



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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Southwest Florida Symphony 2008-09 Season Choral series presents diverse mix of ancient through modern works

Magnificent and breathtaking describe the opening of the Southwest Florida Symphony Stained Glass Series October 26 at 4pm at the Village Church at Shell Point in Fort Myers. Over 200 voices from the Symphony Chorus and the Sarasota Key Chorale combine to present an inspirational concert of American music. Southwest Florida audiences will be the first to hear the Symphony Chorus' 2009 European Tour program - "American Music in France" - conducted by the charismatic Joseph Caulkins, Associate Conductor and Music Director of Chorus.

"The emotional impact an audience feels when hearing a 200 voice choir is quite spectacular. This unique opportunity for both groups to join together with shared musical and performance standards will make this program quite special," explains Caulkins, who has conducted the Symphony Chorus eight seasons and Key Chorale two seasons.

Music will include pieces from the 20th century greats of Ives, Copland and Thompson and music of iconic composers of today such as Lauridsen, Whitacre, Walker and Paulus. "Europeans want to hear music indigenous to the performers so we have chosen music that reflects our heritage," summarizes Caulkins. A highlight of the concert will be violist Reiko Niiya and the choirs performing Eric Whitacre's lush "Five Hebrew Love Songs." Other notable pieces include the rarely heard "The Lord is My Shepherd" composed by Randall Thompson and reprises from Copland's opera "The Tender Land." The ever popular Charles Heard and talented Virginia Bray will share keyboard duties throughout the concert.

The exciting season of choral music features four additional concerts, "We have strived to give our audience as much variety as possible this season, each with its own interesting theme," explained Caulkins. "Messiah & More" offers the traditional Christmas portion of Handel's Messiah and a special 16th century holiday serenade featuring the Chamber Chorus.

"Natural Wonder" celebrates nature and all her wonder in a special concert in cooperation with the Audubon Society and Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. The Children's Chorus' annual Mother's Day concert "Fairy Tales & Pixie Dust" will be conducted by Catherine Truesdale featuring magic and whimsy as the children perform favorite tales of childhood.

The final concert of the year commemorates the 200th anniversary of Haydn's death with a preview performance of Haydn's "Mass in Time of War" which will be performed by the Symphony Chorus and the Sarasota Key Chorale on the European Tour 2009 as a part of the Festival Symposium Mozart with the prestigious Lorenzo Da Ponte Orchestra. This dramatic piece was written at the height of the composer's career and is notable for its extended use of trumpets and timpani with spellbinding results.

Subscriber series are on sale now. For more information, call the box office at 418-1500 or visit on line at www.swflso.org.

Stained Glass Series:

EUROPEAN TOUR - PART I: American Music in France

October 26 at 4 pm

The Village Church at Shell Point, Fort Myers

Joseph Caulkins conducts

Featuring the Symphony Chorus, Sarasota Key Chorale and Reiko Niiya, violin

MESSIAH & MORE

December 13 at 7:30, Faith United Methodist Church, Fort Myers

December 14 at 4 pm, First Baptist Church, Cape Coral

Joseph Caulkins conducts

Featuring Orchestra, Symphony Chorus, Chamber Chorus and guests Kathy Pyeatt, Eleni Matos, Daniel Buchanan and Daniel Cartlidge

NATURAL WONDER

February 28 at 7:30, Unitarian Universalist Church, Fort Myers

March 1 at 4 pm, Sanibel United Congregational United Church of Christ

Joseph Caulkins conducts

FAIRY TALES & PIXIE DUST

May 10 at 4 pm, Faith Presbyterian Church, Cape Coral

Catherine Truesdale conducts

Featuring the Southwest Florida Children's Chorus and Chamber Chorus

EUROPEAN TOUR - PART II: Celebrating "Haydn 200" in Italy

May 12 at 7:30 pm

Faith United Methodist Church, Fort Myers

Joseph Caulkins conducts

Featuring the Symphony Chorus and Sarasota Key Chorale

With record breaking crowds and abundant praise last year, a sizzling 48th season begins as Music Director Michael Hall takes the stage to conduct a vibrant season of music. Serving as Lee County's professional orchestra, the Southwest Florida Symphony is a vital cultural asset to all residents. Our programs impact over 70,000 people annually through a variety of concerts, performance opportunities for youth and educational programs for local school children. Performing groups include the SWFLS Orchestra, the Symphony Chorus, the Children's Chorus and the Youth Orchestra and Sinfonietta. The Symphony is supported by ticket sales, sponsorships, donations, grants and the Symphony Society, an organization of over 500 volunteers. To learn more, see us on the web at www.swflso.org.

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