



*Redlands*

REDLANDS COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA  
13<sup>th</sup> CONCERT SEASON  
2025 – 2026

AMERICA 250  
AMERICAN MASTERS

AARON COPLAND

*with the*

Community Chorus  
of Redlands

SUNDAY, MAY 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2026

REDLANDS HIGH SCHOOL  
CLOCK AUDITORIUM



**James Benanti**  
*Conductor and Music Director*



**Jamison Stevens**  
*Artistic Director*

Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026

***AMERICAN MASTERS: AARON COPLAND***

*Fanfare for the Common Man*

*Old American Songs*

*Zion's Wall*

*Long Time Ago*

*Simple Gifts*

*At the River*

*I Bought Me a Cat*

*Three Dance Episode's from "Rodeo"*

*Buckaroo Holiday*

*Saturday Night Waltz*

*Hoe-Down*

## ABOUT US

The Redlands Community Orchestra is devoted to sharing the joy of music making, engaging our audience, and enriching the cultural life of our community through artistic expression. Based in Redlands, California, the Redlands Community Orchestra is an independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit community organization where amateur musicians of all ages can play orchestral music together for fun.

We rehearse weekly and perform three concerts per year. In addition to performing works by classical greats such as Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, and Mozart, we have also premiered original compositions.

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We are especially grateful to the following individuals and organizations whose time, effort, and support have not gone unnoticed:

Kent Hayworth  
Isabella Showalter  
Mary & Rod Bailey  
Sharon Davis  
Redlands High School Instrumental Department

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# THE REDLANDS COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA MUSICIANS

## ~Violin I

Charles Yoh, *principal*  
Mark Vargas\*\*\*  
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Amy Crippen  
Isabella Showalter  
Jocelyn Urrutia  
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Martin Swiderski  
Sharon Davis  
Christine Denstaedt  
Angela Grounds  
Edward Irawan  
Julianna Magan  
Elise Yenne

## ~Viola

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Mary Moore  
Tracie Scherzer  
Peter Vasquez

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Francisco Rangel, *principal*  
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Romulus Masterson  
Noah Poole  
Beth Tamayose  
Emily Torres  
Andrea Morics  
Ellen Gruenbaum

## ~Double Bass

James Rippetoe, *principal*\*\*\*  
Jacqueline Razar  
Jennifer Sherman  
Matthew Mateo Hernandez

## ~Flute

Heather Thielen, *principal*  
Maud Gillespie\*\*\*  
Carrie Sudweeks

## ~Oboe

Joshua Chidester, *principal*  
Lance Alloway

## ~Clarinet

John Grady, *co-principal*  
Paula Sanchez, *co-principal*

## ~Bassoon

Katherine Hartman, *principal*  
James Hohlfeld

## ~Horn

Eric Grenier, *principal*  
Moses Chalmers  
Christine Richardson  
Marilyn Star Wasson

## ~Trumpet

Steve Morics, *principal*  
Angel Rivas  
Kenneth Taber

## ~Trombone

Susan Collins, *principal*  
Ethan Anema  
Avelino Aquino III  
Lloyd Sherman

## ~Tuba

Steve Moore

## ~Percussion

Dennis Dockstader, *principal*  
Tyler Jacobson  
Steven Devoe

## ~Harp

Emily Linlo

\*\*\* *RCO Board Members*

## JAMES BENANTI



Music Director and Conductor James Benanti spent 19 years as Director of Instrumental Music at Redlands High School and is currently a Principal at Franklin Elementary. While at Redlands High School, Mr. Benanti oversaw all aspects of the instrumental music program, directing the Marching Band, Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Jazz Band, and String Ensemble.

A native of Southern California, Mr. Benanti received his bachelor's and Master of Music degrees from the University of Redlands, where he studied instrumental conducting with Eddie Smith. Mr. Benanti is a member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, the California Band Directors Association, the California Orchestra Directors Association, and the California Music Educators Association. He is an active adjudicator for the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association and currently serves on the Board of the San Bernardino County Music Educators Association, having been President from 2008—2010.

## COMMUNITY CHORUS OF REDLANDS

The Community Chorus of Redlands was formed in the fall of 1979 by Jeffrey H. Rickard, then director of choral activities at University of Redlands, to participate with the University's choirs in the annual presentation of the Feast of Lights. By the fall of 1982, the Chorus had grown large enough to develop its own season and, in addition to participating in the Feast of Lights, began presenting concerts that following spring.

By the fall of 1988, the Chorus had become independent of the University and moved its rehearsals to Trinity Episcopal Church. Over the next several years the Chorus developed its repertoire beyond sacred music and began performing masterworks with the Redlands Symphony Orchestra and with smaller instrumental ensembles. Notably, Community Chorus concerts have always been free of charge, a philosophy held to this day. Rickard, who retired from the University in 2008, retired as director of Community Chorus at the end of the 2023-2024 season.



Jamison Stevens, a professor at University of Redlands, became artistic director of the Community Chorus of Redlands in 2024.

Irmengard Jennings continues with the Chorus as associate conductor and collaborative pianist.

