



A SYMPHONY FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODIES

On March 11th at 7:30 p.m., CSO and Maestro William Intriligator will transport you to the Austro-Hungarian countryside with *Bohemian Rhapsodies*, featuring works by Humperdinck and Dvořák. And, pianist Michael Roll will be featured on Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3.

The concert will open with the Prelude to an enchanting children's opera, *Hansel and Gretel*, by the late-Romantic German composer Engelbert Humperdinck. This opera is meant to be an introduction to opera for children using the Brothers Grimm fairy tale we all know so well. Although it may be intended for children, the opera can be greatly appreciated by adults, too. The piece has beautiful themes and lush Wagner-like orchestrations making this prelude a magical and delightful way to begin a concert.

The prelude sets up the second piece of our concert perfectly, the German Romanticism of Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto. This piece will showcase Michael Roll as soloist with the orchestra providing the supportive accompaniment. Delayed by the pandemic for two seasons, we are excited to be finally welcoming him! Mr. Roll has an incredibly impressive resume and career as a pianist, with much of his concertizing in Europe and Asia. Maestro Intriligator relates, "Mr. Roll has told me that he has focused on the Beethoven piano concertos for his concerto appearances the last several years. In fact, I had the pleasure of hearing a recording of his performance of Beethoven's fourth piano concerto with an orchestra in Tokyo, and I was so impressed with the depth of his artistry, his virtuosity, and his connection with the music."

This is a piece full of Beethovenian drama, struggle, and heroics, yet also with moments of tenderness and poetry.

Following intermission, the program concludes with a personal favorite of the Maestro, and a favorite of many concertgoers, Dvořák's Symphony No. 8. Like the Beethoven work, this piece has a special balance between peaceful music and moments of melancholy and struggle. Yet of all the great symphonies that orchestras usually perform, this one is perhaps the cheeriest. Here Maestro Intriligator reflects on his memories of the piece, "I remember playing this symphony as a young oboist—there's an oboe melody in the third movement that I would practice at home and my dad always said it was one of his favorite things I would play on oboe. So, like so many great pieces of music, this symphony takes me back in time. And for our audiences who may not have youthful associations with this great symphony, it has an undeniable freshness, a sense of youthful vitality, and that cheery, optimistic quality that is special and rare among a mature composer's symphonies." No wonder this is also an audience favorite!

Enhance your experience with "Classic Conversations" on Mar. 11th, at 6:30 p.m. at the Civic Center for ticketed patrons, prior to the concert.

After the concert we invite you to please join us for a reception! Appetizers will be provided by the DDA and drinks will be available for purchase.

Thank you to our Concert Sponsors



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AT-A-GLANCE

LUNCH N' LEARN

Fri., Mar. 10th 12-1:00 PM

Laramie County Library
Cottonwood Room

Join Maestro Intriligator & Michael Roll for a lunchtime lecture at the Laramie County Public Library & learn about the upcoming concert. The conversation will also be Livestreamed on our Facebook page!

CLASSIC CONVERSATIONS

Sat., Mar. 11th 6:30 PM

Cheyenne Civic Center

If you can't make it to the Lunch n' Learn, come early to the concert!

HAUSMUSIK 2 WITH MICHAEL ROLL

Sun., Mar. 12th 2:00 PM

Wyoming Hereford Ranch
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Postcards from the Isles

Cheyenne Civic Center

Sat. Apr. 15th 7:30 PM

Featuring En Avant Dance Studio & Ben Shafer, French horn

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THE NEXT STOP ON CSO'S WORLD TOUR IS BOHEMIA

We are certain that concert goers of a certain age were somewhat surprised when they learned that the theme of the March concert was *Bohemian Rhapsodies*. What immediately came to mind, given the diverse interests and ages of the CSO audience, was how in the world can Maestro Intriligator program an entire evening with music by Queen? However, a closer look at the concert's title reveals that our trip around the world is *Bohemian Rhapsodies*, (plural), so folks who might have otherwise been concerned will be relieved, even though Mercury's signature piece is regarded as one of the greatest rock songs of all time.

