

# SYMPHONY

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musicians (70 percent of them are year-round residents) are a diverse mix of musicians, including retired professionals, music teachers, doctors who play as an avocation, college students who are doing performance degrees.

## Gulf Coast Symphony

The Gulf Coast Symphony offers four different types of concerts; here's a look at what the season holds:

### • Symphonic Sensations Pops concerts at the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall

#### Feb. 8 Brubeck Brothers Quartet

The Brubeck Brothers Quartet (jazz trombonist Chris Brubeck, drummer Dan Brubeck, pianist Chuck Lamb and guitarist Mike DeMicco) perform the music of their father, jazz legend Dave Brubeck, with the Gulf Coast Symphony.

"They're an award-winning jazz group. They've played all over the world," says Maestro Kurtz. "They're doing a symphonic show, playing with a full orchestra, celebrating the music of their dad. They've done this only six times before, with major pops orchestras, so we're really excited about this."

The music includes tunes Dave Brubeck is famous for, including "Take Five," "Rondo a la Turk," and "Cassandra." Also on the program: Chris Brubeck's "Trombone Concerto for Jazz Trombone and Orchestra."

#### April 5: Best of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Richard Rodgers

The program celebrating the music of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Richard Rodgers includes music from "Phantom of the Opera," "Cats," "Evita," "Oklahoma," "South Pacific" and more. Broadway stars Nat Chandler and Rachel York will sing.

### • Classical Access Concerts

"The purpose of these concerts is to give someone who's never experienced a symphonic concert a chance in a safe, inexpensive environment to come to a classical concert, or, for people who enjoy symphony concerts, it's a chance to go in-depth and learn more about what you're listening to," says Maestro Kurtz.

The format is a take-off on the Leonard Bernstein Young People's Concerts, he says. While the orchestra is on-stage, he'll talk about the piece, and have the orchestra demonstrate the key things he wants people to hear, musical signposts or elements of the piece, before the piece is played in its entirety.

#### March 14: American Icons

"We're presenting the regional premieres of two different orchestral works by two young top American composers who are internationally famous," Maestro Kurtz says. "That's Jennifer Higdon's 'Blue Cathedral' and Christopher Theofanidis's 'Rainbow Body.' Both are about 10 minutes but are amazing symphonic color and great writing."

"I'm pairing those two pieces with the Howard Hanson Romantic Symphony and Leonard Bernstein's 'On the Town' dance episodes. The music has so much energy, so much color. It's Americana music, great music."

#### May 9: Bruckner's Symphony No. 8, Beethoven's Fidelio Overture

"The Bruckner's a little over an hour, it's one of his greatest symphonies," Mr. Kurtz says. "I believe it's a Southwest Florida regional premiere. It's for a huge orchestra: eight horns, four Wagner tubas, triple winds. It's a great, great piece."



Erich Kunzel, the Cincinnati Pops founding conductor, often conducts the Southwest Florida Symphony pops.



Joseph Caulkins is the associate conductor and music director of choruses at the Southwest Florida Symphony.

### • Outdoor Park Concerts

#### Feb. 28 Movie Magic, Cape Coral Cultural Park

An entire day of arts and music in the well-named Cultural Park in Cape Coral includes concerts by high school and middle school bands. The Gulf Coast Symphony will perform music from movie soundtracks at 4:30 p.m.

#### March 28: Sounds of the Big Band at Art Estero 2009

"This is an all-day celebration of the arts in the Estero community, starting at 11 o'clock," Maestro Kurtz says. The orchestra will perform "Sounds of the Big Band" at Estero Park.

"We partnered with them to present a free park concert. It seemed like a perfect synergy of two organizations."

## Southwest Florida Symphony

Musical Director Michael Hall begins his second season with the Southwest Florida Symphony this year.

"Last year was a great success," he says. "I got to know the orchestra better, got to know the audience a little bit. I'm looking to improve the orchestra. They're already a wonderful group, and the more I get to know them and they get to know me, our performances will deepen. That's great about first getting together with an orchestra. It's a new time together. We enjoy working with each other, and I think the audience

most awarded composers in the United States.

