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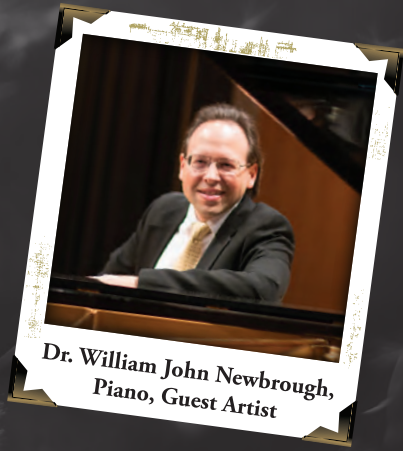
Armenio Suzano,
Conductor

“Reminiscences”



Sujeet Desai,
Pre-Concert Event

Pre-Concert
5:30- 6:30 pm



Dr. William John Newbrough,
Piano, Guest Artist

PROGRAM SELECTIONS:
Holst's The Planets: MARS
Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto #2
Tchaikovsky's 4th Symphony

Sunday, October 23, 2022 | 7 PM
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Conductor's Corner:

"The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones."
(William Shakespeare in Julius Caesar)

One of the most important tools we as human beings have on our disposal is the ability to look at our past and remember. Remember our long and rich history. Remember the triumphs we celebrated and the defeats we suffered. Remember our great accomplishments and remember the cost we paid to achieve those accomplishments. But so easily we tend to forget, so promptly we move to erase.

Do we still remember the militiamen who camped under the stars at Bunker Hill or the countless men at Gettysburg – some wearing blue, some wearing gray – who laid their lives to shape the understanding of who we are today as a nation of free individuals? Can we afford to forget all the priceless lessons learned during the Tet Offensive, Iwo Jima, or the Ardennes? The beach stormers, the foot chargers and the cliff climbers? No, we cannot, and for as long as we live, we must remember these and so many more lessons from our past.

This evening we invite you to go on a journey of remembrance through music. The beautiful moments as well as the hard and painful moments. Tonight, we invite you to contemplate Gustav Holst's exhilarating journey of rhythmic strength through the insistent melodies of Mars: The Bringer of War. Ponder on the deeply moving harmonies and romantic melodies of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2, a composition that not only saved the composer's career but possibly also his life from the dark pits of depression. Finally, embark on the life and love adventures, as well as the emotional struggles of Tchaikovsky's mighty Symphony No. 4, as we remember our own battles and the paths we followed to succeed in becoming who we are today.

Tchaikovsky's 4th Symphony also reminds us that time possesses a unique way of healing wounds, rebuilding bridges of harmony, and restoring hope. I hope you will reminisce with me tonight about our own journey, realizing afresh that we are all called to live in harmony, regardless of the many limitations and flaws we bring within ourselves. Or, in Tchaikovsky's own words, allow this beautiful "music to express all those things for which words cannot be found but which nevertheless arise in the heart and cry out for expression."

I am so deeply honored to share in the musical talents of world-class pianist, Dr. William John Newbrough and this highly committed ensemble of musicians in the Amherst Symphony Orchestra. It is my hope that you will leave tonight's concert feeling both excitement for the unspeakable gift of music as well as a sense of renewed hope for the future and the blank pages each of us is given with every sunrise. Let us fill those pages with beautiful, loving, and fun-filled adventures.

Cheers,

Armênio Suzano

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Kim Fornes
Michelle Russ

Piccolo:

Michelle Russ

Oboes:

Sheryl Rohr, principal
Erin Rush

English Horn:

Laura Beuchi

Clarinets:

Lynn Price, principal
Roseann Deni
Kyle Kohan

Bass Clarinet:

Richard Nunemaker

Bassoon:

Susan Tichy, principal
Mary Britton
Linda Mucyn
Alex Weber

Contrabassoon:

Linda Mucyn

French Horns:

Megan Marranca - Valez, principal
Lee Brusino
Marcus Francisco
Kate Fridman
Dave Macaluso
Alexa Mathes
Isaac Newman
Ian Shaw

Trumpets:

Nate Barnes, principal
Alex Francisco
Ali Jeffords
Al Schlisserman

Trombones:

Bob King, principal
James Mathews

Bass Trombone:

