

GENEVA CONCERTS



PRESENTS

Symphor!a

THE ORCHESTRA OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

GOOD VIBRATIONS

Michelle Merrill, conductor

Sunday, April 23, 2023 • 3:00 p.m.
Smith Opera House

GENEVA CONCERTS

2022-2023 SEASON

Friday, September 16, 2022 at 7:30 pm
Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre

Sunday, November 6, 2022 at 3:00 pm
Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra

Vinay Parameswaran, conductor; Tai Murray, violin
SIBELIUS Symphony No. 5, Op. 82 in E-flat Major
WYNTON MARSALIS Violin Concerto in D Major

Friday, March 10, 2023 at 7:30 pm
Symphoria

Lawrence Loh, conductor; Awadagin Pratt, piano

SEAN O'LOUGHLIN *Symphoria*

ROBERT SIERRA *Fandangos*

JESSIE MONTGOMERY *Rounds* for Piano and String Orchestra

DUKE ELLINGTON *Three Black Kings*

AARON COPLAND *Lincoln Portrait*

Sunday, April 23, 2023 at 3:00 pm
Symphoria

Michelle Merrill, conductor

MENDELSSOHN *The Hebrides Overture*, Op. 26

J.S. BACH *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3*

JOHANN STRAUSS, Jr. *On the Beautiful Blue Danube*

MOZART Symphony No. 41 in C Major, K. 551 (*Jupiter*)

Performed at the Smith Opera House, 82 Seneca Street, Geneva, NY

These concerts are made possible, in part, by the Williams Family Foundation, the Wyckoff Family Foundation, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, and the Statewide Community Re-grants Program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature and administered by Auburn Public Theater.

Symphor!a

THE ORCHESTRA OF CENTRAL NEW YORK

Lawrence Loh, Music Director

GOOD VIBRATIONS

Michelle Merrill, conductor

MENDELSSOHN *The Hebrides Overture, Op. 26* (“Fingal’s Cave”)

BACH **Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major, BWV 1048**
 I. [Allegro]
 II. Adagio
 III. Allegro

STRAUSS, Jr. *On the Beautiful Blue Danube, Op. 314*

~ INTERMISSION ~

MOZART **Symphony No. 41 in C Major, Op. 551** (“Jupiter”)
 I. Allegro vivace
 II. Andante cantabile
 III. Allegretto
 IV. Molto allegro

Michelle Merrill, conductor

Michelle Merrill has been inspiring audiences throughout the country with her sharply detailed and vibrant performances. A passionate and dynamic artist, she served four years as the Assistant and then Associate Conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, where she also carried the title of Phillip and Lauren Fisher Community Ambassador. In addition to her growing guest conducting schedule, Ms. Merrill currently serves as the Music Director of the Coastal Symphony of Georgia, where she has ignited the growth and expansion of the orchestra's offerings both on and off the stage.

Ms. Merrill's most recent and upcoming engagements include the National Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Opera, National Arts Centre Orchestra (Ottawa), Minnesota Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Toledo Symphony Orchestra, Sarasota Orchestra, West Virginia Symphony, Symphoria (Syracuse), Princeton Symphony Orchestra, and the Round Top Music Festival Institute.

During her four-year tenure as the Associate Conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, she helped plan a wide variety of concerts each season, including the renowned educational webcasts, which have reached over 100,000 students to date in classrooms throughout the nation. Ms. Merrill also gave pre-concert lectures, led adult music education seminars, engaged with students and adults in and around Metro Detroit, spoke on behalf of the DSO throughout the community, and participated in hosting *Live from Orchestra Hall*, the DSO's free concert webcast that launched in 2011 and is now watched in more than 100 countries.

Ms. Merrill is a proud recipient of a 2016 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award as well as the prestigious 2013 Ansbacher Conducting Fellowship as awarded by members of the Vienna Philharmonic and the American Austrian Foundation, which enabled her to be in residence at the world-renowned Salzburg Festival. Born in Dallas, TX, she studied conducting with Dr. Paul C. Phillips at Southern Methodist University's Meadows School of the Arts, where she holds a Master of Music Degree in conducting and a Bachelor of Music in performance. Apart from music, she loves cooking, running, hiking, and spending time outdoors with her husband, Steve Merrill, who serves as the principal percussionist of the Jacksonville Symphony, and their two sons, Davis (5 years) and Emmett (9 months).

Good Vibrations

Einstein, Tesla, Edison and other famous scientists were also musicians and music lovers. This concert features works by some of their favorite composers. The program begins with Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*. The composer once said, "it is in pictures, ruins, and natural surroundings that I find the most music." The Overture is very much an ode to nature, after his visit to the Island of Staffa in Scotland. Its famous 'Fingal's Cave' is over sixty meters deep and has been described as a natural 'cathedral' with towering pillars and great archways. Some visitors claim to have also heard mysterious harmonies echoing from the water within the cave. Mendelssohn undoubtedly was influenced by Beethoven, making specific use of a simple melody, and then repeating it with different instruments and combinations throughout the work. The simple melody Mendelssohn used serves to illustrate the motion of water, with the undulating effect imitating the swelling of the waves and the bobbing of the boat. As the work develops, the melody transforms to evoke the grandeur of the cave itself. The work begins our program as reference to inventor and scientist Alexander Graham Bell. Bell was a well-known fan of classical music, a self-taught pianist, who played for his wife Mabel almost every day.

