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**MID-ATLANTIC
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**
JULIEN BENICHOU, MUSIC DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS OF THE MID-ATLANTIC SYMPHONY,

It is such a pleasure to play these spring concerts for you! This year was the inaugural edition of the Elizabeth Loker Concerto Competition and we are proud to present today the winner, Joseph McNure, in Paul Creston's exciting Concerto for Alto Saxophone. One of our most varied programs of the year, it will also include Mozart's Symphony N. 33, Charles Ives' iconic "Unanswered Question", as well as French composers Rameau and Chaminade.



In April, we celebrate our season's finale with a major milestone, Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" and Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto #1. The concert will open with Darius Milhaud's La Creation du Monde.

We are so proud to present to you these programs, as they represent the progress the Mid-Atlantic Symphony has made in recent years, in being able to program large symphonic works. We believe in sharing the music with you and are so grateful for your being part of the MSO family. Music is what brings us all together, and as this season concludes, let me say thank you to all of you for loving the music as much as we do!

We are also very excited to present our upcoming season, that will include more performances than ever, will open with celebrating Beethoven and close with Gershwin's Porgy and Bess!

Enjoy the concert!

Julien Benichou, Music Director

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JULIEN BENICHOU, MUSIC DIRECTOR

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through the power of classical music.**

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KARA DAHL RUSSELL presents the pre-concert lecture. She is a regularly performing harpist, actress, and contralto who has won three Associated Press Awards for her work as a Classical Music Radio Host. In April 2016 she was awarded the “Light of Literacy Award” from Wicomico County Public Library and the Eastern Shore Regional Library Association, with a commendation from the Maryland Senate, for her regional lectures and performances combining acting, history, music and literature. Kara also teaches harp, and is Adjunct Professor of Harp at Salisbury University.



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MID-ATLANTIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

GUIDELINES

Music is an integral part of our lives. The Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra is dedicated to making your concert-going experience one in which you will continually want to return.

VENUES

For the 2019–2020 Season Series, the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra will perform at eight venues on the Eastern Shore, Southern Delaware and Washington, DC:

- Avalon Theatre—Easton, Maryland
- Cape Henlopen High School—Lewes, Delaware
- Chesapeake College—Wye Mills, Maryland
- Christ Church—Easton, Maryland
- Community Church—Ocean Pines, Maryland
- Easton Church of God—Easton, Maryland
- French Embassy—Washington, DC
- Ocean View Church of Christ—Ocean View, Delaware
- Ocean City Performing Arts Center—Ocean City, Maryland

Selection of venues is based on acoustics and availability.

VENUE ACCESSIBILITY

All venues are handicap accessible.

PARKING

Parking is available at all venue locations.

TICKET PURCHASES

There are four options for purchasing tickets. 1) Tickets may be purchased online via the MSO website midatlanticsymphony.org. 2) The ticket order form can be downloaded from the MSO website and mailed to the MSO address. 3) Tickets may be purchased by calling the MSO voice system at 888-846-8600. Leave a brief message with your name and telephone number and an MSO representative will return your call. 4) Tickets, if available, may be purchased at the door.

TICKET PRICES

For the 2019-2020 Season Series, a season subscription is \$195.00 for 5 concerts. For the entire season each subscriber has a reserved seat at the Community Church at Ocean Pines, MD and at the Ocean View Church of Christ in Ocean View, DE. At the Easton Church of God, Easton, MD patrons have a reserved section. Single tickets may also be purchased; adult ticket prices for September, November, and March are \$45. The December and April concerts are \$50. Complimentary tickets are available to youths up to 18 years old, however due to a limited number of these tickets, a reservation is required.

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TICKET PAYMENT

The MSO accepts Visa, MasterCard, check or cash for payment.

TICKET EXCHANGE

Patrons may attend a different venue as long as seating is available. Reserve seating IS NOT the same for each venue, therefore, patrons wishing to attend a different venue must first inform the MSO by calling 888-846-8600.

PRE-CONCERT LECTURES

A complimentary pre-concert lecture is held one hour prior to the performances at Ocean View Church of Christ in Ocean View, DE, Community Church in Ocean Pines, MD, and Ocean City Performing Arts Center. At each location, these lectures are held in a separate room within the church. There are no pre-concert lectures in Easton, MD.

DRESS CODE

There is no official “dress code” for attending MSO concerts. In respect to the Maestro and the musicians, “smart casual” attire is suggested.

“THEATRE” TEMPERATURES

Temperatures in each venue will fluctuate due to audience size and location of seating. Dress in layers so you can adjust your clothing to be comfortable in a variety of temperatures.

LOST AND FOUND

If you misplace your glasses, think you left a sweater on a seat, found keys in the parking lot, etc., call 888-846-8600, leave a message and an MSO representative will return your call.

Turn off cell phones and any other electronic devices. The light/noise from these devices is a distraction. Please, no text messaging or flash photography during performances.

Leave all food and drinks outside the “theatre”. NO food or drinks are allowed inside the “theatre”. If unwrapping a cough drop or piece of candy to soothe a dry or sore throat, please do so quietly.

Respect those around you. Concert-goers are expected to arrive and be seated before the music commences. The audience waiting for a concert to begin may talk freely until the end of the applause greeting the entrance of the conductor (or the concertmaster if the orchestra tunes on stage). Please refrain from talk during the performance as it is extremely distracting to other audience members and the musicians. Unless there is an emergency, plan to stay seated during the performance. Refrain from returning to your seat while the musicians are performing. Do so when there is a “break” in the music.

Applause, for musical performances, is held until the entire piece is completed even though there are sometimes pauses between the movements. In between these movements the music will stop for a few seconds. Take note of the program to determine the number of movements. Do not applaud until the conductor has dropped his hands and has turned around to acknowledge the audience. Sometimes this is prolonged past the cutoff of the orchestra, with hands held in the air or slowly lowered over several seconds, in the hope of allowing the audience to stay joined with the artistic creation even for just a moment after its sounds have ceased.



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MID-ATLANTIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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THANK YOU for your support to “Keep the Music Playing!” The Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors, Maestro Julien Benichou, and the MSO musicians are grateful to the patrons, grantors, sponsors and advertisers who support the MSO concerts performed throughout the mid-Atlantic region.

