



Scheherazade: Beyond the Silk Road coming to Symphony Tacoma

FEBRUARY 2, 2019 BY [THE SUBURBAN TIMES](#)

Tacoma – From the glaciers of Mount Rainier to Arabian Nights, *Scheherazade: Beyond the Silk Road* is a journey of exotic music that will transport the audience from Tacoma to India and the Far East. The concert will take place on Saturday, February 23, at 7:30 pm in the Pantages Theater.

“The overarching theme of this repertoire is the native voice of humanity telling tales about the land and its people on their journeys,” says Sarah Ioannides, Symphony Tacoma Music Director. “Through the rhythmic excitement of the drum beat and lush, lavish melodies that feel like a magic carpet ride, we will experience diverse cultures and their native heritage.”

The program begins with Puyallup native [Daniel Ott](#)’s *Fire-Mountain*, originally commissioned and performed by Symphony Tacoma and Symphony Tacoma Voices in 2017. The composition,

which paints a musical portrait of Mount Rainier's melting glaciers, takes its name from a quote by naturalist John Muir: "Of all the fire-mountains which, like beacons, once blazed along the Pacific Coast, Mount Rainier is the noblest in form."

"I took as my point of departure not only the inspiring nature of our mountain's setting, but also its very shape," said Ott. "If one were to trace the outline of the mountain with the tip of a finger, he or she would describe two prominent peaks: Little Tahoma to the east, and Columbia Crest, Mt. Rainier's summit, to the west. This is this image that encapsulates *Fire-Mountain's* musical form."

Following *Fire-Mountain*, Grammy-winning tabla virtuoso **Sandeep Das** will join the orchestra to perform **Dinuk Wijeratne's Tabla Concerto** (2011), a work that inserts the "king" of Indian percussion instruments into a contemporary Western context. Das, who has performed with orchestras around the world, calls the work "the best Western classical piece written for my instrument."

"While steeped in tradition, the tabla lends itself heartily to innovation and has shown its cultural versatility as an increasingly sought-after instrument in contemporary Western contexts," says Wijeratne. The fusion of cultures "makes for a rather bizarre stew that reflects globalization, for better or worse!"

Closing out the performance is Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's romantic and beloved *Scheherazade* (1888), a symphonic suite that tells the captivating story of the Arabian Nights and illustrates Rimsky-Korsakov's genius for orchestration and musical characterization. A grim bass motif in the low brass portrays the domineering Sultan who, convinced that all women are faithless, vows to put to death each of his wives after their first

nuptial night. Conversely, a solo violin accompanied by harp represents the heroine Scheherazade as she tells her nightly stories to distract the Sultan from killing her. Rimsky-Korsakov paints vivid pictures of Scheherazade's tales in the mind of the listener—the adventures of a young prince, the love story of a prince and princess, and the sounds of rolling waves at sea.

Tickets range from \$24 to \$85 and are on sale through the Tacoma Arts Live box office. To order tickets, call 253-591-5894 or visit symphonytacoma.org. *Scheherazade: Beyond the Silk Road* is sponsored by Point Ruston, MultiCare, M Agency and the Tacoma Philharmonic Endowment.