



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14, 2023

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CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES THE 2023–24 SEASON

**CSO Annual Gala: An Evening with RENÉE FLEMING
Led by Conductor Laureate CHRISTOPHER WARREN-GREEN**

TikTok Sensation CODY FRY Joins the CSO Live in Concert

THE CLASSICAL SERIES

Opening Weekend: BEETHOVEN's "Eroica" and *The Butterfly Lovers* Violin Concerto

100th Anniversary of GERSHWIN's *Rhapsody in Blue*, Performed by MICHELLE CANN

Jennifer HIGDON's *Cold Mountain Suite*, Co-Commissioned by the Charlotte Symphony

Missy MAZZOLI's *Procession*, Featuring Grammy Award-Winning Violinist JENNIFER KOH

VERDI's Requiem with the Charlotte Master Chorale

Christopher Warren-Green Returns To Conduct VAUGHAN WILLIAMS's *A Sea Symphony*

Season Finale: HOLST's *The Planets* and Caroline SHAW's *The Observatory*

Return of SUNDAY MATINEE CONCERTS: FREE for Children Ages 6 Through 18

POPS AND MOVIES

The Hot Sardines, Holiday Pops, An Evening with Regina Carter, Great Ladies of Swing,

***Elf*, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, and *Jaws* in Concert**

FAMILY, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY

Four One-Hour Concerts Introducing Children to Live Symphonic Music

Expanded Access to Educational Offerings and Community Initiatives

March 14, 2023 | Charlotte, NC – The Charlotte Symphony (CSO) announces program details for the 2023–24 season, including an exciting and eclectic range of concerts across the Classical, Pops, Movie, and Family series. Highlights include the returns of soprano Renée Fleming and Conductor Laureate Christopher Warren-Green for the Annual Gala; performances of audience favorites like Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, Beethoven's "Eroica," and Holst's *The Planets*; and a diverse lineup of composers and guest artists — including works by William Grant Still, Florence Price, and Jennifer Higdon; and performances by jazz violinist Regina Carter, pianist Michelle Cann, and TikTok sensation Cody Fry.

“What an incredibly exciting time it is for the Charlotte Symphony,” said President and CEO David Fisk. “As the search culminates for our next Music Director, we’re proud to offer Charlotte this engaging and adventurous season — arguably the most diverse in CSO history. We’re rolling out expanded partnerships across our community, and want to ensure we remain responsive to audience demands, providing increased access for young people, including free tickets for those under 18 to our new Sunday Matinee concerts. We welcome anyone and everyone to join us for this incredible musical journey.”

One of the most celebrated singers of our time, soprano **Renée Fleming**, joins the Charlotte Symphony to launch the 2023–24 season at the Annual Gala on September 20, 2023. This unforgettable one-night-only event, led by Conductor Laureate **Christopher Warren-Green**, will feature some of opera’s greatest hits and selections from the Great American Songbook.

As a leading arts and health advocate, Renée Fleming will also be presenting *Music and the Mind*, a presentation and panel discussion exploring the power of music as it relates to health and the brain, including childhood development, cognitive neuroscience, music therapy, and the impact on healthcare, music education, social cohesion, and the future of music in medicine. Details to be announced at a later date.

Nashville-based singer/songwriter **Cody Fry** will bring his fusion of popular songs and rich orchestration to the Charlotte Symphony on October 27, 2023. Fry took TikTok by storm with his viral sensation “I Hear a Symphony” and his orchestral cover of “Eleanor Rigby” which earned him a Grammy nomination for “Best Arrangement, Instrument and Vocals.”

THE CLASSICAL SERIES

The 2023–24 Classical series opens with a performance of Beethoven’s monumental “**Eroica**” **Symphony**, the composer’s celebration of the heroic spirit. The program, which takes place October 6–8, 2023, will also include *Umoja* by American composer Valerie Coleman and *The Butterfly Lovers* Violin Concerto, featuring violinist **Melissa White**.

The CSO will celebrate the **100th anniversary of Gershwin’s jazz-infused *Rhapsody in Blue*, March 1–2, 2024**, with a performance featuring acclaimed pianist **Michelle Cann** alongside the composer’s energetic *An American in Paris*. Cann will also perform Florence Price’s spirited Piano Concerto in One Movement — a work she has championed to great acclaim.

