



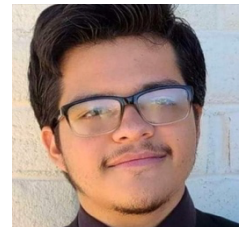
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 29, 2023

**AMERICAN BACH ANNOUNCES THE WINNER OF THE
2023 AMERICAN BACH NEW MUSIC FOR
PERIOD INSTRUMENTS COMPETITION**

**"SPRING IN SAN FRANCISCO" BY JOSÉ DANIEL VARGAS WILL
BE PERFORMED ON THE OPENING NIGHT OF THE
SAN FRANCISCO BACH FESTIVAL
THURSDAY, JULY 27, 2023, AT 7:30 PM IN HERBST THEATRE**

SAN FRANCISCO — **American Bach established a competition for San Francisco Conservatory of Music composition students in January 2023.** Applicants were asked to submit a composition that utilizes period instruments in ways that bring their colors, capabilities, and expressive potential to the forefront. The orchestration would be for an ensemble of Baroque period string instruments, including no more than four violins, two violas, two 'cellos, one contrabass, and one harpsichord.

The winner of this year's competition is José Daniel Vargas, who submitted a new work titled "Spring in San Francisco." It is written for an ensemble that follows the orchestration of a typical Baroque concerto grosso: A group of four soloists — two violins, violoncello, and harpsichord — interact with a fuller ensemble (known as the *ripieno*) comprised of violins, violas, 'cellos, and contrabass. In his program notes, Vargas describes the music:



"This piece catalogs the tremendous range of weather that was seen in San Francisco in the Spring of 2023. The opening pastorale depicts a pleasant sunny day sitting in Golden Gate Park. People walking their dogs or playing soccer, or just strolling along. Wind and clouds begin to roll in, and before anyone can blink, the torrential downpour begins. Everyone races for cover as the rain falls non-stop through the night. The next morning, a cool spooky haze covers the city, creating a mysterious mood with low visibility. Before too long, the sun comes back to clear the fog away, and the peaceful day resumes."

José Daniel Vargas grew up in Tucson, Arizona, where he had an eclectic musical upbringing that began with the electric guitar and classic rock music. Joining his middle school orchestra playing the

double bass, José learned how to read sheet music and was immediately interested in learning how to write his own. Almost entirely self-taught, the only music lessons he received before arriving at SFCM were through private study on the double bass with Dr. Philip Alejo at the University of Arizona. Throughout high school, José became heavily involved in music performance, participating in band, jazz band, orchestra, and a community youth orchestra program called Tucson Junior Strings. José would perform everything from James Brown to Beethoven at festivals, paid gigs, and school concerts. Throughout this time, he was also constantly writing his own music and learning from the music he played. Eventually, José participated in the Tucson Symphony Orchestra's Young Composers Project where student composers worked with professional musicians and had their music played by the orchestra. The Tucson Symphony premiered José's first orchestral work, *Amour déperissant*, in May 2019. December 2021 saw the world premiere of a piece he arranged and orchestrated with the Cape Cod Pops Orchestra. José is a 3rd-year bachelor's student in Composition at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he is currently studying under Dr. David Conte.

The World Premiere of "Spring in San Francisco" will be presented on the Opening Night Concert of the San Francisco Bach Festival, produced by American Bach. The performance will take place in San Francisco's Herbst Theatre on Thursday, July 27, 2023, at 7:30 p.m.

American Bach Artistic Director Jeffrey Thomas commented, "We are honored and privileged to present the world premiere of this beautiful composition to our audiences here in San Francisco. José's music is wonderful, and he captures the storyline of "**Spring in San Francisco**" brilliantly. The titles of the four movements — "Sunrise," "Downpour," "Haze Valley" (a clever wordplay!), and "Sunrise" — are good indicators of how effectively programmatic the piece is. The music is expressive and, at times, quite technically demanding. Our musicians are eager to perform this extraordinary new music."

For more information, go to sfbachfestival.org

BAROQUE OLD & NEW

Bach • Blow • Telemann • Vargas • Vivaldi

Thursday, July 27, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

Herbst Theatre in the San Francisco
War Memorial and Performing Arts Center
401 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO
BACH FESTIVAL

July 27 – 30 2023

Tickets: \$25 / \$42 / \$56 / \$89 / \$125
americanbach.org/tickets • (415) 392-4400

Current SFCM Students with ID may purchase tickets at the venue beginning 1/2 hour before the performance and receive a 50% discount on any ticket price category.

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