffe Zwilich (photo by Bill Keefrey); Zwilich and Zuill Bailey take a bow after Cello Concerto premiere March 2020 (photo by Steven Shires).

Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's Concerto for Cello and Orchestra premiered to critical acclaim in early March 2020, performed by soloist Zuill Bailey and the South Florida Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sebrina María Alfonso – right before the coronavirus pandemic brought concert life around the globe to a standstill.

In the first three months of 2021, the work will have two performances in virtual concert events, both featuring soloist Zuill Bailey. On [Saturday, January 23, at 7:30 pm MT](#), Bailey and members of the Boulder Philharmonic will premiere the chamber version of the concerto (soloist with violin, viola, cello, bass, and piano) as part of a ticketed online event that will be available on demand through February 6. On [Sunday, March 28, at 3 pm PT](#), a performance by Bailey and the Santa Rosa Symphony led by its music director, Francesco Lecce-Chong, will premiere and be thereafter available to stream on the orchestra's YouTube channel.

"Zwilich's Snazzy Cello Concerto Soars In Florida," wrote John Fleming in Classical Voice North America of the work's premiere, saying, "If anything, this expressive, impeccably detailed, technically sophisticated work felt a bit too brief, leaving me wanting to hear more." Citing the work's "strong jazz quality," Fleming wrote, "At times, Bailey seemed to be channeling his inner Sonny Rollins, the cello honking and shouting like a tenor sax." "The blues haunts Zwilich's fine new cello concerto," wrote Dennis Rooney in Palm Beach Arts Paper, saying, "The concerto's three linked movements suggested a meditation on melodic gestures from the American vernacular."

Artistic Partnership with Santa Rosa Symphony

The Santa Rosa Symphony, Francesco Lecce-Chong, Music Director, has announced Ellen as Artistic Partner in the second half of the 2020-21 season:

"During the remainder of the 2020-2021 season, Francesco and SRS orchestra musicians, observing all health and safety protocols, will perform on the Weill Hall stage for five more enhanced concert experiences, recorded for streaming on [YouTube](#).

"The Symphony welcomes legendary composer Ellen Taaffe Zwilich as its Artistic Partner. ... Each of the upcoming five SRS @ Home concerts [Sundays at 3 pm PT] features a Zwilich work, including her beloved *Peanuts Gallery* in our season-ending finale. In addition, she brings her vision, expertise and experience, as she takes an active role with the orchestra, Francesco and the community over the course of the season."

Ellen and SRS Music Director Francesco Lecce-Chong talk about the partnership and the five works to be performed on the spring programs in two videos on the SRS site - [watch here](#).

[January 24, 2021](#) - Concerto Grosso for Chamber Orchestra (with works by J.S. Bach, W.A. Mozart, and Marianna Martines)

[February 28, 2021](#) - Prologue and Variations for String Orchestra (with works by William Grant Still, Richard Wagner, and Antonin Dvorák)

[March 28, 2021](#) - Concerto for Cello and Orchestra with guest soloist Zuill Bailey (with works by Jessie Montgomery, Samuel Barber, Charles Ives, and Johannes Brahms)

[April 28, 2021](#) - Romance for Violin and Orchestra with guest soloist Joseph Edelberg (with works by Caroline Shaw, Arturo Márquez, and Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky)

[May 16, 2021](#) - *Peanuts Gallery* for Piano and Orchestra (with works by Gioacchino Rossini, Michael Daugherty, Paul Dooley, and Franz Joseph Haydn)

Prologue and Variations on Buffalo Philharmonic February 9 Program

Zwilich's 1983 work *Prologue and Variations* receives a performance on the February 9 program by the Buffalo Philharmonic led by Music Director JoAnn Falletta. The virtual concert, a ticketed event on [Tuesday, February 9, 2021, at 7 pm ET](#) available for a limited time thereafter, also features works by Joseph Bologne de Saint-Georges, Claude Debussy, and W.A. Mozart.

Grammy Nomination for *Contemporary Voices* CD

The Pacifica Quartet's new recording *Contemporary Voices*, a Cedille Records release featuring Zwilich's Quintet for Alto Saxophone and String Quartet (with saxophone soloist Otis Murphy) as well as works by Jennifer Higdon and Shulamit Ran, has been nominated for a 2021 Grammy Award in the "Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance" category.

"Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's 2007 Quintet for Alto Saxophone and String Quartet...effortlessly blends the spiky rhythms of the massed strings with the slinky smoothness of [the] alto sax," wrote Musical America's Clive Paget in his recording review, which also cited the work's "...echoes of Stravinsky and Milhaud laced with a sassy, post-minimalist vibe." Claire Jackson wrote in BBC Music Magazine, "Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's Quintet for Alto Saxophone and String Quartet (2007) is a superb addition to the slim repertoire, masterfully executed here by the Pacifica Quartet and Otis Murphy.... The three-movement work begins by blending the string and sax timbres, before the parts develop independence; the saxophone's gentle cantabile solos culminate in a thrilling virtuosic display."

Ellen Taaffe Zwilich

Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians states: "There are not many composers in the modern world who possess the lucky combination of writing music of substance and at the same time exercising an immediate appeal to mixed audiences. Zwilich offers this happy combination of purely technical excellence and a distinct power of communication."

A prolific composer in virtually all media, Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's works have been performed by most of the leading American orchestras and by major ensembles abroad. Her works include five Symphonies and a string of concertos commissioned and performed over the past two decades by the nation's top orchestras.

Zwilich is the recipient of numerous prizes and honors, including the 1983 Pulitzer Prize in Music (the first woman ever to receive this coveted award), the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Chamber Music Prize, the Arturo Toscanini Music Critics Award, the Ernst von Dohnányi Citation, an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Guggenheim Fellowship, four Grammy nominations, the Alfred I. Dupont Award, Miami Performing Arts Center Award, the Medaglia d'oro in the G.B. Viotti Competition, and the NPR and WNYC Gotham Award for her contributions to the musical life of New York City. Among other distinctions, Ms. Zwilich has been elected to the American Classical Music Hall of Fame, the Florida Artists Hall of Fame, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1995, she was named to the first Composer's Chair in the history of Carnegie Hall, and she was designated Musical America's Composer of the Year for 1999. Ms. Zwilich, who holds a doctorate from The Juilliard School, currently holds the Krafft Distinguished Professorship at Florida State University.

Read the latest news on www.zwilich.com.

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