

Overture

Newsletter of the Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur



MASTERWORKS IV
Mahler's Resurrection Symphony
Saturday, March 2, 2019 | Kirkland Fine Arts Center

WELCOME



It is such a privilege to serve as the President of the Symphony Orchestra Guild because I have the opportunity to thank everyone who contributes to the enjoyable nights at the Symphony. The Masterworks III performance in February was one of the finest. The three young artists were outstanding soloists, and the talented Symphony Orchestra musicians produced a beautiful new sound. When the conductor, Dr. Sergey Bogza, rearranged the seating of the musicians, the resulting sound was an amazing balance of the high- and low-stringed instruments. How wonderful to have a talented conductor who incorporates new ideas.

Now, we are looking forward to the Masterworks IV performance on Saturday, March 2, 2019. The Orchestra will play the Resurrection Symphony: Mahler's Symphony No. 2. This challenging work is rarely played by university orchestras. However, based on the success of past programs, the Millikin Decatur Symphony Orchestra will be able to master Mahler's difficult composition.

This is an exciting time for the Symphony Orchestra Guild because of the sponsorship of local auditions for junior high school and high school music scholarships. Results

of the scholarship auditions will be in the April newsletter. Since funding the scholarships is one of the Guild's big contributions to music education in Macon County, many volunteers are scheduled to implement the scholarship program. With gratitude, I thank all of you, both Symphony Guild members and the ticket holders, who are a part of the enthusiastic audience at the Kirkland Fine Arts Center. Your support is continuing to provide many musical opportunities in our community.

Sincerely,

Linda Arends

*President,
Symphony Orchestra Guild of
Decatur*



FROM THE CONDUCTOR



In less than 2 weeks, MDSO, Millikin Union of Choirs and their directors, two outstanding soloists, and I, will begin rehearsals for one of our greatest challenges to date - the performance of the enormously complex, difficult, and ultimately awe-inspiring and exhilarating, *Mahler's Symphony No. 2*.

Requiring well over 100 musicians [in addition to soloists and a 250-member mixed choir], the complexity of this work goes beyond being technically difficult to execute. A 90-minute spiritual journey that attempts to answer life's most complicated questions is directly written into the nuanced music, its text, and the orchestral forces.

Knowing that the music of Mahler may be familiar to some, but foreign to others, I've invited Dr. Marshall Tuttle to give two contrasting presentations on the life and work of Mahler. Both a world-class scholar and performer, Dr. Tuttle's presentations will encourage you to look deeper and experience the piece in a profound way. This is for everyone that desire to understand a work of art beyond the surface level.

As I write this column, I'm also at work on the performance for *The Sleeping Beauty* Ballet. You might be curious to note, that over 22 community cast members coming from seven different cities, and 24 Millikin students will supplement the 60 professional dancers of The Alabama Ballet. We owe an enormous amount of gratitude to Shirley Stanley and her team working behind the scenes to make this production possible.

I trust you are looking forward to the musical offerings this Spring as much as I am. Thank you for your continued support and for making the joy of sharing world's greatest masterpieces possible in Decatur.

See you at the Symphony,

Dr. Sergey Bogza

*Music Director
and Conductor*



Paulina Villareal,
mezzo-soprano soloist



Ariana Strahl,
soprano soloist

2018/2019 season

MASTERWORKS IV

Resurrection Symphony: Mahler's Symphony No. 2

Saturday, March 2, 7:30 pm



By Dr. Marshall Tuttle

Gustav Mahler Answers Life's Important Questions

*What did you live for?
Why did you suffer?
Is it only a vast terrifying joke?*

How do we respond? Some may find strength in faith, some may seek distraction in noisy events, someone else may take a stiff drink. Very few indeed will compose work of musical philosophy that answers those questions once and for all. Mahler was just such a person.

Mahler composed his Resurrection Symphony over a period of seven years. The symphony was written in three waves, each wave having its own agenda and story to tell. Miraculously, there is no real discontinuity of style or effect.

The first wave of composition was the first movement. Mahler originally labeled this movement "*Totenfeier*" (Funeral Rites). He referred to this movement as a musical discourse on the above questions. The composition was intended to stand alone as a symphonic poem. Ironically, Mahler created a musical discourse which audibly and directly struggles with the ultimate mystery without resolution. The Symphonic poem intended to grapple with life's important questions yields no answer.

After a period of five years, Mahler decided to attach a symphony to the opening movement. In a few months



he wrote three movements which tell a kind of life story of the protagonist. The second movement represents him in happier times when the sun was still shining brightly.

The third movement uses two complementary musical portraits. The first is based on a song about St. Anthony giving a sermon to the fishes when he finds the church empty. The fish all greatly appreciate his sermon. But in the end, they swim off not having understood or grown in the slightest. The contrasting sections represent a similar incomprehension from the human side. The protagonist looks as if from a distance at a ball. He cannot hear the music but only sees the wild dancing and cannot understand it. Eventually, he cries out in despair of his life.