Stuart Easter

Euphonium

Lon Gormley

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Kris Banzhaf
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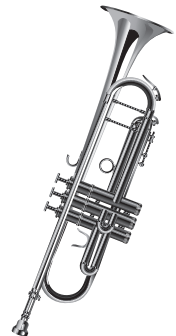
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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2022 AT 7:00 PM

“REMINISCENCES”

Armenio Suzano, Conductor

Guest Artist: Dr. William John Newbrough

“Mars: The Bringer of Wars” (from The Planets)

Gustav Holst

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18

Sergei Rachmaninoff

- I. Allegro malinconico
- II. Cantilena
- III. Presto giocoso

William John Newbrough, piano

Intermission

Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36

Piotr Tchaikovsky

- I. Andante sostenuto
- II. Andantino in modo di canzona
- III. Scherzo: Pizzicato ostinato – Allegro
- IV. Finale: Allegro con fuoco

Floral Arrangements: **Mischler's Florist**

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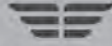
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Armênio Suzano, Conductor



Dr. Armênio Suzano was born in Brazil and at the age of 15 won a competition to become the youngest member ever of the renowned Rio de Janeiro Opera House Symphony Orchestra (Orquestra do Teatro Municipal). He served as their Assistant Principal Clarinetist for 9 years.

Dr. Suzano's accomplishments include the Outstanding Music Graduate Award as well as the President's Award for Outstanding Performer from Stephen F. Austin State University (TX) and the 1st prize at the Sul-America International Competition in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. An avid soccer player and accomplished clarinetist and pianist, Suzano has conducted symphony orchestras and wind ensembles throughout the U.S., Russia, and Brazil.

Armênio Suzano is the winner of the Solo and Aria Competition at Northwestern University and the winner of the Concerto Competition at the University of Michigan, where he was also a Humanities Fellow. He holds degrees from Stephen F. Austin State University (B.M.), Northwestern University (M.M.) and The University of Michigan (D.M.A.). He served as Orchestra Director at Liberty University (Lynchburg, VA) and as Dean of the Greatbatch School of Music at Houghton University (Houghton, NY); currently serves as the Executive Director of The Villa-Lobos Youth Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting character development, self-reliance, and patriotism for Jr. High & High School students, church youth groups and civic youth organizations, as well as serving as Orchestra Director at BRCS Schools. Dr. Suzano lives in Wellsville, NY with his wife, Mezzo-soprano & Choral Director, Kelly VanKirk Suzano and their daughter, Audrey Elizabeth (Cuca) Suzano.

Jocelyn Kagoro '22 loves making music and working with children. A visit to the Greatbatch School of Music in high school made her realize she could combine her two passions by becoming a music educator. At Houghton, Jocelyn has had extensive opportunities to develop both as a performer and a student, thanks to the genuine care and dedication of her professors. Now, she is prepared to confidently serve as a music educator wherever God chooses to send her.

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Guest Artist:

Dr. William John Newbrough

Dr. William John Newbrough is Professor of Piano and Director of Piano Studies at Houghton University, NY, and is a piano faculty member at the Csehy Summer School of Music. He was awarded the Horne Blanchard Endowed Chair of Music at Houghton University in 2014, and was named the Mabel Barnum Davidson Distinguished Professor of Fine Arts in 2012. He has earned the Artist Diploma, Doctor of Musical Arts degree, and Master of Music degree from the Peabody Conservatory of Music/ Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, MD, and the Bachelor of Arts degree with honors from the University of California at Berkeley. Newbrough studied piano with Leon Fleisher, Haggai Niv, Yoheved Kaplinsky, Dominique Weber, and Gilbert Kalish, and has participated in master classes with Richard Goode, Earl Wild, and Malcolm Bilson.



