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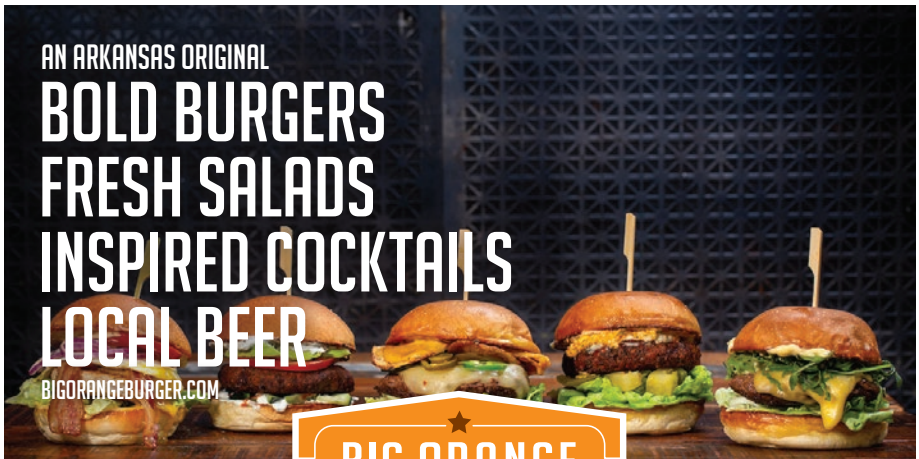
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FROM THE CEO

Dear ASO supporters, music lovers, people who took piano when young and have always wished they still played, former high school band or ASYO members, and anyone who is out for a night of fun and relaxation,

I am so pleased to welcome you here today to hear your Arkansas Symphony Orchestra perform. This is an exciting season for ASO. I could spend this entire page talking about each of our goals for the year: looking for a new Music Director, growing our music education programs and amateur community orchestra, developing our organization's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement, and last, but certainly not least, raising the just under \$782,000 needed to unlock the Windgate Foundation Challenge match so we can break ground on the new ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center for generations of Arkansans to use.

Rather than detail the steps we are taking to achieve those goals, I want to take this space to talk about what makes these goals important right now.

ASO aspires to make the world a better place through music. We want to serve more Arkansans, be more relevant to more people, and be an inclusive and welcoming organization. Our purpose is to make the world a better place through music, and we do this steeped in our values: connectivity, continual learning, artistry, courage and agility. Years ago, ASO leaders concluded that we could not achieve our aspirations and truly serve Arkansas in our current headquarters. We rent space in the Diocese home in the Heights that is over 100 years old. Arkansans ages 4 to 104 used this space until walking up the stairs became impossible. Students take lessons in the storage room and in offices. Our physical headquarters do not support our purpose, aspirations, and music making.

On the cover of the program book this year, you see a rendering of what the ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center will look like. It will be located between Heifer International and the Clinton Presidential Library. ASO has an amazing opportunity to build a 20,000 square foot community music center for Arkansans ages 4 to 104 to make and enjoy music together. With this center, ASO will be more relevant to more people, be accessible to the students from the 33 communities across our state that participate in youth ensembles, have a broadcast studio to share concerts and music education programs throughout the state, and have more financial stability. We still have just under \$782,000 to raise to unlock the Windgate Foundation challenge grant and make the center a reality for our city and state. If you are interested in learning more about how you can help at this critical stage and/or sharing ideas for how to use the music center, please call or email me at CLittlejohn@ArkansasSymphony.org or 501-666-1761, ext. 115.

Thank you for your participation. I hope you enjoy yourself and come back again and again.

Sincerely,

Christina Littlejohn, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
ARKANSAS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



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FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

To All,

Welcome to this Arkansas Symphony Orchestra performance! I want to thank you for being at our performance, whether this is the first time hearing your Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, or if you are a seasoned symphony concertgoer. Congratulations on getting out to hear this incredible musical organization perform.

Each concert this season will be a unique musical experience. With guest artists from Zuill Bailey to Heather Headley, we will show the true diversity and richness of the symphonic repertoire. Already, we have partnered with new friends and old to bring joy to you and your family and friends at Halloween and during the holiday season. We have never been more focused on making the ASO a welcoming and inclusive place to let the power of music lift your spirit. Be sure to check out all of our offerings on the Masterworks, Pops, River Rhapsodies series, and even free neighborhood concerts and other popup events. The artistry of this orchestra will shine at each concert, with relevant and exciting musical selections chosen in every style.

