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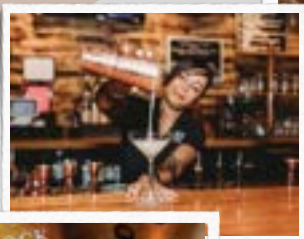
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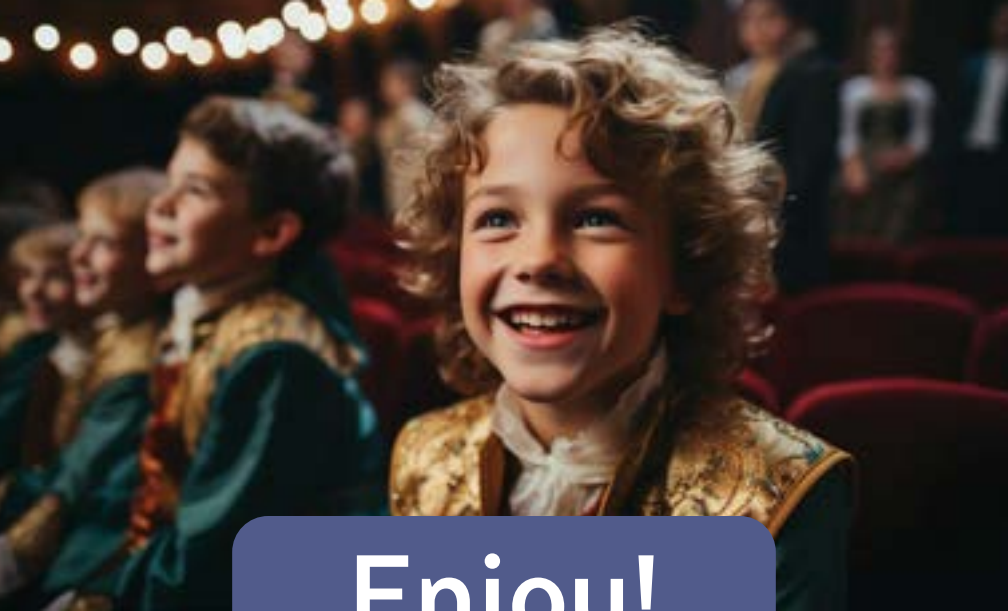
We are setting the stage to build better communities in Arkansas — to become the places your kids will want to raise their kids. By strategically funding a variety of local nonprofits we engage people, connect resources, and inspire solutions that build community.



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ARKANSAS
community foundation



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Dear ASO supporters, music lovers, people that took piano when young and have always regretted quitting, 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 with new Music Director Geoffrey Robson. I could not be more excited about the future. I am so thankful that Geoffrey was selected to lead the orchestra by a unanimous decision of the Search Committee, chaired by Dr. Denise Compton. Geoff cares deeply about the ASO, Little Rock, children, music education, and Arkansas. We could not be in better hands with our new leader. Deepest gratitude to the musicians, board members, and staff that served and gave hundreds of hours to this search.

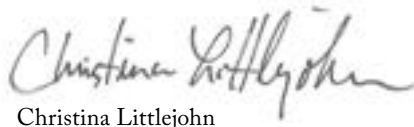
Our next important work is building the ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center. One hundred years ago, Stella Boyle Smith invited a group of musicians to perform in her living room. In fall of 2024, ASO will finally have its first permanent home and be able to broadcast the music of ASO into every living room in Arkansas! Thank you to Brigita Gardner, Chair of the Crescendo Campaign for leading us through an \$11.75M capital campaign to bring this project to a reality.

Thank you to all of you that have contributed to make the new community music center a reality for our state. We envision the ASO Stella Boyle Smith Music Center being a “Radically-Welcoming Hub of Musical Activity for All Arkansans.” We want everyone that walks into the space to see themselves there. A committee of community leaders led by Susan Marsh contributed ideas for how they want to use the music center to further their missions and serve our children, seniors, and community members with music-making and education.