Contributions received between July 1, 2019 and February 24, 2020 are acknowledged. We have made every effort to ensure our list is accurate. For changes/additions, call 888-846-8600.

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Anthony Roth Costanzo as Akhnaten

PHOTO: MICHAEL FRIEDMAN; STYLING: JACQUELINE BROWN

2019–20 SEASON

PUCCHINI
Turandot
OCT 12

MASSENET
Manon
OCT 26

PUCCHINI
Madama Butterfly
NOV 9

WAGNER
Akhnaten
NOV 23

BERG
Wozzeck
JAN 11

THE GERSHWINS
Porgy and Bess
FEB 1

HANDEL
Agrippina
FEB 27

WAGNER
Der Fliegende Holländer
MAR 14

PUCCHINI
Tosca
APR 11

DONIZETTI
Maria Stuarda
MAY 9

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Mike Castoro and Mary Ellen Clark

Kudos and hearty thanks to husband and wife, Mike Castoro and Mary Ellen Clark, dedicated MSO volunteers who have freely given their time, energy and talents in numerous ways to our orchestra and its educational programs.

Together, Mike and Mary Ellen, have served as ambassadors in the Ocean Pines area. They have promoted the Orchestra, provided support at concerts, and actively assisted with fundraising and other special events.

In addition to this direct involvement with the Orchestra, Mike and Mary Ellen have been extensively involved for the past two years in the MSO's Education and Outreach Programs. Together, they have helped to conduct programs bringing MSO musicians into local schools—meeting the musicians at school on the day of their program and ensuring that students and musicians alike have had a successful experience during their class time together.

Making their separate contributions, Mike has assumed responsibility for the MSO "Note-Worthy Instruments" program which maintains and loans donated and new instruments free of charge to students and music teachers in Worcester County Public Schools. Mary Ellen has strengthened the MSO education programs through her outreach to other organizations and by writing applications to grantors that focus on music education for youngsters.

We appreciate the generosity of Mike and Mary Ellen, and the many other volunteers who have dedicated themselves to the of the symphony. We invite our patrons to contact us and to learn ways that they can help us maintain a vibrant concert season and a vigorous outreach into our community.



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MID-ATLANTIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JULIEN BENICHOU, MUSIC DIRECTOR

JULIEN BENICHOU, CONDUCTOR

Julien Benichou is noted for his blend of flexibility and control, inspiring musicality and incredibly infectious energy. Benichou currently serves as Music Director for the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra (MSO), and was recently appointed Principal Conductor of the Washington Opera Society. He is also the Music Director of the Chesapeake Youth Symphony Orchestra (CYSO) and the Southern Maryland Youth Symphony Orchestra (SMYOC). This past December, he made his debut with the New York City Ballet, in Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*, and returned to Carnegie Hall, in a concert that featured Robert Redford and Vice-President Al Gore.



As Music Director of the MSO for the last 12 seasons, Benichou has greatly raised the profile of the ensemble, attracting premier artists, as well as expanding the orchestra's season. This year, he collaborates with Stefan Jackiw, Virgil Boutellis-Taft, Kurt Nikkanen, Brandie Sutton and Leon Fleisher. Previous seasons have included concerts with such noted artists as Kevin Short, Lester Lynch, Arnaud Sussmann and Tine Thing Helseth.

Benichou has also garnered acclaim as guest conductor at the Annapolis Symphony, Newark Symphony, Ballet Theatre of Maryland, Baltimore Concert Opera, Baltimore Symphony/Mobtown Modern Synchronicity projects, Orquestra Sinfonica do Parana in Curitiba, Brazil, the St. Petersburg State Symphony in Russia, the Maison Symphonique de Montreal in Canada, and the Siberian State Symphony in Krasnoyarsk, Russia, where he will return next season. Other return engagements will include a collaboration with Tim Janis at Carnegie Hall.

Julien Benichou also enjoys crossover and pops concerts, and has worked with The US Army Blues Big Band, the Army Strings, the Irish band Lunasa, and such artists as Warren Wolf, Mairead Nesbitt, Loreena McKennitt, Sarah McLachlan, and Matthew Morrison. Benichou received a Graduate Performance Diploma from The Peabody Institute and earned a Master's Degree from Northwestern University. He also pursued graduate studies at Yale University. In master classes he has worked with Leonard Slatkin, Yuri Temirkanov, Marin Alsop, Michael Tilson Thomas and JoAnn Falletta. His main teachers have been Victor Yampolsky, Gustav Meier and Jorma Panula.

Before coming to the United States, he trained in France, with Roland Hayrabedian and Pol Mule at the Marseille Conservatory and Jean Sébastien Bereau at the Rueil-Malmaison Conservatory, as well as privately with Yves Cohen. He also studied harmony and counterpoint with Pierre Doury at the Schola Cantorum in Paris.



MID-ATLANTIC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

MARCH ROSTER

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Cello

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Tzu-Jou Yeh

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JULIEN BENICHO, CONDUCTOR
JAMIE ANDERES, FLUTE
LUIS ENGELKE, TRUMPET
JOSEPH MCNURE, SAXOPHONE

Thursday, March 5, 2020, 7:30 pm, Easton Church of God, Easton, MD
Saturday, March 7, 2020, 3 pm, Ocean View Church of Christ, Ocean View, DE
Sunday, March 8, 2020, 3 pm, Community Church, Ocean Pines, MD

**ELIZABETH LOKER CONCERTO COMPETITION
WINNING PERFORMANCE!**

Concertino for Flute and Orchestra

Cécile Chaminade
1857-1944

I. Moderato

Jamie Anderes, Flute

Suite des Dances from Platée

Jean-Phillipe Rameau
1683-1764

- I. Entrée
- II. Musette
- III. 1st Menuet
- IV. 2nd Menuet
- V. 1st Air
- VI. 2nd Air
- VII. Chaconne

Concerto for Alto Saxophone

Paul Creston
1906-1985

- I. Energetic
- II. Meditative
- III. Rhythmic

Joseph McNure, Alto Saxophone

INTERMISSION

The Unanswered Question

Charles Ives
1874-1954

Luis Engelke, Trumpet

Symphony No. 33 in B-Flat Major

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
1756-1791

- I. Allegro assai
- II. Andante moderato
- III. Menuetto
- IV. *Finale*. Allegro assai



JAMIE ANDERES

Flutist

Jamie Anderes, a homeschooled junior, is enjoying her fifth year as a flutist for the Chesapeake Youth Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Julien Benichou. She has had the tremendous opportunity to study under Gail Vehslage, M.A., and previously under Lorine Anderson from the age of seven. She feels incredibly honored to have been able to perform at the White House, twice at the Maryland State House and three times at Carnegie Hall accompanying Jean Ferrandis, Tim Janis, Tori Kelly, and Colbie Callait, among others. Miss Anderes is also a Junior Olympic competitive gymnast and an accomplished artist, having her entry place in the Congressional Art Competition last year. She is delighted to be able to perform today with the MSO.