The 2023–24 season will feature an exciting and diverse lineup of guest artists:

- Pianist **Orli Shaham** will perform Chopin’s lyrical and poetic Piano Concerto No. 2 on a program also featuring Mayer’s *Faust* Overture, Dvořák’s *The Noonday Witch*, and William Grant Still’s Symphony No. 1, “Afro-American,” October 20–22, 2023.
- Grammy Award-winning violinist **Jennifer Koh** will perform Missy Mazzoli’s Violin Concerto, *Procession*, a work commissioned for Koh. The program also includes Jennifer Higdon’s *Cold Mountain Suite* (a Charlotte Symphony co-commission), Barber’s Second Essay for Orchestra, and Copland’s *Billy the Kid* Ballet Suite, January 19–20, 2024.

- Acclaimed young American pianist **Drew Petersen** will perform Rachmaninoff’s electrifying Piano Concerto No. 3. The program will also include Bartók’s Suite from *The Miraculous Mandarin* and John Adams’s *Dr. Atomic Symphony*, February 2–3, 2024.
- Cellist **Sterling Elliott** will perform Tchaikovsky’s charming Variations on a Rococo Theme on a program also including Wang Jie’s Symphonic Overture “America, the Beautiful” and Brahms’s Symphony No. 1, April 5–6, 2024.

The Charlotte Master Chorale will join the Charlotte Symphony for four programs including Verdi’s Requiem; Handel’s *Messiah*; Vaughan Williams’s *A Sea Symphony*, led by Christopher Warren-Green; and Holst’s *The Planets*.

Additional highlights of the season include **Concertmaster Calin Ovidiu Lupanu** performing Wieniawski’s Concerto for Violin No. 2, February 16–18, 2024; **Principal Trumpet Alex Wilborn** performing Böhme’s Trumpet Concerto, March 22–23, 2024; and the premiere of **Cellist Jeremy Lamb**’s *A Ride on ‘Oumuamua*, a work inspired by the first known interstellar object to visit our solar system, May 17–18, 2024.

Sunday Matinee performances will return to the Charlotte Symphony for the 2023–24 season, including Beethoven’s Eroica (October 8, 2023), Chopin’s Piano Concerto No. 2 (October 22, 2023), Handel’s Messiah (December 3, 2023), and Mozart’s Jupiter (February 18, 2024). The CSO will make Sunday Matinee concerts free for children ages 6–12.

To provide flexibility and support the Charlotte Symphony’s ongoing search for its next Music Director, guest conductors for the 2023–24 season will not be announced at this time.

POPS AND MOVIES

The 2023–24 season of the Sandra and Leon Levine Pops Series will explore the sounds of America’s great musical traditions of jazz, swing, and soul. The series will open with a performance by **The Hot Sardines**, an edgy and endlessly entertaining ensemble that offers a mix of standards and modern-day hits; all brought to life with brassy horn arrangements, rollicking piano, and incredible vocals (November 10–11, 2023). The magic of the holiday season comes to life with **Holiday Pops** (December 15–17, 2023). Dazzling violinist **Regina Carter** joins the Charlotte Symphony for a jazz-infused program featuring David Schiff’s *Four Sisters*, a concerto that pays homage to Aretha Franklin, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, and Sarah Vaughan — performers who changed the musical landscape (February 9–10, 2024). Superstar vocalist Dee Daniels will dazzle Charlotte in the final program of the series, **Great Ladies of Swing**, featuring hits like “A Tisket, A Tasket,” “Fever,” “Can’t Help Lovin’ Dat Man,” “Makin’ Whoopee,” and “Mack The Knife” (April 12–13, 2024).

From a heartwarming film about an oversized elf to the story of a killer shark terrorizing a beach community, the Charlotte Symphony's 2023–24 Movie series will bring to life legendary music scores, live to film, for the ultimate “surround-sound” experience. The series will feature ***Elf in Concert*** (November 24–25, 2023), ***Star Wars: The Force Awakens in Concert*** (March 15–16, 2024), and ***Jaws in Concert*** (June 14–15, 2024). A fourth movie will be announced at a later date.

FAMILY AND EDUCATION

The Charlotte Symphony believes that music plays a vital role in lifelong learning and is committed to nurturing a passion for orchestral music in Charlotte through diverse educational programming and excellent instruction.