To ensure the future of current programs and to take full advantage of the possibilities of the new Music Center, the ASO is embarking on a \$3M endowment campaign, *Encore*. As you may be reading or hearing in the news, the performing arts are navigating new challenges in the aftermath of the pandemic. By adding \$3M to the current \$10M endowment, we will ensure that the ASO remains financially healthy and continues to consistently balance its budget. The ASO has balanced its budget for 14 years, which enabled us to continue serving the community with music during the pandemic. Sustaining a solid financial foundation enables ASO to employ musicians of impeccable artistry to live, teach, and play in Little Rock and the state of Arkansas.

Thank you all for being here today for your Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. If you are a subscriber or concert member, thank you for your commitment. If you would like to become a subscriber or concert member, or are interested in participating on the Board of Advisors or Directors, please reach out to me at clittlejohn@arkansassymphony.org. If you want to learn more about ASO, the programs of the E. Lee Ronnel Music Academy, or see more of the new logo designed by Cranford Co., please visit our website at www.ArkansasSymphony.org.

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



Christina Littlejohn

ASO

ARKANSAS
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

Thank you



for your extraordinary support of the

Stella Boyle Smith
MASTERWORKS Series

Dear Music Lover,

It is an honor to welcome you to the symphony as the eighth Music Director of your Arkansas Symphony Orchestra! This is a historic year for this organization and for the performing arts in central Arkansas, and I am so happy that you are taking part in it with us.

This is a season that has something for everybody. If this is your first time attending the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, we welcome you and hope this will be the first of many world-class performances you enjoy!

I have never been more optimistic about the future of orchestral music. There is more great music being written right now for symphony orchestra than at any point I can remember. Composers you'll hear this year on our Masterworks series, such as Jonathan Bailey Holland and others, have such an extraordinary wealth of influences and styles in their music that it is inspiring, genre-bending greatness with every note. Older works get new life breathed into them each time the ASO takes them up. We create transcendent moments of beauty and enjoy them together, audience and performers, in the concert hall.

But there is much more. You will not want to miss Valery Saul's official debut concert, *Bond & Beyond*, featuring iconic James Bond songs from almost six decades of blockbusters. Capathia Jenkins, who brought the house DOWN when she performed *Tribute to Aretha Franklin* with us, returns in a new show, which will be equally memorable as we celebrate the great American genre of soul music. Coinciding with the total solar eclipse in April 2024, we will perform *The Planets*, a celestial musical journey through the heavens and its accompanying astrology.

Lastly, there is such an astounding array of musical talent right here in our city and across the community; it is one of the great joys of my position that we can seek out and feature local artists, support emerging careers, and uplift all of us. From the remarkable choirs onstage with us during *Home for the Holidays*, to side-by-side performances with youth orchestras, to our final concert of the season, *Arkansas Talent*, we have never been more dedicated to making live music performance one of the great connectors in our community. The construction is well underway for the ASO Stella Boyle Smith Community Music Center, which will house our education programs, youth orchestras, community orchestra, and programming to enrich and inspire ALL Arkansans.

Your Arkansas Symphony Orchestra is more accessible than ever. The concert membership allows one to enjoy any of our concerts for as low as \$9/month. Interested in making and engaging with music no matter your age? **The E. Lee Ronnel Music Academy** offers musical opportunities to students from age 4 to 104!

Thank you again for attending this performance, and I hope you can enjoy many more this season! We are YOUR symphony orchestra, professional musicians dedicated to performing at the highest level, and sharing the depth of our love for live music to all of Little Rock and the central Arkansas community.