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WINNER OF THE ELIZABETH LOKER CONCERTO COMPETITION



JOSEPH MCNURE

Saxophone

Joseph McNure is an educator and saxophonist in both classical and jazz idioms from Harrisonburg, Virginia. As a classical saxophonist, Joseph has won competitions that include the Inaugural Elizabeth Loker Competition with the Mid-Atlantic Symphony, the University of Maryland Concerto Competition, the Penn State Single Reed Summit competition, and the Madison Chamber Ensemble Competition at James Madison University. Joseph will perform a concerto as the guest soloist with the Mid-Atlantic Symphony and the University of Maryland Symphony Orchestra in the year 2020. As a jazz musician, Joseph has been the lead player and a featured soloist with

the JMU Jazz Ensemble alongside guest artists such as Greg Gisbert and Steve Wilson. Joseph has also performed with The Temptations and The Four Tops.

As an educator, Joseph is a licensed teacher in Virginia, and has diverse experience teaching which includes special education in music in Albemarle, Shenandoah, and Rockingham counties. Joseph was a Drum Major for the Marching Royal Dukes at James Madison University, where he led a 90 person leadership team and the full band in performance and rehearsals with his co-Drum Majors. Joseph is currently a graduate assistant for the Mighty Sound of Maryland at the University of Maryland, where he teaches, conducts, and handles logistics for the marching band. Additionally, Joseph maintains a private saxophone studio in the DC/Metro area, where his students are competitive players for All-State Honors, All-State Jazz, and undergraduate music auditions.

Joseph graduated from James Madison University (B.M., Music Education, 2019), and is currently a student at the University of Maryland, College Park seeking a Master of Music degree in saxophone performance.



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JEAN-PHILLIPE RAMEAU

French, 1683-1764

Suite des Dances from *Platee*

A recognized music theorist and composer, Jean-Phillipe Rameau wrote the comic opera *Platee* to celebrate the wedding of Louis, Dauphin of France, son of Louis XV, to the Infanta Maria Theresa of Spain. It was first staged in 1745, at Versailles. Although the opera is now considered a curiosity, the *Suite des Dances* is performed occasionally, primarily to complete a program.

The *Suite* begins with an *Overture*. After a slow introduction, a lively theme is introduced, followed by a dialogue between the higher and lower strings, which is repeated. A tambourine sets the rhythm for the *Air Pantomime*, a highly syncopated dance segment. *Orage* begins with a drum roll, followed by a rapidly ascending figure on the violins and woodwinds. The tempo is *prestissimo* throughout. The tambourine returns for the *Contredanse au Rondeau*. A rhythmic melody is presented by the piccolo, then taken up by strings and the full ensemble. An elegant Spanish dance, *Passepieds*, makes use of the *pandereta*. This section is made up of two themes, arranged in ABA structure. The tambourine returns in the *Rigaudons*, a lovely and happy peasant dance with a remarkable section for violin solo. The final *Chaconne* is quite sophisticated and elaborate, and thoroughly crafted. Very little percussion is used. The tempos vary widely. Highlights include a dialogue between piccolo and orchestra and various short solos for violin.

The *Suite des Dances* is robust Baroque music. The most popular score calls for piccolo, flute, oboes, bassoons, clavichord and strings. Length of performance: about 23 minutes.

Program Notes by Raymond Vergne, M. D.

PAUL CRESTON

Italian-American, 1906-1985

Concerto for Alto Saxophone Opus 26

Born in New York, the son of Sicilian immigrants, Giuseppe Guttovoggio did not receive any formal musical education, and was primarily self-taught. He was a very prolific writer and a powerful orchestrator. His specialty was music for the movies, particularly for documentaries. It is not clear when or why he changed his name to Paul Creston, although the most reasonable guess would be because of the war.

The *Concerto for Alto Saxophone Opus 26* was written in 1944. The first movement, *Energetic*, opens with a theme on the strings alternating with chords on the brass. The second theme is somewhat lyrical, presented by the soloist. The development, which is difficult to follow, is quite dense and lacks in stature. The main subjects return heavily disguised and the movement ends abruptly.

The second movement is titled *Meditative*, and opens on a very attractive melody which soon degenerates into a jazzy passage. The architecture appears to be a theme and variations, although these are not apparent to the listener. Two short cadenzas are identified, which are basically exercises in dexterity for the soloist.

Rhythmic is the title for the third movement, in which the composer's "music for the movies" background is apparent. The movement could be used as a soundtrack for a chase scene in a Walt Disney cartoon animation. The movement seems to be developed in a modified Rondo form, but not all the subjects are repeated. After some more fireworks for the saxophone, the work mercifully ends.

The orchestration of this concert is quite interesting and robust. There is no doubt that Creston could write for a symphony orchestra. The soloist is never drowned by the orchestra, although at times it seems that the saxophone has abandoned the orchestra to go on its own. Some of the harmonies are challenging or surprising, but melody is lacking throughout most of the work. With its warmth, the saxophone is able to "smooth things over" most of the time; the concerto as a whole is unlikely to leave a lasting impression on the first-time listener. Length of performance: about 21 minutes.

Program Notes by Raymond Vergne, M. D.

CHARLES IVES

American, 1874-1954

The Unanswered Question

Charles Ives grew up in New England, the son of an affluent family. He took music lessons and became a respectable organist. He studied music at Yale, where he was also a competent athlete, but after graduation became an insurance executive in New York City. Eventually he developed his own company and was quite prosperous. Ives died after a stroke in 1954.

