



**Bryan Eckenrode**  
Conductor

*presents...*

*A Family Concert...*

# A World of Play

Guest Artists:  
Mike Randall  
& Claudia Staines  
*Narrators*



**Works By:**

Bizet • Copland • Haydn • PDQ Bach



Preconcert 2:15 pm

# February 18, 2024 | 3:00 pm

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## Conductor's Corner:

Hello and welcome to A World of Play. And are you ever in store for a fun afternoon.

Our concert begins on somewhat of a serious note, Aaron Copland's Appalachian Spring. A marvelous work that will make you think of Spring in the hills of Pennsylvania. I can relate as I am from Pennsylvania, the wonderful small town of Cresson, one of the highest elevations in the state.

Next, we present the Toy Symphony and if anyone would like to own up to actually composing it, please contact me. Historically, it is attributed to Hayden but also to Mozart's father Leopold. However, no one really knows. But it is a great deal of fun to play and to experience. And as a value add, it's short!! And then intermission.

The second half of our concert is a piece by the composer of Carmen, Georges Bizet. But it's not Carmen! It's the L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1. This is a work with four contrasting movements; the first is Prelude which has a very popular and recognizable opening theme and also some lyrical lines played by the saxophone which was an unheard of instrument before this time; the second is a Minuetto, a lively dance; the third was written for the upper strings only; the fourth is a Carillon, representative of bells typically housed in a tower.

The final piece in today's program will truly make you smile. If you have ever listened to sports announcers or battled with a referee you will love this piece. Originally written by Beethoven, PDQ Bach, aka Peter Schickele, who unfortunately, just passed away, disassembled this piece. Yes, disassembled and created a piece that will live on as does Who's on First. We are very proud to present our Sports Commentators, the marvelous Mike Randall, making his second appearance with the Amherst Symphony, and Claudia Staines, the current president of our Board and a well-known radio personality. Our referee today is Andrew Ziemba, percussionist extraordinaire with a loud whistle. Watch out. And, play ball!!!!

Hope you enjoy the concert,

*Bryan Eckenrode*



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# Bryan Eckenrode, Conductor

**1st Violins:**

David Spring, Concertmaster  
 Esha Blaggan  
 Sarah Chang  
 Martha Chavez  
 Emma Hoffritz  
 Libby Keller  
 Gayle Kroetsch  
 Janet Mazzio  
 Jeff Mols

**2nd Violins:**

Laura Rusche, Principal  
 Gabrielle Catalano  
 Alicia DiVita  
 Aubrey Garas  
 Melissa Gould  
 Laura Holt  
 Michael Klucznik  
 Grace LeVea  
 Samantha MacNamara  
 Phyllis Piazza  
 Martina Puzanov  
 Melanie Rushton  
 Erin Szymanski

**Violas:**

Martin Ederer, Principal  
 Isabel Anadon  
 Christina DiVita  
 Maddie Mooney  
 Adam Peterson  
 Sarah Philips  
 Mary Pouli-Sosnowski  
 Elizabeth Seward

**Celli:**

Allison Collins, Principal  
 Peg Beyer  
 Emily Carey  
 Erin Eno  
 Reggie Guo  
 John Martell  
 Jennifer Sandner  
 Joseph Tronolone  
 Anne Marie Will

**Double Bases:**

Bob Groves, Principal  
 Jamie Baumgardt  
 Brian DeJesus  
 Mary DiCioccio  
 Mo Han  
 Vincent Tutino  
 Mary DiCioccio  
 Ally Jindra

**Flutes:**

August Grillo, Principal  
 Joan Ricca

**Piccolo:**

Joan Ricca

**Oboes:**

Sheryl Rohr, Principal  
 Laura Buechi

**English Horn:**

Laura Buechi

**Clarinets:**

Lynne Price, Principal  
 Rachel Birkman

**Bassoons:**

Susan Tichy, Principal  
 Linda Mucyn  
 Becca Schroeder

**Alto Sax:**

Christopher Peracciny

**French Horns:**

Megan Marranca - Velez, Principal  
 Lee Brusino  
 Dave Macaluso  
 Alexa Mathes  
 Isaac Newman

