



KEYNOTES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

LAWRENCE ECKERLING, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Virtuoso Voices

The ESO's 73rd season is titled "Virtuosos" in recognition of the diversity of local performers represented in our subscription series. Our fourth and final concert combines the vocal artistry of two choruses and four soloists with the Leonard Bernstein Centennial and the popular choral blockbuster, *Carmina Burana*.

Our program opens with a short "overture" written by the film composer John Williams (b. 1932) in honor of Bernstein's 70th birthday in 1988. This four minute tribute is really a set of brief variations on several Bernstein tunes, most notably "New York, New York" from *On the Town* and "America" from *West Side Story*.

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990) was arguably the most important musician in American history. Please see the article on the next page by our Music Director for his personal reminiscences about Bernstein. The first of two Bernstein works on our program is the dazzling coloratura aria "Glitter and Be Gay" from his opera/Broadway show *Candide* (1956). The dual description of *Candide's* genre is because it has been performed in at least seven different versions, as listed on the official Bernstein website. Regardless of the words and dramatic sequence used, Bernstein's melodies remain as the source of *Candide's* enduring popularity, and "Glitter and Be Gay" is among the gems of the score.

The major Bernstein composition on the program is his most prominent concert work, the *Chichester Psalms* for chorus, orchestra and boy soloist, which was commissioned for the 1965 Chichester Cathedral Choir Festival. The Anglican church choral tradition emphasizes male singers for all vocal ranges; the score uses female sopranos and altos, but maintains the tradition with the boy soloist. However, everyone sings in Hebrew as the texts are taken completely from Psalms; each of the three movements of this 18 minute work contains one complete Psalm plus one to four lines from a second Psalm. The music combines beautiful tonal harmony with energetic and rhythmic tunefulness, heeding the gentle

SUNDAY, MAY 12 — 2:30 PM

VIRTUOSO VOICES

suggestion from the Dean of Chichester Cathedral that "many of us would be very delighted if there was a hint of *West Side Story* about the music."

The concert and the season conclude with what has been called "one of the few box office certainties in twentieth-century music": *Carmina Burana* by Carl Orff (1895–1982). Composed for large orchestra and chorus, plus children's chorus and three vocal soloists, this one hour choral show-piece sets medieval poetry and texts from the Benediktbeuern monastery in southern Bavaria, which were first published in 1847. The Munich-born Orff composed *Carmina* in 1935–36; it was premiered in 1937 and enjoyed an immediate success. It remains the only work in the standard concert repertoire created in Germany between 1933–1945. *Carmina* is notable for simple melodies which are easily grasped upon first hearing, accompanied by ostinato rhythms enhanced by the lavish use of percussion instruments. Its opening "O Fortuna" chorus is among the most recognizable melodies in all music, and because it is repeated as the final number of the score, it will also bring our season to a resounding close. 🎧

—David Ellis



MUSICAL INSIGHTS

FRIDAY, MAY 10, 2019

1:30 PM

FREE

MEET MICHELLE AREYZAGA

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1611 CHICAGO AVE., EVANSTON
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THE EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA IS AN ILLINOIS NOT-FOR-PROFIT COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA PROVIDING DIVERSE, ENJOYABLE AND ACCESSIBLE MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT THAT ENRICHES THE ORCHESTRA, THE AUDIENCE AND THE COMMUNITY. For more information on ESO concerts and events, please contact David Ellis, General Manager, at (847) 864-8804. Write us at Evanston Symphony Orchestra, PO Box 778, Evanston, IL 60204. Email us at esomusic@evanstonsymphony.org. Visit our website evanstonsymphony.org.



BEHIND THE SCENES



The first half of our final concert of this season is the Evanston Symphony's contribution to the Bernstein Centennial celebration. For the last year or so, orchestras all around the world have celebrated Leonard Bernstein's music. Our program opens with John Williams' *To Lenny! To Lenny!*, itself a tribute to Bernstein's music. And what follows are two of Bernstein's own masterpieces, "Glitter and Be Gay" from *Candide*, and *Chichester Psalms*.