In 1721, Johann Sebastian Bach dedicated six “concertos with several instruments” to Margrave Christian Ludwig of Brandenburg. The dedication offers a bit of insight into the social position occupied by one of Europe’s most talented composers during his lifetime. The Margrave had asked to see some of Bach’s work, and he obliged, writing, “I have then in accordance with Your Highness’ most gracious orders taken the liberty of rendering my most humble duty to Your Royal Highness with the present concertos, which I have adapted to several instruments; begging Your Highness most humbly not to judge their imperfection with the rigor of the fine and delicate taste that the whole world knows Your Highness has for musical pieces; but rather to infer from them in benign consideration the profound respect and the most humble obedience that I try to show Your Highness therewith.” Though often-times performed with varying instrumental forces, the Third Concerto was originally written for nine solo strings (three each of violins, violas, and cellos) and continuo. It opens majestically, with the soloists grouped by instrument (the violins play one figure, the violas another, and the cellos a third). As the work progresses, the divisions hold, but occasionally break into solo passages for individual instruments.

Albert Einstein was a well-known lover of the music of Bach, and frequently performed his Concerto for Two Violins. Speaking of his approach to problem-solving, Einstein said, “First I improvise and if that doesn’t help, I seek consolation in Mozart; but when I am improvising and I feel I am achieving something, I need the clear constructions of Bach to get to the end.”

Thomas Edison was primarily focused on the business and the technical innovations that he could provide. While he is known to have appreciated classical music, his taste in music was somewhat more oriented towards music of the time. Edison was a self-professed lover of ‘heart songs,’ a style of sentimental ballad (usually love songs). While musical genres weren’t particularly clearly defined at the time early recordings were being made, Edison declined to participate in the promotion of artistic celebrities, in contrast to his later competitors, such as Victor. Edison is of course credited with the invention of the modern music industry through his phonograph invention. *Blue Danube Waltz* by Johann Strauss II made multiple appearances on Edison’s Diamond discs, first appearing in 1917, as performed by the Imperial Marimba Band.

Nikola Tesla, Albert Einstein, Alexander Graham Bell, and many other well-known inventors point to Mozart as one of their most admired composers. Albert Einstein said, “Mozart’s music is so pure and beautiful that I see it as a reflection of the inner beauty of the universe.” We have chosen Mozart’s *Symphony No. 41* as the closing work for this program, in part because it is one of Mozart’s most grand and wide-ranging symphonic works. Nicknamed “Jupiter” by London audiences, it is a fitting tribute to Mozart’s music.

While Mozart didn’t intend to reference the Olympian god, he did choose the key of C major for the Symphony, a choice which carries imperial associations. The first movement maintains a stately dignity while incorporating fanfares and flourishes throughout, adding to the almost military or royal character. Starting with the second theme in the first movement, Mozart incorporates lyrical passages and creates an almost operatic dialogue for much of the first three movements.

In the final movement, Mozart utilizes a common four note motif, which likely would have been well-known to audiences of the time. It would have been particularly well known to anyone who had studied composition, due to its inclusion as a homework assignment from a well-known book on counterpoint. Mozart teases those with this bit of inside knowledge, but deprives the listener of completion of the counterpoint, until the end of the movement. In the meantime, Mozart incorporates a complex fugue, and multiple canons, culminating in final recapitulation that completes the missing counterpoint. The overall effect is a stunning example of Mozart’s genius.

Symphoria Musicians

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Sonya Stith Williams, Associate Concertmaster
Edgar Tumajyan, Assistant Concertmaster
Supported by David A. A. Ridings
Noemi Miloradovic
Liviú Dobrota
Asher Wulfman
Laura Smith

VIOLIN II

Amy Christian, Principal
Anita Gustafson, Assistant Principal
Yurie Mitsuhashi
Sara Silva
Linda Carmona
Noah Fields

VIOLA

Heejeung Yang, Principal
Supported by an anonymous Friend
Szu Hua (Mia) Chen, Assistant Principal
Carol Sasson
Arvilla Wendland
William Ford-Smith

CELLO

Heidi Hoffman, Principal
Lindsay Groves, Assistant Principal
Gregory Wood, Assistant Principal
Walden Bass
George Macero
Supported by Bill & Nancy Byrne

BASS

Spencer Phillips, Principal
Supported by Lou & Kathy Lemos
Michael Fittipaldi, Assistant Principal
Supported by Barbara Davis, in memory of
Leslie Davis
Joshua Kerr
Marshall Henry

FLUTE

Xue Su, Principal
Kelly Covert
Dana DiGennaro

PICCOLO

Kelly Covert

OBOE

Eduardo Sepúlveda, Principal
The Philip R. MacArthur Chair

Patricia Sharpe
Brian Greene

CLARINET

Allan Kolsky, Principal
John Friedrichs, Assistant Principal
BASS CLARINET
John Friedrichs

BASSOON

Rachel Koeth, Principal
Jessica Wooldridge King
CONTRABASSOON
Jessica Wooldridge King

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