Ives' music was largely ignored throughout his life. It was later "discovered" and promoted by Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein. Ives integrated popular tunes and melodies into his works, fabricating a "musical collage" of the vernacular and the transcendent. Bernstein felt that "... all Ives' works are dreams ...". In 1927, Ives stopped writing new music altogether and only revised previous compositions. He told his wife, "... nothing sounds right ...". His politics, like his music, were unorthodox. He went as far as proposing a constitutional amendment and using his wealth to promote it.

The Unanswered Question was written in 1908 and revised in 1930-35. This short work was premiered by a student orchestra at the Juilliard School of Music on May 11, 1946.

Three musical parties are identified: strings, a woodwind quartet and a solo trumpet. They are often distributed on the stage and off the stage out of sight from each other. Each group plays in a different tempo and sonic level, appearing independent of each other.

The work opens with the strings playing pianissimo thirteen measures of slow tonal triads, in G major and 4/4 rhythm, which are repeated. These are supposed to represent "*The Silence of the Druids*", according to Ives himself. The string background is quite attractive, actually, and at times sounds like it could be the harmonious soundtrack of a Science Channel documentary on "*The Structure of the Interstellar Void*".

The strings are joined by the solo trumpet, stating "*The Perennial Question of Existence*", in the atonal sequence B \flat -C \sharp -E-E \flat -C. The woodwind quartet, identified as "*The Fighting Answerers*" by Ives, responds in equally atonal fashion, while the strings

continue undisturbed in their sojourn through space-time. The *Question of Existence* is presented six more times by the trumpet, in two different forms, alternating B \flat -C \sharp -E-E \flat -C with B \flat -C \sharp -E-E \flat -B, each time attracting more agitated and frustrated responses from the woodwinds. The responses actually incorporate the basic question in their statements, which eventually become *molto agitando*. The *Fighting Answerers* are silent after the seventh presentation of the *Question*; there is no more to say. The strings, after a variation of their chorale, continue their journey undisturbed and impervious to the dialogue that has occurred.

There are really two, not one, *Questions* in this work: although they are similar, they are different. The *Questions*, actually, are answered six times by the *Answerers*, but, although they acknowledge the *Questions* just by answering, there is no response for their frustration at being ignored by the other parties in this little musical universe.

The *Questions*, absolutely, do not remain unanswered. The answers have no impact whatsoever; they are futile. They elicit no response from the Druids or the Trumpet, except a repeat of the question. We do not understand either the questions or the answers, adding to the sense of futility. We can accept them as another of Ives' dreams.

The New York Philharmonic program notes, written by James Keller, remind us that, at the time *The Unanswered Question* was composed, music was at a crossroads, with modernism trying to replace 19th century symphonic grandeur, and that Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, Igor Stravinsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Edward Elgar, Bela Bartok, Maurice Ravel, Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg and Anton Webern were active. Certainly Ives' music, although flawed, was somewhat ahead of its time. For the sake of balance, we may also note that active at the time were many masters of rhythm, melody and harmony of the likes of Antonin Dvorak, Giacomo Puccini, Camille Saint Saens, Max Bruch, Edward Grieg, Jean Sibelius, Carl Nielsen, Alexander Glazunov, Claude Debussy, Gabriel Faure, Jules Massenet, Karl Goldmark and Cesar Cui, to name a few, who did not claim that "... nothing sounds right ...". Length of performance: about 7 minutes.

Program Notes by Raymond Vergne, M. D.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Austrian, 1756-1791

Symphony No.33, K 319

Leopold Mozart, a court musician and composer, recognized his son's gifts for music at an early age. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart excelled as a performer and a precocious composer. Leopold took young Mozart on tour to the major capitals in Europe, achieving great success.

Finding financial security as an adult on his own, however, was another story. He was never able to secure a remunerative position in either Salzburg or Vienna, although his talents were widely recognized and he was warmly admired in many other cities, particularly Prague. During his Vienna days, he barely made a living giving recitals and lessons, and organizing subscription concerts.

Mozart was a prolific composer of works for the opera, large orchestra, piano solo, small ensemble and chorus. If Haydn is to be known as the father of the symphony and the string quartet, Mozart is the father of the piano concerto. He also composed 41 symphonies. Although most, if not all, critics concede that his music has great refinement and grace, some argue that he was incapable of expressing authentic grief in his music, and it is often not profound but charming.

Symphony No. 33, K 319 was composed in 1779-1780. The manuscript exists to this day at the Biblioteka Jagielonska in Krakow, Poland. The work is economically scored for two oboes, two bassoons, two horns and strings. A typical performance runs about 23 minutes.

The influence of the symphonies that Mozart wrote for his Paris audience is evident from the very beginning, as the first movement opens with a full *tutti* in unison. This was more or less a requirement in Paris, termed the “precise attack for full orchestra”. The *Allegro assai* then continues in classic sonata form, with its exposition, reprise, development and recapitulation. The themes exhibit clarity and transparency. This is typical Mozart music. The themes are easily identified, the modulations adhere to the classical rules, the whole movement is very coherent and well crafted. It closes without a coda.

During the development, a four-note segment (C-D-F-E) is repeated seven times. It is the same subject that Mozart later used for the final movement of the *Symphony No. 41 “Jupiter”*. Apparently, this C-D-F-E was popular at the time, having originated in ecclesiastical music during the Renaissance. It is also found in Mozart’s *Symphony No. 1*, in his *Missa Brevis* and in the works of other composers.

The second movement, *Andante moderato*, is a theme with variations that can be described as lyrical, gentle, soft, slow and rocking. This beautiful music will invariably put some of the audience to sleep, missing the exquisite and elegant variations and the soothing solos in the woodwinds.

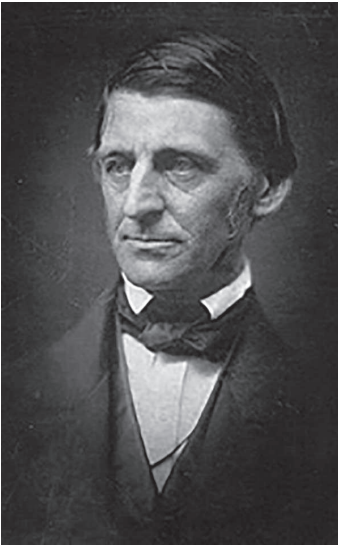
The *Menuetto*, the proper third movement at the time, is rhythmic and graceful. The trio, the middle part, is short and more lyrical.