A veteran performer, Newbrough has won many international and national piano competitions and performed in numerous solo, chamber music, and concerto engagements in the United States, Canada, Mexico, England, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Russia, South Korea, and Australia. Highlight venues have included Carnegie Hall, the Sydney Opera House, the French embassy in Washington, D.C., the Van Cliburn Piano Institute, the Dame Myra Hess Series in Chicago, the Chopin Foundation in San Francisco, and Artist Series performances with the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra. Newbrough was the only American of nine pianists worldwide chosen to perform at the prestigious Franz Liszt International Masterclasses and Festival in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Newbrough has performed multiple times on the acclaimed television series “Grand Piano,” and he was featured on “Great Discoveries” on the Discovery Channel. Many of his performances have also been broadcast on radio. Newbrough has been a recipient of many musical awards, including the Yale Gordon Honorary Medallion in Music, an Eisner Award, and BPAC Artist of the Year. Most recently, he was named a Steinway Artist, he won first prize at The American Prize, and his latest CD became eligible for a Grammy nomination.


In addition to being a classical pianist, Newbrough performs his own hymn arrangements in churches, colleges, and charity and benefit concerts. He acknowledges that his performance ability is entirely a gift from the Lord. Some of the churches at which he has played include the Crystal Cathedral in Los Angeles, Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Florida, Moody Church in Chicago, First Baptist Church in Atlanta, and First Baptist Church in Anchorage, Alaska. He has three sacred piano CDs, “The Sacred Tradition,” “Benediction,” and “Acclamation” on the Mark Custom Recordings label, and a full-length production DVD also entitled “Benediction.”

Bill John lives in Houghton, NY with his wife, Julia, and daughters, Julianna and Daria.



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Pre-Concert Event: Sujeet Desai

Sujeet Desai is an incredible Musician & Motivational Speaker born with Down Syndrome. Since age of 14 Sujeet has paved many new roads in the world of disability and has become a role model. Below are just few highlights of his record breaking achievements from his long Biography and Honors.



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- Plays more than 7 Musical Instruments.
- Traveled around the world in 15 countries and over 40 states in US to share his music & motivational speaking.
- First one born with Down syndrome to play in Carnegie Hall (2015) and to play four instruments in 7 minutes with Tae Kwon Do demo and give an ambassador opening speech.
- Opening night with music at Special Olympic World Games in 2009 (Boise, Idaho)
- Received a presidential award from 3 different countries Singapore, Dubai & Trinidad
- Selected by audition as one of the 13 horn players by Blink film production in London to make a commercial for 2016 Rio Paralympics.
- During the pandemic, since March 2020 to present, Sujeet continues with virtual live performances. They all are posted on his website, www.sujeet.com, under "Covid 19 messages & Prayers".
- First differently challenged musician to be inducted into 2022 Buffalo Music Hall of Fame.
- Entertainer for WNY over 50 Senior Residential facilities, churches & fundraising events
- First differently challenged musician to be invited to open with his solo concert for Amherst Symphony Orchestra (ASO).



Combined, his music and motivational speaking, with unique power point presentations, Sujeet currently holds a job in Western New York as a differently challenged inspirational entertainer for over sixty senior Retired community & nursing homes, many annual events, fundraisers and much more.

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PROGRAM NOTES by Claudia Staines

The Planets: Mars, The Bringer of War

Gustavus Theodore von Holst
1874 - 1934

The composer himself described The Planets as a “series of mood pictures... (acting as) foils to one another” and it is true that the striking difference from one movement to another — from the strident, even harsh sounds of Mars to the jolly tones of Jupiter and mysticism of Neptune — made some critics dislike the suite upon first hearing. However, and rather quickly after its debut in 1918, the suite has grown to be quite popular for live concert audiences and in recordings around the world.

Composed over a three year period, the work was sparked by a holiday in Spain shared by Holst and his friend and benefactor Balfour Gardiner. An almost passing remark about astrology piqued Holst’s interest, in astrology itself, of which he became an accomplished interpreter. But it also affected his musical curiosity. He said once that he only studied that which could suggest music to him, and he found the idea of the planets and music growing slowly in his mind over several years.

Imogen Holst, the composer’s only child, wrote that her father had difficulty with large scale structures like symphonies, so creating a suite, with completely separate characters for each part, was an inspired answer.

Mars was the first piece written, although in an early explanation of the entire suite, Holst number Mercury as 1, suggesting his original thinking was to present the pieces in the same order on paper as in the sky. Using Mars to start the suite, this “experiment in rhythm and clashing keys” (as fellow composer Colin Matthews wrote) was much more dramatic, demanding attention from the orchestra and the audience.

cont.



