

Dvorák

Symphony No. 7

Saturday, March 18, 2023 // 8 pm
The Michigan Theater

Debussy *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*

Prokofiev Violin Concerto No. 2

Dvořák Symphony No. 7

Kyung Sun Lee violin

Timothy Muffitt guest conductor



Digital program notes



March 18, 2023 • Michigan Theater

TIMOTHY MUFFITT guest conductor • **KYUNG SUN LEE** violin

Tonight's concert is supported in part by an award from the Michigan Arts & Culture Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.



- PROGRAM -

CLAUDE DEBUSSY *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun), L. 86

Tonight's performance of the Prelude is sponsored by Bruce Fuester, Mike Fuester, Jim Fuester, Cindy DeHart, and Barb Gomez in memory of their mother Lela Fuester, long-time supporter of the A²SO, who inspired in all of them a love for music of all kinds... whether as a listener or as a performer. "The future disappears into memory, with only a moment between / Forever dwells in that moment, Hope is what remains to be seen" (from "The Garden" by Rush, lyrics by Neil Peart)

SERGEI PROKOFIEV Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63

Allegro moderato
Andante assai
Allegro, ben marcato

Kyung Sun Lee, violin

Tonight's performance of the Concerto is sponsored by Lydia Bates to celebrate the memory of Bradford Bates and his love of the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra.

- INTERMISSION -

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Op. 70, B. 141

Allegro maestoso
Poco adagio
Scherzo: Vivace
Finale: Allegro

TONIGHT'S PERFORMERS

Violin I

Aaron Berofsky, Concertmaster
*Aaron Berofsky Concertmaster
Chair*
Kathryn Votapek
*Straka-Funk Associate
Concertmaster Chair Honoring
Kathryn Votapek*
Mallory Tabb
*Ruth Merigian and Albert A.
Adams Chair*
David Ormai
*Larry Henkel Memorial Violin
Chair*
Jennifer Berg
Kisa Uradomo
Alexandria Ott
Daniel Stachyra
Froehlich Family Violin Chair
Karen Donato
Alena Carter
Yung-Hsuan Lo

Violin II

Barbara Sturgis-Everett *
GATES & RUDISILL ENDOWED PRINCIPAL
SECOND VIOLIN CHAIR
Michael Romans
*Sarah and Jack Adelson Violin
Chair*
Cyril Zilka
*Doubleday Family Second Violin
Section Chair*
Annamaria Vazmatzidis
*Brian Etter and Betty Nolting
Memorial Violin Chair*
Stuart Carlson
Nathalie & John Dale Violin Chair
Katie Rowan
Chase Ward
Judy Blank
Linda Etter
Linda Etter Violin Chair
Priscilla Johnson

Viola

Scott Woolweaver *
*Brooks Family Principal Viola
Section Chair*
Barbara Zmich-McClellan
Jacqueline Hanson
Joshua Muzzi

Janine Bradbury
Josh Thaver
Veronika Vassileva
Hannah Breyer

Cello

Andrea Yun *
SUNDELSON ENDOWED PRINCIPAL
CELLO CHAIR
Benjamin Maxwell
SARAH WINANS NEWMAN ENDOWED
SECTION CELLO CHAIR
Sabrina Lackey
Sarina Zhang
Eric Amidon
Lauren Mathews
Chris Chan
Megan Yip

Bass

Gregg Emerson Powell *
*Lesa & Mike Huget Principal
Bass Chair*
Jon Luebke
A²SO Board Emerita Chair
Robert Rohwer
Joy Rowland
Stephen Castiglione
Marlo Williams

Flute

Alaina Bercilla *
*A. Michael and Remedios
Montalbo Young Principal Flute
Chair*
Trey Bradshaw
Melissa Mashner
Serras Family Flute Chair

Oboe

Tim Michling *
GILBERT OMENN ENDOWED PRINCIPAL
OBOE CHAIR
Stephanie Shapiro
*Bill and Jan Maxbauer Oboe
Chair*
Faith Scholfield

Clarinet

Chad Burrow *
JIM AND MILLIE IRWIN ENDOWED
PRINCIPAL CLARINET CHAIR
Elliott Ross

Bassoon

Christian Green *
*E. Daniel Long Principal Bassoon
Chair*
Daniel Fendrick
*Barbara W. & James E. Martin
Bassoon Chair*