Yours,



Geoffrey Robson

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Friday, December 15, 2023 • 7:30 PM

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FIRST ORION POPS SERIES

Home for the Holidays

Geoffrey Robson, *conductor*

Valery Saul, *associate conductor*

Satia Spencer • Blythe Keating, *vocalists*

Bryant High School Camerata

Tanner Oglesby, *director*

Little Rock Central High School Madrigals

Christy Fudge, *director*

Parkview High School Lab Singers

Mary Shollmier, *director*

CamRyn Stillman, *associate director*

Santa's Strings

BRUCE BROUGHTON Concert Suite from
(b. 1945) *Miracle on 34th Street*

arr. Murphy Ring Those Christmas Bells

ROBERT WENDEL Santa Dear (a letter of denial)
Blythe Keating, vocalist

HOWARD BLAKE Walking in the Air
(b. 1938) from *The Snowman*
Blythe Keating, vocalist

Home for the Holidays *continued*

- arr. Forrest Silent Night
- arr. Friedman A Chanukkah Overture
- arr. Richardson What Child is This?
Santa's Strings
- arr. Richardson Wassail, Wassail
Santa's Strings

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

- JOHN WILLIAMS Three Holiday Songs from *Home Alone*
(b. 1932)
 I. Somewhere in my Memory
 II. Star of Bethlehem
 III. Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas
- arr. O'Loughlin Christmas Canticles
- JULES STYNE The Christmas Waltz
(1905-1994)
 arr. Hayes
- arr. Hansen Joy to the World
 (inspired by Whitney Houston)
Satia Spencer, vocalist
- ADOLPHE ADAM O Holy Night
(1803-1856)
 arr. Ryden
Satia Spencer, vocalist
- JOSE FELICIANO Feliz Navidad
 arr. Vanacore

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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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Home for the Holidays

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

VALERY SAUL, Associate Conductor

SATIA SPENCER, Vocalist BLYTHE KEATING, Vocalist

BRYANT HIGH SCHOOL CAMERATA, Tanner Oglesby, Director

LITTLE ROCK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL MADRIGALS, Christy Fudge, Director

PARKVIEW HIGH SCHOOL LAB SINGERS, Mary Shollmier, Director
CamRyn Stillman, Associate Director

SANTA'S STRINGS

VIOLINAndrew Irvin
*Concertmaster**Dora Paley Ronnel*
*Concertmaster's Chair*Kiril Laskarov
*Concertmaster*Katherine Williamson
*Assistant Concertmaster**†Meredith Maddox Hicks
*Principal Second Violin**Eric M. Hayward*
Memorial Chair‡Linnaea Brophy
†Charlotte Crosmer‡Trisha McGovern Freeney
Linda Hsu

Beth Massa

Sandra McDonald

Tom McDonald

Kenta Nomura

Geronimo Oyenard

†Lauren Pokorzynski

Magdalena Ryszkowski

Dan Santelices

Algimantas Staskevicius

Leigh Wing

VIOLA‡Katherine Reynolds
*Principal**Dr. Howard & Celia*
Barnhard Chair

Joe Joyner

Tatiana Kotcherquina

†Timothy MacDuff

Julian Pranata

Beth Robison

CELLODavid Gerstein
*Principal**Linda Garner Riggs Chair*

†Travis Scharer

Casey Buck

Rafel León

Kristin Smith

‡Jacob Wunsch

BASSRussell Thompson
Principal

Ian Collins

Sara Neilson

Andrew Cody Williams

FLUTECarolyn Brown
Principal

Leanne Hampton

Gabriel Vega

PICCOLO

Gabriel Vega

OBOELeanna Renfro
*Principal**Rachel Fuller*
Memorial Chair

Mary Kay Woolly

Beth Wheeler

ENGLISH HORNBeth Wheeler
*Principal***CLARINET**

Erin Cameron

Karla Fournier

Mason Sangster

BASS CLARINET

Mason Sangster

BASSOONSusan Bell León
Principal

Marissa Takaki

Jake Fowler

CONTRABASSOON

Jake Fowler

HORNDavid Renfro
Principal

Robin Dauer

Brent Shires

Tyler Bjerke

Evan Mino

TRUMPETRoss Ahlhorn
Principal

Andrew Stadler

George Worthen
Memorial Chair

Carl Mason

TROMBONEMichael Underwood
*Principal**William "Bill" Vickery, Jr.*
Memorial Chair

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David Carter

TUBA

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Principal
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Choir in memory
of Gov. Frank White*