**Trumpets:**

Don Montalto, Principal  
 Chris Gawlak  
 Ali Jeffords  
 Kara Mayer

**Trombones:**

Robert King, Principal  
 Alan Jaenecke

**Bass Trombone:**

Stuart Easter

**Percussion:**

Kris Banzhaf  
 Ed Bradley  
 Colin Sperrazza  
 Thomas Stroth  
 Andrew Ziemba

**Harp:**

Cristin Kalinowski

**Piano:**

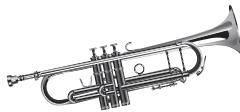
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Jeff Mols  
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## Amherst Symphony Orchestra

# A World of Play

February 18, 2024 • 3:00 pm

Bryan Eckenrode, Conductor

Guest Narrators: Mike Randall & Claudia Staines

Appalachian Spring

Aaron Copland

Toy Symphony

Joseph Haydn

Allegro

Menuetto and Trio

Finale, Allegro

### Intermission

L'Arlesienne Suite No.1

Georges Bizet

Préludes

Minuetto

Adagietto

Carillon

Beethoven's Symphony No.5

P.D.Q. Bach

Allegro con brio

(Peter Schickele)

**Mike Randall & Claudia Staines, Sports Commentators**

**Andrew Ziemba, Referee**

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## **BRYAN ECKENRODE,** Conductor/Cellist

Conductor/cellist, Bryan Eckenrode, graduated cum laude from SUNY at Stony Brook and holds a Master of Music degree from SUNY at Buffalo.

Eckenrode is conductor and music director of the Warren Philharmonic

Orchestra in Pennsylvania and the Chautauqua Regional Youth Symphony, the Prelude Strings Orchestra, and the Young Artists' Orchestra of Jamestown. He is also conductor of the Amherst Symphony. He has been guest conductor with the Western New York Chamber Orchestra. He was guest conductor of the Genesee Symphony and the Cheektowaga Symphony. He was also conductor of the Zone 1 Area All State Orchestra. Eckenrode served as the program coordinator for Artpark's Music in the Woods series.

He is currently principal cello with the Western New York Chamber Orchestra and has performed with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Erie Philharmonic, and with Ars Nova.

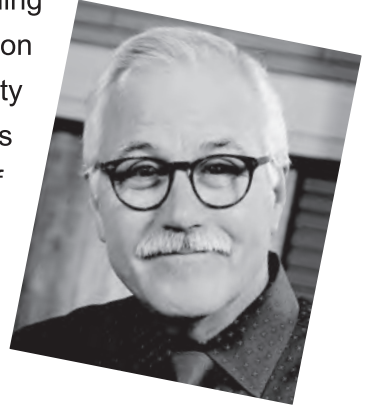
He is principal cello with the Bach and Beyond Festival and records with the International Baroque Soloists. He was principal cellist with the British Columbia (Canada) Mozart Festival Orchestra and the Southern Tier Symphony. He is a member of the Lexington String Quartet, and the chamber groups Voci d'Amore and Camerata.

He can be heard on the CDs of many artists, including Ani DiFranco, 10,000 Maniacs, Sixpence None the Richer, Seven Day Faith, Them Jazzbeards, John and Mary, and Alison Pipitone: not only as a cellist, but as a bagpiper and flutist. He has recorded the sound tracks of film scores for several silent movies being distributed on commercial DVD by the Turner Broadcasting Network. He has performed twice at Lincoln Center in New York and recorded the sound track for the PBS special – The Siege of Fort Erie – A Glorious Battle. He was bagpipe soloist with the Buffalo Philharmonic for their successful Memorial Day Pops Concerts. He has been principal cellist with The Most Arts Festival held at Alfred University. He was recently inducted into the Sigma Alpha Iota for his distinguished contribution to the arts.

Eckenrode is an adjunct professor at Canisius College, Buffalo State College, Jamestown Community College, and director of the string department at Villa Maria College. Eckenrode is on the music faculty at the renowned Nichols School in Buffalo. He is married to the internationally acclaimed soprano, Cristen Gregory.