The fourth movement, *Allegro assai*, is also constructed in classical sonata form, but with three themes rather than two. The development is extremely short and easy to miss unless the listener is really paying attention and following the music. Like the first movement, the *Allegro assai* closes without a coda.

Symphony No. 33 K 319 is a classical example of the classical symphony. The music reflects no conflict or disputation, but is elegant and sweet. The influence of the Paris music culture and the society of the Enlightenment can help modern audiences comprehend how this lovely music was so happy with itself.

Program notes by Raymond Vergne, M. D.

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS IN 1908



In 1908 Charles Ives was completing the composition of his *Unanswered Question*. In that year there were also other interesting events occurring.

On January 1, 1908 Gustav Mahler made his US conducting debut in the Metropolitan Opera's production of Richard Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*. At the same time, Sergei Rachmaninoff premiered his *Symphony No. 2*, and Bela Bartok was in the midst of finishing his first *Violin Concerto*. It is interesting to note that Bartok's *Violin Concerto no. 1* would not be published until 1956 and not performed until 1958—well after the composer's death in 1945. In March the premiere of Maurice Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole* took place in Paris France. Also, in France, Gabriel Faure could be found at his piano composing both his *Nocturne's No. 9 & 10*, as well as his *Serenade for Cello and Piano*.

Meanwhile, *Ziegfeld Follies* was one of the most popular musicals on Broadway along with *Fifty Miles from Boston*, *Mr. Hamlet of Broadway*, and *The Three Twins*. Leroy Anderson, who composed the ever so famous *Sleigh Ride*, which begins the MSO's Holiday Joy concerts was born on June 29, just eight days after the death of composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. In September the Czech Philharmonic premiered Mahler's *Symphony No. 7*, Arnold Schoenberg finished and premiered his *String Quartet No. 2* in Vienna, and on December 3 in Manchester, England Edward Elgar was celebrating the successful premiere his *Symphony No. 1*.

In New York City, 1908 was celebrated with the inaugural drop of the illuminated ball in Time Square. Theodore Roosevelt was the President joined by Charles Fairbanks as his Vice President. In February the Converse Shoe company was founded, and that same month the 46th star was added to the flag representing the great state of Oklahoma. In March, Harvard University voted to establish a Business School. April brought the first observance of Mother's Day, which was held at Andrew's Methodist Church in Grafton, West Virginia.

On October 1 Henry Ford started production of the first Model T, which at the time cost \$850, approximately \$21,597 today when adjusted for inflation. Also, in October The Chicago Cubs won the World Series in baseball defeating the Detroit Tigers in game 5. And last but not least, on November 3 Republican William Howard Taft defeated the Democrat William Jennings Bryan to become the 27th President of the United States.



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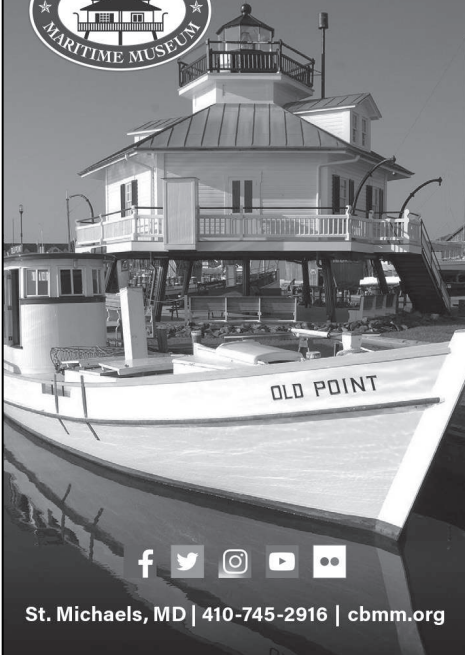
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A decorative background of musical notation, including a treble clef, a sharp sign, and various notes and rests on a staff, is overlaid on the page.

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Promenade [III]. Moderato non tanto, pesamente

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BORIS SLUTSKY

Piano

Consistently acclaimed for his exquisite tonal beauty and superb artistry, Boris Slutsky emerged on the international music scene when he captured the First Prize—along with every major prize, including the Audience Prize and Wilhelm Backhaus Award—at the 1981 William Kapell

International (University of Maryland) Piano Competition. His other accomplishments include first prizes at the Kosciuszko Chopin Competition and San Antonio International Keyboard Competition, and major prizes at the International Bach Competition in Memory of Glenn Gould, Busoni, Rina Sala Gallo, and Ettore Pozzoli International Piano Competitions.

Since his orchestral debut at Carnegie Hall with the New York Youth Symphony in 1980, Slutsky has appeared on nearly every continent as soloist and recitalist, collaborating with such eminent conductors as Dimitri Kitaenko and Valery Gergiev. He has performed with the London Philharmonic, Stuttgart State Orchestra and Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Neuss am Rhein in Germany, Bern Symphony Orchestra in Switzerland, Bergen Philharmonic in Norway, RAI Orchestra in Milan, KBS Symphony Orchestra in Korea, and major orchestras in Spain, Russia, Columbia, and Brazil. In South Africa, he has been soloist with the orchestras of Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg. His North American engagements have included concerts with the Baltimore, Florida, Utah, and Toronto Symphonies.

Slutsky has been heard on recital series throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Latin America, and the Far East, making appearances at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Kaufmann Concert Hall, Bunka Kaikan in Tokyo, National Concert Hall in Taipei, Performing Arts Center in Seoul, and Teatro Colon in Bogota, among many others. An avid chamber musician, Slutsky's more than two decades of chamber music collaborations include the critically acclaimed recording of Schumann's Sonatas for Violin and Piano with Ilya Kaler on the Naxos label, as well as performances with many renowned artists.

Slutsky has presented master classes throughout North America, Europe, and Asia, and served as a jury member for many international piano competitions.