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Orchestra Guild Choir*

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Amy Hearting
Ryan Lewis

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Principal

PIANO

Carl Anthony
Principal

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Brian Wolverton

SANTA'S STRINGS

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Jason Tomas-Velasquez
Laine Farrar
Kalinda Loomis
Vann Lee
Aras Erdag

Charles Yao
Olivia Yu
Ethan Tang
Akshaj Kanaskar
Bennet Chen
Gray Gibson
Joseph Lyon
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Celina Martinez
Kimberly Aguilar
Constanza Madrigal

VIOLA
Max Carter
Molly Chosich
Gabriella Palmer

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Christy Fudge, Director CamRyn Stillman, Associate Director

Betsy Curtis
Bria Donaldson
Bram Fendley
Gabrielle Finley
Ryleigh Gaston
Hannah Greeson
Alex Harkins
Audre Hayes
Shruthi Hebbar
Demi Hubbard
Jeremiah Johnson

Cooper Lewis
Chetana Mandali
Isabella McDonald
Kamilla Parker
Abigail Porter
Audrey Ramsey
Ruby Reeves
Jadon Sanders
Kaitlyn Self
Adyson Shelton
Alexander Smith

**BRYANT
HIGH SCHOOL
CAMERATA**

Tanner Oglesby, Director

Beyonce Aguilera
Landon Allen
Laci Baugh
Kristopher Carolina
Dayne Coker
Nich Conrad
Andre Davis
Davion Deckard
Christopher Garza
Bee Golleher
Kaylie Guydon
Cameron Hastings
Michelle Hernandez
Pedro Hernandez
Hannah Heston
AJ Johnson
Andrew Karp
Braden Lisowe
Sydney Maddox
Joules Margot
Triston McDade
Leilani McKay
Gavin Montgomery
Grant Morehead
Olivia Mortensen
Zachary Moss
Amelia Nickols
Jackson Osborne
Elizabeth Porter
Liv Robertson
Jonathan Rolan
Jake Seaton
Anna Claire Skelley
Landon Smith
Evie Summers
Ava Tillery
Dierra Williams
Katie Wright

PARKVIEW HIGH SCHOOL LAB SINGERS

Mary Shollmier, Director

Xi Bailey
Lila Bass
Jalyn Bell
Kat Blackburn
Ossiana Blankenship
Jacobus Burton
Shamarion Burton
Jaylon Casey
Jayden Davis
Brooke Delong
Amelia Diaz
Amelia Diggs
Aniya Foster
Jaila Green
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PHOTO: JOE MAZZA

GEOFFREY ROBSON, *Music 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*, *LaBobème*, 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 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 Concert master 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.



VALERY SAUL, *Associate Conductor*

Described as a “powerful presence on the podium” by Marin Alsop, Valery Saul is recognized for her dynamic leadership and musicality. She was recently appointed the Associate Conductor of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and also serves as a cover conductor for the Minnesota Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Charlotte Symphony, and Oregon Symphony.

In summer 2023, Valery was invited by Cristian Măcelaru (Orchestre National de France and WDR Symphony Orchestra) to participate in the Romanian Chamber Orchestra Masterclass and at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. During the 2021/22 season, Valery won 2nd place at the Denver Philharmonic International Conducting Competition with a captivating performance of *Chopin Piano Concerto No. 2*. Valery was also invited to the Domaine Forget Conducting Academy to work with Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Bramwell Tovey where she was awarded the Excellence Scholarship. She was also selected by Marin Alsop to participate in the AT&T She's Connected commercial that highlights visibility of women in the arts and entertainment industry and was chosen as the 2022 winner for the Gena Branscombe Conducting Scholarship.

Memorable conducting highlights include invitations to participate in masterclasses with the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center and with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, she was appointed conductor for the OperaBox Company in Vancouver, Canada where she led virtual programs of Puccini's *La Bohème* and Handel's *Messiah*. She also served as the assistant conductor for the Baltimore Symphony Youth Orchestra and the Hillsboro Symphony Orchestra.

