VOLUME 2

MOBILE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SCOTT SPECK MUSIC DIRECTOR 2024-2025 SEASON

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THE MOBILE SYMPHONY

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You're in for an amazing treat! We hope you'll enjoy the inspiring music that has made us Mobile's flagship arts organization.

If you're a newcomer, check out the advantages of becoming a member by subscribing to our concert series. You can save, enjoy member benefits and never miss a beat from your very own season seat! Members get more!

You'll notice a long list of donors who make all these wonderful programs possible. Please join them. You have an important part to play in our orchestra! Donors get even more – including parties and events with the orchestra.

From September through May, your symphony is heard live by more than 40,000 people. Each year we present a casual Beethoven and Blue Jeans concert where we encourage everyone, including the orchestra, to wear jeans. Scott Speck, our music director, always reminds concertgoers they are free to dress however they wish for any concert. From young families attending their first concert to long-time MSO supporters, we welcome all!

As you read this program, you'll discover that the MSO is so much more than the music you hear today. Our education and outreach programs are unmatched along the Gulf Coast. Our amazing Mobile Symphony Youth Orchestra is a training ground for the Gulf Coast's very best student musicians. Attend one of their concerts, and you'll know we're not exaggerating!

Mobile Symphony Orchestra mobilesymphony.org 257 Dauphin Street P.O. Box 3127 Mobile, AL 36652









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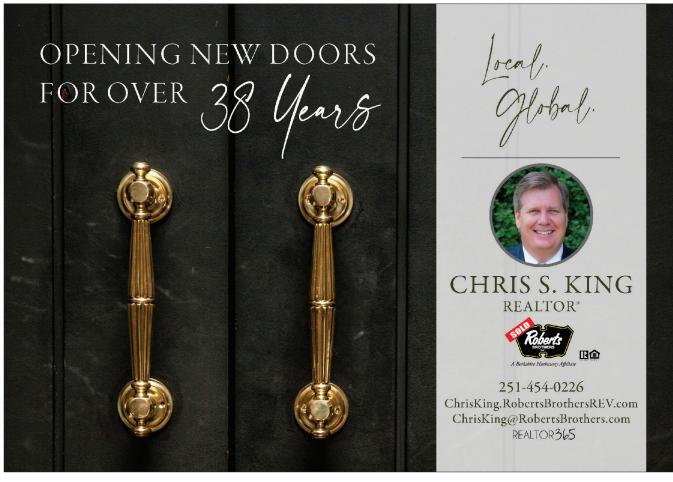
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ABOUT THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

SCOTT SPECK

Dear Friends,

One question that has intrigued me recently is:

"Where exactly is the music?"

By that I mean, at a concert of the Mobile Symphony, where exactly is the music located? When our musicians play, and the audience listens, at what exact point in space does the music get created?

Is it the point where the bow meets the string, the lips meet the mouthpiece, and the stick meets the drum? Is it inside the ears of the listeners, or the synapses of the brain? Or somewhere else?

I like to think that the music forms somewhere over the heads of the Mobile Symphony and the audience. Each musician produces a different sound that rises into the air; that sound merges with those of the other musicians. Of course that particular combination of sounds has been prescribed by the composer, but it's the MSO musicians that bring it into being. Then, in the next moment, another new set of sounds are combined, and then another. Each combination of sounds leads to the next, creating a cascade of sonorities, which we call "the music."

But the orchestra's act of creation is not enough. In order for that music to come to fruition, there's another crucial step. Your ears have to receive it and complete the circuit. Without you to listen, the music doesn't really exist. I believe that strongly.

I believe something else too. When you listen, some part of you travels up to meet the music in midair. Call it a "soul" or "spirit," or even just your attention. Up above our heads, the most magical thing happens. The myriad sounds of our music mingle with the myriad "spirits" of the audience. That's the point where all of us meet on a different plane. As long as you listen, we are all connected, musicians and audience alike. And this only happens in real time – during a live concert of the Mobile Symphony, here at the Saenger. We all transcend time and space; we all become one.

Where is the music? It's here. Enjoy!

Scott Speck, Music Director

Scott peck



Scott Speck joined the Mobile Symphony in 2000 as its first full-time Music Director. Under his leadership the orchestra has grown into one of the Gulf Coast's premier performing arts organizations. Scott is a masterful conductor with a wide-ranging knowledge of repertoire, deep experience in programming, and a terrific sense of what will engage audiences – old and new. His performances with Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, Renée Fleming, Joshua Bell, Midori, Evelyn Glennie and Olga Kern have been highlights of his years as music director of the MSO.

Scott also holds positions as Music Director of the Joffrey Ballet, Chicago Philharmonic and West Michigan Symphony. He previously held positions as Conductor of the San Francisco Ballet; Music Advisor and Conductor of the Honolulu Symphony; and Associate Conductor of the Los Angeles Opera. During a tour of Asia he was named Principal Guest Conductor of the China Film Philharmonic in Beijing. He was also invited to the White House as Music Director of the Washington Ballet.

In past seasons Scott Speck has conducted at London's Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, the Paris Opera, New York's Lincoln Center, Chicago's Symphony Center, Washington's Kennedy Center, San Francisco's War Memorial Opera House, and the Los Angeles Music Center. He has led numerous performances with the orchestras of Chicago, Houston, Washington, Baltimore, Paris, London, Moscow and Beijing, among many others.

He is co-author of the world's best-selling books on classical music for a popular audience: *Classical Music for Dummies*, *Opera for Dummies* and *Ballet for Dummies*. He has been a regular commentator on National Public Radio, the BBC and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, broadcast throughout the world.

Scott can be reached on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @scottspeckmusic

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MOBILE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

2024-2025 ROSTER

VIOLIN

Jenny Grégoire concertmaster Fnen Yu co-concertmaster Will Jackson principal second Petra Bubanja **Edward Charity** Ken Davis Juliana Gaviria Ellen Grant Julie Haring **Bret Heim** Grace Kim **Gesa Kordes** Natasha Marsalli **Zully Morales** Maeanna Naffe Callahan Julianne Odahowski-Steele Kristin Pfeifer Yu Silvia Suárez Rath Stan Roberts **Diane Schmitz** Jennifer Whittle Lisa Wiggins

VIOLA

Jacob Adams
principal
Courtney Grant
Katelyn Hoag
Charles Hogue
Jim Lichtenberger
Ashley Overby

Daniela Pardo Jake Pietroniro Miriam Tellechea Richard Woerhle Laurel Yu

CELLO

Moisés Molina
principal, The Emily
"Patsy" Stone Fail Chair
Andrea Beltrán-Landers
Guo-Sheng Huang
Daniel Martinez
Zlatina Staykova
José Sunderland

BASS

Taylor Hollyer principal Samuel Dahmer Marcos Machado Sophia Scarano Jeb Stuart

FLUTE

Andra Bohnet principal Travis Jones Rachel Nozny piccolo

OBOE

Rebecca Mindock principal, The Patty Malone Chair Matthew Fossa Galit Kaunitz

CLARINET

Jonathan Holden principal Richard Jernigan Kip Franklin

BASSOON

Evelyn Watkins principal Kimberly Woolly Richard Hopkins contrabassoon

HORN

Mollie Pate principal Jon Gannon associate principal James Baker Joey Troia

TRUMPET

Matthew Vangjel principal
Michael Huff
Peter Wood

TROMBONE

Jonathan Houghtling substitute principal Austin Richardson substitute principal Jonathan McNeer Arie VandeWaa bass trombone

TUBA

Chester Schmitz principal

HARP

Katie Ott

principal
Catherine Anderson

TIMPANI

Laura Noah principal

PERCUSSION

Bryan Dilks
principal
Grant Dalton
Matt Greenwood
Brian Nozny
John Purser
Zach Webb

PIANO/CELESTA

Robert Holm principal

Strings and percusion personnel are listed alphabetically, following principal players



MUSICIAN SPONSORSHIP





Musician sponsorship offers a unique opportunity to support the Mobile Symphony and get to better know our orchestra musicians. All musician sponsors are invited to a special event with their sponsored musician. Musician sponsorship begins at the \$5,000 contribution level.

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Doug Hungerford Matt Vangjel, principal trumpet

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Anne Low Mollie Pate, principal horn

Mark Malone Natasha Marsalli, violin

Meagan Malone Travis Jones, flute

Dr. Elizabeth Ann Manci Richard Jernigan, clarinet

Ann McLaurin Daniel Martinez, cello

Heather Miller Grace Kim. violin

Arlene Mitchell Zlatina Staykova, cello Catherine Neal Diane Schmitz, violin

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Shoshana & Jake Treichel Andra Bohnet, principal flute

Gary & Aven Warner Jennifer Whittle, violin

Sherri & Randy Williams Matt Greenwood, percussion

Anonymous

Bryan Dilks, principal percussion Anonymous

Michael Huff, trumpet

Anonymous Enen Yu, co-concertmaster

Anonymous José Sunderland, cello

Anonymous

Guo-Sheng Huang, cello

Anonymous Julianne Odahowski-Steele, violin

Anonymous Kim Woolly, bassoon



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Being a season ticket holder is the best way to experience the Mobile Symphony.

Members enjoy great value, great fun and, of course, great music!

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SEAT SECURITY – Your seat is YOURS for all concerts in your membership. Plus,

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RED CARPET ACCESS – Whenever we have special concerts that are not part of the regular season, you will be the first to know through our Members-Only newsletter. In addition, you will have the opportunity to buy tickets before they become available to the public.

PAYMENT PLAN OPTION – Pay off your season ticket purchase in equal, interest-free monthly installments – call our box office at 251-432-2010 for this option.