The fourth movement represents the protagonist rejecting life's suffering and pain for heaven. When an angel comes to turn him away, he asserts his will to enter and his faith that a loving God will grant him a place.

The fifth movement was still not conceived for another year. Mahler had an inspiration when attending a colleague's funeral where he heard Klopstock's Resurrection chorale from the choir loft. He adapted the chorale for the end of the last movement, and precedes its appearance with a cinematic musical drama that transcends visual imagery. We are immersed in the calls of the last trumpet, ascension, prophesying in the wilderness, earthquakes, the rising of the dead and the march to judgment amid shrieks of terror. Then miraculously, instead of judgment, the heavens open and all are admitted as equals into the light of God's divine love. Questions answered.

2018/2019 season

SLEEPING BEAUTY

with The Alabama Ballet

Saturday, March 30, 7:30 pm

Sunday, March 31, 2:00 pm

By Dr. Katherine Leo

Assistant Professor of Music
Musicology Coordinator



Grand Collaborations

The Alabama Ballet, one of the premiere American professional ballet companies, returns to Decatur this season to join the MDSO in a production of *The Sleeping Beauty*. This collaborative spirit reflects the ballet's first production. Its origins may be traced to Ivan Vsevolozhsky (1835-1909), director of the Russian Imperial Theater, who commissioned new music from promising composers rather than retaining a staff composer. In 1888, Vsevolozhsky approached Petr Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), and they agreed to adapt the 1697 Charles Perrault fairytale, "*The Sleeping Beauty* in the Wood." Together with the Imperial Ballet, they brought to life the story of Princess Aurora, awakened from her enchanted 100-year sleep only by true love's first kiss.

The original choreographer was Marius Petipa (1818-1910), the demanding ballet-master of the Imperial Ballet, who had built a professional reputation on the spectacular drama and technical challenges of his choreography. Stories surrounding the production of *The Sleeping Beauty* portray Petipa providing Tchaikovsky a detailed set of instructions for the music to fit a sequence of

dances. While some commentators have interpreted Petipa's contributions to have impeded Tchaikovsky's own creative process, others have suggested that the collaboration was more enthusiastic, with Tchaikovsky welcoming the practical advice.

Their work together, estimated to be nearly four hours in length, premiered in 1890 at the Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, Russia, followed by a Moscow premiere with the Bolshoi Ballet in 1899. By 1903, *The Sleeping Beauty* had been performed two hundred times and was considered the second most popular ballet performed by the Imperial Ballet. Although major changes have been introduced since then, chiefly cuts to shorten the overall length and new choreography, the ballet continues to be an audience favorite and remains a triumph of creative collaboration.

EDUCATION

DYSO Alumni Spotlight Alexander Kidd



Music has always been a large part of my life and it started with playing music in Decatur. DYSO aided me in expanding my playing and giving me a secondary place to play my instrument outside of school, making both lifelong connections and further developing my chops. It expanded my understanding of strings (as a brass player) and repertoire. DYSO and camp scholarships gave me an opportunity to play and learn in the summer months. These camps gave me more individualized

training and gave me a chance to check out many music schools around the country. Ultimately, this gave me the knowledge to make the decision to continue my education at Millikin University.

I was fortunate to take private lessons through the prep department at Millikin. I was also fortunate to be welcomed into many church homes in the community to expand my playing abilities. I enjoyed my time in the Decatur Municipal Band and was lucky to have spent some time at both the Decatur Park District and Soundcheck Music growing my knowledge of things outside of just playing music. This experience helped me land the job I have today. Currently I am an artist manager and production assistant based in Nashville, TN. I work with fellow DYSO alum, Eric Burgett. Since moving to Nashville, I have traveled the country managing shows and had some really cool experiences in shows of all sizes. I have also had the opportunity to play my trumpet

on a few tracks here and there for a few different country artists... horns make everything better!

As I reflect back, I couldn't imagine a better place to grow up playing music. It was not only the educators I had but also the environment that was created by the people that partially shaped me into who I am today. It goes beyond what I learned musically. I am never late, take everything very seriously, and value relationships. My early musical experiences taught me you could have a career in music, either as a player or in business.

I hope to manage an artist selling out arenas someday with countless number 1's in country music and be a part of a team that shapes an artist that changes our genre. In the near future though, I hope to dust off my horn and find a few new avenues for me to be able to play.



DYSO Beauty and the Beast

This Spring the Decatur Youth Symphony has taken on a project that it has done only once before in its history, and that is to collaborate in a fully staged production of a Broadway musical. On March 15th, 16th, and 17th the DYSO will be presenting *Beauty and the Beast* at the Decatur Civic Center with the Decatur Park District's "Perform" program. Almost 150 young singers and actors are participating in the show and will be organized into two different casts with the DYSO serving as the live orchestra on stage.