Now, for those who don't know where Bohemia is, it is an historical region in Central Europe, located in the western and central part of the present-day Czech Republic. It was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Prague was its capital. Bohemia has a rich cultural heritage, including architecture, art, literature, and music, and is known for its beautiful landscapes. All the pieces on the program were composed by Bohemian citizens, Antonin Dvořák, or persons who lived in or near the area: Engelbert Humperdinck (Prussia – Germany) and Ludwig van Beethoven (born in Germany but lived most of his life in Austria).



The true inspiration for this concert title is Dvořák's Symphony No. 8. It was composed to celebrate his election to the Bohemian Academy of Science, Literature and Arts and was premiered in Prague in 1890. A typical performance of the symphony lasts about 36 minutes, making it one of Dvořák's shorter symphonies. It is considered cheerful and optimistic, in contrast to some of his other work. Critics have observed that this Symphony was more than a composition; in musical terms, it represented everything that made Dvořák a proud Bohemian. Dvořák frequently incorporated rhythms and other aspects of folk music in his music. His style has been described as "the fullest recreation of a national idiom with that of the symphonic tradition, absorbing folk influences and finding effective ways of using them."

The eighth Symphony broke new ground from the moment of its premiere, which Dvořák conducted. It was, as the composer explained, meant to be "different from the other symphonies, with individual thoughts worked out in a new way." This "new way" refers to Dvořák's musical transformation of the Bohemian countryside he loved into a unique landscape. Within the music, Dvořák included sounds from nature, particularly hunting horn calls and birdsongs played by various wind instruments. The composer's biographer observed, "When one walks in those forests surrounding Dvořák's country home on a sunny summer's day, with the birds singing and the leaves of trees rustling in a gentle breeze, one can virtually hear the music."

Antonín Leopold Dvořák (1841–1904) was born, near Prague, in the Austrian Empire. He took organ, piano, and violin lessons and displayed his musical gifts at an early age. His composition career came later; the first public performances of his works were in Prague when he was 31 years old. His professional career took many turns. He played the viola in an orchestra that performed at Prague's restaurants and at balls. He could not afford concert tickets, so playing in the orchestra gave him a chance to hear music, mainly opera. From 1892 to 1895, he was the director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York City, with a goal to discover "American Music" and engage in it, much as he had used Czech folk idioms within his music. In the winter and spring of 1893, Dvořák was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to write Symphony No. 9, "from the New World". A critic observed that "without question this was one of the greatest triumphs, and very possibly the greatest triumph of all that Dvořák experienced" in his life. When the Symphony was published, it was "seized on by conductors and orchestras" all over the world.

Dvořák returned to Bohemia in 1895 and was later appointed to the Austrian House of Lords, by the Emperor and then became Director of the Prague Conservatory until his death. Many of Dvořák's compositions, such as the Slavonic Dances and his large collection of songs, were directly inspired by Czech, Moravian, and other Slavic traditional music. As the basis for his works, Dvořák frequently used Slavic folk dance forms. His major works reflect his heritage and love for his native land.



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PRELUDE TO *HANSEL & GRETEL* BY ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK

Part of our musical journey will include listening to the Prelude to *Hansel and Gretel*, an opera composed by Engelbert Humperdinck. This popular piece is based on the familiar Grimm Brothers' fairy tale and is filled with folk tunes. Since we were discussing pop culture in relation to our concert title, one should be advised that Engelbert Humperdinck, composer of *Hansel and Gretel*, should not be mistaken for Arnold George Dorsey, the English pop singer who used the name as his stage name and became known for such songs as *After the Lovin'* and *Release Me* or for Prince Humperdinck in the movie *The Princess Bride*. (Humperdinck, Humperdinck, Humperdinck!)