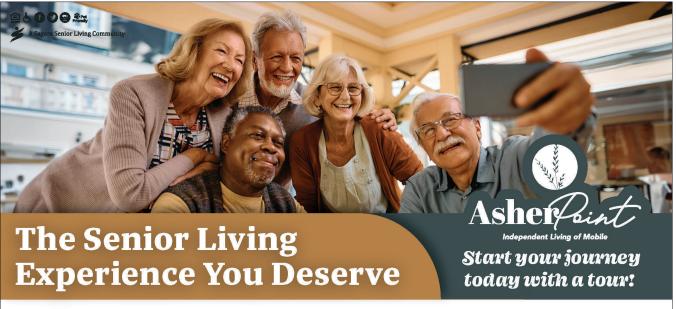
MEMBER LOUNGE – Enjoy refreshments and drinks during intermission at the member-only lounge in Room 1927 adjacent to the Saenger Theatre entrance on Joachim Street. Come enjoy light snacks, coffee and a cash bar.

BECOME A DONOR – Would you like to upgrade your concert experience? See page 54 for information on the perks of becoming a donor!

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YOUR EXPERIENCE

TAKE NOTE!LEARN MORE. ENJOY MORE.

Enhance your concert experience with Take-Note! Join music experts and explore the world of classical music from an in-depth perspective. This informative pre-concert talk begins at 6:30 p.m. before Saturday classical performances and 1:30 p.m. before Sunday classical performances in Room 1927 adjacent to the Saenger entrance on Joachim Street.

TAKE NOTE! SCHEDULE:

Modern Romance

February 8 & 9, 2025

Best of the Best

April 5 & 6, 2025

Handel's Messiah

April 26 & 27, 2025

Symphonie Fantastique

May 17 & 18, 2025

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MOBILE SYMPHONY BOARD

2024-2025

elcome to another outstanding season of the Mobile Symphony. We're building on last season's huge success, including a landmark third appearance of Yo-Yo Ma. I'm expecting great things again, as I've learned each season just keeps getting better.

We start with the return of Randall Goosby, a vibrant young violinist who lit up our 2020 socially distanced Covid season. We'd barely stopped wearing Covid masks before Randall was rocketing to international fame. That happens to a lot of our young soloists!



Whether it's bringing the world's most famous classical musician to Mobile, launching the career of a bright new star, or celebrating the astounding talent of our orchestra, our success requires the work of many. I am honored to share in the accomplishments of the board of directors, generous donors and sponsors, hard-working staff members, dedicated educators, brilliant musicians and our inspiring music director, Scott Speck.

You have a part to play as well. Please consider becoming a member. You'll save money and enjoy some terrific perks. Better still, become a donor. Your ticket price covers less than half the cost of each concert and none of the costs of education programs.

Our symphony is one of Mobile's greatest treasures. We are truly offering world-class classical music performances close to home. It's always a source of great pride to hear an MSO newcomer – whether it's a lifelong Mobilian or a new resident –express surprise at the musical power of our orchestra.

And that's one more role you can play. If you enjoy the Mobile Symphony, join me in sharing the news about this outstanding Gulf Coast jewel. Invite your neighbors, friends and family to hear one of America's best regional orchestras. Let them know, "You've got to hear this!"

Thank you!

Dr. Richard L. Otts, Board Chair

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It is always about the music! Whether it is performing exceptional symphonic music in the concert hall or teaching a child to play a violin in the classroom, everything we do at the Mobile Symphony is about making music. Our reward is the energy and love we feel from the audience and the children in our education programs.

Music has the power to unite, inspire and transcend barriers to bring us together in the sheer joy of listening to our fine Mobile Symphony. Music is not a luxury — but a basic need of human survival. It is how we express feelings when there are no words. Think of the many times music helped us survive and heal after personal or national tragedies.

The Mobile Symphony changes lives and builds community whether it is through the concert experience or an education program. In fact, the quality of our orchestra often surprises guest artists, because very few cities of our size have this quality orchestra and education programs.

Your support is crucial to this success. Join us as we build a stronger community and touch lives in ways nothing else can. Many people were changed when they first heard an orchestra perform, because a teacher or friend invited them to a concert. Please invite a friend to the symphony soon.

Sincerely,

Celia Mann Baehr, President / CEO

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Dr. Andrea Beltrán Landers
Ashley Overby
Daniela Pardo
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José Sunderland
Elizabeth Weaver

Director Chamber Strings Leonard Ligon

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Associate Conductor **Dr. Timothy Beattie**

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String Coaches
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Zully Morales, violin
José Sunderland, cello
Leonard Ligon, bass

Brass and Woodwind Coaches
Dr. Andra Bohnet, flute
Dr. Amy Selkirk, oboe
Dr. Kip Franklin, clarinet
Richard Jernigan, clarinet
Evelyn Watkins, bassoon
Mollie Pate, french horn
Joey Troia, french horn
Dr. Peter Wood, trumpet
Dr. Arie VandeWaa, lower brass
Laura Noah, percussion

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Established in 1990 THE CARING **FOUNDATION OF BLUE CROSS** AND BLUE SHIELD OF ALABAMA supports many organizations and initiatives statewide that seek to improve the health, wellness and education of Alabamians with a special focus on children. Through one of its corporate values, "Give Back to the Community", Blue Cross is proud to be a partner with the Mobile Symphony and applauds its efforts to make music education and outreach programs accessible to schools and communities that have limited access to the fine arts.

RED OR WHITE is a unique combination of a wine store, wine bar and private dining area. Born 21 years ago in downtown Fairhope and shortly after in the Mobile location, we are now also at the Wharf and in Birmingham. We have some of the most talented chefs in the area, so whether you need some wine, a gift, or a bite to eat, please come and see us.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA with nearly 14,000 students is a dynamic community of leaders and learners who support and challenge one another to be actively engaged citizens who advance the Gulf Coast region and the world. South fosters an environment that couples engaging learning experiences with highlevel research, enabling our faculty and students to be leaders in their disciplines. A beautiful 1,200-acre campus includes new facilities and resources for teaching, housing and recreation, health sciences, the arts, engineering, computer science and athletics. Jaguar athletes compete in 17 NCAA Division I sports, including baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, soccer, softball, tennis, track and field, and volleyball. USA Health, through Children's & Women's Hospital, University Hospital, Mitchell Cancer Institute, physicians groups and the Whiddon College of Medicine — and supported by the College of Nursing and the Pat Capps Covey College of Allied Health Professions -provides care across our region and is a training ground for future physicians and healthcare professionals.

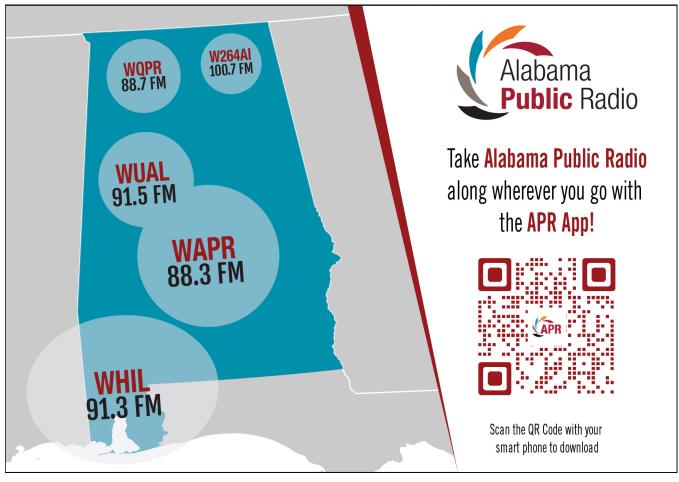


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RANDALL GUOSBY S BACK



PROGRAM

SCOTT SPECK, conductor RANDALL GOOSBY, violin

Saenger Theatre

Saturday, September 21, 2024 at 7:30 P.M. | Sunday, September 22, 2024 at 2:30 P.M.

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34 Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Purcell 18 minutes

Samuel Barber (1910-1981)

Violin Concerto, Op. 14 Allegro Andante Presto in moto perpetuo 25 minutes

Randall Goosby

INTERMISSION

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Symphonic Dances, Op. 45 Non Allegro Andante con moto Lento assai; Allegro vivace 35 minutes

Mr. Goosby records exclusively for Decca. More information on Randall Goosby can be found at www.randallgoosby.com Management for Randall Goosby: Primo Artists, New York, NY www.primoartists.com

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BEETHOVEN & BLUE JEANS

PROGRAM

SCOTT SPECK, conductor BENJAMIN BAKER, violin JAMES BAIK, cello CHAEYOUNG PARK, piano

Saenger Theatre

Saturday, November 9, 2024 at 7:30 P.M. | Sunday, November 10, 2024 at 2:30 P.M.

Jessie Montgomery b. 1981 Starburst*

3 minutes

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) Symphony No. 94, G major "Surprise"

Adagio- Vivace assai

Andante

Menuetto- Allegro molto

Allegro di molto

23 minutes

INTERMISSION

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Concerto for Violin, Cello and Piano, C major, Op.56 "Triple Concerto"

33 minutes

Allegro Largo

Rondo alla polacca

Benjamin Baker, James Baik, Chaeyoung Park

*The presentation of this work is made possible by a generous donation to MSO's Symphonic Innovations Fund

Benjamin Baker, James Baik, and Chaeyoung Park appear by arrangement with Young Concert Artists, Inc. www.yca.org





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Christmas Around the World!



PROGRAM

SCOTT SPECK, conductor RICARDO JOSÉ RIVERA, baritone

Saenger Theatre

Saturday, December 14, 2024 at 7:30 P.M. | Sunday, December 15, 2024 at 2:30 P.M.