Valery is a graduate of Peabody Conservatory (M.M. 2022). She has been mentored by Marin Alsop, Cristian Măcelaru, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, David Danzmayr, and George Manahan. In addition to conducting, Valery is a professional opera singer.



SATIA SPENCER, Vocalist

A mezzo-soprano, teacher, and veteran who honorably served in the U.S Marine Corps, Satia Spencer now serves as a music educator for the Little Rock School District and clinician for various music and theater programs for youth in the central Arkansas region. She is also an avid actor and performer of musical theater both locally and regionally. Her most notable credits include Felicia in *Memphis the Musical* (ACT), Mother Abbess in *The Sound of Music* (ACT/Wildwood), Sarah in *Ragtime* (ACT), Stepmother in *Into the Woods* (The Rep), Nurse Ratched in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (TWT), Celeste in *Troubled Island* (OITR), Miss Hannigan in *Annie* (Wildwood), and Alice's Daughter in *Big River* (AST).

Satia is no stranger to the ASO Pops concert series. In 2022, Satia was a featured vocalist on the *Home for the Holidays* program singing soulful gospel arrangements of "Go Tell It On the Mountain" and "Joy to the World." Other previous performances include the 2010 Christmas Pops (David & The Divas), 2012 "Valentines in New York" (The Wedding Singer), 2017 *Home for the Holidays* (Praeclara), 2022 *Tribute to the Queen of Soul: Aretha Franklin* (Aretha Tribute Choir with Capathia Jenkins), and 2022 *Halloween Spooktacular* (Spooky Singers). She is so honored and elated to return to the Robinson stage with the elite musicians of the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra. Joy to the World!



BLYTHE KEATING, Vocalist

Blythe Keating, soprano, loves to sing any chance she can get. She is training in musical theatre and hopes to pursue the performing arts as a career whether on stage or in arts administration.

In her thirteen years you may have seen her in *Sweeney Todd* (Ensemble – Wildwood Park for the Arts), *High School Musical 2 Jr.* (Gabiella – Argenta Community Theatre), *Oliver* (Artful Dodger – Wildwood), *Blueberry's Playhouse* (PBS Kids), *The Nutcracker* (Candy Cane – Ballet Arkansas), *Sound of Music* (Marta – Wildwood/Argenta), *The Wizard of Oz* (Lullaby League – Wildwood), *Seussical* (Max – Wildwood), *Annie* (Orphan – Wildwood), *Music Man* (Kid's Band – Wildwood), or even the very first Praeclara production of *Carmina Burana*. She studies singing with Dr. Kara Claybrook (University of Mobile), and jazz, ballet, and tap dance with Allison Wilson and Leslie Dodge at Shuffles and Ballet II. At the beginning of December, Blythe will be playing the title role in the Menotti opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with chamber orchestra at St. James United Methodist Church.

Blythe is delighted to make her debut with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and can't wait to perform with musicians that she has looked up to for as long as she can remember. She would like to thank her parents, Bevan and Kira, her brother, Brock, and all her teachers and mentors for their guidance and continual encouragement.

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Arkansas Symphony Orchestra broke ground on August 10, 2023 on its new \$11.75 million Stella Boyle Smith Music Center in Little Rock's East Village, creating a first-of-its-kind music-focused headquarters for the state. The new 20,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility, slated to open in September 2024, is the Symphony's first permanent home in its 58-year history.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT

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The new music center will be a **radically-welcoming hub** of musical activity for all Arkansans, serving youth and adults of all ages with an array of musical offerings. The building will provide access to music education, music performances, and music-making to residents of all corners of the state through new spaces and a broadcast and recording studio.