Horn

Adam Unsworth *
*Jon Beebe and Rich Wong
Principal French Horn Chair*
Kristi Crago
*Bradford Bates Memorial French
Horn Chair*
Kurt Civilette
Tamara Kosinski

Trumpet

Justin Rowan *
*A. Michael and Remedios
Montalbo Young Principal Trumpet
Chair*
Eriko Fujita
Lisa Marie Tubbs Trumpet Chair

Trombone

Donald Babcock *
Zongxi Li
*Carol Sewell and Jeff Weikinger
Trombone Section Chair*
Greg Lanzi

Timpani

Zachary Masri *
*A. Michael and Remedios
Montalbo Young Principal Timpani
Chair*

Percussion

Cary Kocher *

Harp

Chen-Yu Huang *
*Nadine and Ron Burns/A New Path
Financial Principal Harp Chair*
Brittany DeYoung

* Principal

PROGRAM NOTES

BY KEMPER EDWARDS

Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune (Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun), L. 86 (1894) 10 minutes

Claude Debussy

BORN August 22, 1862; Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France

DIED March 25, 1918; Paris, France



"[Debussy's] effort seems to be to note the most distant harmonics of the verse and to take possession of all the suggestions of the text in order to transport them to the realm of musical expression. Most of his compositions are thus symbols of symbols, but expressed in a language itself so rich, so persuasive, that it sometimes reaches the eloquence of a new word, carrying its own law within it, and often much more intelligible than that of the poems on which it comments."

- Paul Dukas, on Debussy's *Nocturnes*, 1901

Around the last decade of the 19th century was an unnerving time to be a composer. In ways that recalled the shadow cast by Beethoven at the beginning of the century, the works, methods and ideologies of Richard Wagner generated whirlpools of discord amongst the creative minds in the musical arts. Whereas the more conservative schools of composition advocated for a return to traditional structures and unifying techniques, Wagner's skill in constructing gargantuan operatic edifices that operated according to their own internal logic empowered an new generation of young composers and legitimized their belief that the future of music lay in innovation.

In 1892, Claude Debussy was one of these new emerging firebrands. A gifted prodigy on the piano, he had enrolled in the Paris Conservatoire at just 10 years of age and would remain a member of this prestigious institution for over a decade. Debussy's time at the Conservatoire was characterized by more than occasional controversy; as an established body of Parisian academia and somewhat inflexible viewpoints, the composition faculty frequently butted heads with the young composer when it came to matters of style and theory. Nevertheless, Debussy would achieve the unthinkable in 1884, winning the Prix de Rome, an award for composition regarded by many as the most distinguished of its kind in Europe. Emboldened by this unequivocal recognition of his creative gifts and sharing with many of his colleagues a sense of responsibility for forging the next chapter of French music, he sought to create new forms and soundworlds that would pair with the glitter of France's Belle Époque era.

For Debussy, the future of orchestral music lay not in the symphonic forms. In his eyes, these existed as lifeless, obsolete vessels of pedantic material and uninspired direction. Perhaps even more controversial was his insistence that Wagner, too, was not the answer. Like many of his peers, Debussy initially had been struck by the German composer's audacious harmonies and sensually endless melodic lines, but after considering the advocacy of the Wagner "school" he would go on to remark that Wagner existed as "A beautiful sunset... mistaken for a dawn."

Kemper Edwards was raised in London and Pittsburgh. He joined the A²SO from the Academy of Ancient Music, the leading period instrument ensemble where he was Communications and Engagement Manager. Beginning work with AAM after studying music at the University of Cambridge, he oversaw a revitalization of the orchestra's digital presence, with AAM becoming the world's most listened-to ensemble of its kind online and producing a number of critically acclaimed recordings on its in-house label, AAM Records.

A keen musician, Kemper began studying violin and piano at a young age with Viktoria Grigoreva of the Royal College of Music and Alexandra Andrievski of the Yehudi Menuhin School, before continuing his studies with Rufina Yefimova, a graduate of the Moscow Conservatory. A 2012 Pittsburgh Concert Society Young Artist Winner and recipient of the Anna and Benjamin Perlow Prize and Blackwood Music Scholarship, Kemper was selected by Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Principal Guest Conductor Leonard Slatkin as the winner of the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra Conducting Competition in 2010.