Ukrainian Christmas Carol Leontovich-Wilhousky arr. Richard Hayman

Fantasia on Greensleeves Ralph Vaughan Williams

O Holy Night Adolphe Adam, arr. Johnie Dean

Dance Noel (Il Est Né le Petit Enfant) arr. John Leavittl

Les Patineurs Emile Waldteufel

Los Peces en el Rio arr. Juan J. Colomer

Villancico Yaucano arr. Maury Vizoso

Christmas Eve Suite: "Polonaise" Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

INTERMISSION

arr. Marco Frisina

Gioachino Rossini

Fledermaus Overture Johann Strauss Jr. Tu Scendi Dalle Stelle

Gesù Bambino Pietro Yon, arr. William Ryden

Radetzky March Johann Strauss Sr.

arr. Lucas Richman Christmas Sing-Along

It's a Wonderful Life Suite Arr. Tiomkin

"Auld Lang Syne"



Barber of Seville "Largo al Factotum"



Ernestine L. Lenior Charitable Trust



PROGRAM

SCOTT SPECK, conductor LAURA NOAH, timpani PETER FERRY, timpani

Saenger Theatre

Saturday, February 8, 2025 at 7:30 P.M. | Sunday, February 9, 2025 at 2:30 P.M.

Steve Reich b. 1936

Philip Glass

b. 1937

Clapping Music*

Concerto Fantasy for Two Timpanists and Orchestra*

Movement II Movement III

Laura Noah, Peter Ferry

INTERMISSION

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) Suite No. 1,2, & 3 Romeo and Juliet Op. 64bis, 64ter and 101

The Montagues and Capulets

Masks

Romeo and Juliet Death of Tybalt

Romeo and Juliet before Parting

Romeo at Juliet's Grave The Death of Juliet



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*The presentation of this work is made possible by a generous donation to MSO's Symphonic Innovations Fund Concerto Fantasy & Romeo and Juliet suites presented under license from G. Schirmer, Inc.

Flowers in the Saenger Theatre arcade are provided by Elizabeth's Garden

3 minutes

30 minutes

30 minutes

PROGRAM NOTES

CLAPPING MUSIC

STEVE REICH BORN October 3, 1936 | New York, New York

In reaction to the complexity of the modern music of the first half of the twentieth century, composers in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s turned towards minimalism. Borrowing from the minimalist movement in the visual arts, they sought to reduce their artistic materials to the essentials and to impose a formal regularity on their compositions. They intentionally simplified all elements of their musical vocabulary. The pioneers of this musical style were La Monte Young, Terry Riley, Philip Glass, and Steve Reich.

Steve Reich's contribution to minimalism is largely outlined in his essay "Music as a Gradual Process." He wrote, "I am interested in perceptible processes. I want to be able to hear the process happening throughout the sounding music." He created a process that he called "phase shifting," where one or more repeated phrases sounds at a slightly slower or faster tempo than the others, causing it to go "out of phase." He accomplished this with recorded tape loops in his seminal compositions It's Gonna Rain (1965) and Come Out (1966). And something similar occurs in live performance with Piano Phase (1967) and Clapping Music (1972).

A performance of flamenco music, with its animated clapping, inspired Reich to compose Clapping Music. He said that he wanted to "create a piece of music that needed no instruments beyond the human body." The piece unfolds as two musicians clap the exact same rhythm in 12/8 meter. One performer claps the rhythm to a steady tempo throughout the entirety of the piece. The other performer claps the same rhythm, but periodically skips one eighth-note (or rest), thereby shifting the rhythm one eighth-note to the right. They do so until they have accomplished twelve shifts and are again in sync with their duet partner. The resulting music has a sense of ebb and

flow as the "phases shift" in and out of sync with each other.

This piece is scored for two musicians clapping.

CONCERTO FANTASY FOR TWO TIMPANISTS AND ORCHESTRA

PHILIP GLASS

BORN January 31, 1937 Baltimore, Maryland

American composer Philip Glass is one of the most influential composers of our time. He is perhaps best-known for the minimalist music heard in his acclaimed operas (including *Einstein on the Beach* and *Satyagraha*) and film scores (*The Hours, The Truman Show,* and *Kundun,* among others). But the composer has eschewed the label "minimalist" and instead describes himself in more flexible terms as a composer of "music with repetitive structures." This description gives him leeway to bring in different styles beyond the slow harmonic changes, repetitive melodies, and steady pulse of twentieth century minimalist music.

This more complex style can be heard in his Concerto Project, which Glass undertook beginning in 2000. He composed — or gathered from previous compositions — a set of eight concerti arranged into four volumes. Volume 1 contains his Cello Concerto and the Concerto Fantasy for Two Timpanists and Orchestra. Concerti for timpani are not a common occurrence, but they are also not new: examples can be found as far back at the Baroque period. Glass's contribution to the genre enlists two timpanists to a play on a total of nine timpani in an intense, highly athletic work.

The Concerto includes three movements, with an extended cadenza between the second and third. The first movement is fast, with an opening rhythmic theme that may remind the listener of *Mission Impossible*. As the movement progresses, string harmonies and then a woodwind melody are layered under the rhythmic theme. The second movement is slower and more dramatic, with repetitive, slowly

changing melodies, harmonies, and orchestration. An extended almost five-minute cadenza occurs between the second and third movements. The two timpanists engage in extended performance techniques including scraping the drumheads with hard mallets, playing with fingertips and bare hands, and playing with the stick end (rather than soft head) of the mallet. The cadenza speeds to a frenzy as the orchestra percussionists join the timpanists to transition seamlessly into the dance-like final movement.

This piece is scored for 2 flutes and piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, E-flat clarinet, and bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 French horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, 1 tuba, 4 percussionists playing a large array of percussion instruments, harp, piano, and strings.

SELECTIONS FROM ROMEO AND JULIET SUITES, OP. 64BIS, 64TER, AND 101

SERGEI PROKOFIEV BORN April 23, 1891 | Sontsovka, Ukraine DIED March 5, 1953 | Moscow, Russia

Following the Revolution of 1917, Sergei Prokofiev and many other artists and musicians left Russia. But only Prokofiev returned.

In 1934, Prokofiev's diary reveals the careful calculations that preceded his unusual return to the Soviet Union. It shows that he returned with eyes wide open, fully aware that in the Soviet Union, an artist's success or failure was dependent on social and political ideas and that one must pander to the whims of the Soviet critics. Prokofiev believed that his new simple aesthetic could succeed within the Soviet framework and so in 1936 — as performances and commissions were drying up in the United States and Western Europe due to the Great Depression — he returned.

At the end of 1934, he was already feeling the pull back to the Soviet Union through commissions. He was in negotiations with the Leningrad Opera House for the composition of a ballet on the story of *Romeo and Juliet*. When that agreement fell through, the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow commissioned the score. Prokofiev completed *Romeo and Juliet* in 1936, but it was rejected by the Bolshoi as too difficult to dance to. The piece did not receive its premiere until 1938 in Brno, Czechoslovakia.

Between its rejection by the Bolshoi and its premiere in Brno, a savvy Prokofiev took a gamble on himself. He extracted pieces of the ballet into two suites, certain that successful orchestral performances of his music would build demand for the full ballet. His strategy paid off, and the companies in Moscow and Leningrad were soon vying for the opportunity to stage the ballet. A January 1940 performance in Leningrad finally launched the work into the international repertory.

The two suites Prokofiev composed in 1936 and a third one completed in 1946 have endured in the orchestral repertoire. On this concert, you will hear pieces from each of the three suites, arranged in an order

that outlines Shakespeare's timeless story. Listen for some of the major plot points of Shakespeare's tragedy, carefully illustrated by Prokofiev's music.

In "Death of Tybault," an energetic fight becomes tragic when percussive jabs give way to a final blow. The movement ends with the steady, low beat of a funeral procession.

Following a foreboding introduction, the music of the "Montagues and Capulets" contains somber music that, in the ballet, accompanied a warning to the two families to cease their fighting. The second half of this movement comes from the ballet's "Dance of the Knights," which includes a tenor saxophone solo, a rarity in orchestral music.

The dramatic "Romeo at the Grave of Juliet" features Prokofiev's "love theme," which had previously been heard played by the flute in "Romeo and Juliet Before Parting." Low brass and woodwind instruments feature prominently in this movement. They evoke the depth and darkness of the tomb,

while also providing a dynamic contrast to the sounds of the flute and violin, which Prokofiev associates throughout the ballet with Juliet and Romeo, respectively. The movement ends with Romeo's heartbreak, heard in the the soft violins accompanied by throbbing cellos and basses, culminating in a sustained note played by the piccolo.

"The Death of Juliet" is the *Adagio* that ends the ballet. Music from "The Child Juliet" returns before the movement's quiet end.

This piece is scored for 2 flutes and piccolo, 2 oboes and English horn, 2 clarinets and bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, 2 bassoons and contrabassoon, 4 French horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (including bass drum, bells, cymbals, maracas, snare drum, tambourine, triangle, and xylophone), harp, celesta, piano, and strings.

- Program Notes by Sarah Ruddy, Ph.D.

LAURA NOAH, TIMPANI



Laura Noah is very familiar to MSO audiences. She has been our Principal Timpanist since 2007. She is a professional musician and educator residing in Mobile, and is also Principal Timpanist for the Pensacola Symphony, Mississippi Gulf Coast Symphony, Meridian Symphony, Mobile Opera and Pensacola Opera. In February 2024, Laura performed the Concerto Fantasy for Two Timpanists and Orchestra by Philip Glass with the Mercer University Wind Ensemble under the direction of Dr. Brittan Braddock. She will be the featured soloist for Glass's Concerto Fantasy in February 2025 with the Mobile Symphony under Music Director Scott Speck.

