**PRESS CONTACTS:**Libby Huebner, 562 799 6055, pr@laco.orgLaura Stegman, 310 470 6321, pr@laco.org

**LOS ANGELES CHAMBER ORCHESTRA-COMMISSIONED**

**WORLD PREMIERE BY JUAN PABLO CONTRERAS**

**OPENS THIS SEASON’S *IN FOCUS* SERIES*,*
CURATED BY CONCERTMASTER MARGARET BATJER**

**Thursday, February 14, 2019, 7:30 pm, at Moss Theater
Friday, February 15, 2019, 7:30 pm, at Rothenberg Hall, The Huntington**

***In Focus* Concerts Provide Insights Into Chamber Music Repertoire
Through Lens Of LACO Artists**

 **Other Programs Include:
LACO Violinists/Husband and Wife Carrie Kennedy and Joel Pargman Showcased on Prokofiev’s Sonata for Two Violins (March 28 & 29); and**

**Impressionistic Gems by Ravel, Debussy and Kodaly to Cap Series (April 12 & 18)**

**Each Program Takes Place at Both
Moss Theater in Santa Monica and The Huntington in San Marino**

Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra’s (LACO) virtuosic musicians serve as musical tour guides for *In Focus*, the Orchestra’s compelling chamber music series curated by Concertmaster Margaret Batjer, which provides insights into the quintessence of some of the great chamber music repertoire through the lens of LACO artists in an intimate setting. This spring LACO offers three *In Focus* programs, each presented at both the Moss Theater at New Roads School at The Herb Alpert Educational Village in Santa Monica and Rothenberg Hall, The Huntington in San Marino. Batjer leads a LACO-commissioned world premiere by Juan Pablo Contreras; LACO violinists, stand-mates and husband and wife Carrie Kennedy and Joel Pargman are showcased on Prokofiev’s Sonata for Two Violins; and the series concludes with impressionistic gems by Ravel, Debussy and Kodaly.

*In Focus* opens with the LACO-commissioned world premiere of Juan Pablo Contreras’ piano quintet *Musas Mexicanas* (Mexican Muses) with back-to-back performances on Valentine’s Day, Thursday, February 14, 7:30 pm, at Moss Theatre in Santa Monica, and Friday, February 15, 2019, 7:30 pm, at Rothenberg Hall, The Huntington in San Marino. The program also features Tchaikovsky’s *Souvenir de Florence*, inspired by the sunny Italian city, and Dohnányi’s Serenade for String Trio, notable for its Hungarian folk music influences. With *Musas Mexicanas*, a collection of musical portraits, Contreras pays homage to several women who have made an indelible impact on Mexico, including artist and icon Frida Kahlo, 17th century poet Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz and La Malinche, the Aztec woman who translated for Hernán Cortés during the Spanish Conquest. Batjer is joined by pianist Hye-Jin Kim and LACO artists Violins Susan Rishik and Maia Jasper White, Associate Principal Viola Victoria Miskolczy, Viola Robert Brophy, Principal Cello Andrew Shulman and Cello Trevor Handy. Contreras, born in Guadalajara, Mexico and currently based in Los Angeles, is recognized as “one of the most prominent young composers of Latin America" (*Milenio*). His music has been performed by the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, the Salta and Cordoba symphonies in Argentina and the Simon Bolivar Symphony Orchestra in Venezuela. The recipient of the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award and Mexican Endowment for the Arts and Culture Young Artist Fellowship, Contreras has served as composer-in-residence at the Turtle Bay Music School and the Concerts on the Slope chamber music series in New York.

LACO violinists, stand-mates and real-life husband and wife Carrie Kennedy and Joel Pargman are showcased on Prokofiev’s Sonata for Two Violins on Thursday, March 28, 7:30 pm, at the Moss Theatre in Santa Monica, and Friday, March 29, 2019, 7:30 pm, at Rothenberg Hall, The Huntington in San Marino. Additional works on the program include Barber’s String Quartet in B major, for which the composer arranged the middle movement for string orchestra as the highly recognizable Adagio for Strings; Peter Knell’s tender and delicate string quartet *Intimate Voices*, premiered in 2016; and Bartók’s *Contrasts* for Violin, Clarinet and Piano, a three-movement work infusing Hungarian and Romanian dance melodies commissioned by famed American jazz clarinetist and bandleader Benny Goodman. Other featured LACO artists are Assistant Concertmaster Tereza Stanislav and Violin Sarah Thornblade, Associate Principal Viola Victoria Miskolczy, Cello Giovanna Clayton and Principal Clarinet Joshua Ranz. Pargman and Kennedy, who joined LACO in 2011 and 2012 respectively, also perform with Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra and the Santa Barbara Chamber Orchestra and are active in the television, motion pictures and recording industry.