# COMMUNITY CHORUS OF REDLANDS SINGERS

## **Soprano**

Lenore DeBold  
Marcia Fagan  
Stephanie Fluitt \*  
Sue Gagnon  
Laura Gonzales  
Nora Harris  
Heidi Hutchinson  
Sunny Hyon  
Cindy Klein  
Janet Lindell Thorson \*  
Raylene Mejia  
Sue McClure  
Teresa Morris  
Deborah Nolte  
Jennifer Otis  
Carolyn Stacks  
Jocelyn Vivanco  
Nicole Weintraub

## **Alto**

Diane Christensen  
Kate Deen  
Ellen D'Errico  
Liz Derrington  
Ellen Eastwood  
Katherine Espinoza  
Catherine Evans  
Caryl Forristall  
Kitty Huff  
Lauri Jones  
Sylvia Karcher  
Jo Lynn Lambert  
Christine Marquez  
Balgis Muhammad  
Becky Neufeld  
Jane Norcross  
Barbara Pflanz  
Marisol Sandoval  
Melodee Seccombe \*  
Charleen Walsh  
Lynn Velkov  
Liz Zeller

## **Tenor**

Gretchen Andrews  
Mary Bolaños  
Maurine Deen \*  
Nathan Jones  
Barbara Keough \*  
Bob Klein  
Janet Kownack  
Jessica Luc  
Susan McCabe-Patke  
Larry McFatter  
Eugene Platt \*  
Armando Reyes

## **Bass**

Bill Britt  
Peter Burk  
George R. Crisp  
John J.G. Guerin  
John Harris  
William Huff  
Rick Jones  
Mike Larrance  
Fred McClung  
Bob Noble  
Ernie K. Ott  
Mark St. John  
Jackson Sweeney

## **Artistic Director**

Jamison Stevens

## **Associate Director & Collaborative Pianist**

Irmengard Jennings

## **Board President**

Ed Yarnelle

*\* Indicates board member*

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## *Fanfare for the Common Man*

Composed: 1942

Scored for: Brass and percussion

Premiere: March 12, 1943

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Goossens

Approximate duration: 2–4 minutes

Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* is one of the most recognizable ceremonial works in American music. Written in 1942, during the first full year of U.S. involvement in World War II, the piece was commissioned by Eugene Goossens and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra as part of a wartime effort to create short, patriotic fanfares for orchestral concerts. Goossens specifically asked Copland for music using brass and percussion, lasting roughly two minutes, and suitable for the national mood of resolve and sacrifice.

The title reflects both wartime democracy and Copland's populist musical language. Vice President Henry A. Wallace's 1942 "Century of the Common Man" speech framed the war not merely as a military struggle, but as a fight for a postwar world built on freedom, fairness, opportunity, and shared human dignity. Copland's response was not a march for generals or a salute to political power, but a monumental tribute to ordinary people: workers, soldiers, citizens, taxpayers, and families whose lives sustained the nation during crisis. Goossens ultimately scheduled the premiere for March 12, 1943, during income tax season, calling it an appropriate moment to honor "the common man."

Musically, the work achieves grandeur through extraordinary simplicity. It opens with the elemental force of percussion: bass drum, timpani, and tam-tam create a vast sonic space before the brass enter. Rather than moving quickly like a traditional military fanfare, Copland's brass writing unfolds slowly, deliberately, and with architectural weight. The open intervals, widely spaced harmonies, and spacious pacing produce a sound that feels both public and solemn music less about victory than about dignity.

The instrumentation is sparse but powerful: four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, and tam-tam. Without strings or woodwinds, Copland strips the orchestra down to the most basic. The result is unmistakably American in its open sonorities. Although brief, *Fanfare for the Common Man* has had a large afterlife. Copland later incorporated its material into the finale of his *Symphony No. 3*, where the fanfare becomes part of a larger symphonic vision of national hope after World War II. Today, the work continues to function as civic ritual: solemn enough for memorial occasions, bold enough for celebration, and universal enough to speak beyond the particular moment of its creation.

At its heart, Copland's fanfare asks listeners to hear heroism not as something reserved for the famous, powerful, or victorious, but as something rooted in the lives of ordinary people. In just a few minutes, it transforms a wartime commission into a lasting musical statement about democracy, sacrifice, and human dignity.

## ***Old American Songs***

*Zion's Walls*

*Long Time Ago*

*Simple Gifts*

*At the River*

*I Bought Me a Cat*

Composed: 1950 – 1952

Scored for: Strings, Winds, Brass & Harp

Orchestral Premiere: January 7, 1955

Los Angeles Philharmonic, conducted by Alfred Wallenstein

Soloist: William Caesar Warfield (Bass-baritone)

Approximate duration: 2–4 minutes

Aaron Copland's *Old American Songs* grew from a commission by Benjamin Britten and tenor Peter Pears for the Aldeburgh Festival. Copland completed the first set in 1950, and it was premiered that year by Pears with Britten at the piano. A second set followed in 1952, after the first proved popular with singers and audiences alike. Copland later orchestrated both sets, preserving the directness of the folk materials while surrounding them with the clear, open sonorities that became central to his American style.