Laura Noah is a Pearl/Adams Regional Education Artist and an active Percussive Arts Society member. She served as PAS Alabama Chapter President from 2021-2024, is a current member of the Symphonic Committee, and served as the Socioeconomic point person for the PAS Diversity Alliance from 2020-2023.

Laura is the Director of Percussion and Assistant Director of Athletic Bands at the University of West Florida, where she directs the UWF Percussion Ensemble and the UWF Argo Marching Band Drum Line. Laura also works with her husband, Sean, and the McGill-Toolen Catholic High School Band program coaching the Prep Band percussionists and is the instructor and arranger for the McT Band Front Ensemble.

PETER FERRY, TIMPANI



Peter Ferry is an American percussionist acclaimed for his virtuosic expressivity and dedication to creating arresting musical experiences. Called "an artist of vision... presenting percussion in a stunning thoughtful way" (*Democrat and Chronicle*), Ferry puts audience experience first and shares his passion for percussion with contagious enthusiasm. *The Chicago-Sun Times* has called him "the ingenious percussionist Peter Ferry."

An advocate for new music, Ferry collaborates with leading composers, having premiered works by Meredith Monk, Shawn Okpebholo, and John Luther Adams. As a soloist and chamber musician currently based in Phoenix, his performances have spanned the U.S., Canada, South America, and Europe, bringing him to the world's finest institutions including Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art. His debut at age 18 led to

solo engagements with notable orchestras like the Chicago Philharmonic and Mobile Symphony Orchestra.

Beyond percussion, Ferry has explored boundary-pushing projects with artists like Manual Cinema, earning praise from *The New Yorker* for "endlessly imaginative" shows. As Assistant Director of Artistic Planning for Alarm Will Sound, Ferry has led and staged ambitious performances at the Park Avenue Armory and Philharmonie de Paris. He has been a guest with GRAMMY-winning Third Coast Percussion and Eighth Blackbird.

As an educator, Ferry regularly coaches students while on tour, sharing his insights at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee, New York University, and the Juilliard School. Ferry trained at the Eastman School of Music with performer/pedagogue Michael Burritt.

Ferry proudly endorses Marimba One, Vic Firth/Balter Mallets, and Zildjian.

Find out more about Peter Ferry here. www.peterferry.com

SPECK SPEAKS

The MSO's January concert opens with Steve Reich's groundbreaking Clapping Music, a minimalist marvel that challenges conventional notions of rhythm and ensemble performance. Featuring precise handclap patterns that gradually shift and evolve, Reich's composition mesmerizes with its hypnotic simplicity and intricate rhythmic interplay. Speaking of rhythm, we next present Philip Glass's Concerto Fantasy for Two Timpanists, starring our own Principal Timpanist Laura Noah alongside guest percussionist Peter Ferry. Glass's mesmerizing concerto is a rhythmic blast, showcasing the timpani's versatility and expressive power in a dialogue that spans resonant depths and ethereal heights.

The concert concludes with a suite from

Sergei Prokofiev's ballet *Romeo and Juliet*. Many musicians list this piece among their favorites to perform, and it's easy to hear why: Prokofiev's musical adaptation of Shakespeare's tragic love story unfolds with vivid orchestral colors and emotional intensity, driving the iconic tale with passion and turmoil. From the tender Balcony Scene to the fiery Death of Tybalt, our orchestra brings Prokofiev's evocative melodies to life, immersing our audience in a torrent of love, fate, danger and beauty.



THE BEST HE BEST

PROGRAM

SCOTT SPECK, conductor

Saenger Theatre

Saturday, April 5, 2025 at 7:30 P.M. | Sunday, April 6, 2025 at 2:30 P.M.

Erich Wolfgang Korngold

(1897-1957)

Bernard Herrmann

(1911-1975)

Bernard Herrmann

(1911-1975)

Ennio Morricone (1928-2020)

Ennio Morricone

(1928-2020)

Maurice Jarre (1924-2009)

Alan Silvestri b. 1950 The Sea Hawk

Vertigo: Prelude and Scene d'amour

Psycho Suite

The Mission: Gabriel's Oboe arr. by Robert Longfield

Cinema Paradiso

Doctor Zhivago Suite orchestrated by Nic Raine

Back to the Future

INTERMISSION

Danny Elfman

b. 1953

John Barry

(1933-2011)

John Williams

b. 1932

John Williams

b. 1932

Jerry Goldsmith

(1929-2004)

Beetlejuice Theme

Out of Africa

Jurassic Park

arr. by Calvin Custer

Close Encounters of the Third Kind

Star Trek First Contact: End Credits

The Sea Hawk presented under license from G. Schirmer, Inc.



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Harold & Carlos Parkman

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SPECK SPEAKS | SAMPLING THE GREATEST MOVIE MUSIC EVER COMPOSED



In this concert, we present some of the greatest movie music ever composed, featuring masterpieces from the 20th and 21st centuries. From the silver screen to the symphonic stage, the MSO takes a hairraising journey through the film scores that have shaped cinematic history.

We start in the Golden Age of Hollywood, with music of Erich Wolfgang Korngold. In the late 1930s this Austrian Jewish composer emigrated to the United States to escape the rise of Nazism – and Europe's loss was America's gain. Korngold had been a musical wunderkind like Mozart, praised by the likes of Gustav Mahler. His original dream had been to compose symphonies and operas like the 19th-century greats, and he brought his European late-Romantic sensibilities to Hollywood. Between 1934 and 1946, he composed some 18 scores for Warner Brothers. Of those scores, the swashbuckling Errol Flynn epic The Sea Hawk spawned his most popular concert overture.

Also of Jewish descent was the American composer and conductor Bernard Herrmann. As a music director, he was responsible for introducing more new pieces to American audiences than any other musician. His own film scores started out with echoes of the great Europeans like

Korngold – but he soon imposed his own extremely innovative style on such scores as *Vertigo* and *Psycho*.

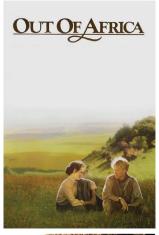
By the way, the orchestra for *Psycho* consists of nothing but string instruments. Herrmann famously decided to limit his orchestral palette only because Alfred Hitchcock had limited his color palette to black and white. And Hitchcock did that only because he felt audiences weren't ready to see that famously gory shower scene in color. Yes, the audience's squeamishness determined Herrmann's orchestration!

We then move on to explore the music of more recent music geniuses, some whose musical styles were influenced by the Golden Age composers like Korngold. Maurice Jarre ranks high among the most celebrated film composers of the past sixty years; he wrote for some of the greatest epic movies of all time, including Lawrence of Arabia, A Passage to India, and Doctor Zhivago (featured in this concert). And like Bernard Herrmann, he even composed for Alfred Hitchcock. Ennio Morricone had a style all his own – or more accurately, styles; his language was as diverse as the movies he scored. You'll hear two very different sounds in his scores to The Mission and Cinema Paradiso. We also represent fine scores by some composers of the late 20th and early 21st centuries: John Barry (Out of Africa), Alan Silvestri (Back to the Future), Danny Elfman (Beetlejuice), and Jerry Goldsmith (Star Trek: First Contact).

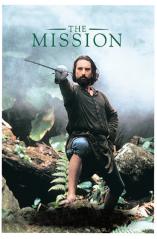
After these illustrious composers had explored a more modern musical idiom in their scores, along came the immortal John Williams (*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*), to harken back to the grandeur and spectacle of the Golden Age. And so we come full circle!

At the MSO, we believe that great movie music is simply great music – and it deserves to be heard in all its glory. This concert demonstrates why these scores resonate with audiences worldwide, capturing the imagination and emotion of generations.









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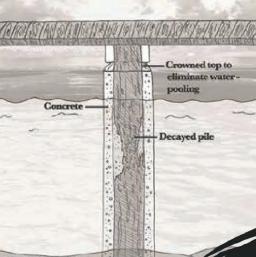
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SYMPHONIC INNOVATIONS FUND

Launched by an extraordinary gift from an anonymous donor, Mobile Symphony's Symphonic Innovations Fund is dedicated to performing and commissioning new works. This season we hear works by three important American composers: Starburst by Jessie Montgomery begins our Beethoven & Blue Jeans concert. Steve Reich's Clapping Music opens our February concert. Our own Laura Noah, along with Peter Ferry, is featured on the Concerto Fantasy for Two Timpanists and Orchestra by the iconic Philip Glass.

Contribute to the Symphonic Innovations Fund by phone at 251-432-2010 or by check to

Mobile Symphony Orchestra P.O. Box 3127 • Mobile AL, 36652







PROGRAM

SCOTT SPECK, conductor KATHRYN MUELLER, soprano EMILY MARVOSH, contralto JAMES REESE, tenor
JONATHAN WOODY, bass

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA CONCERT CHOIR MOBILE OPERA CHORUS LAURA MOORE, director

Saenger Theatre

Saturday, April 26, 2025 at 7:30 P.M. | Sunday, April 27, 2025 at 2:30 P.M.

