

Lakeland Civic Orchestra

Dr. Matthew C. Saunders, director

86th Anniversary Season: 2023-2024

Concert #4: Music of the Spheres

Sunday, April 28, 2024, 4 p.m.

Rodehorst Performing Arts Center

Lakeland Community College

Program

MAX BRUCH (1838-1920)

Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26 (1866-67)

Prelude: Allegro moderato—

Adagio

Finale: Allegro energico

Aika Birch, violin

Winner, Young Artists Competition

Intermission

MISSY MAZZOLI (b. 1980)

Sinfonia (For Orbiting Spheres) (2014, rev. 2016)

GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813-1901)

Aïda (1870-71)

Act II: Triumphal March and Ballet

THE LAKELAND CIVIC ORCHESTRA

Dr. Matthew C. Saunders, director

Violin I

Aaron Roberts*
Lauren Godfrey
Jacob Ball
Marisa McCaffrey
Carter McCullough
Riley Hochmuth
Bruce Knarr

Violin II

Jennifer Roberts **
Kathryn Barufa
Ann Weaver
Abigail Bickel
Ashley Johnson
Alexandra Cielic
Luca Spataro
Joseph Raizis

Viola

Carol Linsenmeier **
Amy Roth
Ben Billings
Lexi Huntington
Sonja Marich
Lucas Rogowski

Violoncello

Amanda Sprinzl**
Dean Slejko
Emily Glink
Christian Keller

Bass

Matthew Yoke **
Jim Bockhoff
West Matthews
Olivia Bickel

Flute

Judith Elias **
Jennifer Lawery
Mary Ann Ratchko

Piccolo

Jennifer Lawery

Oboe

Michael Steckner **
Emily Recchia

Clarinet

Bruce Langguth **
Jolyon Welsh
Samuel Griesmer

Bassoon

Melanie Nichols **
Scott Moorman

Horn

Carol Stafinski **
Ken Kingston
Sarah Jackson
Laura Zydiak

Trumpet

Art Goldstein **
John McClellan
Michelle Swiniarski

Trombone

Jack Borsi **
Simon Haney
Tom Toth

Tuba

Charlie Holmes

Percussion

Darrell Garlock
Joshua Marshall

Librarian

Carol Stafinski

*concertmaster

**principal player

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

DR. MATTHEW C. SAUNDERS (born 1976, Austin, Texas, USA) is a Northeast Ohio composer, conductor, trombonist, husband and father. All his work is connected to teaching students from kindergarten to college in styles from madrigal to mariachi. He draws inspiration from the vastness of space, the waterways and forests, mountains and prairies of America, the motion of atoms and the mysteries of existence, but most importantly from collaboration with other musicians and his students. He reads history, science, science fiction, classics and too much social media. After a hard day's work, he relaxes on the couch with his wonderful wife, who is the love of his life and his teammate in the sport of parenting their children. On sunny days off, he bicycles and hikes and hopes to bike the full-length of the Ohio & Erie Canalway, from Cleveland to Bolivar, a short distance from the first home he remembers. He is lucky to live near Lake Erie, and he often pauses to look out over it for the glimpse of a freighter, or merely to contemplate the motion of the water. Dr. Saunders is a lover of both solitude and camaraderie, Cincinnati-style chili, road trips, movies, and random facts. His favorite dinosaur is the Parasaurolophus, but he thinks the best dinosaur is the Stegosaurus. He keeps a running list of possible band names, and one day hopes to start one, singing clever songs about the world (as well as a few love songs) with plenty of vocal harmony. He gets excited about lots of music that he would never write or perform himself and does what he can to share that with the world, too, because everyone's voice should be heard.

Dr. Saunders is professor of Music and music and theater department chair at Lakeland Community College, where he also directs the Lakeland Civic Orchestra. Before coming to Lakeland, he held the position of associate professor of Music and Director of Bands at Oklahoma Panhandle State University from 2007 to 2012. He received degrees in music from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and The Ohio State University.

ABOUT THE SOLOIST



AIKA BIRCH is a 15-year-old freshman at Jackson High School in Canton, Ohio. She began studying violin with Dr. Marlene Moses at age 3, followed by studies with Dr. Minju Kim, and is currently a student of Jung-Min Amy Lee, Associate Concertmaster for the Cleveland Orchestra.

Aika plays first violin with the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra under the baton of Daniel Reith. Previously, she played with the Canton Youth Symphony Advanced Orchestra under the direction of Matthew Jenkins Jaroszewicz. Aika has attended the Western Reserve Chamber Festival and participated in four summer sessions of the Advanced String sessions at Interlochen Arts camp. She is a member of Brahms Allegro and frequently plays with the Junior McDowell Club in Canton. Aika volunteered as an assistant violin instructor at EN-RICHMENT of Stark County.

