2018 SHSU Festival of Strings, October 4-8

Five consecutive days of concerts and master classes by guest artists and SHSU faculty

- Master class with Jassen Todorov (violin), Thursday, October 4, 2:00 pm, Room 218 (Music Building)
- SHSU Symphony Orchestra, Friday, October 5, 7:30 pm, GPAC Concert Hall (ticketed event)
- Guest Artist Recital, Jassen Todorov (violin), Saturday, October 6, 7:30 pm GPAC Recital Hall (free admission)
- Guest Artist Recital, Terra Nostra Ensemble, Sunday, October 7, 7:00 pm GPAC Recital Hall (free admission)
- Kolonneh String Quartet & Alejandro Montiel, Monday, October 8, 7:30 pm GPAC Recital Hall (free admission)

Jassen Todorov has distinguished himself as one of the most prominent violinists of his generation. Dubbed “an outstanding violinist…a player to watch” by the British music journal The Strad, Mr. Todorov has given numerous performances throughout Europe, North America, South America, Asia and Australia. He is also an active performer in his native Bulgaria, where he is considered one of the country’s most prized musicians. With a repertoire including works from all styles and epochs, Mr. Todorov has recorded the complete sonatas of Bach, Brahms and Ysaye, as well as Beethoven’s Sonatas Nos. 6 and 10. The Strad described him as “a violinist of rare technical ability…he brings musicality to his performances…his left hand is able to deliver Ysaye’s demands in the many mercurial passages with commendable accuracy” and the American Record Guide portrayed it as “high praise…an important release for admirers of Ysaye’s music.” Mr. Todorov began his musical education in Bulgaria and furthered his studies at the Idyllwild Arts Academy, California. A top prize winner of several national and international competitions, he earned his bachelor’s degree in violin performance from Harid Conservatory, Florida, and his master’s degree from the Eastman School of Music, New York. From 2000 to 2003, he served as the teaching assistant to Professor Oleh Krysa at the Eastman School and held a violin position at the University of Rochester. Mr. Todorov is the recipient of full scholarships and prestigious awards including the Eastman award for excellence in teaching (2002) and the Crystal Lyre for achievements in music (2006). From 2008 to 2010, Mr. Todorov served as the Director of the School of Music and Dance at San Francisco State University. Currently, Mr. Todorov is a Professor of Violin at San Francisco State University and Visiting Professor at Xinjiang Arts University, Xinjiang Normal University and Qimingxing School of Music, China. Mr. Todorov plays a 1778 Tomaso Eberle violin.

Mr. Todorov is an avid pilot and photographer. He holds a Commercial Pilot’s License and Flight Instructor Certificate.

Terra Nostra Ensemble is Houston’s innovative ensemble dedicated to the performance, promotion, and preservation of music by Latin-American and Iberian composers. The music we play pays homage to our heritage and fills a void in the traditional classical chamber music repertoire.

Terra Nostra Ensemble was born out of the necessity to establish a Houston-based musical group that would speak to the heritage of the area’s sizeable Latino population. In early 2016, founding Terra Nostra members Mauricio Oliveros and Jackson Guillén discussed the possibility of creating a Latin-American string quartet which would focus on performing music composed by Latin-American composers. After further research and meetings with different art entities in the city, the idea evolved to encompass a larger ensemble that would focus on music from Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula.

In its first year, the group captivated the audiences with vibrant performances that included works by Villa-Lobos, Turina, Atehortua, Anton García Abril, Gabriela Ortiz, Enrique Granados, Abelardo Valdez, and the premiere in the United States of the Piano Trio by Honduran composer Jorge Santos. Terra Nostra also performed educational concerts at institutions such as the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and the Meyerland Performing and Visual Arts Middle School. Additionally, Terra Nostra presented with great success a Latin American Arts Festival at the Wharton Dual Language Academy.

In the summer of 2017, the ensemble was invited to participate as Guess Artist the Festival South Chamber Music and Orchestral Academy in Hattiesburg Mississippi working alongside with the Grammy-Award winning Cuarteto Latinoamericano.

The second season will continue to provide innovative programs that aim to promote the rich cultures of Iberoamerica expressed through the vast repertoire available by composers of all eras. We are excited to be a part of the historic Beethoven for All project by Da Camera of Houston presenting a String Quartet by Beethoven in addition to our regular repertoire. The ensemble also plans to release their first album by the end of 2019.