George Freidrich Handel (1685-1759)	Messiah, HWV 56	5	
PART 1			
No. 1. Overture	No. 6. "But who may abide"	No. 11. "The people walked in darkness"	No. 16. "And suddenly there was with the angel"
No. 2. "Comfort ye"	No. 7. "And he shall purify"	No. 12. "For unto us a child is born"	No. 17. "Glory to God"
No. 3. "Ev'ry valley"	No. 8. "Behold a virgin shall conceive"	No. 13. Pastoral symphony	No. 18. "Rejoice greatly"
No. 4. "And the glory of the Lord"	No. 9. "O thou that tellest"	No. 14. "There were shepherds and lo, the angel of the Lord"	No. 19. "Then shall the eyes of the blind"
No. 5. "Thus saith the Lord"	No. 10. "For behold, darkness"	No. 15. "And the angel of the Lord"	No. 20. "He shall feed his flock / Come unto him"
			No. 21. "His voke is easy"

INTERMISSION

PART 2 No. 24. "Surely he hath No. 29. "Thy rebuke" No. 38. "How beautiful No. 42. "He that dwelleth borne our griefs" are the feet" in heaven" No. 25. "And with No. 30. "Behold and see" No. 39 "Their sound is No. 43. "Thou shalt his stripes" gone out" break them" No. 40. "Why do the nations" No. 44. "Hallelujah" No. 26. "All we like sheep No. 31. "He was cut out of have gone astray the land of the living" No. 37. "The Lord gave the word" No. 23. "He was despised" No. 41 "Let us break their bonds asunder" PART 3 No. 45. "I know that my redeemer liveth" No. 48. "The trumpet No. 53. "Worthy is the lamb No. 47. "Behold, I tell you shall sound - Amen' a mystery" No. 46. "Since by man



came death'

Anne Low
Dick & Betsy Otts

Bradford & Francie Ladd

PROGRAM NOTES

MESSIAH

GEORGE FREIDRICH HANDEL BORN: Halle, Germany | February 23, 1685

DIED: London, England | April 14, 1759

George Freidrich Handel was born in Germany, studied music in Italy, and moved to England in 1712, settling there for the remainder of his life. Handel made a name for himself as a composer of Italian opera in London. When audiences began to see Italian opera as pretentious and took their ticket money elsewhere, Handel was forced to adapt. He turned to oratorio: a genre that was not new to him — as a young man in Italy, he had composed two oratorios when the Pope temporarily banned opera — but was new to his English audience.

The history of oratorio dates back to about 1600. Oratorios are large-scale sacred works that sound like opera. Like opera, they involve solo singers, a chorus, and an orchestra. And they are made up of acts and scenes, which are comprised of arias, recitatives, choruses, and instrumental numbers. But they diverge from opera in their subject matter and staging. Oratorios portray sacred subjects and were often written for performance during sacred times of year, especially for the Christian season of Lent. And, as they are not intended to be secular entertainment, they are not dramatically staged: they do not include sets, costumes, or acting.

The subject of Handel's most famous oratorio is the Messiah: Jesus Christ himself. Unlike most oratorios — and unlike Handel's previous six — the singers in *Messiah* do not assume dramatic roles: no one plays the role of Jesus, his mother Mary, or his disciples. This unusual text was written by Charles Jennens, a wealthy patron of Handel's. He sent the libretto to Handel and then wrote to a friend: "I hope [Handel] will lay out his whole Genius & Skill upon it, that the Composition may excell all his former Compositions, as the subject excells every other subject. The subject is Messiah." Jennens' text —

compiled from the *King James Bible* and the *Book of Common Prayer* — does little to tell the story of Jesus. Jennens' aim is not to tell the story of Jesus' life, but rather to prove Jesus' divinity. He does so by presenting the Old Testament prophets who foretold Jesus' coming, followed by the annunciation of Jesus' birth in Act One. In the second act, he describes the passion, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. And, the final act communicates St. Paul's teachings on the resurrection and the final victory over sin and death.

Handel received Jennens' text on July 10, 1741. He began work on the oratorio on August 22. And he finished the work on September 14, having composed the entire work in just 24 days. Jennens was appalled at the speed of composition, interpreting it as carelessness on the part of the composer. After Handel's death, many posited that the speed of composition could only be attributed to divine intervention. Neither point of view factors for the reality that Handel composed most of his large-scale works that quickly. He was accustomed to composing during the short time between the close of one opera season and the start of the next. And he kept up that pace when he turned to oratorio. In fact, upon completing Messiah, he began composing his next oratorio, Samson, within a week and completed it less than a month later.

Much to Jennens' chagrin, Handel took Messiah to Dublin for its premiere. He presented it there as a concert to benefit those in debtors' prison. It is reported that 700 people attended the premiere. Women were asked to not wear hoops in their skirts and men were instructed to leave their swords at home so that they could more easily pack the house. The revenue from the performances purportedly allowed for the release of 142 debtors from prison. And the Dublin News-Letter reported that the performance "far surpassed anything of that Nature which has been performed in this or any other Kingdom." When it premiered in London about a year later, Messiah did not

fare quite as well. Critics wrestled with the very nature of the genre. In the *Universal Spectator*, a critic asked if oratorio was "an Act of Religion.... if it is, I ask if the Playhouse is a fit Temple to perform it in.... If it is for Diversion and Amusement only ... what a Prophanation of God's Name and Word it is, to make so light use of them?"

After Handel's death, Messiah really caught on. Evidence of huge productions of it go back to 1784, when a performance at Westminster Abbey publicized an orchestra of 250 musicians. And in 1787, a performance at the same venue boasted over 800 musicians involved. *Messiah's* popularity has endured for centuries, whether in oversized productions, small scale performances on period instruments, or even in the form of singalongs. It seems that, despite its unusual text, its message of hope followed by despair that ultimately transforms into triumph — all wrapped in Handel's approachable musical style — continues to resonate with audiences over 250 years after its composition.

This piece was originally scored for two oboes, two trumpets, timpani, strings, basso continuo, plus vocal soloists and chorus. Handel arranged it for numerous different configurations and various orchestral sizes during his lifetime.

- Program Notes by Sarah Ruddy, Ph.D.

KATHRYN MUELLER, SOPRANO



American soprano Kathryn Mueller has made a mark with her "appealing stage presence of personal warmth and musicianship," singing a wide range of repertoire from period baroque performances to world premieres of new works. She has sung with the LA Chamber Orchestra, American Bach Soloists, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Santa Fe Pro Musica, Charlotte Symphony, Memphis Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, Winston-Salem Symphony and Tucson Symphony Orchestra.

Favorite concert works include Barber's Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Glière's Concerto for Coloratura Soprano, Haydn's Creation, Bach's St. John Passion, and anything by Mozart or Handel. She collaborates as a guest artist with the award-winning early

music group Wayward Sisters, and has also sung operatic roles for Arizona Opera, the North Carolina HIP Music Festival and Bach Collegium San Diego.

Kathryn's honors include a GRAMMY nomination for her solo work on True Concord's album *Far in the Heavens*, and prizes from the Oratorio Society of New York's Solo Competition and Early Music America's Baroque Performance Competition. She was also an Adams fellows at the Carmel Bach Festival. Kathryn has recorded two GRAMMY-nominated albums with Seraphic Fire and is featured as a soloist on Seraphic Fire's best-selling *Monteverdi Vespers of 1610*.

Find out more here. www.kathrynmueller.com

EMILY MARVOSH, CONTRALTO

American contralto Emily Marvosh has established a reputation as a singing actress with excellent musicianship, a "plum-wine voice," and "graceful allure," on national and international stages. Recent solo appearances include the Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Charlotte Symphony, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, Tucson Symphony Orchestra and John Davenant's Macbeth with the Henry Purcell Society of Boston, as well as solo recitals in Tucson and the Boston area. Awards include the prestigious Adams Fellowship at the Carmel Bach Festival, the American Prize in the Oratorio and Art Song divisions, and second place in the New England Regional NATSAA competition.

Her contributions to 21st century repertoire and performance include world premiere performances with The Thirteen, Juventas New Music, Shoreline Music Society, the Manchester Summer Chamber Music Festival and the Hugo Kauder Society. She is a member of the Lorelei Ensemble, which promotes innovative new music for women. With Lorelei, she has enjoyed collaborations with composers David Lang and Julia Wolfe, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, A Far Cry, Duke Performances, and major symphony orchestras in Boston, Chicago, Nashville, and San Francisco.

A frequent recitalist and proud native of Michigan, Emily Marvosh created a chamber recital celebrating the history and culture of her home state, which won a St. Botolph Club Foundation Emerging Artist Award. She belongs to Beyond Artists, a coalition of artists that donates a percentage of their concert fees to organizations they care about.

Find out more here. www.emilymarvosh.com



JAMES REESE, TENOR



"A shining tenor" (New York Classical Review), James Reese delivers dynamic, thoughtful performances that facilitate intimate connections between audiences and the art.

An emerging specialist in early repertoire and a champion of new works, Reese's rare ability to impart emotional immediacy on music from Bach to the present day has earned him overwhelming critical acclaim over the course of a burgeoning and multifaceted career.

As a soloist, Reese has appeared with leading orchestras and ensembles throughout North America, and this year, he looks forward to forging new musical relationships with the Mobile Symphony and the Victoria Symphony. He greatly anticipates a number of projects, among them an international tour to Germany and Slovakia with the Boston Early Music Festival (Carissimi's *Jephte*), his Kennedy Center solo debut with Opera Lafayette, and a staged performance of Bach's St.

Markus Passion with Concert Theater Works, collaborating with the storied actor Joseph Marcell.

The 2023-24 season saw James perform in venues from Hawaii to international locales including Belgium, Sweden, Finland, Canada, Scandinavia and Germany, making debuts with Tafelmusik (CAN), the Portland Baroque Orchestra and Symphony Nova Scotia. An active recitalist, Reese works frequently with friend and collaborator, pianist Daniel Overly. In 2025, they will present Schubert's *Die Schöne Mullerin* at the historic Hill-Physick House in Philadelphia.

