



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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Southwest Florida Symphony Symphony to perform holiday celebration

The Southwest Florida Symphony celebrates the holidays with a Celtic-inspired holiday concert the entire family will enjoy. The heartwarming, family favorite - "A Very Merry Pops" - takes place December 20 & 21 at the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall. Joseph Caulkins conducts both the Saturday 8 pm and Sunday 7 pm performances which feature the orchestra, chorus, children's chorus and special guests Celine Mogielnicki and the Kellyn Celtic Arts Irish Dance Academy.

"To me the holiday concert is best when it is a mix of traditional favorites and new pieces, but I always like to have a surprise around every corner and this concert is all about surprises!" explains Caulkins. "This is the best holiday concert we've put together so far. It is very visual and fun yet with many moving moments including the performance by Celine Mogielnicki of *The Beautiful Star*. This is a rarely-heard German piece which fits her voice perfectly - it will be a poignant part of the program." Many Symphony patrons will remember the up and coming young singer from last year's "The Rising Stars of Opera" program.

As always, nothing is held back for the holiday concert. The full orchestra, Symphony chorus and Children's chorus will join the festivities. The Children's Chorus will be featured in a set of Jewish melodies, including the well-known Hebrew piece *Rock of Ages*. In addition, the Kellyn Celtic Arts Irish Dancers, a multi-generational local performing group, will perform to such pieces as *Lord of the Dance*. "The Kellyn dancers sparkle. Their costumes are beautiful and the dancing is upbeat and lively. I know they will be a favorite this year," comments Caulkins.

This holiday season the Symphony is partnering with the Salvation Army to put toys under treats and food on tables of the area's needy. Help make someone's holiday a little brighter by bringing unwrapped, new toys or canned and non-perishable food items to the concerts. Collection boxes will be in the lobby. The Kellyn Irish Dancers will also perform in the lobby 45 minutes prior to the concert each day.

Single tickets are on sale now and sell quickly so place your order today by calling the Symphony Box Office Mon. - Fri., 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at 418-1500. Or order on line at www.swflso.org.

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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