Rather than looking within the confines of his art for inspiration, Debussy instead turned to poets and painters. Two movements were growing in popularity by the day, that of Impressionism for the visual arts, and Symbolism among poets of the time. The shimmering suggestions of Impressionism empowered the observer to interrogate the scene before them. For Debussy, this translated into intuitive harmonies that progress with a certain unfettered curiosity; hazy mirages of melody that extend like wisps of incense; lush and colorful orchestration that achieves a paradoxical clarity through asectional combinations; and above all, an unapologetically hedonistic pursuit of effects that pleasure the senses. Poetic Symbolism provided interdisciplinary inspiration, particularly the works of Stéphane Mallarmé, whose poem *L'Après-midi d'un faune* was on everyone's lips by 1885 after a series of influential recirculations in literary publications. In Mallarmé's writing, Debussy deduced a style similar to his own and resolved to set his impressions of the poem to music.

The Faun of Mallarmé's verse comprises a half-man, half-goat creature, lazy by nature and obsessed with pursuing the pleasures of the flesh. Intoxicated with desire, he sets off after woodland nymphs and fairies before the afternoon heat gets the better of him and he succumbs to a fitful sleep. Debussy brings an improvisational quality to his depiction of the frolics satyr, with a flute rising out of a silent haze to sound the call of the passions. The orchestra enters on a chord of uncertainty, with harp figuration gilding harmonies that made just as much of an impression on contemporary listeners as the "Tristan" chord of Wagner nearly 30 years previously. Here Debussy the iconoclast cements his artistic philosophy: if a particular effect or turn of phrase is judged to have brought pleasure, it is immediately repeated in a sequence that grows boundlessly in self-satisfaction. Like improvisation, a certain logic underpins the progress of melody, harmony, and voice leading, but these mechanisms are never allowed to rest on their laurels. New combinations and event orders are continually dreamed up, just like the Faun might contemplate a new object of his affection. Cells of material are passed about the orchestra, motifs are extended and elaborated, and acoustic transformations are applied to the principal "Faun" theme through its sounding in various instrumental groups. Orchestrative anarchism is an identifiable theme, with Debussy's own exposure to music of the Javanese gamelan at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1889 opening his ears to new textures, pairings, and sonic effects.

The effect of Debussy's musical eroticism was immediate and profound. The audience at the *Prelude's* premiere demanded an encore, which the conductor Gustave Doret was only too happy to provide. Mallarmé himself was initially reticent on his thoughts of Debussy's setting, with close friends reporting that the poet regarded verse and music as mutually exclusive. This viewpoint proved short lived: Mallarmé allegedly emerged from the premiere in a state of deep emotion and immediately penned a letter to the composer: "Your illustration of the Afternoon of a Faun, which presents no dissonance with my text, but goes much further, really, into nostalgia and into light, with finesse, with sensuality, with richness. I press your hand admiringly, Debussy." The musical world as a whole would come to view Debussy's *Prelude* as a masterpiece of Impressionist composition and a watershed moment in the evolution of modern music. Despite its immediate fame, the composer refrained from expanding on the work's theoretical ramifications and instead doubled down on the principles that governed his approach: "There is no theory. You merely have to listen. Pleasure is the law."

The Kellogg Eye Center is pleased to sponsor
large print program notes.

Ask your usher for a copy.

Learn more about us at:
www.kellogg.umich.edu
734.763.1415



Events of 1894 (Prelude composed)

- American Electric Company founded in Detroit; became leading manufacturer of electrical irons
- Nicholas II became Tsar of Russia
- Bridge introduced in Portland Club in London
- First US golf tournament held at Yonkers, NY
- Victor Herbert established as composer of light opera when his *Prince Ananias* performed
- *Jungle Books* written by Rudyard Kipling

Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63 (1935) 26 minutes

Sergei Prokofiev

BORN April 1891; Sontsivka, Ukraine

DIED March 5, 1953; Moscow, Russia



'Ow d'you think then, Comrade Makarov, is it being that determines the life of man, or an idea? Is being in the idea too? Are we to think like that?'