Find out more here. www.jamesreesetenor.com

JONATHAN WOODY, BASS-BARITONE

Jonathan Woody is a versatile and dynamic musician who maintains an active schedule as a performer and composer in New York and across North America. Cited by the Washington Post for singing "with resonance and clarity," Woody is in demand as a bass-baritone soloist, appearing regularly with historically informed orchestras including Boston Early Music Festival, Apollo's Fire, Pacific MusicWorks, Bach Collegium San Diego, Trinity Baroque Orchestra and New York Baroque Incorporated. In the 2021-2022 season, he served as Artistic Advisor for the Portland Baroque Orchestra, curating a program of 17th-century German music for voices and orchestra.

An accomplished chamber musician, Woody often performs as a member of the

GRAMMY*-nominated Choir of Trinity Wall Street, where he has earned praise from the *New York Times* for his "charismatic" and "riveting" solos. He has also recently performed in collaboration with Kaleidoscope Ensemble, Les Délices, Seraphic Fire, Byron Schenkman and Friends and TENET Vocal Artists.

Woody's compositional voice blends 17th and 18th-century inspiration with the minimalism and socially conscious subject matter of today. Since 2020, he has received commissions from Apollo's Fire, the Choir of Trinity Wall Street, Chanticleer, the Handel and Haydn Society, the Cathedral Choral Society of Washington, D.C. and the Five Boroughs Music Festival, among others.



Find out more here.
www.athloneartists.com/artists/jonathan-woody/

SPECK SPEAKS

We celebrate the joy and renewal of spring with an uplifting performance of Handel's most beloved oratorio. A cherished tradition in many countries, *Messiah* tells the story of Christ's birth, passion, resurrection, and resurrection through sublime choruses, stirring arias, and majestic orchestration. From the exhilarating "Hallelujah"

chorus to the tender beauty of "He shall feed his flock," Handel's music conveys the profound spirituality and universal themes of hope and redemption.

This is the first time in its history that the MSO has presented *Messiah*. The orchestra and USA Concert Choir and Mobile Opera Chorus illuminate every facet of Handel's

masterpiece, capturing its emotional depth with clarity and resonance. Our four soloists bring each character and emotion to life in a performance that inspires and uplifts. Join us for an unforgettable evening of music that transcends time and tradition.



PROGRAM

SCOTT SPECK, conductor CHARLIE ALBRIGHT, piano

Saenger Theatre

Saturday, May 17, 2025 at 7:30 P.M. | Sunday, May 18, 2025 at 2:30 P.M.

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

La Valse, poème chorégraphique

12 minutes

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Piano Concerto No.2 g minor, Op. 22 Andante sostenuto 24 minutes

Andante sostenuto Allegro scherzando

Presto

Charlie Albright

INTERMISSION

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14
Rêveries, Passions (Visions, Passions)
Un ball (A Ball)
Scéne aux champs (Scene in the Country)
Marche au supplice (March to the Scaffold)
Songe d'une nuit du sabbat (Dream of a Witches' Sabbath)

49 minutes



The Laura Lee Pattillo Norquist Charitable Foundation

PROGRAM NOTES

LA VALSE

MAURICE RAVEL

BORN March 7, 1875 | Ciboure, France DIED December 28, 1937 | Paris, France

Around 1906, Maurice Ravel began composing a symphonic poem about the great European capital of Vienna, which he titled "Wien." It was an homage to Johann Strauss and the Waltz: a dance form that had held the city's imagination for an entire century. Ravel, who was a notoriously slow composer, finally got around to orchestrating the work in about 1914. Shortly thereafter, he abandoned the symphonic poem when Austria-Hungary invaded Serbia. As the First World War began, Ravel felt it was not the time to laud the Austrian capital.

The war was not easy on Ravel. He stopped composing, enlisted as a lorry driver, and lost many friends (whom he honored in the suite Le Tombeau de Couperin). Coming out of the war, he suffered from insomnia and his rate of composition slowed even further. Upon receiving a commission from the ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev, Ravel returned to his "Wien" symphonic poem, rewriting it as ballet for the post-war world. The re-titled La Valse no longer sounds like a tribute to the charming, whirling, glittering sounds of Strauss's Vienna. Instead, in Ravel's post-war composition, the waltz slowly materializes out of nothingness. Fragments are heard long before any danceable themes emerge. No sooner do we begin to feel the rhythm and hear the melodies of the waltz than it is interrupted: loud percussion crashes throw it into disarray and dissonance. The piece grows to a chaotic climax before coming to a violent end with crashing unisons from the whole orchestra. Ravel provided a rather benign description of the piece in his preface to the score:

"Through whirling clouds, waltzing couples may be faintly distinguished. The clouds gradually scatter: one sees... an immense hall peopled with a whirling crowd. The scene is gradually illuminated. The light of the chandeliers bursts forth at the *fortissimo*.... Set in an imperial court, about 1855."

Ravel's description doesn't admit to any of the chaos or violence that enfolds in his piece. He denied that the work was a reflection on post-war Vienna. But others can't help but hear the death of the waltz—and of Viennese imperial society—in Ravel's work. Composer George Benjamin describes the piece: "Whether or not it was intended as a metaphor for the predicament of European civilization in the aftermath of the Great War, its one-movement design plots the birth, decay and destruction of a musical genre: the Waltz."

This piece is scored for 3 flutes (one doubling piccolo), 3 oboes (one doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, a large complement of percussion, 2 harps, and strings.

PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS BORN October 9, 1835 | Paris, France DIED December 16, 1921 | Algiers, Algeria

Camille Saint-Saëns was a prolific composer who wrote in nearly all genres available to him: operas, symphonies, tone poems, concertos, chamber music, songs, choral music, and even one of the first film scores. He was an organist at the Church of the Madeleine in Paris, conducted and performed as a pianist, and wrote poetry, plays, articles, and books. His second piano concerto was composed in less than three weeks, at the request of the Russian pianist and composer Anton Rubinstein.

Saint-Saëns and Rubinstein first met in 1858 and became friends. Their friendship lasted the rest of their lives and, during Rubinstein's frequent visits to Paris, the two would often perform together. In the spring of 1868, Rubinstein was in Paris for a series of eight performances on which he was playing piano and Saint-Saëns was at the podium. As the series was coming to an end, Rubinstein proposed to Saint-Saëns that the two friends should swap places for a concert on which Rubinstein would make his Paris conducting debut with Saint-Saëns performing on piano. They looked for a venue and settled on a concert date just

three weeks away. Saint-Saëns composed a new concerto for the occasion, completing the work in seventeen days.

The work is in three movements, like most concertos. But it does not carry the typical tempos of a concerto. The first movement is a slow, sacred-sounding *Andante sostenuto*, the second is a playful *Allegro scherzando*, and the third is a whirlwind *Presto*.

The first movement owes its character to Saint-Saëns' long career as a church organist. It begins with an improvisatory sounding piano solo reminiscent of a Bach Fantasia. When the main theme emerges, it is a melody that Saint-Saëns borrowed from a discarded motet composed by his student Gabriel Fauré. (Pianist Alfred Cortot reported that Fauré "with absolute sincerity congratulated himself on the honor his master had done him by using his theme.") Following a playful second movement that suggests the wittiness of the composer's famous Carnival of the Animals, the third movement Presto is an extremely fast Tarantella that gives the soloist hardly any time for rest.

Unlike many of his Romantic contemporaries, Saint-Saëns believed in art for art's sake. He wrote in his memoir: "He who does not get pleasure from a simple series of well-constructed chords, beautiful only in their arrangement, is not really fond of music."

This piece is scored for solo piano, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, crash cymbal, and strings.

SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE

HECTOR BERLIOZ

BORN: La Côte-Saint-André, France | December 11, 1803

DIED: Paris, France | March 8, 1869

In 1827, a young Hector Berlioz attended a performance of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* that would have a lasting effect on his life and work. He fell in love with Shakespeare, reading and quoting his works frequently for the rest of his life. The Bard inspired three major compositions — *Roméo et Juliette, Béatrice et Bénédict*, and the *Roi Lear* overture — and many more of his

smaller works. But just as important as the love for Shakespeare that the performance sparked was Berlioz's obsession with the play's leading lady. Following the performance, Berlioz wrote of the actress Harriet Smithson: "The impression made on my heart and mind by her extraordinary talent, nay her dramatic genius, was equalled only by the havoc wrought in me by the poet she so nobly interpreted."

Berlioz wrote letters to Smithson frequently over the next two years, though he never received a response. He referred to her as his Juliet, his Ophelia, and his Desdemona. In 1829, finally beaten down by unrequited love, Berlioz turned his obsession into composition with his Symphonie Fantastique, subtitled "An episode in the life of an artist in five parts." This programmatic symphony tells the story of a gifted artist who, despairing over a woman who does not return his love, poisons himself with opium. A series of dream-like scenes follow: a ball, a countryside vignette, a harrowing march to the scaffold where the artist dreams he has killed his beloved and is facing execution, and a witch's sabbath celebrating his death. Berlioz writes in his extensive program notes: "yet everywhere, whether in town or in the countryside, the beloved image keeps haunting him and throws

his spirit into confusion." Berlioz musically evokes the haunting image of his beloved with an *idée fixe*: a musical theme that recurs in every movement and lends unity and structure to the piece.

The first movement opens with a slow, tender introduction. Berlioz writes:

"The author imagines that a young musician, afflicted by the sickness of spirit which a famous writer has called the confusion of passions, sees for the first time a woman who unites all the charms of the ideal person his imagination was dreaming of, and falls desperately in love with her."