### • Around Town

#### A Jazzy Journey: 7 p.m. Feb. 8 Schein Hall at BIG Arts, Sanibel, 7 p.m. Feb. 9, First Presbyterian Church, Cape Coral

"In a Jazzy Journey, we are going to examine the relationship between jazz and classical music," Maestro Hall says. "The two pieces that will explore that is 'Creation du Monde' by Milhaud, a French composer. He went to Harlem in the early part of the 1920s and was so taken by jazz that when he went back to France, he wrote in that idiom."

The second piece is Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue." Maestro Hall says that most people know the orchestral version, but they will be performing the original jazz band version.

"It was a ground-breaking concert in the 1920's when this piece was premiered," he says. "It features a small group, saxophones, violins, no cellos, no basses, so it's not your standard orchestra. Even if you know this rhapsody, it's a different sound, a different take."

### • Musical Triumph

#### 7:30 p.m. March 20, Faith Presbyterian Church, Cape Coral

#### 7:30 p.m. March 21, Sidney & Berne Davis Center for the Arts, Fort Myers

#### 7 p.m. March 22, Schein Hall at BIG Arts, Sanibel

"We're going to perform one of Haydn's masses, 'Lord Nelson Mass,' for 'Musical Triumph,'" Maestro Hall says. "Haydn wrote about 12 masses."

The Mass includes the Symphony Chamber Chorus and soloists.

The other two pieces the symphony will perform in the program are Elgar's "Serenade for Strings in E minor" and Handel's "Royal Fireworks Music."

### • Classics

#### The Glory of France: 8 p.m. Jan. 24 and 2:30 p.m. Jan. 25

"We'll perform Poulenc's 'Gloria,' featuring the Symphony Orchestra, a chorus that's part of the Southwest Florida Symphony," Maestro Hall says. "We'll also perform the Saint-Saens' 'Symphony No. 3.' It's music that will be familiar to people, even if they think they don't know it. It was used at the end of the movie 'Babe.'"

#### Star Crossed Lovers: 8 p.m. March 7 and 7 p.m. March 8 at the First Christian Church, downtown Fort Myers

The Southwest Florida Symphony will work in collaboration with the Florida Repertory Theatre for this concert.

"The idea is that everyone knows Leonard Bernstein's music, 'West Side Story,'" Maestro Hall says. "It's the story of Romeo and Juliet, updated and set in New York. So we're performing Bernstein's 'Symphonic Dances from West Side Story' and Prokofiev's 'Suite from Romeo and Juliet.'"

"We're looking at two musical views of the same story. Two different takes on the Shakespearean play, and we're going to also see highlights from the play. We hope that one will inform the other and you will come out of the concert with an appreciation of how the composers have taken the drama of the story and put it into music."

#### Musical Masterpieces: 8 p.m. April 4, 2:30 p.m. April 4

"Augustin Madelich, 24, an up-and-coming young soloist, is starting to make a name for himself, internationally," Maestro Hall says. "He will play Beethoven's Violin Concerto. And then we will play Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5. Tchaikovsky was very dramatic in his writing, full of the emotions of life. He wore his heart on his sleeve and wrote the same way. It's full of emotion, this piece, a great way to end the season. ■"



The Gulf Coast Symphony is a community orchestra that practices once a week.

picks up on that, and it's palpable."

Maestro Hall is trying to break down the barriers to classical music.

"We're trying to break down preconceived notions that you have to be educated in classical music. But it's a communicative art," he says. "It's not an intellectual art, it's an emotional art."

People just have to listen with their emotions, he says.

The Southwest Florida Symphony provides a classic series and a pops series at the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall. They also perform a chamber orchestra series at various venues around town.

### • Pops

#### John Williams Tribute: 8 p.m. Feb 6 and 7

"In our tribute to John Williams, we're going to feature music from 'E.T.,' 'Star Wars,' 'Schindler's List,' 'Raiders of the Lost Ark,' and others," Maestro Hall says. "'Schindler's List' has a violin solo our concertmaster, Reiko Niya, will perform."

"Everyone knows the music of John Williams. It's fun to play and fun to conduct."

Williams, who's received the most Oscar nominations (over 41) has received five Oscars, two Emmys, three Golden Globes and 18 Grammys. He's considered one of the best-known and