Born in Moscow into a family of musicians, Slutsky received his early training at Moscow's Gnessin School for Gifted Children as a student of Anna Kantor, and completed his formal studies at the Juilliard School and Manhattan School of Music, studying with Nadia Reisenberg, Nina Svetlanova, John Browning, and Joseph Seiger. In addition, he has worked for many years with his mentor Alexander Eydleman.

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DARIUS MILHAUD

French, 1892-1974

The Creation of the World, Opus 81a

Darius Milhaud was born to a Jewish family in the south of France and studied music at the Paris Conservatory. He was 22 when the Great European War started, but he avoided military service, probably due to arthritis. He became secretary to Paul Claudel, who was ambassador to Brazil, where he was exposed to exotic rhythms, harmonies and melodies.

In 1922 Milhaud visited the United States and was particularly interested in the music life in Harlem, namely jazz. After his return to Europe, he was considered one of “*Les Six*”, the most promising progressive composers at the time. (Considering that a whole generation had been lost in the Great War, “*The Only Six Left*” might have been more appropriate.) In 1940 he escaped German occupation with his family to the United States and taught music at Mills College in Oakland, California. Two of his students were Dave Brubeck and Burt Bacharach. Milhaud returned to France in 1947 and taught at the Conservatory. He died in Geneva, Switzerland in 1974.

Milhaud was a very prolific composer, with over 400 works to his credit. He wrote 9 operas, 12 ballets, 12 symphonies, 18 string quartets and 6 piano concertos. Like Nate Zock, the millionaire in *The House of God*, said when asked about his line of business, “Nuts and bolts: not the best, but the most”, Milhaud favored volume and composed continuously and effortlessly but less critically than other composers.

Classical harmonies, melodies and rhythms can be found in his music, together with jazz, blues, Jewish and African influences. His scores exhibit polytonality, the simultaneous use of different keys, which makes a score basically dissonant. His music is colored with “bluesy turns of harmony and melody, swinging climaxes and stomping rhythms”, according to one critic.

The Creation of the World Opus 81a is a relatively short piece written in 1923 on commission from a Swedish ballet company. The ballet is rarely performed at present, and the music is occasionally played by major orchestras to fill in a program but remains ballet music. It consists of an *Overture* and five sections which are played without pause.

The *Overture* opens somberly until a five note figure is presented by the trumpets. The mood is at times funereal; a rhythmic drum beat appears, reminiscent of the imperial galleys’ sea battle in *Ben Hur*; the final sections resembles the sounds made by two-year-old children engaged in parallel play (totally unaware of each other), with the trombone moaning because it has been left out of the fun.

The Chaos Before the Creation is a jazz fugue, introduced by the double bass, followed by the saxophone, woodwinds and trumpet. The five note figure heard in the *Overture* makes an appearance. The music is quite amorphous and complex, and it appears again that the instruments are playing against each other. If you are expecting music with the dignity and solemnity of Haydn’s *The Creation* or Wagner’s *Prelude to Das Rheingold* you will be disappointed. If the creation of the world was the work of God, Milhaud’s God is thoroughly Nietzschean, and the creation is the product of his “play”.

In *The Birth of Plants and Animals*, the instruments make an effort to find a melody by returning to the beginning of the *Overture*. This section is heavily influenced by the blues, and a melody is almost reached, until the music is interrupted by the hammering of drums and a march-like tune which would be appropriate for a merry-go-round,



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carnival, bazaar or New Year's Eve celebration. The section ends abruptly after a brass fanfare. The relation of the music to the origin of life is obscure.

The bassoon and two violins develop a nocturnal ambience through dreamy music in *The Birth of Man and Woman*. A solo for clarinet in the fifth section, *Desire*, is an attempt at lyricism and development of passion that actually sounds like elevator muzak. In the last section, *Spring*, the music returns to the material of the overture with all its contradictions and after a trumpet fanfare, *The Creation of the World* mercifully ends in outer space, without definition or resolution. In this creation of the world, the Big Bang is a little thud.

Keeping in mind that *The Creation of the World* was written for the ballet, you may enjoy watching a rendition of the music and dance together. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkUNchTOQJo>. It is quite entertaining and very colorful even though the rhythms are uneven and not what the contemporary public associates with "dance music".

The Creation of the World is scored for 2 flutes, one doubling as piccolo, oboe, 2 clarinets, bassoon, alto saxophone, French horn, 2 trumpets, trombone, piano, percussion, tympani, 2 violins, cello and bass. Length of performance: about 18 minutes.

Program Notes by Raymond Vergne, M. D.

PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Russian, 1840-1893

Piano Concerto No. 1 in B flat Minor, Opus 23

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) is one of the most popular composers of classical music. He had the gift of melody, creating an almost immediate rapport with the listener through a sincere emotional response. Engaging rhythms, disarming harmonies and brilliant orchestration makes his music unpretentious, accessible and memorable. In addition to the traditional forms, he expanded the status of ballet music and symphonic poems in the classical repertoire. He could write music that the public understood.

Throughout most of his life, Tchaikovsky was criticized by the "Russian Five" (Mily Balakirev, Cesar Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Borodin) for being too eclectic and formal, too "Western" and not "Russian" enough. Although Tchaikovsky's music was profoundly influenced by the Russian temperament and background, and he made liberal use of Russian folk songs and rhythms, even in our times his music does not escape scrutiny. In his *Essays in Musical Analysis*, Donald Francis Tovey does not give any of Tchaikovsky's violin and piano concertos the time of day, not even a mention. Milton Cross and David Ewen, in the *New Encyclopedia of Great Composers and their Music*, write that Tchaikovsky "... sometimes permits his grief to become hysterical, his tenderness to become cloying, his pessimism to degenerate into self-pity ...". Jan Swafford states, in *The Vintage Guide to Classical Music*, "... Tchaikovsky was the archetypical Russian artist: a hectic blend of spiritual aspiration and extravagant self-indulgence, a saint and a charlatan, self-inflated and self-loathing, fatalistic and more than a little mad."

Tchaikovsky once said of himself, "...I am an unhappy man, but not a bad man..." He could not become reconciled with his sexuality. Long bouts of depression alternated with episodes of intense activity. He relied heavily on the bottle for solace and succor. Composing great music, nevertheless, appears to have been what most consistently lifted him from many emotional crises.