As the pace quickens to an allegro, violins and flutes in unison present the *idée fixe*.

The *idée fixe* morphs into a waltz theme in the second movement. It interrupts the quiet countryside scene of the third movement. And it notably returns at the end of the fourth movement's march to the scaffold. Listen for the solo clarinet playing the beginning of the *idée fixe* as the artist's last thought before the death blow sends his head bouncing to the ground with a plunk-plunk-plunk performed by pizzicato strings.

The final movement is "The Witch's Sabbath." According to Berlioz, it is "a hideous gathering of shades, sorcerers and monsters of every kind who have

come together for his funeral. Strange sounds, groans, outbursts of laughter; distant shouts which seem to be answered by more shouts. The beloved melody appears once more, but has now lost its noble and shy character; it is now no more than a vulgar dance tune, trivial and grotesque: it is she who is coming to the sabbath."

This final mêlée of a movement brings together the *idée fixe*, distorted dance themes, and the funeral chant *Dies Irae* from the Latin Mass in a frighteningly triumphant conclusion.

In 1832, Smithson accepted Berlioz's invitation to a performance of *Symphonie Fantastique*. Finally acknowledging *his* "dramatic genius," she agreed to meet him. Berlioz succeeded in winning Harriet's heart and the two were married in 1833. However, the marriage only lasted about six years as life with his "ideal person" seems to have spoiled in the light of the everyday.

This piece is scored for 2 flutes and piccolo, 2 oboes and English Horn, 2 clarinets and E-flat clarinet, 4 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets and 2 cornets, 3 trombones, 2 ophicleides (usually played on tuba), 2 harps, timpani, cymbals, snare drum, bass drum, bells, and strings.

- Program notes by Sarah Ruddy, Ph.D.

CHARLIE ALBRIGHT, SOLOIST



Hailed as "among the most gifted musicians of his generation" with a "dazzling natural keyboard affinity" who "made quite an impression" by the Washington Post, American pianist/composer/improviser Charlie Albright has been praised for his "jawdropping technique and virtuosity meshed with a distinctive musicality" by The New York Times, and his "extravagance that had showmanship but never felt cheap" with his "ease and smoothness that refuses to airbrush the music, but animates it from within" by the Philadelphia Inquirer. Recipient of the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant and Gilmore Young Artist Award, Albright won the Ruhr Klavier Festival Young Artist Award presented by Marc-André Hamelin (Germany) and the Young Concert Artists International Auditions. In addition to

performing, Albright is sought after as a speaker, masterclass instructor, teacher, and competition judge. His debut commercial recording, *Vivace*, has sold thousands of copies worldwide and the first two parts of a 3-part Schubert Series of live, all-Schubert recordings was released in 2017 and 2020. Charlie Albright breaks the "classical" rules of music by connecting with audiences like no other. Through his music, speaking, and unique improvisations that bring music to life, he crosses all genres...and makes it fun.

Albright, who last performed with the MSO in March 2022 is a local favorite. He regularly performs in programs featuring artists from all genres, including vocalist/conductor Bobby McFerrin, violinist Joshua Bell, pianist Emanuel Ax, conductor Gum Nanse, Vocalists Harry Connick Jr., Marc

Martel, and Branford Marsalis, and Broadway vocalists Mandy Gonzalez, Scarlett Strallen, and Hugh Panaro. He has performed five times with revered cellist Yo-Yo Ma: at the honorary degree ceremony at Harvard University for Senator Ted Kennedy; at a 10th anniversary remembrance of 9/11; at the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison; at the Aspen Institute's Citizen Artistry conference in New York; and with the Silk Road Project.

Albright appears regularly worldwide with such orchestras as the San Francisco, Seattle, Boston Pops, Philly Pops, BBC Concert Orchestra, Seongnam Philharmonic (Korea), Bergen (Norway), Victoria (Canada), and NCPA (China) Symphonies; and at venues including the Walt Disney Concert Hall, Grieg Hall (Norway), and the mainstage of Carnegie Hall.

Albright's compositions and improvisations have been likened to "the great Romantic-era composer-pianists" by Classical Source and have been praised as "thrilling" by the DC Metro Theatre Arts. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* raved that he "brought the art of classical-music improvisation to a new level." *The Boston Musical Intelligencer* wrote simply that "Albright is a master of improvisation."

A firm believer in education, Albright founded the Charlie Albright Scholarship and Charlie Albright Piano in collaboration with the Centralia College Foundation in his hometown. The Scholarship provides financial aid to music students, and money was raised to purchase and maintain a new 9-foot Steinway Piano for the college's Corbet Hall.

Albright graduated as the first classical pianist in the Harvard/NEC Joint Program and received his Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School, having studied with Nancy Adsit, Wha-Kyung Byun, and Yoheved Kaplinsky. Albright is an official Steinway Artist.

Find out more here. CharlieAlbright.com

SPECK SPEAKS

The Mobile Symphony Orchestra's 2024-2025 season ends in a blaze of glory, highlighting three masterful French composers. Maurice Ravel's *La Valse* opens the concert with its intoxicating whirl of waltzes, shimmering with kaleidoscopic colors. The music first draws us into a world of swirling dance and poignant nostalgia – and then devolves into a stunning depiction of the devastation of the early 20th century.

The ebullient pianist Charlie Albright returns for Camille Saint-Saëns' Piano Concerto No. 2, showcasing his virtuosic pyrotechnics and lyrical sensitivity in this Romantic masterpiece.

The concert culminates with Hector Berlioz's visionary *Symphonie Fantastique*, a symphonic odyssey that delves into the depths of the Romantic imagination. From the dreamlike reveries of the "Reveries – Passions" to the electrifying "March to the Scaffold" and "Dream of a Witches' Sabbath," Berlioz's powerful and innovative symphony unfolds with theatricality and emotional intensity. A thrilling end to a thrilling season!



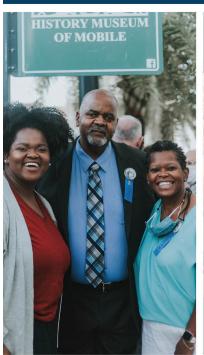








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obile Symphony is the most important source of music education in our community. More than 10,000 children and young people experience, create and learn music through the MSO's award-winning programs. Our education programs reach students throughout the Mobile Bay area, especially those whose families are least able to afford music lessons and quality arts experiences for their children.

Music learning supports ALL learning. Study after study shows adding music to a child's education develops a long list of skill sets that improves learning across all subject areas, carrying through to success in college and the workforce. Musical kids develop better language skills, increase their IQ, score better on tests, excel at math and gain the discipline to learn difficult skills. We spend almost one-fifth of our budget on education – much more than most orchestras or other local arts organizations. Here are just a few of the ways we make a difference:

• First and second graders in participating schools receive music classes all year through the symphony's award-winning Preludes classes. Our Strings in Schools program offers the only weekly string instrument instruction in Mobile and Baldwin County public elementary schools.

- Internationally acclaimed musicians like this season's Randall Goosby, Grammy-winning Harlem Quartet, pianist Aldo López-Gavilán, Renée Fleming, international mandolinist Avi Avital and local professional ensembles perform for area students in their schools.
- Instrument and tuition scholarships, \$10 student tickets and free children's concert tickets on Sundays through Big Red Ticket (sponsored by Alabama Power Foundation and the Figures Foundation) make classical music accessible to all families.
- Mobile Symphony Youth Orchestra the region's top youth orchestra offers high-level instruction and performance opportunities resulting in success on stage and in life.

You can help support student success and keep this amazing outreach going by contributing today. Every gift makes an impact in the lives of the young people we teach in Mobile and Baldwin counties.

Find out more at MobileSymphony.org or call us at 251-432-2010 or daniela@mobilesymphony.org Follow Mobile Symphony Education on Facebook.



EDUCATION

ORCHESTRATING STUDENT SUCCESS



PRELUDES – Mobile Symphony professional instructors teach weekly general music classes at nine participating elementary schools. These classes reach more than 1,400 1st and 2nd grade students and show how integrating music and music education in the classroom can help in all subjects, making a more well-rounded student.

STRINGS – Students in our 24 participating public schools can sign up for group lessons in violin, viola or cello. Taught by professional musicians, these weekly classes are available in grades 2-9 and cover everything from basic string technique to more advanced music concepts, note reading and aural skills.

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Professional Mobile Symphony ensembles perform for school assemblies throughout the school year. These performances introduce students to orchestral instruments in a fun and casual manner and expose young



audiences to classical music, helping them connect it to more familiar genres. MSO guest artists frequently visit area schools to perform, discuss music with older students and coach young musicians.

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One of our most popular outreach programs, instrument petting zoos are a unique hands-on experience in which students learn about and experiment with making sounds on the various instruments of the orchestra. The experience can be tailored to all audiences including the hearing or visually impaired, special education students or general education.

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YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS

The Mobile Symphony presents full-orchestra performances at the Saenger Theatre for children during the school day. This year we will present *Lily and the Bull Shark* on Feb. 10, 2025.

BIG RED TICKET – Mobile Symphony's Big Red Ticket program, underwritten by The Alabama Power Foundation and The Figures Foundation, provides any K-12 students (ages 5-18) with free admission to MSO Sunday classical matinee performances when accompanied by a paying adult. The following performances are eligible for Big Red Ticket admission. Please no babies in arms.

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IVAN DEL PRADO, MUSIC DIRECTOR







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Mobile Bay region. This season, we will return to Foley for our traditional holiday program and to Medal of Honor Park for our Mother's Day celebration.

For information about concerts or auditions, please call 251-432-2010 or visit www.mobilesymphony.org.