# Guest Narrator: Mike Randall

Mike Randall is an actor and award winning playwright. He is best known for his long run on WKBW-TV where he was an on-air personality for 40 years from 1983 to 2023 and was inducted into the Buffalo Broadcasting Hall of Fame in 2017. He has performed his Mark Twain Live! solo show for more than fifty years, including off-broadway in New York City. Mike Randall has performed a variety of roles locally and throughout the country and has appeared on stage at Lancaster Opera House, Riviera Theatre, Kavinoky Theatre, TOY Theatre Company, New Phoenix Theatre and Musically Theatre. Mike has narrated concerts for The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Buffalo Silver Band, Amherst Symphony Orchestra and Buffalo Wind Symphony.



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## PRECONCERT EVENT

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# Guest Narrator: Claudia Staines

Claudia Staines doesn't have a musical bone in her body, but she does have a love of the arts and performing, and is delighted to have the chance to show it again.

Born and raised in Kitchener, Ontario, she is a long-time resident of Williamsville, living in the house her in-laws, Dr. Robert & Grace Mols, bought brand-new in 1958. Before marrying Jeff Mols, who is the ASO Music Acquisition Librarian and a violinist in the orchestra, she spent a year in Australia as a Rotary Exchange student and then graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University.

Her professional career has included being a teacher, the personal assistant to the owners of a small chain of art movie houses and then a leading NYC entertainment attorney; owning and operating a small inn; writing for and editing two different small-town magazines; working in morning radio for more than 11 years as a morning co-host, talk show host, and a "weather specialist"; marketing and then managing two different small professional theatre companies; and having a 'memoir with recipes' published. Kind of a "Jill of All Things Cultural and Business".

In the past few months, and rather unexpectedly, she has acted as the President of the Amherst Symphony Orchestra Association Board of Directors. It is an honor and privilege to do this work, and she looks forward to helping the Orchestra grow in community outreach, education, and of course quality.



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*My Dear Fellow ASO Fans,*

It's our annual Family Concert, so I decided to share a family story with you. A few years ago, actually quite a few years ago, I took one of my younger brothers to his first classical music concert. It was the Kitchener Symphony, and they were playing Beethoven's Fifth. We were late, which of course is no surprise to anyone who knows me, and got into our seats just as the baton came down. In the silence that followed the familiar da-da-da-daaaa I said to Michael "that's death knocking". Unfortunately, my voice was the only sound in the hall at that moment, so not just Michael but pretty much everyone else heard me.



I tell the story not just because the ASO is playing the first movement of this symphony today, but to make a point about loving music. I shared my reaction to the music honestly and from my heart, and while the elderly man behind us was a little grumpy about it, I still think I did the right thing. When we're caught up in the drama, the sweep, the emotions of a great performance, sometimes our reactions just... come out. And that's okay.

Some audience members, some orchestra members, may be surprised by spontaneous applause at the end of a movement, but if you are one who feels a little clapping in appreciation is called for, then clap. Perhaps don't stand on the chairs and holler bravo! But we perform these concerts to reach your heart and soul, to entertain, to encourage you and your children and grandchildren to learn more about and love classical music. You applaud, the kids applaud, I think we reached our goal.

This is going to be a bit of a controversial point with some people but orchestras like ours must find new ways to engage new audiences. As with every other tradition in our lives, new can mean different. And that's okay.

The important thing is, you're here. We value you supporting us with your attention and applause, and perhaps a buck or two in the baskets. Tell your friends. Bring your family to all our concerts. Share the joy of the music.

I'm applauding you!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Claudia". The signature is written in black ink and has a decorative flourish at the end.