The original Humperdinck began work on setting the fairy tale to music in 1890 when his sister asked him to compose songs for a puppet show that her children wanted to present. The project was so successful that Humperdinck quickly expanded the music to a *singspiel* (spoken dialogue between musical numbers) with piano accompaniment, and then he wrote a fully orchestrated score in January 1891. He composed music for the opera, which premiered in 1893, with Richard Strauss conducting. Strauss was one of the opera's earliest champions, describing it as "a masterpiece of the highest quality...all of it original, new, and so authentically German." In 1894, *Hansel and Gretel* was performed throughout Germany, with additional productions in England and Switzerland. It quickly became a beloved Christmas family tradition in Europe, like the *Nutcracker* is in North America. On Christmas Day 1931, the Metropolitan Opera presented *Hansel and Gretel* as its first-ever complete radio broadcast. *Hansel and Gretel* has always been Humperdinck's most popular work.

Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921) displayed musical ability as a young child; he wrote a piano duet at age seven and his first music for the stage at 10. He entered the Cologne Conservatory at 18 and excelled as a student, winning several prestigious prizes. Even though his parents disapproved of his plans for a career in music and encouraged him to study architecture, the lure of music was too great. In 1877, he attended the Royal Music School in Munich, where he first encountered Wagner's music and aesthetics. After meeting Wagner in 1881, Humperdinck accepted the older composer's offer to come to Bayreuth and work on the premiere production of *Parsifal*. During the 1880s, Humperdinck immersed himself in Wagner's music, while some of his friends and contemporaries feared Wagner's outsized influence might smother Humperdinck's own voice.



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9th Grade



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"Picks for Picken"
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1ST PLACE 2D
MAGGIE M. CAREY JR. H.S.
8TH GRADE



RESERVE BEST IN SHOW
JAESE W. CENTRAL H.S.
11TH GRADE



HONORABLE MENTION
NYAH H. EAST H.S.
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2ND PLACE 2D
ISAIAH S.W. EAST H.S.
9TH GRADE

ART IN MUSIC 2023 WRAP-UP

We hope you enjoyed viewing the winning artwork while listening to *Gee's Bend* for Electric Guitar and Orchestra last month. Congratulations to all Art in Music participants and award winners!

Thank you to the art teachers for inspiring their students! Thank you to art teachers Devin Hodges, Kayla Pearson, Michele Ragaglia, Sara Willson, Ali Womack, and Brigitte Zumbo for hanging the show, and judges Judy Schulz, Becky Tish, and Mark Vinich. And last but certainly not least, thank you to Wyoming Hereford Ranch for sponsoring this program.

To view all the award winner's artwork online please visit CSO's website:
www.cheyennesymphony.org/learn.

PIANO CONCERTO NO. 3 BY LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN FEATURING GUEST ARTIST MICHAEL ROLL, PIANO

Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37 is generally thought to have been composed in 1800. It was first performed on April 5, 1803, with Beethoven as the soloist. It is considered to be a bridge between Beethoven's early and later work, because it differs from Beethoven's two earlier, more clearly Mozart-derived concertos, and reflects his later, more personal style. Piano Concerto No. 3 was the first concerto which Beethoven composed in a minor key.

The score had not been completed at the time of its first performance, so Beethoven played it mainly by memory. Beethoven's friend, who turned the pages that night, later remembered: "I saw empty pages with here and there what looked like Egyptian hieroglyphs, unintelligible to me, scribbled to serve as clues for him. He played most of his part from memory, since, obviously, he had put so little on paper. So, whenever he reached the end of some invisible passage, he gave me a surreptitious nod and I turned the page. My anxiety not to miss such a nod amused him greatly and the recollection of it at our convivial dinner after the concert sent him into gales of laughter."



CSO is pleased to finally present English classical pianist, Michael Roll after two pandemic related postponements. He has had a long, successful international career, ranging from winning the first Leeds International Piano Competition at age 17, to performing internationally today. He specializes in the works of Beethoven and Liszt and first performed Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 when he was 13. He has appeared on sixteen occasions at the Promenade Concerts at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

Beethoven's piano concerto played by an English pianist, who is married to a Bulgarian pianist, will add an international flair to the evening of Bohemian Rhapsodies.



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