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After Mars, completed in mid-1914, there were Venus, The Bringer of Peace and Jupiter, The Bringer of Jollity at the end of the year. In mid-1915, Holst completed Saturn, Bringer of Old Age and Uranus, The Magician. Late in 1915, Neptune, The Mystic was done and Mercury, The Winger Messenger, was last in early 1916. Orchestration was not done until 1917, and required help to finish because of persistent neuritis in his arm.

The first performance of all seven parts was held at Queen's Hall in late September 1918, just weeks before the Armistice of World War I. It was a fairly intimate concert, with perhaps 250 in attendance.

Critics at first were not kind. Richard Strauss, writing in 'Ein Heldenleben', said battle music, such as Mars, "...had never expressed such violence and sheer terror." By 1920, however, The Sunday Times' critic, Ernest Newman, said the suite showed that Holst had "...one of the subtlest and most original minds of our time."

Symphony No. 4

Pytor Ilyich Tchaikovsky
1840 - 1893

Following the time of Peter the Great, Russia often displayed an ambiguity of its nature, a sort of 'split personality' between the native and adopted elements of the country. It led the country's intelligentsia to consider and re-consider, over many cups of tea and much drink, what kind of country Russia was. It was a dilemma which also haunted Tchaikovsky through his life. Despite his many popular successes, the composer faced a series of personal troubles, including depression. The early death of his mother while he was a boy away at school, the loss of close friend, and the dissolution of the long relationship with his mentor and patron were all contributing factors, but perhaps we can find some good from this - his music.



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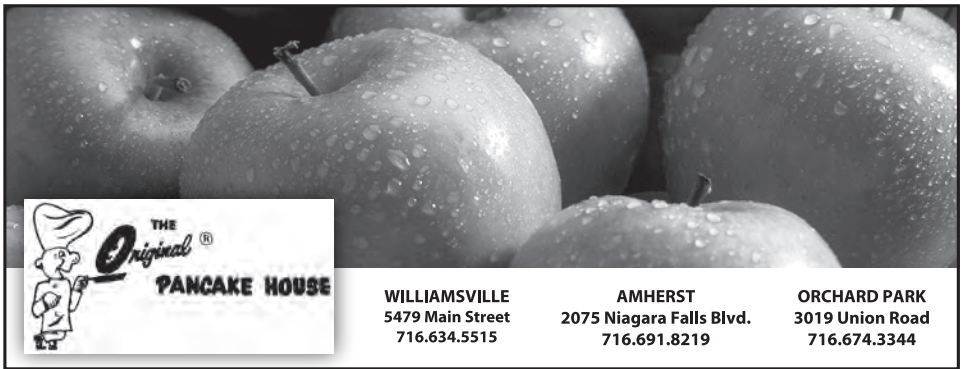
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During the time he was composing Symphony No. 4, Tchaikovsky wrote to that patroness, Nadezhda von Meck. He said he wanted very much to dedicate the piece to her, adding that he would write “Dedicated to My Best Friend”. The dedication, although sweet, was actually much more significant in Russia. In the artistic patronage system, patron and artist were considered equals. A dedication was not just an acknowledgment of a personal relationship but of an artistic partnership.

Von Meck was the widow of a railway magnate and reached out to the composer around 1877. They immediately ‘clicked’ in their thinking and developed a very close, very intimate relationship, which was only ever carried out on paper. They agreed early on to never meet, a promise kept for the entire 13 years she was his patron.

In a letter to von Meck written in 1878, he explained that fanfare heard at the opening was “the kernel, the quintessence, the chief thought of the whole symphony” and was Fate writ large. Tchaikovsky himself called fate a part of life “...an unbroken alternation of hard reality with swiftly passing dreams...” In another letter, to his friend Sergei Taneyev, the composer called this symphony “program music and a reflection of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony.

But there was more to the turmoil of this symphony; it reflected the changes in his personal life, including the utter failure of his one attempt at marriage, ended when the couple had been together less than three months. The emotional urgency Tchaikovsky felt turned into a muse of sorts, bringing out his gift for tunefulness, building on his skills in a more ‘western’ form of composition, and the creation of a ‘symphonic hybrid’. In another letter to von Meck, Tchaikovsky wrote he was keeping to a “poetic form of the symphonic poem”, where he follows the familiar forms but re-interrupts them to more fully develop all the ideas that come from and with the music.