Despite my loving all of the celebrations about his music, I have still felt a lack of satisfaction about the Centennial. The reason is that while these tributes rightly focus on "Lenny the composer," this was only one part of everything that he was. My first experiences with Bernstein (as was true with many) was both as conductor and teacher through his Young People's Concerts. When I was in eighth grade, my father took me to a movie... *West Side Story*, and I was mesmerized. And later, as a high school student, I became all-consumed with his *Mass*. Then in college I became obsessed with virtually every recording he made (which was a lot, because he basically recorded everything!). Right after college I took a trip to New York, attending concerts and theater at night. But during the day, I landed at the

Museum of Broadcasting (this was before anyone had home videos), and spent all day watching the Young People's Concerts. I did this for probably four years on my annual trek to New York.

In 1983 one of my first dreams was fulfilled with the opportunity to study with him at Tanglewood. Those sessions were not large in number, but their impact on my life and my musicianship was immeasurable, and profound. Those sessions and interactions shaped everything I am today.

So a mere celebration of "Bernstein the Composer" rings hollow to me. I adore so much of his music. Does his greatest music measure up to the greatest music of Beethoven or Mozart? Probably not (of which Bernstein himself agreed!). But if in celebrating Bernstein you not only celebrate his music, but also Bernstein the conductor, the teacher, the writer, and the music ambassador, then you are celebrating ALL of him. And through that lens, he is one of the greatest of the greats in my lifetime. And it is through that same lens that we are privileged to honor him at our final concert of the season. 🎻

—Lawrence Eckerling
Music Director, Evanston Symphony Orchestra

YOUNG PERSONS' CONCERT

MAY 19, 2019 • 2:30–3:30 PM

EVANSTON TOWNSHIP
HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

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Music by Rossini, Rodríguez, Vivaldi, Williams followed by Farandole by Bizet plus Music from *Pirates of the Caribbean* performed by Evanston District 65 orchestra students playing side-by-side with Evanston Symphony musicians.



Meet our May Soloist, Michelle Areyzaga



Michelle Areyzaga didn't set out to be a professional singer. In fact, she never had a formal voice lesson until she was 23.

Michelle was born and raised in Chicago. When she was growing up, Michelle, her parents and her brother would sing

their favorite hymns in four-part harmony for church services or just for themselves. Not surprising, as her father, who was from Mexico, and her mother, from Bolivia, met as choir members at the Moody Bible Institute.

Michelle started playing piano when she was three and in high school was a choir accompanist. She then earned a scholarship to major in accounting at Southern Illinois University, where she joined the choir and minored in music. When a professor told her that she should consider changing her major to voice, Michelle realized that accounting might not be the right career for her after all. She also realized that she didn't like being so far from home, so she left SIU and came back to Chicago.

Michelle started investigating the various voice programs in the Chicago area and was offered scholarships at Northwestern and Northern Illinois. However, a friend strongly suggested she study with renowned Chicago soprano Maria Lagios, then teaching at the Music Conservatory at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts—which is how Michelle, at the ripe old age of 23, came to have her first formal voice lesson. (Ms. Lagios, now Professor Emerita at Roosevelt, is still Michelle's vocal coach.)

After receiving her B.A. in vocal music with honors from Roosevelt, Michelle made her opera debut with the Chicago Opera Theatre as The Girl in Viktor Ullmann's *The Kaiser of Atlantis*. Her performance was hailed by one critic as "stunning." Since then she has sung with opera companies and orchestras all over the U.S. and abroad to ovations that have been, of course, standing. Recently, under the baton of Maestro John Nelson, Michelle sang the first performance in Costa Rica of the Bach B minor Mass.

Michelle brings to the stage not only her gorgeous voice, but also her ability to interpret a composer's lyrics. She first appeared with the ESO in 2008, delighting audience and orchestra alike with her interpretations of Canteloube's *Songs of the Auvergne*. Even though she was singing in Langued'Occ, a romance language spoken in the Occitan regions of France, Italy and Spain, there was absolutely no mistaking which work was which, especially Canteloube's tongue-in-cheek song about a lazy girl who did not want to get up! Michelle has also performed selections from "Bernstein on Broadway" to audiences nationwide. One reviewer said of her performance, "Areyzaga's rendition of "Glitter and Be Gay" was easily the highlight of the set. Her sense of comic irony brought laughter as she pulled baubles from her bosom, and her spectacular coloratura singing shone brightly in this devilishly difficult number."