**Claudia Staines**  
*President, ASOA*

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# PROGRAM NOTES

by Eric Deeb Weaver

## Appalachian Spring Suite

**Aaron Copland**  
(1900-1990)

Aaron Copland's "Appalachian Spring Suite" iconic composition in American classical music, celebrated for its evocative portrayal of the American frontier and its deep connection to dance. The piece originated as a ballet score commissioned by choreographer Martha Graham, a pioneering figure in modern dance, and premiered in 1944. The ballet "Appalachian Spring" tells the story of a newlywed couple settling in the Pennsylvania wilderness. The music, with its sweeping melodies and distinctive orchestration, perfectly complements Graham's choreography, which is known for its expressive and dynamic movements. The "Appalachian Spring Suite" later emerged as a standalone orchestral composition. Quickly gained popularity and acclaim, it earned Copland the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1945. The suite has since become one of Copland's most performed and celebrated works.

The collaboration between Copland and Graham was a pivotal moment in the history of American music and dance. Graham wanted Copland to compose the music for her new ballet initially titled "Ballet for Martha." Copland drew inspiration from the Shaker hymn "Simple Gifts" and incorporated it into the score, creating a piece that captures the essence of rural America and the simplicity of Shaker life. Musicologists said that Copland caught the spirit of the American landscape through his music.

As a dancer and choreographer myself, I appreciate the unique relationship between music and dance. The seamless integration of movement and music enhances the emotional impact of both art forms. Although we are not seeing dance tonight, allow yourself, just like Martha Graham did, to visualize movement that inspires you when hearing the gorgeous melodies of this timeless American piece.

## Toy Symphony

**Joseph Haydn**  
(1732-1809)

Joseph Haydn's "Toy Symphony," also known as the "Cassation" or "Sinfonia in C," is a delightful musical composition dating back to the 18th century. Haydn, an Austrian composer often referred to as the "Father of the Symphony" and the "Father of the String Quartet," is renowned for his significant contributions to classical music. The "Toy Symphony" is believed to have been composed around the 1760s, during Haydn's early years. It became popular because it is a light-hearted and humorous piece, reflecting the playful spirit of the time.

cont.



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The composition is scored for a small orchestra, including toys or novelty instruments such as toy trumpets, bird whistles, and other whimsical sound-producing devices. These additions contribute to the playful and entertaining character of the symphony.

Despite its modest origins, and even if it is perhaps not considered a serious work in the classical canon, the "Toy Symphony" has endured as a charming and beloved composition. Its cheerful nature makes it a popular choice for performances in various settings, especially during festive occasions or family-oriented events, like this afternoon's concert by the ASO. The piece's enduring appeal lies in its ability to evoke a sense of joy and whimsy, and I'm sure will be an entertaining and exciting piece to uplift our spirits during these past cold winter months!

### **L'Arlésienne Suite #1**

**Georges Bizet  
(1838-1875)**

Georges Bizet's "L'Arlésienne Suite No. 1" originated from the incidental music he composed for Alphonse Daudet's play "L'Arlésienne" in 1872. Despite the play's initial failure, Bizet's music endured and found success as a standalone suite. "L'Arlésienne Suite No. 1" showcases his ability to infuse folk melodies with vivid orchestral colors. The suite comprises four movements: the lively "Prélude," the melancholic "Minuet," the dramatic "Adagietto," and the festive "Carillon." The "Prélude" is particularly famous for its energetic theme, later adapted into a Christmas carol known as "March of the Kings."

Bizet, a French composer born in 1838, is best known for his opera "Carmen." Bizet's career faced challenges during his lifetime, with some of his works receiving mixed reviews. Sadly, he passed away at the age of 36, just three months after the premiere of "Carmen." Despite the initial lukewarm reception to "L'Arlésienne," the suite's later success contributed to Bizet's recognition throughout history.

The enduring popularity of "L'Arlésienne Suite No. 1" lies in its emotional depth. The piece has become a staple in classical repertoire, admired for its evocative themes and expressive qualities. This suite solidifies Bizet's place as one of the most influential composers of the Romantic era.