Meanwhile, the work of our top-flight music educators continues apace. The leadership of this organization have long hoped to find a physical space that could contain our wide breadth of education programs: three youth orchestras, an adult community orchestra, beginner group classes, hundreds of weekly private lessons, advanced masterclasses with guest artists, student recitals, recording projects, lectures, and more. We are thrilled to be on the cusp of beginning construction of the ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center, which will house these activities in a modern, inspiring, safe, and inviting new facility. And as it always has been, cost is never a barrier for students to access these programs — through generous scholarship support made possible by patrons like you.

Thank you again for being part of our journey. I hope to see you many times this year!

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Robson, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
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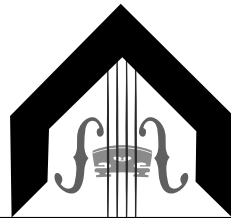
The tour will run for two April weekends, allowing ticket holders to tour all homes in one weekend or choose a few each weekend. A tour map will be provided. At each residence, there will be docents to assist you and to answer your questions. Our Prelude party will kick off the fun on April 21. It's the start of something wonderful!

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PROGRAM

Saturday, April 1, 2023 • 7:30 PM Sunday, April 2, 2023 • 3 PM
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STELLA BOYLE SMITH MASTERWORKS SERIES

Zuill Bailey plays Dvořák

Geoffrey Robson, *conductor*

Zuill Bailey, *cello*

FANNY MENDELSSOHN <i>(1805-1847)</i>	Overture in C Major, H-U: 265 Adagio – Allegro di molto	11'
ROBERT SCHUMANN <i>(1810-1856)</i>	Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 97, “Rhenish” Lebhaft Scherzo: sehr maessig Nicht schnell Feierlich Lebhaft	32'

I N T E R M I S S I O N

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK <i>(1841-1904)</i>	Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104, B. 191 Allegro Adagio ma non troppo Finale: Allegro moderato <i>Zuill Bailey, cello</i>	40'
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The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra is supported in part by a grant from the Arkansas Arts Council, an agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage.



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Zuill Bailey plays Dvořák

GEOFFREY ROBSON, Conductor, *Pamela Diane Stephens Conductor's Chair*

ZUILL BAILEY, Cello

VIOLIN

Kiril Laskarov

Concertmaster

Dora Paley Ronnel

Concertmaster's Chair

Andrew Irvin

Concertmaster

Katherine Williamson

Assistant Concertmaster

*†Meredith Maddox Hicks

Principal Second Violin

Eric M. Hayward

Memorial Chair

Edward Barnes

‡Linnaea Brophy

Rachel Bundy

†Charlotte Crosmer

Leanne Day-Simpson

‡Trisha McGovern Freeney

Linda Hsu

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Sandra McDonald

Tom McDonald

Juan Mario Moreno

Jordan Musgrave

Geronimo Oyenard

Magdalena Ryszkowski

Dan Santelices

Algimantas Staskevicius

Nelio Zamorano

VIOLA

‡Katherine Reynolds

Principal

Dr. Howard & Celia

Barnhard Chair

Joe Joyner

Tatiana Kotcherguina

†Timothy MacDuff

Ryan Mooney

Julian Pranata

Beth Robison

Borys Smolaga

CELLO

David Gerstein

Principal

Linda Garner Riggs Chair

†Chava Appiah

Casey Buck

Stephen Feldman

Rafael León

Alexander Seman

Kristin Smith

‡Jacob Wunsch

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Justin Cheesman

Principal

Ian Collins

John Hunter

Chris Leverenz

Sara Neilson

Russell Thompson

FLUTE

Carolyn Brown

Principal

Gabriel Vega

PICCOLO

Gabriel Vega

OBOE

Leanna Renfro

Principal

Rachel Fuller

Memorial Chair

Beth Wheeler

CLARINET

Karla Fournier

Mason Sangster

BASSOON

Susan Bell León

Principal

Marissa Takaki

HORN

David Renfro

Principal

Robin Dauer

Brent Shires

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Principal

Carl Mason

George Worthen

Memorial Chair

TROMBONE

Michael Underwood

Principal

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Memorial Chair

Bruce Faske

David Carter

TUBA

Ed Owen

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Rick Dimond

Principal

Arkansas Symphony

Orchestra Guild Chair

PERCUSSION

Madison Shake

Principal



ARTISTS



GEOFFREY ROBSON, Artistic Director

Geoffrey Robson has emerged as a force of artistic leadership throughout the U.S. and the state of Arkansas. As Artistic Director and principal conductor of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, his dynamic leadership during the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in state-wide and national visibility for the organization. By overseeing an accelerated shift to virtual offerings of performances and educational content, Maestro Robson ensured continued success of the orchestra and continued employment of all musicians and staff. The orchestra's online *Bedtime with Bach* series received nationwide acclaim and was featured by the *Washington Post* and the *Kelly Clarkson Show*.