Aika is the 2023 winner of the Sigma Alpha Iota Cleveland Annual String Competition. She also placed third in the Interlochen Arts Camp Advanced Concerto Competition. In her middle school band, Aika played flute and saxophone. She currently sings alto in the Jackson High School Freshmen Chorus. Additionally, she was honored to join the pit orchestra, mostly comprised of professional musicians, for the school's production of the musical "Newsies." In her free time, she loves to read and enjoys baking, sewing and long walks. Aika is honored to play her orchestral solo debut with the Lakeland Civic Orchestra as a winner of the Young Artist Competition in 2023.

PROGRAM NOTES

MAX BRUCH composed his first violin concerto in 1866, revising it the next year into the version heard today, which was first performed in Bremen, Germany January 5, 1868. The soloist was violinist Joseph Joachim and the conductor was Karl Martin Reinthaler. They are scored for solo violin, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings, and lasts about 25 minutes in performance.

The first violin concerto of Max Bruch is an example of a work on which a composer's reputation rests almost solely: despite two other violin concerti, three symphonies and numerous other works, only Bruch's "Scottish Fantasy" for violin and orchestra is also widely performed. Bruch himself was frustrated by this state of affairs in his own lifetime, making no secret of his wish that musicians would take up his other works more frequently, even to the point of rudeness. The piece nonetheless stands closely with 19th-century violin concertos by Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Brahms in its scope, its melodic appeal and its ability to bring a symphonic-style orchestration and development to the concerto genre, which so often has been the vehicle for mere display of technical proficiency: this is likely what led its first performer, Joseph Joachim, to place it among the four great German violin concertos, calling it the "richest, and most seductive" of its era.

Bruch was firmly in the German school of violin writing, more influenced by the likes of Joachim (dedicatee of Brahms' concerto a decade later) than Pablo de Sarasate, inspiration for many composers writing violin music in mid-19th century France. The similarities between Bruch's first concerto and its predecessors by Beethoven and Mendelssohn are not surprising. Bruch calls his first movement a "prelude:" Like Beethoven's concerto, the music begins with a timpani answered by winds and like Mendelssohn's concerto, it is connected to the slow second movement by a single tied note. Echoing Mendelssohn, the second movement is lyrical and song like, leading to a boisterous and confident finale worthy of Beethoven.

MISSY MAZZOLI composed “Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)” in response to a commission from the Los Angeles Philharmonic and revised and expanded it for the Boulder Philharmonic. The version heard today received its first performance in Boulder, Colorado by the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra February 12, 2016 under the baton of Michael Butterman. It lasts approximately 12 minutes in performance and is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets, two trombones, tuba, vibraphone, marimba, suspended cymbal, gong, lion’s roar, glockenspiel, melodica, snare drum, spring coil, boombox, piano, synthesizer, and strings. Eight woodwind and brass players also double on harmonicas.

Missy Mazzoli has emerged as one of the foremost American composers for the concert and operatic stages of the 21st century. In 2018, she became one of the first two women to receive a commission from the Metropolitan Opera and has held composer-in-residence positions with Opera Philadelphia and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Her works have been performed and recorded by the Kronos Quartet, eighth blackbird, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic. “Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)” has become a consistent part of the concert repertoire, appearing on more than one hundred separate programs since its premiere, including performances earlier this year by the Cleveland Orchestra as part of Great Lakes Science Center’s Total Eclipse Fest. The composer writes:

“Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)” is music in the shape of a solar system, a collection of rococo loops that twist around each other within a larger orbit. The word “sinfonia” refers to baroque works for chamber orchestra but also to the old Italian term for a hurdy-gurdy, a medieval stringed instrument with constant, wheezing drones that are cranked out under melodies played on an attached keyboard. It’s a piece that churns and roils, that inches close to the listener only to leap away at breakneck speed, in the process transforming the ensemble turns into a makeshift hurdy-gurdy, flung recklessly into space.

GIUSEPPE VERDI composed his four-act tragic opera “Aïda” in 1870 and 1871 to a libretto by Antonio Ghislanzoni for the opening of the Khedivial Opera House in Cairo, Egypt, where it had its first performance December 24, 1871 under the baton of Giovanni Bottesini. The triumphal march and ballet music that open the second act last about 11 minutes in performance and the concert version heard today is scored for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, bass drum, cymbals and strings.

The Suez Canal represented the fulfillment of a decadeslong dream of European and Egyptian rulers and scientists and its completion in 1869 allowed an integration of world trade thus far unknown. The Khedive of Egypt, representing the Ottoman Empire saw that his nation now lay at the heart of trade between China, India, and Europe, and determined to commemorate the occasion by constructing a European-style opera house in his capital city, Cairo. He commissioned Giuseppe Verdi for a suitable work to inaugurate the house. Verdi initially refused, but relented when presented with a suitable libretto. While the premiere took place in an admittedly peripheral location in world of European opera (Verdi considered the La Scala premiere in February 1872 to be the work’s true premiere and did not attend the Cairo performance), but 1880, the work had been heard in most major European opera houses as well as New York City and Buenos Aires. Since its first performance at New York’s Metropolitan Opera in 1886, it has been heard in that house over a thousand times.

