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CHARLOTTE SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES THE 2020–21 SEASON

February 18, 2020 | Charlotte, NC – The Charlotte Symphony (CSO) announces details for the 2020–21 season, Christopher Warren-Green’s eleventh as Music Director. From symphonic masterworks by Beethoven and Mahler to the entertaining Pops Series, movies-in-concert, family favorites, and performances throughout the community, the CSO’s 2020–21 season reaffirms its strong commitment to serving as Charlotte’s symphony through diverse and compelling programming, exceptional live concert experiences, and deep engagement with the community.

“It’s such a joy to work with the outstanding musicians of the Charlotte Symphony,” shared Music Director Christopher Warren-Green. “In this season — our eleventh together — we’ll present beloved and timeless classics alongside a few newer surprises for the Charlotte audience. There are so many highlights to look forward to, including our continued celebration of Beethoven in his 250th birthday year and a co-presentation of the *Rite of Spring* with the Charlotte Ballet. We’re also committed to showcasing the talents of a diverse range of artists like conductor Kwamé Ryan, pianist Joyce Yang, and composers Jennifer Higdon, Gabriela Lena Frank, and more.”

“The Charlotte Symphony continues its commitment to preserving a rich classical tradition while exploring the music of our time and forging a deep connection with our city,” said Interim President & Chief Executive Officer Michelle Hamilton. “We strive to strengthen the cultural fabric of Charlotte through the beauty we create onstage and our robust education programs, youth orchestras, and collaborations with city-wide partners like the Charlotte Ballet, Charlotte Master Chorale, Opera Carolina, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.”

CLASSICAL

The Charlotte Symphony’s 2020-21 Classical Series will feature an exciting mix of time-tested favorites, inspiring new works, and a diverse lineup of world class soloists and conductors.

The Charlotte Symphony continues **Beethoven at 250**, marking 250 years since the birth of the beloved and prolific composer with an exploration of some of his most famous pieces. Music Director Christopher Warren-Green will open the season with Beethoven’s *Egmont* Overture and Violin Concerto, with Pamela Frank as soloist in her Charlotte Symphony debut, (October 9-11, 2020). Maestro Warren-Green will also lead the CSO in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 7 (November 6-7, 2020); and Symphony No. 3 and the Triple Concerto with Paul Huang, Julie

Albers, and Stewart Goodyear as soloists (January 29-30, 2021). The final classical concert of the season will feature Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, "Choral," featuring the Charlotte Master Chorale, paired with Gerald Barry's *Beethoven*, a vivid and dramatic work for bass voice and ensemble, which uses Beethoven's only surviving love letter as the text (May 14-16, 2021).

Conductors Kwamé Ryan and David Danzmayr will make their Charlotte Symphony debuts conducting Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3, with Wei Luo as soloist (November 20-21, 2020) and Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 (January 15-17, 2021), respectively.

The Charlotte Symphony will partner with the Charlotte Ballet for the culmination of their 50th anniversary season in an updated version of the former Artistic Director Salvatore Aiello's fully-staged ballet, *Rite of Spring*, (April 22-24, 2021). The program will also include Susan Jaffe's new ballet set to Philip Glass's *Company* and Val Caniparoli's *Ibsen's House*, a dramatic ballet known for its technical brilliance, set to Dvořák's Piano Quintet No. 2.

Maestro Warren-Green and the Charlotte Symphony will continue their **Mahler Journey** with a performance of the deeply personal Symphony No. 9 (March 12-13, 2021). Since 2012 Maestro Warren-Green and the CSO have performed Mahler's Symphonies Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, and 9.

Maestro Warren-Green will be joined, for the first time on the Charlotte stage, by his wife, **violinist Rosemary Warren-Green**, for Chausson's *Poème* (March 26-27, 2021). The romantic program will also include Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht* and Franck's Symphony in D minor.

Continuing its commitment to presenting the music of today and diversity among guest conductors, guest artists, and composers, the Charlotte Symphony's 2020-21 season will feature **Gabriela Lena Frank's** *Elegía Andina* (January 15-17, 2021), **Joan Tower's** *Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman* and **Jennifer Higdon's** Concerto for Orchestra (February 12-13, 2021), **Vivian Fung's** *Dust Devils* (February 26-27, 2021), **Philip Glass's** *Company* (April 23-24, 2021), and **Gerald Barry's** *Beethoven* (May 14-16, 2021). The season will also include debuts from conductors Kwamé Ryan and Karen Kamensek, violinists Pamela Frank and Rosemary Warren-Green, and pianists Wei Luo and Drew Petersen.

