

Grammy-winning Isabel Leonard and Jason Mraz to headline "Amplify," the San Diego Symphony's 2026 Gala

One night. Amplified.

SAN DIEGO (August 12, 2026) – On Saturday, November 21, the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Music and Artistic Director Rafael Payare, welcomes three-time Grammy Award-winning vocalist Isabel Leonard and special guest, two-time Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter Jason Mraz, for “**Amplify**,” the Symphony’s signature 2026 Gala at Jacobs Music Center in downtown San Diego.

The 2026 Gala honors Raffaella Belanich, a long-time champion of the Symphony whose leadership and philanthropy helped advance transformative projects including The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park and the reimagining of the Jacobs Music Center.

Proceeds from the evening will support the Symphony’s artistic initiatives as well as its education and community engagement programs throughout the region.

The evening begins at 5 p.m. with cocktails and culinary experiences curated by celebrity chef Richard Blais, culinary director for dining at The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park, setting the stage for an unforgettable night of music, dining, and celebration.

At 6:30 p.m., guests will take their seats in the Jacobs Music Center’s Miller Theater for a one-of-a-kind musical collaboration featuring internationally renowned Grammy Award-winning singer Isabel Leonard and a performance by singer-songwriter Jason Mraz, with the San Diego Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Rafael Payare.

Following the concert, guests will enjoy a three-course dinner by acclaimed restaurateur Tracy Borkum of Urban Kitchen Group in the Symphony Towers B Street lobby—transformed for the occasion—before the evening concludes with music and dancing.

“**'Amplify'** is about bringing people together to experience the energy and joy of live performance—and to celebrate what music makes possible,” said Martha Gilmer, president and CEO of the San Diego Symphony. “From the moment guests arrive, every part of the evening is meant to celebrate artistry, imagination and the joy of live performance—from Isabel Leonard, Jason Mraz and our orchestra under Rafael Payare to exceptional food, a welcoming atmosphere and the chance to connect with friends who share a passion for music. It's an evening that could only happen here, and we're thrilled to honor Raffaella Belanich, whose generosity and leadership have helped shape the Symphony we know today.”

[**Learn more about Amplify.**](#)

Individual tickets on sale August 12.

For underwriting and sponsorship opportunities, contact specialevents@sandiegosymphony.org.

2026 Gala Steering Committee

The San Diego Symphony gratefully acknowledges the leadership of the 2026 Gala Steering Committee:

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About the Artists

Three-time Grammy Award-winning singer **Isabel Leonard** is celebrated worldwide for performances that combine vocal brilliance, dramatic depth, and magnetic stage presence. Equally compelling in opera, concert repertoire, musical theater, and American song, Leonard has built a career defined by extraordinary versatility and emotional immediacy. A native New Yorker and graduate of The Juilliard School, Leonard has appeared at many of the world's leading opera houses and concert halls, including the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, the Wiener Staatsoper, the Salzburg Festival, and Carnegie Hall. Her artistry has earned widespread acclaim for its rare combination of vocal elegance, theatrical instinct, and deeply human storytelling. Leonard is particularly admired for bringing a vivid sense of character and intimacy to every performance, whether singing Mozart, Rossini, Ravel, Broadway classics, or contemporary works. Her repertoire ranges from iconic operatic heroines such as Carmen, Rosina, and Charlotte to American musical theater favorites including *West Side Story* and *The Sound of Music*. A trained dancer as well as vocalist, she is known for performances that feel both musically refined and physically expressive. Beyond the opera stage, Leonard has collaborated with internationally renowned conductors and orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and Vienna Philharmonic. She has also become a familiar presence to audiences worldwide through film appearances,

televised performances, and her work as a host for the *Metropolitan Opera's Live in HD* broadcasts.

Jason Mraz is a two-time Grammy Award-winning singer-songwriter and Songwriters Hall of Fame honoree, most famously known for his hits "I'm Yours" and "I Won't Give Up." His nonprofit, the Jason Mraz Foundation, supports programs focused on inclusive arts education and the advancement of equality. This year, Mraz released *Grandma's Gospel Favorites*, an album of hymns and gospel standards originally recorded as a Christmas gift for his grandmother in 2007. In 2023, Mraz released his eighth studio album, *Mystical Magical Rhythmical Radical Ride*, featuring the single "I Feel Like Dancing" and placed second on season 32 of *Dancing with the Stars*, which aired live on ABC and remains streaming on Disney+. Prior to that, he performed as Dr. Pomatter in *Waitress* on Broadway.

The **San Diego Symphony** stands among the nation's leading orchestras and serves as a dynamic cultural ambassador for the United States and the San Diego region. Led by President and Chief Executive Officer Martha Gilmer and Music and Artistic Director Rafael Payare, its 82 internationally distinguished musicians bring artistry of the highest caliber to audiences at home and abroad. Globally connected and firmly grounded in its community, the Symphony is anchored by two iconic venues: The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park, a striking open air performance space on the San Diego waterfront, and the recently renovated Jacobs Music Center, a premier concert hall and architectural landmark. The Orchestra presents a broad and ambitious repertoire, from cornerstone symphonic works to major new commissions and collaborations with leading artists of our time, positioning San Diego as a destination for conductors, soloists, composers, and creative partners. Guided by its mission of Changing Lives Through Music, the Symphony's community programs serve more than 65,000 students, families, educators, military service members, and nonprofit partners each year. In schools and neighborhoods throughout the region, its programs integrate music into daily learning and expand access to live performance. Learn more at www.sandiegosymphony.org.

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