These songs draw from several strands of American musical life: revival hymnody, Shaker song, sentimental ballad, children's nonsense song, and 19th-century sacred music. Copland's achievement is not simply that he "arranged" old tunes, but that he allowed each one to retain its own character while giving it a refined concert voice.

### ***"Zion's Walls"***

"Zion's Walls" comes from the American revivalist tradition, with words and music credited to John G. McCurry. Copland later returned to the tune in his opera *The Tender Land*, suggesting how naturally the melody fit his larger image of American communal life. The song has the momentum of a gathering crowd. Its repeated phrases feel less like private reflection than public proclamation, carried forward by rhythmic lift and bright, confident energy. In orchestral dress, the tune becomes both rustic and ceremonial: a camp-meeting song transformed into a jubilant concert opener.

### ***“Long Time Ago”***

Copland found the ballad in the Harris Collection at Brown University and set it with a simplicity that allows the melody to speak almost unadorned. The music seems to look backward, but without exaggeration or sentimentality. Copland’s restraint is essential: the accompaniment gently frames the voice, creating an atmosphere of affection, distance, and quiet nostalgia. Its beauty lies in its plainness.

### ***“Simple Gifts”***

Perhaps the most familiar melody in the group, “Simple Gifts” is a Shaker song that Copland had already made famous in *Appalachian Spring*. In *Old American Songs*, he presents it in a more direct style, closer to the original folk source. The song’s message of humility and grace is matched by Copland’s transparent musical setting. Nothing feels forced or ornamental. The melody turns with natural ease, suggesting both dance and devotion. Even in orchestral form, the music preserves the dignity of something handmade, useful, and quietly radiant.

### ***“At the River”***

Copland’s setting of Robert Lowry’s beloved 1865 hymn tune, commonly known as “Shall We Gather at the River.” Here Copland’s orchestral language becomes especially luminous. The song unfolds with the calm assurance of a hymn, but its atmosphere is more meditative than grand. The river image carries associations of gathering, consolation, reunion, and hope. Copland lets those meanings emerge gently, without overstatement.

### ***“I Bought Me a Cat”***

A children’s nonsense song, it builds through repetition as each verse adds another farm animal. Copland’s accompaniment imitates the growing barnyard chorus, and William Warfield later praised the orchestral version for its vivid comic effects. After the reverence of “At the River” and the sincerity of “Simple Gifts,” this song reminds us that folk tradition also includes humor, exaggeration, and childlike delight. The orchestra becomes part of the joke, adding color, timing, and personality to each animal’s entrance. It is Copland at his most affectionate and witty: sophisticated artistry in the service of simple fun.

## ***Three Dance Episode's from "Rodeo"***

Composed: 1942

Scored for: Woodwinds, Brass, Percussion, and Strings

Premiere: October 16, 1942 – The Metropolitan Opera House

Created For: Agnes de Mille(choreographer) and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo

Approximate Duration: 14 – 16 Minutes for Three Settings

Aaron Copland's *Rodeo* is one of the most recognizable musical portraits of the American West. Originally composed as a ballet for choreographer Agnes de Mille, *Rodeo* tells the story of a young Cowgirl who struggles to fit into the masculine world of ranch hands, bronco riding, and frontier courtship. Like Copland's other major American works of the 1930s and 1940s, the score uses open harmonies, folk-like melodies, strong rhythms, and bright orchestral colors to create a sound that feels spacious, direct, and distinctly American.

### ***"Buckaroo Holiday"***

Buckaroo Holiday opens the ballet with energy, humor, and motion. The music suggests the bustle of ranch life, with galloping rhythms, sudden accents, and a sense of playful competition. Copland does not simply imitate cowboy music; instead, he transforms American folk materials into a vivid orchestral language. The movement captures both the confidence of the ranch hands and the awkward determination of the Cowgirl as she tries to enter their world.

### ***"Saturday Night Waltz"***

Here the setting shifts from the open ranch to a social dance, where the Cowgirl becomes more vulnerable and introspective. The waltz rhythm is simple and graceful, but not overly polished; it has the character of a rural community dance rather than an elegant ballroom. The music carries a quiet tenderness, suggesting longing, uncertainty, and the desire to belong.

### ***"Hoe-Down"***

"Hoe-Down" is the most famous episode from *Rodeo*. Bright, fast, and rhythmically infectious, it brings the ballet to a celebratory close. Copland draws heavily on traditional fiddle tunes, especially "Bonaparte's Retreat," and reshapes them into a brilliant orchestral square dance. The movement's driving strings, lively percussion, and bold brass writing create a sense of communal excitement and frontier optimism.

Together, these three selections show Copland's gift for combining folk inspiration with symphonic craft. *Rodeo* is not merely a picture of the American West; it is a theatrical celebration of energy, humor, loneliness, courtship, and belonging. Through these dances, Copland gives the frontier a sound that is both rustic and refined, both popular and deeply artistic.

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The Redlands Community Orchestra extends sincere appreciation to its many donors. The generosity of individuals, foundations, and corporations makes an extraordinary impact on the RCO's mission. Those donors give the gift of live music to our community. The following is a list of patrons who contributed or pledged their annual support. Thank you!

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