ArkansasSymphony.org/crescendo

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**CAROLYN BROWN, *Flute***

Carolyn Brown, Principal Flute with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and recently retired long-time Professor of Flute at the University of Central Arkansas, began her musical education as a young girl, studying piano with her mother and flute with her father. She continued her education at Wartburg College, the Conservatory of Music in Kansas City, the University of Kansas and received her doctorate in Flute Performance and Literature from The Eastman School of Music in New York where she studied with Bonita Boyd. During

her residency at Eastman, she was the only woodwind candidate to be unanimously nominated by the Eastman faculty for the prestigious Performer's Certificate.

Carolyn was the top prize winner in the 1995 Myrna Brown International Artist Competition. The *Arkansas Times* has described her playing as "achingly beautiful" and "gorgeous." She has been a concerto soloist with numerous orchestras and has been a featured piccolo and flute soloist on multiple occasions with the ASO, including performances of the Flute Concerto by Christopher Rouse and Mozart's Flute and Harp Concerto with ASO's Principal Harpist, Alisa Coffey.

She performs frequently as a soloist throughout the United States and abroad. She has performed at numerous National Flute Association conventions and performed the national premiere of Keith Gates' Sonatina for Flute and Piano at the NFA Convention in Kansas City. Her international travels have taken her to Asia and South America, where she's performed recitals and taught masterclasses.

When she is not performing or teaching, she spends her time waiting on her three sweet cats Ronnie, Siri and Rosey. She loves spending time outdoors, especially hiking, and is an avid tennis fan.



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TANGAZO / Astor Piazzolla

b. Mar del Plata, Argentina / March 11, 1921; d. Buenos Aires, Argentina / July 4, 1992

Piazzolla became a Latin-American musical legend by taking the traditional tango—the sultry dance that sprang up in the back alleys and brothels of Buenos Aires in the final quarter of the nineteenth century—and mixing it with classical music and jazz to create the more sophisticated and experimental “Nuevo Tango” (New Tango).

In 1954, an orchestral work he composed for the Buenos Aires Philharmonic won him a scholarship for a year’s study in Paris with Nadia Boulanger, friend of Stravinsky and tutor to an entire generation of composers, including numerous Americans. “Up to then, I had composed symphonies, chamber music, string quartets,” Piazzolla recalled. “But when Nadia Boulanger analyzed my music, she said she could nowhere find any Piazzolla... Nadia made me play a tango to her and she said, ‘You idiot! That is the real Piazzolla!’ I threw away all the other music and, in 1954, started working on my New Tango.”

His compositions in this style, designed more for serious listening than for dancing, met with heated resistance from traditionalists after he resettled in Argentina. “Musicians hated me,” he recalled. “I was taking the old tango away from them.” Nuevo Tango first found acceptance in France and the United States. Fed up with his countrymen’s scorn, Piazzolla relocated to Paris for good in 1974.

During the final two decades of his life, he earned worldwide fame, touring with his band and composing busily for stage, screen, and concert rooms. His fellow Argentines finally came to accept his new style, to the point where they hailed him as the savior of tango. In the late 1980s, classical performers began taking his music into their repertoires.

He composed *Tangazo* (sub-titled “Variations on Buenos Aires”) in 1969. Although its roots clearly lie in the traditional tango form, it is at the same time totally symphonic in scale, content and treatment. The opening bars, confined to the double bass section, set a melancholy, lamenting mood. The higher strings gradually join in, raising the levels of volume and activity, but only for a short time, and without relieving the sense of gloom. Sunlight arrives via the wind instruments, which enter with a cheeky, vivacious dance tune that spreads to the full orchestra. A quiet transitional passage sets up the appearance of a long, lyrical melody on solo horn. It builds in fervor to an eloquent climax. The central dance tune returns and seems to be building up to a resounding, razzle-dazzle finish—only to fade away, ironically, into stillness.

FLUTE CONCERTO IN D MINOR, WQ. 22 / Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach

b. Weimar, Germany / March 8, 1714; d. Hamburg, Germany / December 14, 1788

Carl Philipp Emanuel, and his younger half-brother Johann Christian, were the most talented and famous offspring of Johann Sebastian Bach. Carl’s expressive and richly crafted music won the admiration of many illustrious musicians, including Haydn and Mozart, while Beethoven believed that his works “should be in the possession of every true artist, not only for the sake of real enjoyment but also for the purpose of study.” Naturally, his principal teacher was his father. He probably studied with his godfather, Georg Philipp Telemann, as well.