“Aïda” is set in ancient Egypt’s Old Kingdom, and is the fictitious story of the title character, an enslaved Ethiopian princess and her love for Radamès, an Egyptian military commander. The Triumphal March and Ballet introduce the second scene of Act 2, beginning with Radamès’ return to the city of Memphis in triumph. The music heard today is the accompaniment to “Gloria all’Egitto, ad Iside, (Glory to Egypt and to Isis!),” an enormous chorus number that is one of the most appealing set-pieces in all of opera. Verdi included not only two vocal choruses, but music for an onstage wind band and six “Egyptian trumpets.”

Often referred to as “Aïda trumpets,” these instruments were designed for this work and are straight trumpets with a single piston valve. While they have found use in other operas, they are relatively rare. Their parts and the wind band parts are doubled in the regular orchestral wind section in the version heard today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to all of the following for their assistance in bringing the Lakeland Civic Orchestra to the stage:

Dr. Sunil Ahuja, President, Lakeland Community College
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Dr. Laura Barnard, Provost and vice president for Academic Affairs
Dr. Erin Fekete, Dean of Arts and Sciences
Jeri Pilarczyk, senior secretary
Timothy Dorman, Rodehorst Performing Arts Center
Charles Hegedus, Marketing
Lakeland Cashier Office
Lakeland Facilities Management

SUPPORT THE LAKELAND CIVIC ORCHESTRA

Donations to the Civic Orchestra Fund of the Lakeland Foundation can be made through the Arts at Lakeland page on the Lakeland Community College website at lakelandcc.edu/arts, or directly to the Lakeland Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

HISTORY OF THE LAKELAND CIVIC ORCHESTRA

THE LAKELAND CIVIC ORCHESTRA began in September 1937 as the Lake County Symphony Orchestra Association, founded by Mrs. Lorna Nighman, its first director, leading musicians from Lake and Geauga counties. By February 1938, the group had grown to 30 members and in June 1938, presented its first concert at Painesville Baptist Church. In 1951, the orchestra reorganized and renamed itself the Lake County Symphony Orchestra.

Around 1955, Charles Ruddick organized and began to lead the Willoughby Community Orchestra, a group providing concerts in the parks and other service functions. In 1970, the groups merged to become the Lakeland Civic Orchestra under the aegis of the recently- established Lakeland Community College.

Since then, the Lakeland Civic Orchestra has pursued the dual missions of providing Lake County residents with opportunities to play and hear orchestral music, while fulfilling the performing ensemble requirement for many Lakeland Community College music students. The annual Young Artists Concerto Competition has been an important step in the careers of budding young musicians, with the winners performing with the orchestra as soloists. Additionally, the orchestra has collaborated with choral ensembles, including the Lakeland Civic Chorus, and with the wide range of professional soloists and composers in Northeast Ohio.

For 86 years, the musicians of Lake, Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Ashtabula counties have come together to bring orchestral music to our community. They rehearse one weekday evening per week because of their passion for music and love for the act of music making and perform four times per year. We are open to all community members by audition and would love to have you join us for the next phase of our history!

MUSIC DIRECTORS OF THE LAKELAND CIVIC ORCHESTRA

LAKE COUNTY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Lorna Nighman (1937-38)

R. A. Lake (1938-42)

CIVIC CONCERT ORCHESTRA

Joseph Koch (1943-48)

Hilbert Collins (1948-55)

WILLOUGHBY COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA

Charles Ruddick (ca. 1955)

Mark Woodruff

LAKELAND CIVIC ORCHESTRA

Curtis Peterson (1970-1972)

John H. Cox (1972-1975)

Robert Bergantino (1975-1978)

Harry Davidson, Jr. (1978-1981, 1994-1998)

Peter Stafford Wilson (1981-1991)

David Borsvald (1992-1994)

Richard Niezen (1999-2000)

Kathryn Harsha (2000-2008)

Eric Gratz (2008-2010)

Scott Seaton (2010-2012)

Matthew C. Saunders (2012-present)

Lakeland Civic Orchestra

86TH SEASON—2023-2024

Sunday, Nov. 12, 2023, 4 p.m.

“Spirit of Adventure”

Sunday, Dec. 10, 2023, 4 p.m.

Combined concert with the Lakeland Civic Chorus, including works by Handel, Holst and Mozart.

Monday, Dec. 11, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

The orchestra travels to Painesville United Methodist Church with the Lakeland Civic Chorus for a concert of light classical fare and holiday favorites. Free admission.

Sunday, March 3, 2024, 4 p.m.

“Invitation to the Dance”

Sunday, April 28, 2024, 4 p.m.

“Music of the Spheres”

SAVE THE DATES: 87TH SEASON—2024-2025

Sunday, Nov. 17, 2024, 4 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 9, 2024, 7:30 p.m. (Painesville United Methodist Church)

Sunday, March 2, 2025, 4 p.m.

Sunday, April 27, 2025, 4 p.m.

All Sunday afternoon concerts are at 4 p.m. in the Dr. Wayne L. Rodehorst Performing Arts Center.