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Sunday, November 17, 2024 - 2:30 p.m.Opening Concert - Saenger Theatre

Friday, December 6, 2024 - 7:00 p.m. Holiday Concert - Foley, Alabama, Civic Center **Sunday, May 4, 2025 – 2:30 p.m.** Season Finale – Saenger Theatre

Sunday, May 11, 2025 - 5:30 p.m. Mother's Day Concert - Medal of Honor Park 1711 Hillcrest Road, Mobile, Ala. 36609

All concerts are subject to change.

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IVAN DEL PRADO, MUSIC DIRECTOR



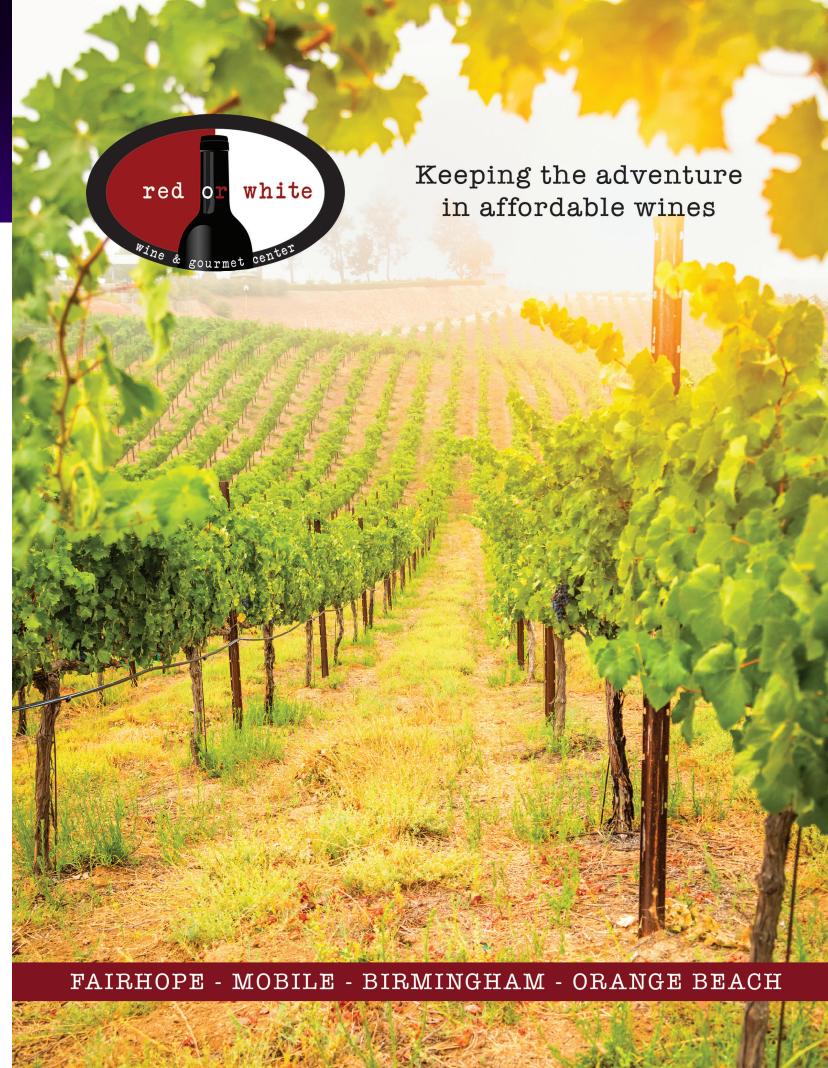




his is Dr. Ivan del Prado's sixth season as music director of the Mobile Symphony Youth Orchestra. Recognized as one of the most gifted Cuban-American conductors and described by critics as energetic and versatile, Dr. Del Prado is also the music/artistic director of the Philharmonic Orchestra of the State of Chihuahua, Mexico. He has been the principal conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba, artistic and music director of the Gran Teatro de La Habana Symphony Orchestra, founder and general director of the Chamber Orchestra of Havana and music director of the Baja California Orchestra in Mexico.

Del Prado has been guest conductor for numerous orchestras around the world and has been praised by critics for his masterful interpretation on both standard Romantic literature and works from the 20th Century. His versatility spans the genres of symphony, opera and ballet. Opera has given del Prado the opportunity to collaborate with outstanding artists such as Maestro Luigi Alba, José Carreras and Victoria de Los Angeles. Ballet has taken him to conduct the Deutsch Staatsoper Unter den Linden Ballet and the Cuban National Ballet in international tours.

Education has been a central focus in Ivan del Prado's career, and he was founder of the Cuba National Youth Orchestras. He was an adjunct professor at the University of Southern Mississippi and artistic director of the Premier Orchestral Institute, a project of the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra.



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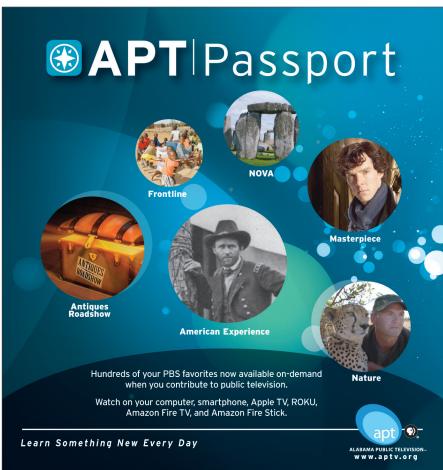
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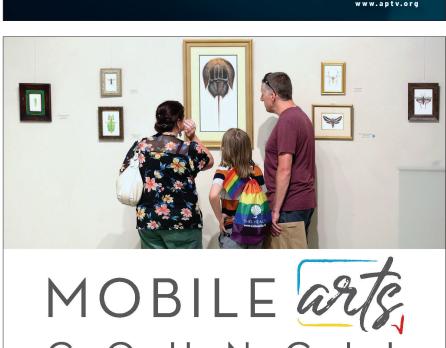
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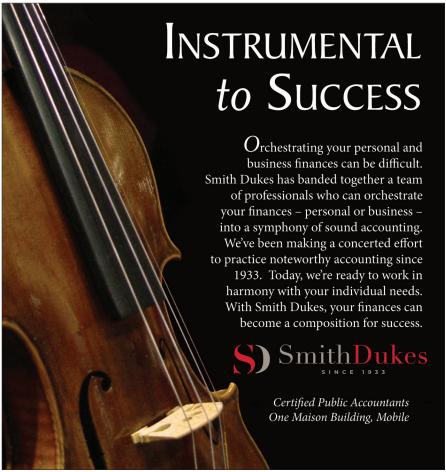
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For more information about a gift to our endowment, please call the Mobile Symphony Development Department at 251-432-2010.

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ABOUT THE SAENGER

A JEWEL OF MOBILE'S HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE

he Mobile Symphony has performed in the historic Saenger Theatre since 1997. Built as part of a chain of Saenger Theatres along the Gulf Coast, Mobile's Saenger opened on January 19, 1927, and hosted everything from vaudeville shows to silent films. Construction cost approximately \$500,000 and took a year to complete. The Saenger's style was intended to resemble European opera houses and the decoration was inspired by classical Greek mythology and Mobile's coastal location.

The theater was closed in 1970 and later, like many of America's grand movie palaces, was prepared for demolition. On the eve of its destruction, the University of South Alabama bought the Saenger, and the theater was renovated and reopened as the USA Saenger Theatre, a performing arts center.

In 1999, the City of Mobile purchased

the Saenger from USA. A non-profit organization, the Centre for the Living Arts, Inc., was formed in 2000 to operate the theater. The CLA, with generous donations from the community, restored the historic building to its former glory at a cost of about \$6 million. In early 2013, the CLA ended its contract and management of the Saenger.

In 2014, the Mobile Symphony was pleased to donate a new \$373,000 acoustical shell to the City of Mobile for use in the Saenger Theatre. The shell consists of movable white panels that are situated around and above the orchestra during a performance. This structure optimizes the sound of our musicians so that the softest stroke of a bow can be heard in the farthest seat.





MSO / SAENGER INFORMATION

PERSONAL PROPERTY – We regret that the management cannot be responsible for patrons' personal apparel or property. Lost and found inquiries may be directed to the Saenger's administrative office, 251-208-5605.

CELL PHONES, PHOTOGRAPHY & **RECORDING** – Cell phones MUST be turned off. Cameras and recording devices may not be brought into the theater without the consent of the Saenger Theatre management or Mobile Symphony. Recording in any form – including by cell phone – of a live performance may be a violation of federal copyright laws. All cell phone use during the performance is prohibited.

RESTROOMS – Restrooms are located in the Arcade and on the mezzanine and balcony levels.

SMOKING – The Saenger Theatre is a smoke-free facility.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS-

Wheelchair seating locations are available upon request from the Mobile Symphony box office. Box office policy is to sell one wheelchair ticket and one companion ticket together. Patrons with special needs are encouraged to contact the box office, 251-432-2010, in advance.

FIRE NOTICE – The exit sign nearest the seat you occupy is the shortest route to the street in the event of fire or other emergency. Please follow the instructions of ushers or other theatre personnel.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES – Beverage service is available in the lobby before performances and during intermission.

Alabama law prohibits the sale of alcoholic beverages to minors. No outside food or beverages may be brought into the auditorium. No food is allowed in the auditorium during the performance.

LATECOMERS – Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of Mobile Symphony management during appropriate pauses in the program. MSO policy is to begin performances at the advertised curtain time.

NO BABIES IN ARMS – We recommend ages 5 and up. All patrons must have a ticket to enter the theater and occupy their own seat.



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