- Boris Pilnyak, *Golyi god* (The Naked Year), 1922

Homesickness is a difficult beast to wrestle with. For Sergei Prokofiev, 1935 marked the 17th year of his travels abroad and the nomadic reality of his lifestyle had begun to wear on the 44-year-old composer. Economic and political turmoil had made Prokofiev's 1918 exit from Moscow one of the easiest choices imaginable, but now the green grass of the West appeared less verdant. Financial circumstances supported a permanent move back to the Soviet Union. The hardships of the Great Depression exacerbated artistic frustrations that Prokofiev increasingly experienced, and he was forced to moderate his compositional output and increase his appearances as a concert pianist in order to pay the bills. A move back to Moscow appeared temptingly straightforward: stay on the right side of the authorities, ruffle as few feathers as possible, and you'd be free to compose as much as you'd like with plentiful material comforts. Prokofiev tried to assure himself that he was making the right choice: "I care nothing for politics – I'm a composer first and last. Any government that lets me write my music in peace, publishes everything I composed before the ink is dry, and performs every note that comes from my pen is alright with me."

The Russia that Prokofiev was returning to was a very different land from the one he'd left some two decades before, and in many ways his timing could not have been worse. Beginning in 1936, the manifestations of Stalin's "Social Realism" began to take shape across the nation's artistic landscape, enforced with growing aggression and contempt for all judged at odds with its ideals. 1937 saw the first purges of Soviet composers, guilty of "formalist" tendencies and capitalist decadence. Prokofiev was prepared to reinvent himself amid this growing hostility, disavowing the shock and sensationalism that characterized his earlier works and committing a more compliant, "acceptable" pen to paper.

It was amid the dawn of this new, ominous chapter, that Prokofiev received his last commission from the West. In Brussels a few years previously, he made the acquaintance of the accomplished French violinist Robert Soetens and was impressed with his skill. Following Soetens' successful premiere of Prokofiev's Sonata for Two Violins in 1932, the composer embarked on his Second Violin Concerto without delay and gave the violinist exclusive rights to the work for one year following its premiere in Madrid in 1935. Soetens was highly enthusiastic about the concerto and performed it regularly over the next several decades, including in recital with the composer at the piano. For Prokofiev, the cultural whirlwind generated by a fully-fledged concert tour is reflected in the concerto's international influences: "The number of places in which I wrote the Concerto shows the kind of nomadic concert-tour life I led then. The main theme of the first movement was written in Paris, the first theme of the second movement in Voronezh, the orchestration was finished in Baku and the premiere was given in Madrid."

Perhaps suggestive of the composer's mental state at the time of its writing, the concerto opens with a somber, troubled theme performed by the unaccompanied soloist. Equal parts sinister, nostalgic and hopeful, the melody concludes with a question before the orchestra takes it up in the lower strings, the

soloist trailing along in canonic fashion. The energy of Prokofiev's ideas is never far from the stage, and the soloist embarks on brilliant passages that bring fresh color and reimagined combinations to the fore. A glorious second idea takes the stage before both principal materials play an elaborate game of cat and mouse across the texture. The movement closes with a composed-out curtain call over plucked strings and soft brass.

The second movement takes a soaring melody and brings to it all of the languid subtlety of an acetylene torch. A searing intensity emerges as the soloist reaches the upper registers of their instrument, and the composer pours all of his longing into yearning sequences and elaborations. Angst and uncertainty fuel the fire, and parabolic syncopations between soloist and orchestra underscore the ever-new lands traversed by the wandering pair.

The finale mediates between the sureness of the known and the opportunity presented by the unexplored. Decidedly "Spanish" touches in figuration and instrumentation (listen for the castanets) hint at the location of the work's premiere and what the composer stood to gain from his decade-and-a-half international sojourn. Incessant rhythmic propulsion and rondo form bring a familiar feel to this closing movement, as does virtuosic pyrotechnics from the soloist. A robust, earthy dance sweeps us along as all parties involved high-step across the finish line. Wild dissonances, smashing strings and a final tumble in the percussion bring the atmosphere of the fiesta to a riotous close.