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In 1878 he married Antonina Miliukova, who had been his student at the Moscow Conservatory. The marriage, not surprisingly, was a disaster and did not last three months. Tchaikovsky left Russia for Western Europe to complete the *Fourth Symphony* and continue work on his opera *Eugene Onegin*.

Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Opus 23, a “virtuoso concerto”, was written in 1874. This type of concerto was popularized in the XIX Century by artists like Franz Liszt to display the technical abilities of the virtuoso pianist. Tchaikovsky hoped that the work would be premiered by the pianist Nicholas Rubinstein. The concerto was rejected in the most unpleasant terms: “... utterly worthless, absolutely unplayable, ... trivial, vulgar ... “. The premiere took place not in Russia, but in Boston, Massachusetts, on October 25, 1875 and was a great success. Eventually Rubinstein came around and played the concerto many times with great enthusiasm.

Few concerti, if any, open with a more majestic, lush and assertive introduction: maybe Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat major, Opus 73, “*Emperor*” (1811); Brahms' Piano Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Opus 15 (1858); or Grieg's Piano Concerto in A minor, Opus 16 (1868). Four descending notes are presented by the horns three times, followed by a tutti chord by the orchestra, before the piano enters with authority, playing seven-note chords in support of the orchestra's inspiring, noble and passionate theme. This is not, however, the main subject of the movement, *Allegro maestoso*; it is only the introduction! This theme is picked up by the piano and, after a short cadenza, played by the orchestra for a third time, with double chords on the piano. The introduction lasts almost four minutes; the noble and passionate theme is never heard again during this concerto. The theme, however, is widely recognized by the public, as it was recorded by the Freddy Martin Orchestra in 1941, sung by Jan Peerce in 1964 (“*Tonight We Love*”) and widely popularized by Liberace.

Following this introduction, the actual first subject is introduced by the piano in a rather playful fashion, as it does not have the overflowing melody of the introduction and portrays a totally different rhythm and mood. The origin of this melody is believed to be a tune sung by a blind beggar in the Ukraine. The second subject, presented by the woodwinds, is divided in two parts, and returns to the lyricism of the introduction. Both the orchestra and the soloist are given prominent parts in the development. A second cadenza, full of difficult passages, unites the recapitulation with the coda.

Although Tchaikovsky had been, and would be, castigated by the “Russian Five” for being too “formal” and too “European”, the first movement of the Piano Concerto No. 1 Opus 23 has to be recognized as very unorthodox. The extraordinary introduction, the early entry of the piano, the rejection of a very substantial and promising theme, the writing of a cadenza for the piano during the introduction (oh, heresy!), and the use of folk music are all highly irregular.

The second movement, *Andantino semplice*, is developed around a lullaby introduced by the flute and repeated by the piano. Subsequently, the melody is given to the cello and then the oboe, while the piano develops the subject. The middle of the movement, *Prestissimo*, brings on another abrupt change in rhythm and mood with a tune allegedly borrowed from a popular French song (“Let's enjoy, dance and laugh!”). After some piano fireworks, the lullaby theme returns and the movement ends peacefully. Tchaikovsky ably blends in several of the elements of a *scherzo* into the slow movement of the concerto, another scandalous liberty.

Allegro con fuoco, the third movement, follows without pause. Critics differ in their analysis of the architecture of this movement, whether it is a Rondo as in many classical concerti, or modified sonata form. The first subject is lively and syncopated, based also on an Ukrainian folksong; the second is passionate and poetic, presented by the violins. A march-type theme is introduced and promptly discarded. The two initial themes are repeated, and followed by a rather complicated development on the piano. The first subject is presented by the woodwinds very briefly in the recapitulation, and the second subject given a triumphal treatment by the piano and full orchestra. The first subject, its jagged rhythm now smooth, returns on the brass during the coda to complete the concerto in grand virtuoso style.

After the *Piano Concerto No. 1 Opus 23*, Tchaikovsky wrote two other piano concerti, neither of which attained the popularity of the first one, although both are substantial works. The composer completed, over the next eighteen years the *1812 Overture*, various operas, six symphonies, the *Violin Concerto Opus 35*, several tone poems, and the *Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake* and *Nutcracker* ballets. He travelled to America and conducted his works at the opening of Carnegie Hall in New York. He died in St. Petersburg in November 1893 during an epidemic of cholera shortly after the premiere of his *Symphony No. 6 Opus 74* (“*Pathetique*”).

What makes his *Piano Concerto No. 1 Opus 23* so remarkable? For the person who loves music, the passionate melodies in the introduction and every movement, and the relationship and balance between soloist and orchestra. For the person who loves the piano, the challenging and exquisitely brilliant writing for the soloist. For the person who studies music, the many surprises in the extraordinary score. For all, the superb blend of craftsmanship, inspiration and performance that is called art.

Program notes by Raymond Vergne, M. D.

MODEST MUSSORGSKY

Russian, 1839-1881

Pictures at an Exhibition (Orchestrated by Maurice Ravel)

Modest Mussorgsky received his first piano lessons from his mother, who was a trained pianist. He was later enrolled in a private school in St. Petersburg, but his formal musical education was rather limited and unstructured. His formal career was in the military, and as a naval officer he became acquainted with some of the developing composers and performers of the second half of the XIX Century in Russia who were also in the service.

Eventually Mussorgsky resigned his commission in the military and took a clerical position in the Ministry of Communications to make a living and pursue a composing career. He became a member of the “Russian Five” (Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Cui, Borodin), who advocated a “more Russian, less European” style of music. He wrote primarily for the piano, since his orchestration abilities were limited.

Mussorgsky wrote many song cycles and several operas. *Boris Godunov* is performed regularly in many opera houses, often sung in Russian, sometimes in translation. The symphonic poem *Night on a Bald Mountain* is part of the regular orchestral repertoire. *Pictures at an Exhibition* is a group of ten piano pieces written after the untimely death of the artist Victor Hartmann; it was orchestrated by various composers, and in 1922 by Maurice Ravel on commission from Serge Koussevitzky. Several other composers have also orchestrated *Pictures at an Exhibition*, including the superb version by Russian composer Sergey Gorchakov in 1954.