Other Classical highlights include Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6, "Pathétique" conducted by Peter Oundjian; Hummel's Trumpet Concerto featuring Principal Trumpet Alex Wilborn as soloist; Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1, with Concertmaster Calin Ovidiu Lupanu as soloist; and the debut of Karen Kamensek, who will lead the CSO in works by Joan Tower, Jennifer Higdon, and Rachmaninoff.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Charlotte Symphony will offer a variety of special events in the 2020-21 season. The circus meets the symphony in **Cirque De Noël**, a show filled with awe-inspiring acrobatics and musical holiday favorites (December 29, 2020). American Idol finalist and soulful singer **Melinda Doolittle** will help the CSO ring in the **New Year** for a special evening that includes a post-concert party with champagne, dancing, and a countdown to midnight (December 31, 2020).

Hotel California: A Salute the Eagles, will celebrate the Eagles’ timeless hits, including Grammy winners like “Take It Easy,” “Heartache Tonight,” and “Hotel California” (June 18, 2021).

POPS AND MOVIES

The 2020-21 season of the Sandra and Leon Levine Pops Series will explore a wide range of musical genres, from Big Band and Disco to beloved Broadway classics. The series will open with a tribute to the all-American big band era with **Big Band Swing** (October 16-17, 2020), led by Carl Topilow. Disco tribute band Motor Booty Affair will join the CSO to perform the top disco hits of the 1970s in **Disco Fever** (November 13-14, 2020). Vocalist and entertainer Tony DeSare will help the Charlotte Symphony spread holiday cheer at the annual **Magic of Christmas** concerts including sing-alongs, falling snow, and more (December 11-20, 2020). The CSO performs the music of iconic movie scenes from sci-fi films like *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* in **Spaced Out: Sci-Fi Movie Music** (January 22-23, 2021). The CSO will celebrate the reigning divas of Soul and R&B in a symphonic tribute that spans six-decades, featuring the music of Aretha Franklin, Tina Turner, Patti LaBelle, Gladys Knight, and more in **Queens of Soul** (February 19-20, 2021). The series concludes with **Broadway’s Longest: Phantom, Chicago, Cats & More** — a celebration of the music from some of the most enduring and best-loved musicals of all time (May 7-8, 2021).

From holiday train rides to epic space battles, the Charlotte Symphony’s 2020-21 Movie Series will bring to life legendary music scores, live to film, for the ultimate “surround-sound” experience. The series will feature *The Polar Express* (November 27-28, 2020), *Beauty and the Beast* (February 5-6, 2021), *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (March 19-20, 2021), and *Jurassic Park* (June 25-26, 2021).

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 2020-21 season will present four one-hour concerts, conducted by Charlotte Symphony Resident Conductor Christopher James Lees, and designed for children 4-9 years of age. Each event includes pre-concert activities including music-related crafts and a hands on instrument petting zoo. The season will include **Behold the Bold Umbrellaphant**, a program set to the poems by children’s author Jack Prelutsky (October 17, 2020); **Magic of Christmas** (December 12, 2020); **Harry Potter: Children’s Suite for Orchestra** (February 20, 2021); and **Green Eggs and Ham**, a staged orchestral adaptation of Dr. Seuss’s beloved children’s classic (May 8, 2021).

In the 2020-21 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, leads 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 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 Conductor Jessica Morel, and the Charlotte Symphony musicians. Students also have access to the CSO's renowned Music Director Christopher Warren-Green. Student participation has grown 50% over the past year. Learn more [here](#).

Project Harmony, a free, after-school intensive youth music program, will continue in the 2020-21 season. The program serves families who face challenges and seek to provide greater opportunities for their children. Learn more [here](#).

Each year more than 10,000 students from North and South Carolina engage in **CSO Education Concerts**. There are five annual concerts that offer thematic curriculum-based content geared towards the integration of music into the core curriculum. In the 2020-21 season, students will experience thrilling performances like Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, "Eroica" and our 5th annual Link Up, a partnership with Carnegie Hall's Weill Institute. 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 2020-21 On Tap Series to be announced at a later date)

A complete listing of concerts for the Charlotte Symphony's 2020-21 season can be found [here](#).

Subscriptions for the Classical, Pops, Family, and Movie series go on sale Tuesday, February 18. Individual tickets for all performances will go on sale to the public this summer. For more information visit charlottesymphony.org.

About the Charlotte Symphony

Founded in 1932, the Charlotte Symphony is a longstanding nonprofit organization committed to connecting and strengthening the community through exceptional musical experiences. Led by internationally renowned Music Director Christopher Warren-Green, the Symphony upholds the highest artistic integrity and takes bold steps to engage the community through music. We

employ professional full-time orchestra musicians, support two youth orchestras, and offer significant educational programming aimed at improving underserved sections of our community. The Charlotte Symphony is integral to the Charlotte area, serving its community through music that connects and inspires. charlottesymphony.org

The Classics Series is Sponsored by **Wells Fargo**

Performances of Beethoven's Triple Concerto are Underwritten and Sponsored by **Doug Young**

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