Events of 1935 (Concerto composed)

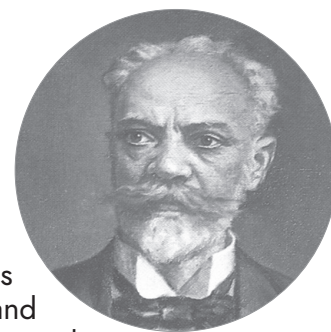
- Detroit Tigers defeat Chicago Cubs in World Series for their first World Series victory
- 22 million people on U.S. relief rolls
- Germany formally denounces Versailles Treaty and reintroduces conscription
- Works Progress Administration created under authority of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act
- Social Security act establishes national system of social insurance
- National Labor Relations Act establishes a national labor policy of protecting rights of workers to organize; United Automobile Works of American organized

Symphony No. 7 in D minor, Op. 70, B. 141 (1885) 35 minutes

Antonín Dvořák

BORN September 8 1841; Nelahozeves, Czechia

DIED May 1, 1904; Prague, Czechia



On December 13, 1884, the composer Antonín Dvořák set out for a walk to the nearby train station, a daily ritual that he'd been observing for some time. On this particular journey, there was much on his mind. A composer of established skill and refined musicianship, he'd ascended from humble beginnings in a family of innkeepers and secured the recognition and mentorship of one of Europe's most highly regarded composers, Johannes Brahms. With this flourishing friendship came lucrative publishing deals and international awareness, along with expectations regarding the style and substance of the Czech composer's output. This last part failed to sit well with Dvořák.

The Austro-Hungarian empire of the late 19th century was a messy amalgamation of ethnic tensions, political strife, fractious and disconnected leadership structures, and the security and stability of a tinderbox. Few would be surprised at the spark that would ignite the First World War just a few decades later, and for now the rights and destinies of nations were the topics on everyone's lips. Going back centuries, the Czech people had been reduced to peripheral citizens under the ruling Hapsburgs, providing provincial "color," modest industry and not much else in the eyes of the authorities. Moreover, Czech artists were compelled to create in styles that fit in with a broader, more European flavor, or content themselves with producing rustic, lighter fare that brought popular appeal at the expense of scholarly acceptance and recognition.

It was with this debacle that Dvořák was wrestling as he hiked towards the sounds of the arriving train in Prague, a train bearing guests for that evening's musical performances and pro-Czech political

demonstrations at the National Theater. Dvořák was well aware of this; as he would write in the opening manuscript of his Symphony No. 7, "[the] main theme occurred to me upon the arrival at the station of the ceremonial train from Pest in 1884." This new symphony would carry a special significance for the composer, responsible as he felt not only for his own career ambitions and the desire to write "serious" symphonic works, but also for championing of the cultural aims and political visions of his beloved Bohemian homeland. A stormy, dramatic and at times paradoxical work, Dvořák lost no time setting his melodies to a canvas that demonstrated his mastery of form and instrumentation, and one that he hoped would put incessant criticism to rest.

Over a brooding rumble in the lower brass and strings arrives the opening theme of the first movement, brought forward with hesitancy by violas and cellos – instruments that suggest the natural timbre of the human voice. Energetic, leaping string passages characterize this opening material, balanced by lush passages for solo horn and wind pairings. The opening theme reappears in various guises and in states of increased agitation, chopped into fragments, compressed into an essence, or turned on its head to bring the movement to a close after the irrepressible energy of the coda. Dvořák completed work on the opening movement in just five days, remarking that "wherever I go I can think of nothing else. God grant that this Czech music will move the world!"

Peace and order appear to return at the onset of the second movement, a woodwind chorale that evokes an almost religious solemnity. The comfortable surroundings are short lived, however, as a new theme in the strings plunges the orchestra into an abyss of despair. Despite the best efforts of brass and clarinets, this mood would appear to pervade for the remainder of the movement, if not for the return of slightly cheerier material in the closing measures. Heavily punctuated rhythms bring a driven quality to the symphony's third chapter, with a self-propelled obsession in the strings moving us swiftly past any attempts by the upper woodwinds to establish a pastoral counterpoint. The somber, perilous mood continues as we embark on the finale, but what is unleashed feels ambitious and hopeful, rather than ominous. Cellos offer a more lyrical melody with hints of sentimentality, and the symphony ultimately closes in a blazing fanfare of color, celebration and belief in ultimate triumph over oppression.