"We're very excited to take part in this project and to work with so many talented young actors and singers" said music director Neal Smith. "When we did *Fiddler on the Roof* with them four years ago, we were amazed at the level of the production and the attention to detail required of the score. It really inspired us to play our best."

The theater version of *Beauty and the Beast*, based on the 1991 animated Disney film, opened on Broadway in 1994 and ran for thirteen years, one of the longest running

shows in history. It tells the story of a bookish, small town girl named Belle, who learns to look past the monstrous exterior of a cursed prince and fend off the unwanted advances of the conceited Gaston. It features popular music from the original movie along with a few songs that were added to the Broadway version. The show was later made into a live-action movie featuring Emma Watson in 2017 and was nominated for two academy awards

"There is a tremendous amount of music in the show, over 100 pages for most of the instruments, and it's very challenging to play," added Smith. "But, it's the perfect show for us to be involved in because there are such great lushly-orchestrated tunes in it, and the instruments are central to the majestic atmosphere of the production."

Later in the Spring, the Decatur Youth Symphony will be joined by

DYSO Performance Calendar

MAR *Beauty and the Beast*, with Decatur Park District "Perform" Production
Friday, March 15, 7:00 pm
Decatur Civic Center
Saturday, March 16, 7:00 pm
Decatur Civic Center
Sunday, March 17, 2:00 pm
Decatur Civic Center

APR PASS Concert with "Perform" students
Tuesday, April 9, 10:00 am
Kirkland Fine Arts Center

Spring Concert
Sunday, April 14, 4:00 pm
Kirkland Fine Arts Center

JOIN US

Please consider joining the membership of the **Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur**.

Membership in the Guild supports the Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra, the Decatur Youth Orchestra, and music in Decatur schools.

Guild membership allows us to:

- Present affordable Masterworks and other concerts for the community
- Support the careers of working musicians
- Deliver music education to hundreds of students
- Provide financial aid to students
- Be cultural leaders in the community and make Decatur a wonderful place to live

Guild members enjoy:

- Season tickets for the Masterworks I-V series
- Priority Seating
- Priority Ticket Access
- Free shuttle service to Kirkland ticketed events
- Invitations to all social events

CHOOSE YOUR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

IVORY BATON CIRCLE	\$30 - \$59
SILVER BATON CIRCLE	\$60 - \$119
GOLD BATON CIRCLE	\$120 - \$249
CONDUCTOR'S CIRCLE	\$250 - \$499
PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE	\$500 - \$999
ORCHESTRA CIRCLE	\$1,000 AND UP

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

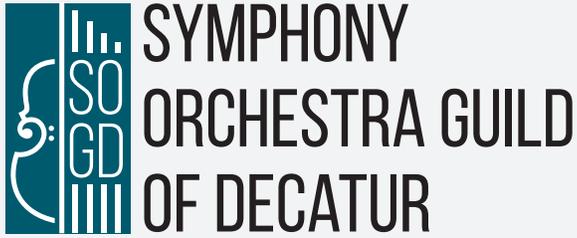
Phone _____

Make checks payable to:

The Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur

Mail to: **Symphony Orchestra Guild**, c/o 651 W. Karen Ct.,
Decatur IL 62526

Your donation is tax deductible within the fullest extent of the law.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Decatur, IL
Permit No. 168

P.O. Box 1541
Decatur, Illinois 62525

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS

MAR **Masterworks IV, Resurrection Symphony:**
Mahler's Symphony No. 2
Saturday, March 2, 7:30 pm | Kirkland Fine Arts Center

Sleeping Beauty with Alabama Ballet,
Millikin Chamber Orchestra
Saturday, March 30, 7:30 pm | Kirkland Fine Arts Center
Sunday, March 31, 2:00 pm | Kirkland Fine Arts Center

APR **Masterworks V, Dvorak's New World Symphony**
and Amy Catron
Saturday, April 13, 7:30 pm | Kirkland Fine Arts Center

Single tickets

Kirkland Fine Arts Center Box Office | 217.424.6318

Guild events, & Membership information

Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur | 217.877.2963

Visit decaturorchestra.com for more information.

Free Shuttle Service to Kirkland Events

SOGD has made arrangements with Baldwin Shuttle to provide free round-trip shuttle service to seniors who would like to attend ticketed events at Kirkland. Call Baldwin Shuttle at **1-800-747-3593** to reserve your seat on the mini-bus. Baldwin will pick you up at your front door, and bring you to the front patio at Kirkland so you can catch your favorite shows.

Photo credits: Greg Fombelle: cover, page 2

PRE-CONCERT TALKS SERIES

One hour prior to each Masterworks performance, concert goers are invited to attend informal pre-concert conversations to guide you through the music you are about to hear, providing an enlightening look at the repertoire and composers. Held in Kirkland's lower lobby. Hosted by Dr. Sergey Bogza.

AFTERGLOW

Mingle with Guild members and Dr. Sergey Bogza after each MDSO performance at Bizou, located at 259 N. Main St., Decatur, for appetizers, desserts, and wine.