

Lakeland Civic Orchestra

Dr. Matthew C. Saunders, director

86th Anniversary Season: 2023-2024

Concert #3: Invitation to the Dance

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

Rodehorst Performing Arts Center

Lakeland Community College

Program

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Slavonic Dances, Op. 46 (1878)

1. Furiant
3. Polka

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898-1937)

ARR. ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT (1894-1981)

Porgy and Bess: Selection for Orchestra (1935, arr. 1961)

Intermission

CAROLINE SHAW (B. 1982)

Entr'acte (2011, 2014)

CARL MARIA VON WEBER (1786-1826)

ARR. HECTOR BERLIOZ (1803-1869)

Invitation to the Dance, Op. 65 (1819, arr. 1841)

THE LAKELAND CIVIC ORCHESTRA

Dr. Matthew C. Saunders, director

Violin I

Aaron Roberts*
Lauren Godfrey
Jacob Ball
Marisa McCaffrey
Casey Gray
Carter McCullough
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 Sjelko
Emily Glink
Christian Keller

Bass

Matthew Yoke **
Jim Bockhoff
West Matthews
Olivia Bickel

Flute

Judith Elias **
Jennifer Lawery
Stacy Gaeta

Piccolo

Jennifer Lawery

Oboe

Michael Steckner **
Emily Recchia

English Horn

Emily Recchia

Clarinet

Bruce Langguth **
Jolyon Welsh
Samuel Griesmer

Bass Clarinet

Jolyon Welsh

Bassoon

Melanie Nichols **
Scott Moorman

Horn

Carol Stafinski **
Ken Kingston
Sarah Jackson
Alan DeMattia

Trumpet

Art Goldstein **
John McClellan
Michelle Swiniarski
Darla Dunn

Trombone

Jack Borsi **
Simon Haney
Tom Toth

Tuba

Charles Holmes

Harp

Nancy Paterson

Percussion

Darrell Garlock
Joshua Marshall
Robert Weppler

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. Prior to 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.

PROGRAM NOTES

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK composed his first set of Slavonic Dances for piano four hands in the spring of 1878 and set them for orchestra in the spring and summer of the same year. The two dances heard today were first performed May 16, 1878 in Prague by the Czech Theater Orchestra under the baton of Adolph Čech. They are scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle and strings, and together last about eight minutes in performance.

The current of nationalism that swept Europe in the 19th century often reflected interest in unique folk music and dance forms of the peoples aspiring to nationhood, and many composers created concert versions of the dance music of their homeland alongside or instead of more cosmopolitan dances. Frederic Chopin popularized the rhythms of his native Poland—at the time partitioned between three empires—in his sets of polonaises and mazurkas, while Franz Liszt promoted the music of his native land in his Hungarian Rhapsodies. Dvořák often included “Bohemian” or Czech influences in his concert music, and the dance rhythms and folk melodies of his country—then a part of the Habsburg empire—are never far from the surface of his symphonies and string quartets, with Czech dances such as the furiant frequently appearing in place of more Germanic forms in scherzo movements.

Dvořák came to prominence later in life when his works caught the attention of Johannes Brahms in a composition contest. Brahms connected Dvořák with the Berlin music publisher Simrock and after Dvořák’s “Moravian Duets” were a success, Simrock commissioned a set of Czech dances for piano four-hands. Unlike Brahms’ very popular “Hungarian Dances,” Dvořák created original melodies rather than setting existing folk tunes, but having been raised on Czech folk music, Dvořák was able to tap into his first musical language. The two dances heard today, a furiant and a polka, are typical of the set in their ternary form, their juxtaposition of major and minor keys, and their

development of musical ideas. The orchestral versions, by Dvořák himself, were adopted quickly by orchestras in German-speaking countries, but also in the United States, and have never fallen out of the repertoire.

GEORGE GERSHWIN composed his only opera “Porgy and Bess” in 1934 and 1935 to a libretto by DuBose Heyward and Ira Gershwin and adapted from “Porgy,” the stage adaptation by Dorothy and DuBose Heyward’s of DuBose Heyward’s 1925 novel of the same name. The opera had its first performance at the Colonial Theatre in Boston September 30, 1935 before moving to a Broadway production at the Alvin Theatre October 10, with the original production running for 124 performances, and being followed by a national tour in 1936. It was adapted in to a 1959 film version directed by Otto Preminger.

ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT’S 1961 “selection” is a medley of Gershwin’s songs including “Clara,” “A Woman is A Sometime Thing,” “Summertime,” “I Got Plenty O’Nuttin,” “Bess, You Is My Woman,” “Oh, I Can’t Sit Down,” “There’s a Boat Dat’s Leavin’ Soon for New York,” “It Ain’t Necessarily So,” and “Oh Lord, I’m On My Way.” It lasts approximately 12 minutes in performance and is scored for two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes (one doubling English horn), two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, xylophone, bells, drum set, harp and strings.

In 1935, George Gershwin was one of the best-known musicians in the United States, if not the world. Having published his first song in 1916 at age 17, and having his first big hit, “Swanee,” three years later, Gershwin spent the 1920s becoming at once the foremost American composer of popular song and Broadway musical while also honing his skills as a composer of classical music. From 1924’s piano concerto “Rhapsody in Blue” forward, Gershwin made time for concert music compositions even as he composed a string of successful musicals and moved to Hollywood to begin work as a film composer.