Alcoholism destroyed Mussorgsky's health and terminated his life. In his late 30's and early 40's he was unable to hold any kind of job or complete anything but a simple composition. He suffered alcoholic seizures, episodes of *delirium tremens* and attacks of amnesia. He eventually died in a coma in 1881 and is buried in St. Petersburg.

Pictures at an Exhibition was originally written in 1874 as a piano piece, and a glorious one it is. The technical demands are considerable, with complex rhythms and challenging harmonies. The work is thoroughly satisfying for performer and audience. Various performances are available on the internet, generally all attractive. If you like the orchestral version, listen to the piano version sometime. It is a virtuoso piece, and it is fascinating to imagine "how much music" did the orchestral composers like Ravel and Gorchakov "see" or "discover" in the piano score.

The orchestral work begins with the solo trumpet playing the *Promenade*, which loosely ties the various pieces together. The *Promenade* can be considered a transition theme, as a visitor to the exhibition walks, or strolls, from painting to painting. Both Ravel and Gorchakov have the trumpet introduce the theme, which may be readily recognized as it is often played in wedding ceremonies.

Pictures at an Exhibition is programmatic music, a musical depiction of a visual experience. After the *Promenade*, *The Gnome* is presented in hesitant rhythms by the woodwinds and strings. The *Promenade* returns, played by the brass in the Ravel version, by the cellos in the Gorchakov orchestration, and then the woodwinds, including a saxophone in Ravel's presentation, deliver a beautiful melody that evokes medieval ruins (*The Old Castle*). The *Promenade* returns, on the brass by Ravel, on the strings by Gorchakov. The next stop is at the *Tuilleries*, the gardens in Paris where children run and play while their chaperones converse. The Polish oxcart *Bydlo* is awarded to the tuba by Ravel and to the French horns by Gorchakov. The crescendo of this dark music is impressive as the cart rolls by. After another quotation of the *Promenade*, the music turns to *The Ballet of the Unhatched Chickens*, a favorite because of its brilliant effects and imaginative writing.

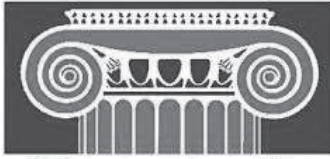
A portrait of two Polish Jews, *Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle*, one rich, one poor, in a vivid argument is the subject of the next section, followed by the gossiping women at *The Market Place at Limoges*. The environment becomes dark and somber again in the *Catacombs*, but lightens in *A Hut on Fowl's Legs*. The monumental *Great Gate of Kiev* closes the work with a memorable melody, tolling bells and a majestic and glorious ending.

Ravel's orchestration of *Pictures at an Exhibition* is the most popular in the west and probably world-wide. Gorchakov's version is very interesting, as it is the most "Russian", at times darker and more reliant on strings than on brass to present and develop the themes. Some critics feel that Gorchakov has profound reverence for the music, although he uses more percussion and strings and less brass than Ravel, while Ravel has intense respect for the original score and yet delivers a "Westernized" version. In the final analysis, both are tremendous achievements. As good as Ravel's version is, it would be fortunate if Gorchakov's orchestration was heard more often.

Maurice Ravel orchestrated *Pictures at an Exhibition* for 3 flutes, one doubling as piccolo, 3 oboes, one doubling as *cor anglais*, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, saxophone, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, tympani, percussion, xylophone, celesta, 2 harps and strings. Length of performance: about 35 minutes.

Program notes by Raymond Vergne, M. D.

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FALL CONCERTS:

A Beethoven Birthday Celebration

Thursday, September 24, 2020, 7:30 PM
Chesapeake College, Wye Mills, MD

Saturday, September 26, 2020, 7:30 PM
Epworth United Methodist, Rehoboth, DE

Sunday, September 27, 2020, 3 PM
Performing Arts Center, Ocean City, MD

Repertoire:

Ludwig Van Beethoven, Symphony No. 5

Soloist: Michael Boudewyns

NOVEMBER CONCERTS:

Serenades and Double Reeds

Wednesday, November 4, 2020, 7:30 PM
French Embassy, Washington, DC

Thursday, November 5, 2020, 7:30 PM
Easton Church of God

Saturday, November 7, 2020, 3 PM
Ocean View Church of Christ, Ocean View, DE

Sunday, November 8, 2020, 3 PM
Community Church, Ocean Pines, MD

Repertoire:

Antonio Vivaldi, Oboe Concerto in C Major
Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, String Serenade

Soloists:

Joshua Lauretig, Oboe
Carl Oswald, Oboe

HOLIDAY JOY

Thursday, December 3, 2020, 7 PM
Chesapeake College, Wye Mills, MD

Saturday, December 5, 2020, 7 PM
Cape Henlopen High School, Lewes, DE

Sunday, December 6, 2020, 3 PM
Performing Arts Center in Ocean City, MD

Repertoire:

A festive selection of Holiday music.

Soloists:

Alex Raszkazoff, Soprano
Michael Butler, Tenor

NEW YEAR'S EVE

with Lisa Chavez and Virgil Boutellis-Taft

Thursday, December 31, 2020, 7 PM
Christ Church, Easton, MD

Soloists:

Lisa Chavez, Mezzo Soprano
Virgil Boutellis-Taft, Violin

MARCH CONCERTS:

A Romantic Visionary, Schumann at 220

Wednesday, March 3, 2021, 7:30 PM
French Embassy, Washington, DC

Thursday, March 4, 2021 7:30 PM
Avalon Theatre, Easton, MD

Saturday, March 6, 2021, 3 PM
Ocean View Church of Christ, Ocean View, DE

Sunday, March 7, 2021, 3 PM
Community Church, Ocean Pines, MD

Repertoire:

Performance by the winner of Elizabeth Loker Concerto Competition

Robert Schumann, Symphony No. 2

APRIL CONCERTS: American Visionaries: Gershwin, Barber, and Boyd

April 23, 2021, 7 PM
Chesapeake College, Wye Mills, MD

April 24, 2021, 7 PM
Cape Henlopen High School or Rehoboth Beach Convention Center

April 25, 2021, 3 PM
Performing Arts Center, Ocean City, MD

Repertoire:

Samuel Barber, Summer of Knoxville 1915
Stephanie Boyd, Violin Concerto
George Gershwin, Porgy and Bess Suite
arr. Robert Russell Bennett

Soloist:

Kevin Short, Bass

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