Initial criticism of this symphony was not, well, good. His closest friends were unsure what to say to him because they were not sure they actually liked parts of the work. Taneyev was honest with him, saying that it was excellent in parts, but not completely impressive. First performance in the US was also greeted with lukewarm reviews with one critic writing “...most thoroughly Russian, i.e. semi-barbaric composition ever heard in (New York)...”

Still, there is something about this glorious symphony which grows on audiences, making it essential to 21st century orchestra repertoires and, for most, amongst the very best of Tchaikovsky’s work.

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**Piano Concerto No.2
in C minor, Op. 18**

**Sergei Vasilevich Rachmaninoff
1873 -1943**

For many creative types - authors, actors, musicians - there is something referred to as a 'sophomore curse'. The first time out of the gate with a book, or a movie, or a great piece of music, and it's a hit! Audiences love the work, the money rolls in, and you're a success. Except, the complete opposite was true for Rachmaninoff.

Already suffering from a mental decline following the death of Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff fell into a depression following the March 1897 debut of his Symphony No. 1. It was not well received, at all. Critic and composer Cesar Cui said it was "a depiction of ten plagues of Egypt...". Anyone would spin into depression after such criticism, and Rachmaninoff's lasted for three years, during which he endured writer's block, unable to produce anything, and could support himself only by teaching piano, supplemented by the occasional conducting gig, such as leading an opera in Moscow later in 1897.

Rachmaninoff had always been determinedly self-critical, and through his illness became even more so. However, a persuasive visit from a beloved aunt convinced him to try hypnosis and psychotherapy, which he undertook for the first few months of 1900. The idea was improve his mood, help his poor sleep patterns, re-develop his appetite, and to help him find a way to reignite the desire to compose. That summer, he began to write a few things, and by April 1901 - a year after he had completed his work with Dr Nikolai Dahl - Piano Concerto No.2 was complete. It was dedicated to Dr Dahl, and it was most enthusiastically received by the first audiences who heard it.

Besides being a composer, Rachmaninoff was a fine pianist, ranked amongst the best of his time, along with Leopold Godowsky, Moriz Rosenthal, and Josef Hofmann, in no small part due to the enormous span of his hands. Rachmaninoff had a five-finger stretch that enabled him to play the chord C Eb G C G with his left hand, spanning 12 piano keys in total. Because of the composer's own remarkable hands, Concert #2 is notoriously difficult to conquer for a pianist, but a delight for audiences when well-played.

This concerto has been adapted or 'borrowed' in several blockbuster films, like "Brief Encounter" (1945), "The Seven Year Itch" (1955), and "Hereafter" (2010). It has also been re-purposed by popular performers like Frank Sinatra, in his 1945 hit "Full Moon" and by Eric Carmen in his ballad "All By Myself" (1975).

As you are being absorbed by Concerto No.2 this evening, think of Rachmaninoff performing it at its debut, perhaps remembering the failure of the first concerto, not knowing that the future would see this piece celebrated around the world, but proud his writer's block was gone, and he was composing again. Let that triumph fill your heart and mind.

THE AUTHOR OF THESE NOTES: The past two or three years have been difficult for so many of us that getting back to the simple joys of life, not least sharing live performance of outstanding music, mean even more than they ever have. We may hear tonight of the Bringer of War, but we also can thrill to the fanfare of all of us, men and women who do what we need to do for our-selves, our families, our communities. And in a period when stories of mental health challenges hit us all, we can hear a concerto that celebrates what reaching out for, and accepting help, can achieve. Fate has brought us together this evening; may it continue to bring us to this place for many, many more performances.

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Coming to a Preview Luncheon is a grand way to meet the conductor and guest artists and to learn about the up-coming concert. You are treated to a delicious lunch, a fabulous musical program and an "up close and personal" look at just what goes into our presentations. All held at very special venues.

We look forward to meeting you and sharing the joy that music delivers.

