


Begin our medically supervised weight loss program with a friend and we will discount each of your initial visits by \$75 — start today!



Weather:  NOVATO, CA | Now: 49°F | High: 59°F | Low: 40°F | 5-Day Forecast

Subscriber Services 

Site Web Search powered by **YAHOO! SEARCH**

Home [Marin News](#) [Obituaries](#) [Opinion](#) [Blogs](#) [Sports](#) [Lifestyles](#) [Business](#)  [Homes](#)

Classifieds

Lib at Large: NPR host explores what the Golden Gate Bridge sounds like for Marin Symphony

By Paul Liberatore
Marin Independent Journal

Posted: 01/21/2011 09:37:00 AM PST

0

WE'VE ALL DRIVEN across the Golden Gate Bridge countless times. So we know what the bridge looks like. But what does it sound like?

To commemorate the bridge's 75th anniversary, the Marin Symphony has commissioned a new piece of music that will hopefully answer that question. With your help.

For this fascinating task, the symphony has enlisted Rob Kapilow, a 57-year-old composer, educator, conductor and all-around dynamo dubbed "the Bill Nye the Science Guy of classical music."



Composer Rob Kapilow says, I've asked people sitting next to me on planes, and they immediately start wondering, What does it sound like? What would I do if I were writing a piece of music about the bridge? (Photo by Peter Schaaf)

Author of the book "All You Have To Do is Listen: Music from the Inside Out," he may be best known as the host of NPR's "What Makes It Great?" — a listener-friendly program aimed at opening minds and changing attitudes and perceptions about classical music.

Kapilow arrives in Marin on Jan. 23 for five days of information gathering, talking to as many people as he can about the bridge, asking them what they think it sounds like.

"There's no one who doesn't get engaged by that question," he said, speaking from his home in River Vale, N.J. "I've asked people sitting next to me on planes, and they immediately start wondering, 'What does it sound like? What would I do if I were writing a piece of music about the bridge?' It really gets them thinking. And now I want to talk to people for whom the bridge is a daily event."

So start getting your minds around the question. Over the next five months, Kapilow plans

Advertisement

to talk to commuters, schoolkids, toll takers, the people who work on the bridge, even seniors who might remember the sound of the Golden Gate before the bridge was finished in 1937. He'll be asking for MP3s of bridge sounds from the public, and the symphony

More News Article

Cookbook Critic: It 'MasterChef How it is: A lesson Keeping him young Lectures and the li Jan. 23 through 30 Haiku challenge: C

Most Viewed

- (From the last 12)
1. Novato man fo Beach was fat
 2. Former San Ra again for conta
 3. San Rafael ma wreck
 4. Police: Fairfax \$hort show
 5. Firefighters qu

Babble On: World
powered by



-Los Angele 17-27 2010 Angeles



-Champagn Harmony Pi LA's Nights



-European William's we

-James Franco talks 'cra
-Celeb Pix: Minka Kelly the red carpet

[ADD](#)



plans to set up a website so that people can weigh in with ideas for the music.

"My real goal is to get people past the fancy dress and manners associated with classical concerts and get to the heart of this stuff, the real music, which is fantastic, and, in my opinion, grabs everybody," Kapilow explained. "I know the standard symphony concert presentation is a hard sell, but my sense is that when you get past the barriers — 'It's old-fashioned,' 'It's stuffy,' 'It's for elderly people,' 'I don't know when to clap' — everyone will love classical music. And it's not only that this bridge piece will get different people engaged in the Marin Symphony. It will

get them engaged in a vital way."

In his campaign to broaden the audience for classical music, Kapilow has just finished writing and conducting "Paddywak, a Tap Dance Concerto" for the National Art Center Orchestra in Ottawa, Canada. He composed the first musical setting of the Dr. Seuss story "Green Eggs and Ham" and blended it with Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" to create "Green Eggs and Hamadeus" for the Vanguard Classics label. And his "Play Ball!," a musical setting of "Casey at the Bat," was performed at New York's Lincoln Center.

Noralee Monestere, the symphony's executive director, heard him give the keynote address at an Association of California Symphony Orchestras conference and instantly knew that he was the spark the 60-year-old orchestra needs as it tries to reinvent itself for future generations.

"I'm so ready to not just be a presenting symphony where you pay money and you come to hear us perform," she said. "I really want to interact with the community. I want us to be a dynamite local symphony that everybody's involved with on some level. So this is a move toward that in my mind."

Kapilow, who also has conducted on Broadway, struck a chord when he talked about involving the public in the inspiration and composition of such pieces as the music he composed on the Lewis and Clark Expedition — from the perspective of the Native Americans — for the St. Louis Symphony, and a composition, "Citypiece: DC Monuments," for the Kennedy Center and the National Symphony Orchestra that included rap music.

"Should it just be that the composer locks himself in a room and the music just pours from his head?" Monestere wondered. "Or should there also be a process whereby the ideas for the music, particularly a piece that's commissioned about something, comes from the community, from people who live with that something all the time? With the bridge piece, anybody can have input. That's the beauty of it. Everybody gets to play."

There's plenty of time for all this to happen. Kapilow won't sit down and begin composing until June. The as-yet-unnamed bridge symphony (ideas anyone?) will have its world premiere in May 2012 as part of the hoopla around the bridge's 75th birthday.

"This is the exploratory period," Kapilow said. "I'm coming there with a clean slate. I have no idea what it will eventually sound like. But a new piece of music should engage an entire county. So every meeting I have with every person is the symphony to me."

Contact Paul Liberatore via e-mail at liberatore@marinij.com; follow him on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/LibLarge>. Follow his blog at http://blogs.marinij.com/ad_lib.

SOUND OFF

For more information on the Golden Gate Bridge music project, contact the Marin Symphony Association at 4340 Redwood

Highway, Suite 409C, in San Rafael; 479-8100; www.marin [symphony.org](http://www.marinij.com)

BOOKMARK Print Email Font Resize Return to Top

• Readers: [Learn about our new Facebook-based commenting system](#). To report a comment directly to IJ editors, e-mail abuse@marinij.com with the URL of the article, the name of the offending commenter and the time of the offending post.

Like Sign Up to see what your friends like.

Add a comment...

Login Log in to Facebook to post your comment

Marcia Lynn Bauman Jan 21
 This sounds like a great, fun project. It would be nice to involve some local, Marin, GG Bridge-crossing composers (ahem) . . .

Facebook social plugin

Displaying the only post.

<p>Point Reyes Lodging Eco-cabins w/kitchenettes, firestoves, pool, hot tub, www.invernessvalleyinn.com</p>	<p>\$74/Hr Job - 117 Openings Can You Type Earn \$74+/hr From Home. Seen On CNN & FOX www.news7nyc.com/Finance</p>	<p>\$437/Day Work From Home Can You Type? Make Over \$4 From Home. LA-Sentinel.com</p>
--	---	--

A

Advertise | Contact Us | About our ads | FAQs | Site Map | RSS | MY YAHOO! | Facebook | Twitter | IJ Outreach | Privacy Policy | MNG Co

Copyright © 2011. Marin Independent Journal. MediaNews Group. All Rights Reserved.

A MediaNews Group WEBSITE



Featured Links

[Social Security Disability](#) [Dating](#) [Private Jet Sales](#) [Assisted L](#)
[Colorado Springs Team](#) Real Estate [Speaker Mount](#) [Payday loans](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [MNG Corporate Site Map](#) | [Copyright](#)

A MediaNews Group WEBSITE