The final *In Focus* program this season features Batjer leading impressionistic gems by Ravel, Debussy and Kodály on Friday, April 12, 7:30 pm, at Rothenberg Hall, The Huntington in San Marino, and Thursday, April 18, 2019, 7:30 pm, at Moss Theatre in Santa Monica. Ravel’s otherworldly Sonata for Violin and Cello, dedicated to Debussy, which concludes with driving gypsy rhythms, is paired with the work that directly influenced it – Kodály’s Duo for Violin and Cello, noted for its dashing color, rhythmic freshness and Eastern European folk idioms, and Debussy’s beloved String Quartet, filled with textural depth and iridescent beauty. In addition to Batjer, LACO artists performing are Assistant Concertmaster Tereza Stanislav, Violins Josefina Vergara and Tamara Hatwan, Viola Robert Brophy, Principal Cello Andrew Shulman and Assistant Principal Cello Armen Ksajikian.

*In Focus* is generously sponsored by June & Simon Li, Faucett Catalyst and Allan & Muriel Kotin.

Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra (LACO) ranks among the world’s top musical ensembles. Beloved by audiences and praised by critics, the Orchestra is known as a champion of contemporary composers, with eight ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming, as well as a preeminent interpreter of historical masterworks. Headquartered in the heart of the country's cultural capital, LACO has been proclaimed “America’s finest chamber orchestra” (Public Radio International), “LA’s most unintimidating chamber music experience” (*Los Angeles* magazine), “resplendent” (*Los Angeles Times*) and “one of the world's great chamber orchestras"(KUSC Classical FM). Performing throughout greater Los Angeles, the Orchestra presents orchestral, Baroque and chamber concerts, as well as salon evenings in private spaces and unique experiences that explore classical music's cutting-edge sounds. LACO's long history of educational outreach encompasses programs integral to its mission of nurturing future musicians and composers as well as inspiring a love of classical music. Jaime Martín, praised as "a visionary conductor, discerning and meticulous" (*Platea Magazine*), is LACO’s Music Director Designate and takes the podium as Music Director in the 2019-20 season.

Tickets, starting at $49, are available online at **laco.org**, or by calling LACO at 213 622 7001. Single tickets can also be purchased at the venue box office on the night of the concert, if tickets remain. Discounted tickets are available by phone for groups of 12 or more. College students with valid student ID may purchase tickets for $8, subject to availability.

**EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE: calendar listings for all three *In Focus* programs

WHAT:
Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra - *In Focus*: “Homages & Souvenirs”**Thursday, February 14, 2019, 7:30 pm, Moss Theater
Friday, February 15, 2019, 7:30 pm, Rothenberg Hall, The Huntington
**Margaret Batjer, violin
Susan Rishik, violin**

**Maia Jasper White, violin
Victoria Miskolczy, viola**

**Rob Brophy, viola**

**Andrew Shulman, cello**

**Trevor Handy, cello**

**Hye-Jin Kim, piano**

PROGRAM:
DOHNÁNYI Serenade for String Trio

JUAN PABLO CONTRERAS *Musas Mexicanas* (LACO-Commissioned World Premiere)

TCHAIKOVSKY *Souvenir de Florence*
**Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra - *In Focus*: “Folk & Lyricism”**Thursday, March 28, 2019, 7:30 pm, Moss Theater

Friday, March 29, 2019, 7:30 pm, Rothenberg Hall, The Huntington
**Carrie Kennedy, violin**

**Joel Pargman, violin**

**Tereza Stanislav, violin**

**Sarah Thornblade, violin**

**Victoria Miskolczy, viola**

**Giovanna Clayton, cello**

**Joshua Ranz, clarinet**

PROGRAM:

PROKOFIEV Sonata for Two Violins

BARBER String Quartet in B major

PETER KNELL *Intimate Voices*

BARTÓK *Contrasts* for Violin, Clarinet and Piano

**Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra - *In Focus*: “The Spirit of Impressionism”**Friday, April 12, 2019, 7:30 pm, Rothenberg Hall, The Huntington

Thursday, April 18, 2019, 7:30 pm, Moss Theater
**Margaret Batjer, violin**

**Tereza Stanislav, violin**

**Josefina Vergara, violin
Tamara Hatwan, violin
Robert Brophy, viola**

**Andrew Shulman, cello
Armen Ksajikian, cello**

PROGRAM:

RAVEL Sonata for Violin and Cello

KODÁLY Duo for Violin and Cello

DEBUSSY String Quartet in G minor`

**VENUE ADDRESSES:**

**Moss Theater**The Herb Albert Educational Village3131 Olympic Boulevard
Santa Monica, CA 90404

**Rothenberg Hall, The Huntington**1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, CA 91108

**TICKETS/INFO:**Tickets start at $49. For information about the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra’s 2017-18 season or to order tickets, please call 213 622 7001, or visit [www.laco.org](http://www.laco.org).

# # #

Program, artists and ticket prices subject to change.

01/11/19