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**KENT NAGANO AND BERKELEY AKADEMIE  
PERFORM WITH JÖRG WIDMANN AND CHRISTINE BRANDES  
IN WORKS BY BEETHOVEN, WIDMANN, AND MOZART  
MAY 20 AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BERKELEY**

Berkeley, CA – April 15, 2010... Berkeley Symphony Conductor Laureate [Kent Nagano](#) returns to conduct Berkeley Akademie Ensemble **Thursday, May 20 at 8 PM** at the First Congregational Church. The program includes **Beethoven's** Quintet in E-flat for Piano and Winds, German composer [Jörg Widmann's](#) *Versuch über die Fuge* ("Attempt at the Fugue") with soprano [Christine Brandes](#), and **Mozart's** Clarinet Concerto in A major featuring Widmann as soloist.

*Versuch über die Fuge*, which was premiered in 2005 by Juliane Banse and the Artemis Quartet, is the last installment of Widmann's quartet cycle. A landmark composition in the composer's oeuvre, the cycle consists of five string quartets with each individual work examining a traditional movement form and specific performance techniques. As the title of the piece suggests, this final movement of the quartet cycle is Widmann's take on Baroque counterpoint, in which he recreates his version of a fugue through a dialogue between the soprano and the strings.

The thirty-six year old [Jörg Widmann](#) is one of the most sought-after composing talents of his generation. His works have been performed by both large orchestras and small ensembles in Europe and North America, including the Junge Deutsche Philharmonie, the Vienna Philharmonic, and the Cleveland Orchestra. He has received numerous honors for his compositions, most recently the prestigious [Elise L. Stoeger Prize](#) for his significant contributions to the field of chamber music. An accomplished clarinetist, Widmann studied at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich and The Juilliard School in New York. He regularly collaborates with musicians such as Andrés Schiff, Tabea Zimmermann, and Hélène Grimaud. Berkeley Symphony recently performed his orchestral overture *Con Brio* in concert in April.

[Christine Brandes](#), the featured soloist of *Versuch über die Fuge*, is noted for her radiant, crystalline voice and committed artistry. She enjoys an active career in North America and abroad, performing at many of the most distinguished festivals and concert series in programs ranging from recitals and chamber music to oratorio and

opera. Her recent concert appearances included performances of Handel's *Solomon* with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Bach's *Magnificat* and arias from *Giulio Cesare* with the Cleveland Orchestra, and Haydn's Lord Nelson Mass with the Handel & Haydn Society, among others.

**Beethoven** composed his Quintet in E-flat for Piano and Winds in 1796, which had its premiere the following year at a concert organized by the composer's friend and teacher, violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh. Inspired by Mozart's highly successful Quintet, K.452, Beethoven wrote the piece in the same key and for the same forces.

**Mozart's** Clarinet Concerto in A major, K.622, written in 1791 for clarinetist Anton Stadler, is one the composer's final completed works. The concerto was originally scored for basset horn, but it is likely that Stadler asked Mozart to recompose the piece to feature a new instrument of his own design—the basset clarinet. Today, the work is known for its profound and straightforward musicality and the intimate exchange between the soloist and the orchestra.

**Kent Nagano** served as Music Director of Berkeley Symphony from 1978-2009. Nagano is currently General Music Director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, where his contract has been renewed through 2013, and Music Director of the Montreal Symphony. Previously, he held leadership positions with the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester, Opéra National de Lyon, Los Angeles Opera, and Deutsches Symphonie Orchester in Berlin. Nagano is the recipient of three GRAMMY awards for classical music recordings. He continues his association with Berkeley Symphony both as Conductor Laureate and as Artistic Director of Berkeley Akademie.

**Berkeley Akademie** is a program of Berkeley Symphony, founded in 2007 to explore repertoire for small orchestra in an intimate setting. This performance marks a realization of Nagano's intention to continue his association with the organization, following the conclusion of his tenure as Music Director at the close of his 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in May 2009.

**CALENDAR and PSA EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**UPCOMING BERKELEY AKADEMIE CONCERT**

Thursday, May 20, 2010, 8 PM  
Kent Nagano, Artistic Director

Ludwig van Beethoven    Quintet in E-flat Major for Piano and Winds, Op. 16  
Jörg Widmann            *Versuch über die Fuge* (Attempt at a Fugue) with Christine Brandes, soprano  
Wolfgang Mozart        Clarinet Concerto in A Major, K. 622 with Jörg Widmann, clarinet

**Concert Venue:** First Congregational Church of Berkeley, 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley

**Tickets:** \$20, \$40, and \$60

Call 510-841-2800 or visit [www.berkeleysymphony.org](http://www.berkeleysymphony.org)

**For PSAs**

On Thursday, May 20 at 8 PM at First Congregational Church of Berkeley, Maestro Kent Nagano is joined by the young German composer and clarinetist Jörg Widmann and the musicians of Berkeley Symphony for this season's *only Berkeley Akademie concert*. Don't miss this intimate, powerful evening of music-making, including Mozart's Clarinet Concerto and Bay Area soprano Christine Brandes performing Widmann's *Versuch über die Fuge*. For tickets, call 510-841-2800, or visit [www.berkeleysymphony.org](http://www.berkeleysymphony.org).

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