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**CHARLIE CHAPLIN'S *CITY LIGHTS* WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA ACCOMPANIMENT!
APRIL 25 & 26**

7 P.M. FILM LECTURE BY SAM SHAPIRO, FILM STUDIES INSTRUCTOR AND CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG LIBRARY SYSTEM PROGRAM COORDINATOR

7:30 P.M. CHAPLIN-INSPIRED PHYSICAL ACTING DEMOS BY UNC CHARLOTTE STUDENTS

8 P.M. FILM

April 3, 2014 | CHARLOTTE, NC – Charlie Chaplin's iconic Little Tramp—in his too-tight jacket, bowler hat and baggy pants—will bumble across the big screen in *City Lights* with the Charlotte Symphony performing the original film score live! The Symphony joins orchestras and film societies across the globe in celebrating the centennial of the Tramp, who made his first appearance 100 years ago.

Acclaimed by filmmakers, film lovers, actors and critics as one of the greatest cinematic masterpieces of all time, Charlie Chaplin wrote, directed and starred in *City Lights*. It was also his first musical score.

Chaplin was no stranger to music. Although he suffered hardships as a youth (his father was largely absent and his mother was committed to a mental asylum when he was only 14), Chaplin's parents were music-hall performers in England and so he grew up playing the piano, violin and cello.

In his autobiography, Chaplin said, "I tried to compose elegant and romantic music to frame my comedies in contrast to the tramp character, for elegant music gave my comedies an emotional dimension. Musical arrangers rarely understood this. They wanted the music to be funny. But I would explain that I wanted no competition."



City Lights © Roy Export SAS.

Despite the fact that the talkies had been ushered in four years prior, *City Lights* (1931) is a silent film. Chaplin, for both artistic and linguistic reasons (he didn't want his films to be limited to English speakers), decided not to add dialogue. This decision elevated the role of *City Light's* music in relaying the Tramp's comedic, but tragically noble, mission to rescue the Flower Girl from blindness and poverty.

"I know from experience that audiences of all ages absolutely love to experience silent films with live musical accompaniment. I can only imagine how thrilling it will be to see (and hear) Chaplin's transcendent *City Lights* with the CSO playing the music," said local film expert Sam Shapiro.

Shapiro, who will dig into the behind-the-scenes background and filmography of *City Lights* in a lecture immediately before the show, has been leading public film discussions with Charlotte audiences for more than 25 years. He also teaches film-studies courses at UNC Charlotte.

Joining Shapiro for the pre-concert experience will be three students from the UNC Charlotte Department of Theatre, under the direction of Professor Carlos Alexis Cruz. The students will perform Charlie-Chaplin inspired scenes in the orchestra-level lobby of the Belk Theater, entertaining patrons with improvisatory physical theatre.

The Charlotte Symphony will show CITY LIGHTS with the orchestra performing the live score at 8 p.m. on April 25 and 26 at Belk Theater. Jacomo Rafael Bairos will conduct. The pre-show lecture with Sam Shapiro, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library System Program Coordinator and film studies instructor, begins at 7 p.m.

Tickets range from \$26.50 - \$72.50 and are available at charlottesymphony.org or by calling the Charlotte Symphony ticket office at 704-972-2000.

About the Charlotte Symphony

Founded in 1932 and led by internationally renowned Music Director Christopher Warren-Green, the Charlotte Symphony is a non-profit organization that serves the whole community through music that educates, entertains and enriches the human spirit. We are world-class musicians, music teachers and music lovers. We put violins in the hands of Charlotte's children and actively nurture the next generation with our programs in music education. We bring artistic excellence to Charlotte's parks and hospitals, schools and places of worship, stadiums and concert halls. The Charlotte Symphony is a cornerstone of the cultural community, connecting people and adding value to their lives through music.

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