In 2017, he was awarded the Respighi Prize in Conducting by the Chamber Orchestra of New York, and led the group in performance at Carnegie Hall. He has worked with renowned artists such as Gil Shaham, Midori, Rachel Barton Pine, Zuill Bailey, Vadym Kholodenko, Alexander Markov, Mandy Gonzalez, the Beach Boys, and many others.

During his tenure in Arkansas, he has conducted critically acclaimed and sold-out masterworks, pops, chamber, and children's concerts. He frequently collaborates with organizations such as Ballet Arkansas, Arkansas Children's Theater, Opera in the Rock, the Chamber Music Society of Little Rock, and numerous choral groups. He also writes, records, and produces *At the Symphony*, a concert preview radio series on KLRE Classical 90.5 in Little Rock.

Robson also currently serves as Artistic Director of the Faulkner Chamber Music Festival. In this role, he curates a summer concert series and serves as director of the chamber music camp, which provides a unique, immersive experience to music students in the art of playing chamber music. He has served on the music faculty of Hendrix College, and was Visiting Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Central Arkansas, where he conducted the Conway Symphony Orchestra.

He has conducted numerous ballet and opera productions including *The Nutcracker*, *La Bohème*, and *Madama Butterfly* with the Plano Symphony (Texas) and Opera in the Rock (Little Rock). As a founding member of The Chelsea Symphony (New York), he conducted numerous sold-out performances and served as an artistic advisor, ensuring the growth and success of the organization.

A champion of new music, Robson collaborates with and explores the music of renowned living composers. In 2016, he conducted the San Juan (Colorado) Symphony in the world-premiere of James Stephenson's *Concerto for Hope* with celebrated trumpeter Ryan Anthony. He served as arranger, conductor, and violinist for the world-premiere of *Billy Blythe*, a one-act opera based on the life of a young Bill Clinton, by Bonnie Montgomery. He conducted the premiere of *Into the Beautiful North* by Joe Brent, performed by the 9 Horses trio, as well as the premiere of *Richard III*, *A Crown of Roses*, *A Crown of Thorns*, an opera by Karen Griebing. In 2021 and 2022, he secured commissions of

continued next page

ARTISTS *continued*

new works by Tania León and James Lee III, which were performed by the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra.

As a violinist, Robson is an avid chamber musician and regularly collaborates with musicians across the country. He served as concertmaster of the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra and as Assistant Concertmaster of the Waterbury Symphony (Connecticut). He is recognized for his skill and versatility as a violinist and fiddle player, and has established himself as a highly sought-after studio musician. He creates and performs string and orchestral arrangements for recording artists to assist them in achieving their musical goals in the studio.

Utilizing his extensive studio experience, Robson conducted and served as executive producer for the 2021 recording of Florence Price's *Concerto in One Movement*, with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. He is also an orchestral pops arranger and his music has been featured in numerous ASO performances.

Robson studied orchestral conducting at the Mannes College of Music in New York City under the tutelage of David Hayes and holds violin performance degrees from Yale University and the Michigan State University Honors College. Primary violin teachers include Erick Friedman, Dmitri Berlinsky, James Krehbiel, and I-fu Wang.

He studied conducting at Yale University with Lawrence Leighton Smith, Edward Cumming, and Shinik Hahm. Other notable teachers include John Farrer, Neil Thomson, Joana Carneiro, Dirk Brossé, and Larry Rachleff.



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ZUILL BAILEY, Cello

Zuill Bailey, widely considered one of the premiere cellists in the world, is a Grammy Award-winning, internationally renowned soloist, recitalist, Artistic Director, and teacher. His rare combination of celebrated artistry, technical wizardry, and engaging personality has made him one of the most sought after and active cellists today.

Mr. Bailey has been featured with symphony orchestras and music festivals worldwide. He won the Best Solo Performance Grammy Award in 2017, for his recording of Michael Daugherty's "Tales of Hemingway," with the Nashville Symphony led by Giancarlo Guerrero. His extensive discography includes his newest release—his second recording of the Bach Cello Suites for PS Audio's Octave Records label, recorded and mixed in stereo and multichannel sound.

He appeared in a recurring role on the HBO series "Oz," and has been heard on NPR's "Morning Edition," "Tiny Desk Concert," "Performance Today," "Saint Paul Sunday," BBC's "In Tune," XM Radio's "Live from Studio II," Sirius Satellite Radio's "Virtuoso Voices," and his latest disc of Bach Suites was the disc of the week on Sirius' Symphony Hall.