Perhaps the most ambitious and "international" masterwork of Dvořák's career, the Symphony No. 7 was premiered in London in April 1885 to a rapturous reception and critical acclaim. Dvořák was forced to travel abroad for his symphony to receive the approval it deserved; its performance at the hands of the Vienna Philharmonic two years later was met with a chilly atmosphere. While some in the audience may have legitimate differences in opinion when it came to musical preference, many critics could barely attempt to veil racist undertones when they scorned the attempts of a Czech composer to work – to their eyes – in a Germanic medium. Despite these initial setbacks, Dvořák's Symphony No. 7 has since become one of his most famous, joining his final two works of the genre as the most representative of his distinctive and enduring personal style.

Events of 1885 (Symphony composed)

- Detroit Museum of Art incorporated (and last month it was named the #1 art museum in the country!)
- Newspaper reader complained about reckless Detroit drivers who "bang through the streets at six miles an hour or over"
- Introduction of "two-a-day" or continuous vaudeville revolutionized the entertainment world
- *Child's Garden of Verses* by Robert Louis Stevenson published
- "Safety" bicycle first manufactured in England with low wheels of equal size
- Karl Benz in Germany built the first gasoline automobile powered by an internal combustion engine
- Linotype machine patented by Ottmar Mergenthaler of Baltimore
- Heinrich Hertz discovered photoelectricity and verified existence of electro-magnetic or radio waves
- First skyscraper, Home Insurance Building, erected in Chicago – a ten-story, steel-skeleton structure

KYUNG SUN LEE



Violinist Kyung Sun Lee captured sixth prize in the 1994 Tchaikovsky Competition, a bronze medal in the 1993 Queen Elizabeth Competition, first prizes of the Washington and D'Angelo International Competitions, and third prize in the Montreal International Competition, where she also won the Audience Favorite and the Best Performance of the Commissioned Work prizes. Subsequent to winning these awards she has enjoyed ever-increasing popularity as a performer. She has received high critical acclaim: "Exceptional tonal suavity and expressive intensity in equal measure," commented *The Strad*. "Godard's 'Concerto Romantique' could not have had a more outstanding soloist than Kyung Sun Lee," proclaimed Harris Goldsmith in the *New York Concert Review*. "Fluidity and grace; pathos and emotion," raved the *Palm Beach Post*. "Lee is the most musical, the most intelligent soloist to have played with the orchestra in quite a while," maintained the *Tuscaloosa News*. "Penetrating clarity, a strong sense of style and a technical supremacy that conquered all difficulties with unruffled ease," announced the *Miami Herald*. "Beyond superb execution, she conveyed [Vieuxtemps's Concerto no. 5]'s particular Romanticism expertly," remarked Dennis Rooney in *The Strad*.

In addition to her busy schedule as soloist and chamber musician, Ms. Lee is an accomplished teacher and clinician. After becoming Assistant Professor of Violin at the Oberlin Conservatory in the fall of 2001, then Associate Professor at the University of Houston in the fall of 2006, she is a newly-announced Professor of Music in Violin at The Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and Professor at Seoul National University since 2009. She taught for two summers at the Aspen Music Festival, and has also been involved with the Seattle, Ravinia and the Marlboro Chamber Music Festivals, the Texas Music Festival, and the Great Mountains Music Festival in Korea. Ms. Lee is a former member of the acclaimed KumHo/Asiana String Quartet, with whom she toured worldwide. In recent years she has also been in demand as a judge of violin competitions including the Joachim International Violin Competition Hannover, Seoul International Competition and the Tibor Junior International Competition.

Ms. Lee studied at Seoul National University, Peabody Conservatory, and The Juilliard School. Her teachers have included Nam Yun Kim, Sylvia Rosenberg, Robert Mann, Dorothy Delay, and Hyo Kang. She plays a Joseph Guarnerius violin dating from 1723 and serves as music director of the Changwon International Chamber Music Festival and Seoul Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra.

This is Ms. Lee's first appearance with the A²SO.



