



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**KMFA 89.5 CELEBRATES 50 YEARS AS AUSTIN'S CLASSICAL RADIO STATION**  
**WITH 50 EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2017**

Austin, Texas—January 6, 2017—KMFA 89.5, Austin's listener-supported classical music station, will celebrate 50 years on the air in January 2017. To honor this landmark occasion, KMFA has planned **"50 Events for 50 Years,"** which includes a free public birthday party, a mayoral proclamation, a world premiere by the Austin Symphony, and a host of live and broadcast special events, community engagement events, and public appearances throughout the year.

"We want to encourage the entire community to enjoy classical music throughout the year—on the air, online, and in person," says KMFA President & General Manager Ann Hume Wilson. "We see this as a celebration of Austin, and its commitment to classical music, because that's what's kept us on the air for 50 years—the support, love, and engagement of the Austin and Central Texas community."

**New work by Dan Welcher kicks off celebrations with Austin Symphony January 13-14**

In honor of its anniversary, KMFA commissioned a new work by Dan Welcher, renowned composer and faculty member at the UT Butler School of Music. Welcher's "KMFA: A Celebratory Overture" will be given its world premiere by the Austin Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Peter Bay, at its subscription concerts on January 13-14. Following the premiere, KMFA will produce 30-second audio IDs arranged by Welcher from the overture's primary themes, which will be played by classical musicians based in Austin. These original mini-arrangements will form part of KMFA's ongoing station identification.

**Mayoral Proclamation of KMFA Day January 26**

During the City Council Meeting on January 26, an official proclamation will be read into the Council minutes declaring January 29 as "KMFA Day."

**50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Block Party: January 29, 2017, 12 noon – 4 pm**

KMFA will host a free public birthday party at Fair Market, 1100 E. Fifth Street, on Sunday, January 29 from noon – 4 pm. Live classical performances will be featured on a radio show hosted by KMFA announcers throughout the afternoon, featuring Chorus Austin's Youth Chorus; Graham Reynolds and Liz Cass; and Mother Falcon, among others. At 1 pm, the exact time KMFA first went on the air in 1967, the audience will perform the finale of Rossini's *William Tell* Overture—the first piece KMFA ever played—as members of a kazoo symphony led by Austin Symphony Orchestra's Maestro Peter Bay. Party guests will also enjoy food trucks from local eateries, free beer from 4<sup>th</sup> Tap Brewery and cupcakes from Central Market, yard games and interactive arts activities, and a sonic recording booth for telling KMFA stories. The Block Party is sponsored in part by Volvo Cars of Austin.

### Other highlights of the anniversary year include:

February 26: *From The Top*, NPR's popular weekly program featuring America's top young musicians, hosted by Christopher O'Reilly, comes to the Long Center in partnership with KMFA.

March 30-April 1: Suzanne Bona, host of the long-running national program *Sunday Baroque*, will perform with Austin La Follia Baroque in a KMFA-sponsored program of early classical music and musical conversation.

January-December: KMFA will be the presenting media sponsor of a new concert-and-brunch series, "Revel Unclassified," designed by the innovative chamber group Revel to bring classical music to unexpected places – in this case, 4<sup>th</sup> Tap Brewery. KMFA listeners will get the chance for free tickets to a monthly "Brunch with KMFA" event including a post-show chat with the artists and a KMFA host.

November 4: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at the Hotel Van Zandt. This signature event will highlight KMFA's role over the past fifty years in Austin's classical music community, and look towards its future. Chaired by KMFA Board Member Nancy Scanlan, with KMFA Board Member Ron Oliveira serving as emcee, the celebration includes a VIP cocktail hour, gala dinner, paddles-up auction, and performances by pianist Anton Nel and vocalists Mela Dailey and Charles Wesley Evans.

A complete listing of "50 Events for 50 Years" can be found at [www.kmfa.org](http://www.kmfa.org).

### About KMFA: History and Background

When Austin's commercial classical radio station switched to a pop format in 1966, a group of local citizens set out to bring classical music back to the airwaves as a listener-supported undertaking that would not rely on paid advertising. Volunteers secured non-profit status, obtained donated equipment and space, and raised funds. With legendary first announcer Leonard Masters at the controls, KMFA went on the air on January 29, 1967, and has broadcast ever since, with steadily growing community support. Initially on-air 11 hours daily, the broadcast schedule expanded to 18 hours by 1981 and reached 24/7 by 1999. Starting with 1,300 watts on a 146-foot tower, KMFA now broadcasts at 40,000 watts from a 1,189-foot tower than sends a clear and uncompressed signal across a 60-mile radius throughout Central Texas. Its daily content is also streamed, bringing the sounds of Austin's classical music community to a worldwide audience.

In 2017, KMFA will celebrate its 50th anniversary, marking it as one of the oldest continuously operating, listener-supported classical radio stations in the country. A rare resource in the shifting world of public media, KMFA is one of a handful of independently licensed stations in the country that broadcasts an all-classical music format with an emphasis on locally curated, locally produced content.

### Community Service and Impact

As Austin's only all-classical public radio station, KMFA engages listeners in the city's cultural life.

- KMFA reaches over 80,000 Central Texas listeners each week via on-air broadcast, and many thousands more who listen locally and globally through apps and internet streaming.
- Programming ranges from locally produced shows like Classical Austin, Ancient Voices, Film Score Focus, Icons of Broadway, and Classical Guitar Alive (now globally syndicated), to nationally distributed programs such as the Metropolitan Opera Broadcasts and From The Top.

- KMFA provides more coverage and support of its local arts and culture scene than any other public broadcasting entity in Texas.
- Live and produced broadcasts of Austin Opera, Conspirare, the Austin Symphony, La Follia, Austin Chamber Music Center, Huston-Tillotson University Choir, Austin Classical Guitar and more help to shine a spotlight on the excellence and distinctiveness of the Austin classical music community.
- KMFA also supports Austin arts organizations through on-air and online promotions and interviews, and encourages arts education through its annual Fall Into Music instrument drive and Kids Recording Kids summer camp.