Mr. Bailey received his Bachelor's Degree from the Peabody Conservatory where he was named the 2014 Johns Hopkins University Distinguished Alumni, and received a Master's Degree from the Juilliard School. He performs on the "rosette" 1693 Matteo Gofriller Cello formerly owned by Mischa Schneider of the Budapest String Quartet.

He is the Artistic Director of El Paso Pro-Musica (Texas), the Sitka Summer Music Festival/Series and Cello Seminar, (Alaska), Juneau Jazz and Classics (Alaska), the Northwest Bach Festival (Washington), Classical Inside Out Series – Mesa Arts Center (Arizona), and is Director of the Center for Arts Entrepreneurship and Professor of Cello at the University of Texas at El Paso.



PROGRAM NOTES

Overture in C Major / FANNY MENDELSSOHN

b. Hamburg, Germany / November 14, 1805; d. Berlin, Germany / May 14, 1847

Many who knew Felix Mendelssohn's much-beloved older sister believed her to be as musically gifted as he. However the social values of the day—women were not encouraged to follow professional careers—meant that her talent rarely received opportunities to present itself. She selflessly served her famous brother as mentor and inspiration throughout his career. Like Felix she died young, during the same year as he. Ironically, she suffered a stroke while leading a choral rehearsal of his oratorio *The First Walpurgis Night*.

Only a few of Fanny's 400 compositions were published during her lifetime. This gracious orchestral overture was probably composed around 1830, for performance (like much of her music) at the family's weekly in-home concerts in Berlin. It sat gathering dust in the Mendelssohn Archive in that city, apparently since the composer's death (if not longer), until Judith Rosen, a board member with the Women's Philharmonic of San Francisco, negotiated its release. Reconstructed from a cluttered, much-revised score in the composer's own hand, it was recorded for the first time in 1992. Opening with an introduction in slow tempo, it continues with a melodically appealing, transparently-scored allegro.

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 97 "Rhenish"

ROBERT SCHUMANN

b. Zwickau, Germany / June 8, 1810; d. Eendenich, Germany / July 29, 1856

In September 1850, Schumann, his wife, Clara, and their children moved to Düsseldorf, where Robert had been engaged as conductor of the local orchestra and chorus. Enchanted with the city and the welcome opportunity of having his own orchestra to work with, he promptly began to compose again, something which recent illness had kept him from doing.

First came a cello concerto, completed in two concentrated weeks. Then he set down his impressions of his new home and its verdant setting on the banks of the Rhine river (as well as his happiness in being there) in a new symphony. This is the source of its nickname, the "Rhenish" or "Rhineland Symphony." The creation of this broader canvas occupied him for four weeks. "I cannot see that there is anything remarkable about composing a symphony in a month," he wrote to a friend. "Handel wrote a complete oratorio in that time. If one is capable of doing anything at all, one must be capable of doing it quickly, the quicker the better, in fact. The flow of one's thoughts and ideas is more natural and more authentic than lengthy deliberation." He conducted the premiere himself, in Düsseldorf, on February 6, 1851.

It is the only one of his symphonies with five movements rather than four, a possible nod to Beethoven's Sixth, the similarly picturesque and rustic "Pastoral" Symphony. The opening movement, a sweeping piece with a genuine sense of joy, lays claim to be his finest orchestral creation. Renowned British musicologist Sir Donald Tovey draws a parallel between it and the first movement of Beethoven's Third, the "Eroica" Symphony, with which it shares the same key. Although Schumann called the second movement a scherzo, it has the leisurely air of a country dance rather than the boisterous energy of a musical joke. His original title for it was "Morning on the Rhine."

The first of two slow movements is a lyrical song without words, similar in character to Schumann's vocal and piano romances. The solemn, darkly atmospheric second slow movement is virtually a miniature tone poem or mood picture. It was inspired by a ceremony—the elevation of Archbishop Geissel to the office of Cardinal—that the Schumanns had witnessed the previous September at the magnificent (although at that time, unfinished) Gothic cathedral in the nearby city of Cologne. The addition of trombones to the orchestra lends it an aptly stately air. Schumann returns us to the sunlight of the Rhine valley for the vigorous and cheerful finale.