Next Preview Luncheon:
Thursday, December 1, 2022
Salvatore's Italian Garden Restaurant

**Check the Amherst Symphony website,
"About Us" Friends Committee tab for
information and reservation form.**

WWW.AMHERSTSYMPHONY.COM

2023 FASO/ROTARY SCHOLARSHIP

Information regarding the 2023 Music Scholarship sponsored by FASO (Friends of the Amherst Symphony Orchestra) and the Williamsville Rotary will once again be extended to all Town of Amherst High Schools, public and private. The scholarship is awarded to a senior who is planning to go on to be a music major. The award is given to a senior graduating from schools in the Town of Amherst or a senior who is related to a member of the Amherst Symphony. Information will be sent to the schools and symphony members in October about the requirements and location of auditions. This will be our 38th year of scholarships.

Sharron Jo Rich
Scholarship Chairperson

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“News From the Friends”

The Friends Committee held its first Executive Board meeting in September, organizing the many different ways to support and promote the orchestra this year. Are you interested in becoming a member of FASO? Volunteer at our orchestra hospitality events? Help us with your computer skills? Men are most welcome to join the Friends Committee. (The Women's Committee became the Friends Committee in 2003 to accommodate all volunteers!) Learn more about the Friends Committee at our amherstsymphony.com website; using the “About Us tab; pull down “Friends Committee”. You will find out about our history, a membership application button, and information about the annual Plant Sale, FASO/Williamsville Rotary Music Scholarship, our Hospitality Events and Concert Preview Luncheons. (Plus, there are buttons for a photo gallery tour of past luncheons and a current Preview Luncheon reservation form.)

September also held a welcoming First Rehearsal Break for the orchestra musicians to enjoy sweet treats and desserts as 18 new members of the Symphony were introduced. The “Reminiscences” Preview Concert Luncheon was held at Sean Patrick's. Did you attend? Join us for the Holiday Concert Preview Luncheon at Salvatore's, December 1, 2022.

We welcome the return of the Annual Holiday Cookie Reception, held in the cafeteria, following the Sunday, December 4th Holiday Concert, “Sing! Sing! Sing!” Contact Priscilla Sedgwick for more information about donating home baked cookies for this event or use the “Contact Us” tab at the ASO website. All FASO members are needed to help supply cookies for the crowd of concert goers.

FASO/MISCHLER'S 2022 PLANT SALE

Thank you to those who supported this very important fund-raising project.

Mischler's still has many beautiful Fall plants: rich colored mums, some in hanging baskets and Fall containers and there are many lovely succulents!

Plant Sale coupons can be used through

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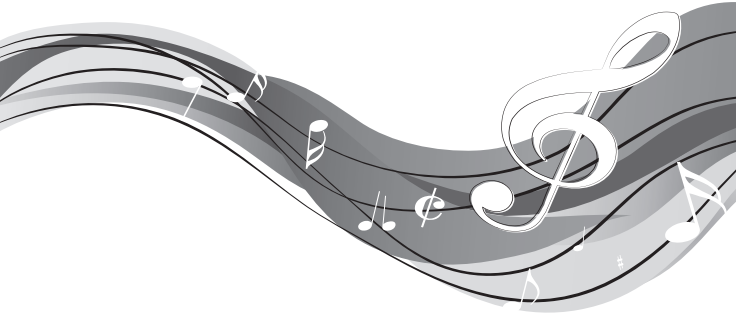


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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:



Maestro Armenio Suzano has chosen a truly remarkable program of the world's most treasured classical music for us to enjoy tonight. Always up to the task, Personnel Manager Lee Brusino has assembled one of the largest orchestras I can remember to rise to the occasion.

Not wanting to miss this golden opportunity, we have asked Mark Recording Services to professionally produce an archival video of the entire concert. You will notice cameras recording in several locations as they key in on the conductor and musicians who have prominent solos. For the first time, everyone will be able to view the ASO performance on our website, Facebook and other social media. We are excited!

It is my honor to be your steward for our musical journey this evening.

I know you have many choices when it comes to deciding how to spend your leisure time and we thank you for choosing the Amherst Symphony Orchestra.

So now, fasten your imaginary seat belts, sit back and join the orchestra on a fantastic fantasy flight to Mars and beyond...

Ron Daniels

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