CARLINPIANO

TUNING

REGULATION

REPAIR

MICHAEL CARLIN

734 . 800 . 1901

www.carlinpiano.com

carlinpiano@gmail.com

TIMOTHY MUFFITT



Timothy Muffitt is currently Music Director and Conductor of the Lansing Symphony Orchestra, a position he has held since 2006. For 21 years, he was also Music Director of the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra. Upon his resignation there he was honored with the title Music Director Laureate.

Mr. Muffitt is also Artistic Director of the Chautauqua Institution Music School and conductor of the Music School Festival Orchestra, one of the country's premiere orchestral training ensembles. He has held this position for 25 years.

Along with continued growth in artistic excellence, Mr. Muffitt's work has been marked by innovative and imaginative programming. In addition to traditional concert settings, he has crafted concert programs in new and engaging formats and venues, creating musical experiences that have expanded the audience base in his communities and garnered enthusiastic response.

Also notable throughout his career has been the championing of new music from composers of broadly diverse backgrounds including composers from traditionally under-represented communities along with well-established composers and those whose stars are still rising. He has been involved in commissioning well over 100 works in his career and initiated a Composer-in-Residence program with The Lansing Symphony. These efforts reflect Mr. Muffitt's commitment to creating a nurturing environment for music of our time, all while striking a balance with traditional repertoire that creates a dynamic experience for the audiences.

In great demand as a guest conductor, Mr. Muffitt has appeared with many prominent orchestras around the country including the Atlanta, St. Louis, Houston, Phoenix, Edmonton, Spokane and Tulsa Symphonies, along with several return engagements with the San Francisco Symphony. Other engagements have taken Muffitt to podiums of the Hollywood Bowl, Columbus Ohio's Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, the Long Beach Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic, Harrisburg Symphony, the Virginia Symphony, and the Grant Park Music Festival Orchestra in Chicago. Equally at home in the opera pit as the concert stage, Mr. Muffitt has also conducted over 50 staged opera productions.

He has had the pleasure of collaborating with a wide range of artists including Lang Lang, Yo Yo Ma, Renee Fleming, William Warfield, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Van Cliburn, Itzhak Perlman, Andre Watts, Audra McDonald, Chris Botti, Branford Marsalis, Roberta Flack, Kenny Loggins, and Trisha Yearwood among many others.

The 2022-2023 season sees return engagements with the Louisiana Philharmonic, Flint Symphony and two concerts in Baton Rouge with Emanuel Ax and Hilary Hahn, in addition to the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra.

Off the podium, Mr. Muffitt has engaged his communities as an arts advocate and cultural leader through multiple platforms. A strong proponent of community-based arts education and enrichment, he has used television, radio, public lecture and social media to engage, entertain and enlighten diverse audiences.

Formerly Associate Conductor with the Austin Symphony, Mr. Muffitt was also Artistic Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic's Casual Classics Series in New Orleans. It was for his work in that position that he was awarded a Certificate of Meritorious Service from the American Federation of Musicians.

Born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Mr. Muffitt began his musical studies on the piano and later added viola and trumpet. He is a graduate of Ohio State University and the Eastman School of Music where he studied with David Effron and earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree.

This is Mr. Muffitt's third appearance with the A²SO.



MAHLER 2

SEASON FINALE

Generously sponsored by



Saturday, April 22, 2023 // 8 pm
Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor

Mahler Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection"

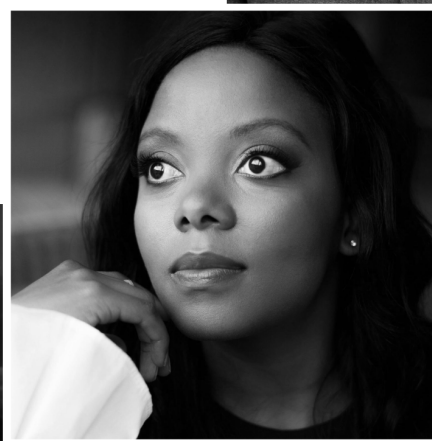
Vuvu Mpofu soprano

Susan Platts mezzo-soprano

UMS Choral Union

Earl Lee conductor & music director

Plus special guests!



**Reserve the best seats
at the box office tonight,
or contact us at:**

a2so.com/mahler-2
734.994.4801
tickets@a2so.com