The 2023–24 season will present four one-hour concerts designed for children 4–9 years of age. The season will include ***Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Missing Maestro***, a whodunit mystery that leads Mr. Holmes to investigate each of the instrument families to find the missing Maestro (November 11, 2023). The magic of the holiday season comes to life with a family-friendly performance of ***Holiday Pops***, featuring sing-alongs and snowfall (December 16, 2023). A young girl discovers her music teacher was the biggest star in 18th-century France in ***Saint-Georges' Sword & Bow***, Giselle learns about life's triumphs and tragedies from the most accomplished man in Europe, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges (February 10, 2024). The series will end with a menagerie of music including Saint-Saëns's ***Carnival of the Animals*** and Peter Schickele's ***Thurber's Dogs*** — a work that brings to life the drawings of celebrated author and cartoonist James Thurber (April 13, 2024).

In the 2023–24 season, The Charlotte Symphony will continue to offer **Pre-Concert Talks** before every Classical concert — free of charge for ticketholders. Resident Conductor Christopher James Lees, or a guest conductor or artist, will lead a discussion about the evening's repertoire and composers, allowing concertgoers to feel more connected to the in-concert experience. Learn more [here](#).

The **Charlotte Symphony's three Youth Orchestras** offer extraordinary music education to the youth of Charlotte. The ensembles are inclusive, diverse, and accessible to all students, regardless of financial resources. High-quality ensemble training is led by Charlotte Symphony Resident Conductor Christopher James Lees, Youth Philharmonic Co-Conductor Katie Ebert, Youth Ensemble Conductor & Youth Philharmonic Co-Conductor Eric Thompson, and the Charlotte Symphony musicians.

With the recent addition of the Youth Ensemble, the CSO now offers expanded access to orchestral training for students who have never had group instruction. This affords students new opportunities for a pathway towards musical exploration and enrichment within the CSO's Youth Orchestra program and beyond. Learn more [here](#).

Project Harmony, a tuition-free, after-school music program, will continue in the 2023–24 season. A powerful program serving Title I schools and families in under-resourced Charlotte communities, Project Harmony provides free instruments and ensemble music training to its students. Together with Arts+, the CSO serves students grades 2–5 in four Charlotte community-based sites in the Montclaire, West Sugar Creek, West Boulevard, and Winterfield neighborhoods. Learn more [here](#).

IN THE COMMUNITY

The Charlotte Symphony continues to bring music to the community through programs like **Music for All**, which allows members of the Charlotte community on public assistance to attend most CSO concerts for \$1 per ticket and **Healing Hands**, a program that sends orchestra musicians to perform in area hospitals, senior care centers, and community centers to enrich the lives of patients, residents, and caregivers.

You can also find the CSO out in the community at your local brewery for **On Tap**, the popular series featuring an intimate orchestra experience within the laid-back environment of a neighborhood brewery. (Details for the 2023–24 On Tap series to be announced at a later date)

In the 2023–24 season, the CSO will continue to strengthen and expand its community partnerships through a variety of programs and services, including in area churches, schools, community centers, and higher education.

GENERAL INFORMATION

A complete listing of concerts for the Charlotte Symphony’s 2023–24 season can be found [here](#).

Subscriptions for the Classical, Pops, Family, and Movie series go on sale today, March 14, 2023. Individual tickets for all performances will go on sale to the public beginning in July. For more information visit charlottesymphony.org.

About the Charlotte Symphony

One of the premier music organizations in the Southeastern United States and the oldest operating symphony orchestra in the Carolinas, the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra (CSO) connects with more than 100,000 music lovers each year through its lively season of concerts, broadcasts, community events, and robust educational programs. The CSO is committed to its mission of uplifting, entertaining, and educating the diverse communities of Charlotte-Mecklenburg and beyond through exceptional musical experiences. The CSO employs 62 professional full-time orchestra musicians, fosters three youth orchestras, and offers significant educational support aimed at serving the under-resourced areas of our community. Founded in 1932, the Charlotte Symphony plays a leading cultural role in the Charlotte area and aims to serve the community as a civic leader, reflecting and uniting our region through the transformative power of live music.

The Classical Series is presented by **Bank of America**

The Pops Series is presented by **Sandra and Leon Levine**

The Family Series is presented by **Domtar.**

ALL PROGRAMS AND ARTISTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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