Her acting talents are not limited to the comic, however. Michelle appeared with the ESO in January of 2011 in the premiere of Gwyneth Walker's *The Promised Land*. Walker wrote this work specifically for Michelle, whose performance brought many in the audience to tears, such is the power of her voice. She had previously premiered another Walker work, *La Tenura*, in Vermont and also released a recording of Walker's *The Sun is Love*. It is a tribute to Michelle's voice and dramatic talents that Dr. Walker is drawn to composing works specifically for this versatile soprano.

For the past several years, Michelle has been the soprano soloist for the International Music Foundation's perennial favorite, the "Do-It-Yourself" presentation of Handel's *Messiah*; a number of ESO musicians are also members of the DIYM orchestra.

Since her last appearance with the ESO in 2015, when she performed Strauss' *Four Last Songs*, Michelle has returned to Roosevelt University, this time as a faculty member, and very much enjoys teaching. In addition, she has been in high demand to perform Leonard Bernstein's works during the many celebrations of his centennial, including performances with Bernstein's daughter, Jamie. Michelle will also be appearing in Bernstein's "Trouble in Tahiti" at Ravinia on August 22, with Marin Alsop conducting.

Michelle has three recording projects in the works for 2019: *Dona Nobis Pacem* with the Richmond Symphony; the London version of the Brahms *Requiem* with the excellent Chicago choral group, Bella Voce, which will be conducted by Andrew Lewis, father of William Lewis, the boy solo in the ESO's performance of Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* in this concert; and an album for female voices in Spanish and English by American composers, including a work by Gwyneth Walker based on poems of Emily Dickinson.

In August of 2015, Michelle married Roy Da Silva, a well-known car authority whom she describes as her "Brazilian hunk." The ceremony was performed by Alan Heatherington, current Music Director of the Chicago Master Singers, former Music Director of the Lake Forest Symphony and Ars Viva Symphony Orchestra, and now an Anglican priest. Michelle and Roy live in Arlington Heights with Michelle's son, Will, who is 15 and a student at Wheeling High School. Will doesn't sing, but plays the electric guitar and is into heavy metal music. Michelle hopes this music choice is just a phase, but reminds herself that there is a correlation between heavy metal music and opera in that both are driven by the power of the emotions—an interesting thought that more parents of teen-agers may want to tuck away for future reference.

The ESO is delighted to welcome one of our favorite artists back to our stage! 🎵

—Kelly Brest van Kempen



EVANSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Lawrence Eckerling, Music Director

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Great Composers

J. Sibelius

NOVEMBER 10, 2019

SIBELIUS 1

SIBELIUS

Finlandia

NIELSEN

Flute Concerto

Mindy Kaufman, flute

VIVALDI

Piccolo Concerto in C Major

Mindy Kaufman, piccolo

SIBELIUS

Symphony No. 1

P. Tchaikovsky

MARCH 15, 2020

TCHAIKOVSKY 4

KHACHATURIAN

Four Dances from *Gayane*

PROKOFIEV

Violin Concerto No. 2

Irina Muresanu, violin

TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 4

G. Gershwin

FEBRUARY 2, 2020

**GERSHWIN
CONCERTO IN F**

NEWMAN

Blow It Up, Start Again

WALKER

Lyric for Strings

GERSHWIN

Concerto in F

Jeffrey Biegel, piano

GROFÉ

Grand Canyon Suite

L. van Beethoven

MAY 3, 2020

**BEETHOVEN
“EMPEROR”**

BEETHOVEN

Consecration of the House Overture

BEETHOVEN

Piano Concerto No. 5 “Emperor”

Inna Faliks, piano

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 6 “Pastoral”

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EVANSTON SYMPHONY HOLIDAY CONCERT (December 8, 2019)

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