While unusual for the time, it was not without precedent that Gershwin would want to make the move from musical theater to opera, and he found his subject in a novel, "Porgy," by friend DuBose Heyward. Heyward had set his novel in a fictitious Black community near his vacation home on Folly Island, South Carolina, and Gershwin conceived much of the opera in a summer spent there in 1934.

It is impossible to ignore the racial controversy that surrounds "Porgy and Bess." Gershwin was adamant that all the singers in American productions should be African American, launching the careers of several Black opera singers, but the depiction of the Black residents of Catfish Row has often been justly criticized for being grounded in stereotype and the tropes of the blackface minstrel tradition, and the use of dialect in the libretto (by Heyward and Ira Gershwin) is similarly problematic.

Gershwin was a passionate advocate for American jazz and popular music and brought to it his own musical background: he was the son of Jewish immigrants and a student of classical music, but also a product of an era in which blackface performance meant good money for many white musicians. The result, in "Porgy and Bess," is a blending of the European opera tradition, with what Gershwin knew and understood about African American music: jubilees, blues, work songs and spirituals. "Porgy and Bess" became the source of some of its composer's best-known music and, through Gershwin's own "Catfish Row" suite and two arrangements (including today's) by Robert Russell Bennett, a fixture of the concert stage.

CAROLINE SHAW composed "Entr'acte" for string quartet in 2011 for the Brentano Quartet, who gave the first performance at Princeton University in April 2011. She adapted the work for string orchestra for *A Far Cry* in July 2014. The work lasts approximately 11 minutes, and is scored for string orchestra.

The music of Caroline Shaw came to broader attention in 2013 when her work "Partita for Eight Voices" was awarded that year's Pulitzer

Prize for Music, making her one of the youngest composers ever to be so recognized. Her music combines traditional and contemporary ideas and practices, often juxtaposing the sounds of Western concert music and instruments with techniques and timbres derived from folk, popular and non-Western sources. She has worked with a range of artists including Rosalía, Renée Fleming and Yo Yo Ma, and she has contributed music to films and TV series including “Fleishman is in Trouble,” “Bombshell,” Beyonce’s “Homecoming.” Her favorite color is yellow, and her favorite smell is rosemary.

About “Entr’acte,” the composer writes:

“Entr’acte” was written in 2011 after hearing the Brentano Quartet play Haydn’s Op. 77 No. 2 — with their spare and soulful shift to the D-flat major trio in the minuet. It is structured like a minuet and trio, riffing on that classical form but taking it a little further. I love the way some music (like the minuets of Op. 77) suddenly takes you to the other side of Alice’s looking glass, in a kind of absurd, subtle, Technicolor transition.

CARL MARIA VON WEBER composed his solo piano work “Aufforderung zum Tanz,” or “Invitation to the Dance” in July 1819. It was adapted and orchestrated by Hector Berlioz in 1841 and the orchestra version was first performed as the Act II ballet for a production of Weber’s “Der Freischütz” at the Paris Opera June 7, 1841. This work lasts nine minutes in performance and is scored for piccolo, flute, two oboes, two clarinets, four bassoons (with only two heard today), four horns, two cornets, two trumpets, three trombones, harp, timpani, and strings.

A curious tradition that benefits the modern concert orchestra is the 19th-century requirement that any opera presented at the Paris Opera must contain a ballet. This requirement dates back a further two centuries, having been put in place by King Louis XIV, himself a ballet dancer who appeared onstage in productions at his court in Versailles. For centuries, then, French opera contained ballet, and the works of foreign composers would be altered and expanded for Paris,

sometimes by the insertion of completely unrelated music. It was this practice that led Hector Berlioz to orchestrate Weber's piano piece after the composer's death to be shoehorned in to the second act of "Der Freischütz," Weber's 1821 groundbreaking and influential work that inspired generations of opera composers. Berlioz was insistent that music by any other composer not be allowed interlope in the work of one of heroes. While the likes of Frederic Chopin and Franz Liszt are known to have performed the piano version of this work in solo recitals, this orchestral version has proved the most enduring. Weber dedicated the work to his wife Caroline shortly after their marriage and provided a compelling, if slight, program: a gentleman asks a lady to dance, she is evasive, but agrees. They dance, he thanks her, and they retire from the dance floor.

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.

With the 2019-2020 season cut short immediately after our March 8, 2020 concert, the musicians of the orchestra went on an eighteen-month forced hiatus from in-person rehearsal and performance, returning in November 2021, and producing in the meantime two virtual concert videos, in which each musician recorded their own part at home.

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, November 12, 2023, 4 p.m.

Spirit of Adventure

Erich Wolfgang Korngold: The Sea Hawk Suite

Jennifer Bellor: Ballad of a Wanderer

Felix Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto

Alice Han, violin

Georges Bizet: L' Arlésienne Suite No. 1

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

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

Monday, December 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

Antonin Dvořák: Slavonic Dances, Op. 46, Nos. 1 & 3

George Gershwin: Selection from "Porgy and Bess"

Caroline Shaw: Entr'acte

Carl Maria von Weber, arr. Hector Berlioz: Invitation to the Dance

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

Music of the Spheres

Max Bruch: Violin Concerto No. 1

Aika Birch, violin

Missy Mazzoli: Sinfonia (for Orbiting Spheres)

Giuseppe Verdi: Triumphal March and Ballet Music from "Aïda"

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