### **Symphony No 5**

**Ludwig von Beethoven  
(1770 – 1827)**

When simply looking at the title, many people may notice one of the most famous composers of all time, but might not be able to pin-point the exact melody of the title. Although, when the first chords play with the triumphant "da-da-da-Dummm," the ears will almost always perk up to one of the most recognizable pieces of classical music in Ludwig van Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

**cont.**




A little history, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, composed between 1804 and 1808, stands as a triumphant masterpiece in classical music. The iconic four-note motif—short, short, short, long—symbolizes fate knocking at the door. Premiered in 1808 in Vienna, the symphony reflects Beethoven's revolutionary spirit during a tumultuous period in European history. Deafness plagued him during its creation, adding a layer of personal struggle to the composition. Despite initial criticism for its bold departure from traditional symphonic norms, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony has endured as a symbol of resilience and innovation, solidifying its place as one of the most celebrated works in classical music.


Although I cannot remember exactly when I first heard this iconic music, I know it's sampled everywhere, in popular music, advertisements, media, and nods to the composition in new works. In fact, I remember when it was used in Disney's *Fantasia 2000* in the opening sequence! What's exciting about this version that the ASO is performing today intertwines humor with the well-renowned piece. From the comedic mind of Peter Schickele and first appearing on his album *P.D.Q. Bach on the Air*, Schickele fused a broadcast of a symphony orchestra on a public radio station along with a sports-like commentary. As if watching an actual game, there is commentary from two announcers that are directly related to the piece being played, as if the orchestra members are the athletes on the field, referencing their instruments and more. I for one am excited to see and hear this happen live with you this afternoon and witness a whole new take on such a classic and iconic piece!

***Composer and musicologist Peter Schickele died in January at his home in Bearsville, NY at the age of 88. His touch of comedic and musical genius will be missed.***

#### **Authors Note**

I remember going to my first classical concert as a child when my family went to the San Diego Symphony. I remember it being a grand affair, not only because it was all the way downtown, but because I had never seen so many musicians onstage before except on television! As a singer, music has always moved me from the very first chords to the final fortissimo notes. I have a huge appreciation for musicians and the magic they are able to evoke through their instruments. Listening to snippets of the pieces scheduled for this afternoon's performance fills me with anticipation to experience the grandeur and sweeping melodies crafted by these accomplished composers. Today's concert promises to be a celebration of the rich tapestry of orchestral music, where hopefully we all are inspired to listen, move, reflect, and pass on the impact of these musical masterpieces. I am honored to be a small part of the Amherst Symphony Orchestra, who continues to share these timeless compositions and beautiful performances with our community.





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It has often been said that ***“Music brings unity to the community”*** and the Amherst Symphony Orchestra certainly provides us with perfect gatherings to relax, see old friends, make new friends and enjoy the talents of dedicated musicians. Attending concerts is great but consider adding another opportunity for community engagement by joining FASO (Friends of the Amherst Symphony Orchestra).

FASO’s preconcert performance luncheons have been outstanding and well attended. So, don’t miss out on the final one for this concert season.

Mark your calendars now and don’t forget to invite a friend to join you.

Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at the Transit Valley Country Club. The conductor, Matthew Bassett will give an overview of the concert: ***“Music for Lovers”***, with a performance by Shieh-Jian Tsai, Violin Soloist.

Looking forward to spring,

*Mitzie Serafin*

FASO President

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*Friends Preview Luncheon*

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*It is with deep sadness that the Board of Directors for the Amherst Symphony Orchestra Association and the Friends of Amherst Symphony Orchestra (FASO) share the news of the passing of our longtime friend and colleague, **John Sedgwick**.*

*John, with his wife Priscilla, have both been boundless in their enthusiasm for the orchestra and its work, stalwart in their efforts to help ASO and FASO grow and improve, and would often be the first voice to say “We can do that”.*

*On behalf of the ASO and FASO, we extend to Priscilla, their children Dawn and Greg, their grandchildren, and a network of other family members and friends, our sympathy and our gratitude of being part of our lives.*

*Priscilla tells us the immediate family has gathered in Long Island where John’s life will be celebrated with memories, photos and favorite family foods. Plans for honoring John’s life in Western New York will be announced later.*

**Treasure those you hold dear,**

**Claudia Staines**  
President, ASOA

**Mitzie Serafin**  
President, FASO



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