In 1740, he was appointed resident harpsichordist to the Berlin court of Frederick, the young King of Prussia. He remained there for 27 years. Probably during the 1750s, he composed five flute concertos. They appear to be transcriptions of earlier concertos

for harpsichord. The Concerto in D Minor, the earliest of the set, is the most profound and impressive of the group. Its dark emotions forecast the Storm and Stress movement that would soon become a prominent element in German art, including music. The Finale is a particularly striking creation. Its rhythms and dynamics conjure up a storm of dramatic tensions.

SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN C MINOR, OP. 78

"ORGAN" SYMPHONY / *Camille Saint-Saëns*

b. Paris, France / October 9, 1835; d. Algiers, Algeria / December 16, 1921

The first four of Saint-Saëns' five symphonies date from 1850-1859. Since he felt that only two of them were worthy of publication, his final symphony (the work to be heard on this program) has come to be known as No. 3. The lightness and grace of the early symphonies reflect his love of Mozart, Mendelssohn, and Schumann.

By the time he came to write No. 3, in the early months of 1886, he had absorbed another, quite different influence: the drama and brilliance found in the music of Hungarian composer and pianist Franz Liszt. In this symphony, Saint-Saëns adopted a compositional practice that Liszt had originated: basing a large-scale composition on the continuous transformation of a handful of short themes. On Liszt's final visit to Paris in April, Saint-Saëns played him a draft of the symphony. Liszt died on July 31, without having a chance to hear the completed piece; Saint-Saëns dedicated it to his memory.

The symphony was commissioned by the London Philharmonic Society. His publisher, Jacques Durand, wished him to finish it swiftly. The composer resisted, replying in jest, "You ask for the symphony; you don't now what you ask. It will be terrifying... there will be much in the way of experiment in this terrible thing, and I shall certainly have to make changes after the first performance..."

Saint-Saëns traveled to England to conduct the premiere himself. After a rehearsal he wrote to Durand that the symphony was "truly terrible; I was right. Happily I am dealing with a first-class orchestra... I have a few small retouches to make, but that's a small matter. The coda of the finale is really extraordinary."

The first performance took place in St. James's Hall on May 19. It won a tremendous success, setting the seal on Saint-Saëns' popularity in England. On the same program, he re-affirmed his reputation for versatility by performing the solo part in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4, with Sir Arthur Sullivan conducting. The symphony's Parisian debut one year later drew equally strong praise, from audiences if not the press.

Together with the *Symphonie Fantastique* of Berlioz (1830) and César Franck's Symphony in D minor (1889), it is one of the cornerstones of nineteenth-century French orchestral music. The composer saw it as something of a climax in his career, stating, "I have given all that I have to give. Whatever I have done I shall never do again." It is his longest purely instrumental work. He continued to compose for the rest of his long life, but he never again attempted anything so long and grand.

Although it consists of the four movements standard to most symphonies of the period, Saint-Saëns groups them into two pairs, with a full stop only at the halfway point. The first movement is made up of a restless allegro and a meditative slow section; the second includes a flashing, fantastic scherzo and a majestic finale. The lavish orchestration includes a piano (two players) and the organ, which participates only in the second and fourth sections. The "king of instruments" adds a warm, atmospheric glow to the former, and an overwhelming sense of spectacle to the latter.

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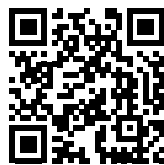
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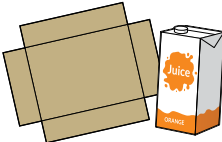
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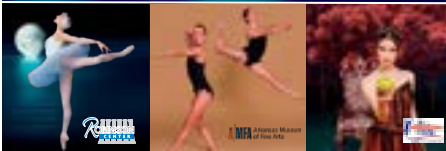
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