Cello Concerto in B Minor, Op. 109 / ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

b. Nelahozeves, Bohemia / September 8, 1841; d. Prague, Bohemia / May 1, 1904

This magnificent concerto was the final piece Dvořák composed during his three-year term as Director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York. Inspiration flowed from several sources. One was the powerful homesickness that he had harbored since he left his beloved homeland. Further stimulation flowed from the second of American composer Victor Herbert's cello concertos, and from Hanuš Wihan, the cellist of the Bohemian Quartet, an ensemble that had done much to popularize Dvořák's music. Wihan offered to assist with the creation of the new concerto's solo part. He proved too industrious an adviser, making more revisions and additions than the composer wanted. These included a virtuoso solo cadenza in the finale, something Dvořák rejected as utterly inappropriate to the concerto's serious character and symphonic scale.

Three decades before, Dvořák had been in love with Josephina Čermáková, an aspiring sixteen-year-old actress to whom he gave piano lessons. Even though she rejected his romantic advances, he retained a powerful affection for her. He married her younger sister, Anna, perhaps because he considered her the closest substitute he could find. While he was composing the second movement of this concerto, a letter from Josephina revealed that she was gravely ill. In her honor, he quoted the melody of one of his songs, *Leave Me Alone in My Fond Dream*, which was a particular favourite of hers, in the middle panel of this movement.

Josephina died in May 1895, one month after Dvořák had resettled in Europe. A few weeks later, he revised the closing pages of the Concerto's finale to include a second quotation from the song, this time as a memorial tribute. Due to a misunderstanding, it was not Wihan but the British cellist Leo Stern who gave the Concerto's premiere, in London on March 16, 1896. Wihan performed the Concerto shortly thereafter.

PROGRAM NOTES continued

The opening movement begins with an orchestral introduction outlining the two main themes. The first—sombre, almost funereal—soon bursts forth into forceful expressiveness. Solo horn introduces the second theme. Its haunting lyricism recalls the slow movement of the “New World” Symphony. Dvořák said that it had cost him a great deal of effort, but that it moved him profoundly every time he heard it. Passing through much drama, the movement concludes with ringing fanfares.

The slow second movement opens with a warm, tranquil theme introduced by the woodwinds. Dvořák gives the middle section a forceful launch, then takes up the soaring melody of Josephina’s favorite song, here transposed into a minor key. A quasi-cadenza for the soloist, with light accompaniment, precedes a return to the opening subject and a peaceful, contented coda.

Strong contrasts characterize the Finale, from the forceful opening theme in march rhythm, through a wistful subject strongly inflected with the spirit of Czech folk music, to a sizeable, elegiac reverie where themes from the previous movements reappear briefly. Here, in a final gesture of farewell, Dvořák brings back Josephina’s melody once again, but this time in its original, major-key warmth. The Concerto concludes on an exultant note.

PROGRAM NOTES BY DON ANDERSON © 2023

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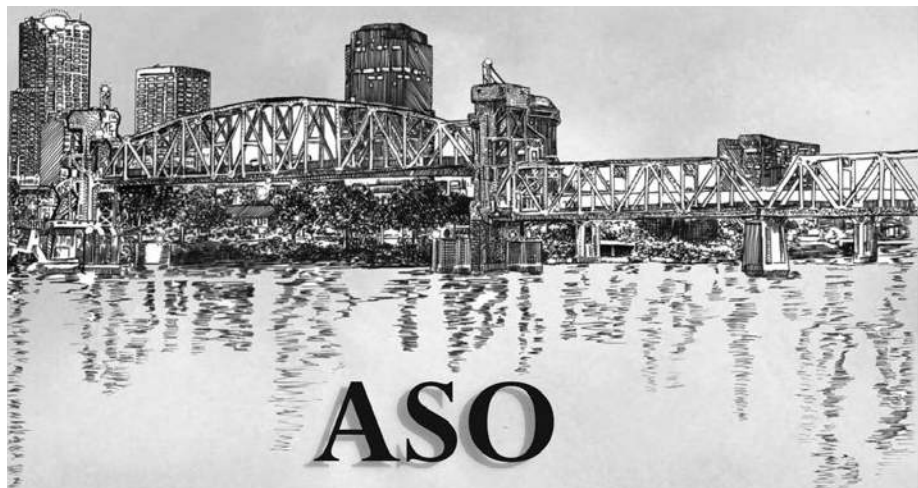
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- 1/18-2/24 Art + Design Faculty Biennial Show
- 3/1-3/31 Dean Dablow: *Everything is Abstract*
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- 9/21-9/24 *Anne of Green Gables*
- 11/16-11/19 *Servant of Two Masters*
- 2/16-2/19 *Muse Project*
- 3/11 *All-Night Theatre*
- 4/20-4/23 *42nd Street*
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- 11/3-11/5 Opera: *This is my Father's World*
- 12/2-12/3 A Festival of Christmas
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