

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 27, 2018 (updated April 10, 2018)

Contact: Peter Rodgers, Director of Marketing
Phone: (608) 260-8680 x226
Mobile: (415) 713-0235
Email: prodgers@madisonsymphony.org
Web: madisonsymphony.org

The Madison Symphony Orchestra Announces its New 2018–2019 Silver Anniversary Season

A celebration of the 93rd season and John DeMain's 25th year as Music Director

Madison, Wis. March 27, 2018 – The Madison Symphony Orchestra's (MSO) 2018–2019 *Silver Anniversary Season* invites audiences to commemorate 25 years of great music with John DeMain. Subscriptions are available now, and single tickets for all concerts go on sale to the public Saturday, August 18, 2018.

MSO Music Director John DeMain has created a 25th anniversary season filled with music as momentous as the milestone it celebrates. "There are several things that were important to me for my 25th year with our orchestra. One thing that is close to me personally, is that we're celebrating the 100th anniversary of Leonard Bernstein's birth, along with the 80th birthday of the great American composer and Madisonian, John Harbison. As I am an American musician, I've included in this season a strong American presence. In addition, I've created a season that includes so many of my personal favorite orchestral works and many of my favorite soloists as well. Every concert for me is a celebration of my time here in Madison with the beautiful musicians and soloists that make up the great Madison Symphony Orchestra. I hope you'll join us for this exciting anniversary year."

2018–2019 subscription series concerts begin in 2018, featuring many guest performers and new concert themes such as:

- **"Ax is Back!"** (Sept. 28-30) a collaboration between John and one of the world's greatest pianists, **Emanuel Ax**. Listen to Ax perform **Brahms' Concerto No. 2** and the MSO performing **Higdon's Fanfare Ritmico** and excerpts from one of John's favorite ballets, the **Prokofiev Romeo and Juliet Suite**.
- **"Epic Romance"** (Oct. 19-21) features cellist **Zuill Bailey** performing **Elgar's Cello Concerto** and the dynamic guest conductor, **Tania Miller**, leading the MSO in **Michael Oesterle's Home** and **Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5**.
- **"Remembering Lenny"** (Nov. 9-11) celebrates 100 years of Leonard Bernstein and John's unique work with this great American musician. The first half of the concert celebrates Lenny the composer in three works: **Overture to Candide**, **Three Dance Episodes from On the Town** and finally the MSO's first performance of **Symphony No. 2, Age of Anxiety**. Cherished Madison favorite **Christopher Taylor** will perform Symphony No. 2's exciting piano part. The second half of the concert features **Beethoven's Symphony No. 7**, the last piece Lenny conducted.
- **"A Madison Symphony Christmas"** (Nov. 30-Dec. 2) is the beloved kickoff to the holiday season. Guest artists **Cecelia Violetta Lopez**, Soprano, and **Kyle Ketelsen**, Baritone, join John DeMain, the MSO, the **Madison Symphony Chorus**, **Madison Youth Choirs**, and **Mount Zion Gospel Choir** on stage for the family-friendly tradition.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

- The MSO's 18-19 season also includes the popular multimedia production of **Beyond the Score®**, **Mendelssohn Symphony No. 4: Why Italy?** Live actors and multimedia projections in the first half are followed by the MSO performing the entire work in the second half. Joining the orchestra are American Players Theatre actors **Nate Burger**, **Sarah Day**, and **Jonathan Smoots**. The performance takes place on January 20*.
- “**Pictures at an Exhibition**” (Feb. 15-17) explores the rich colors of the orchestra in **Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition (arranged by Ravel)**, as well as the satirical **The Most Often Used Chords** composed by Madison resident **John Harbison**. The MSO will also be joined by violinist **James Ehnes**—one of John's favorites, to present **Brahms' Violin Concerto**.
- “**Orchestral Brilliance, Three Virtuosi**” (March 8-10) throws focus on the remarkable musicians of the Madison Symphony, both collectively and individually. The evening begins with the MSO playing **Schubert's Symphony No. 8, Unfinished** and then moves on to feature three MSO soloists. Hear **Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No. 2** with concertmaster **Naha Greenholtz**, **Debussy's Rhapsody for Clarinet and Orchestra** with principal clarinetist **JJ Koh**, and **Vaughan Williams' Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra** with principal tuba player **Joshua Biere**. The concert concludes with a crowd favorite, **An American in Paris** by **George Gershwin**, chosen by John as a vehicle to showcase the orchestra in all its brilliance.
- “**An Auspicious Debut, Marc-Andre Hamelin**” (April 12-14) features two of the greatest German composers and two great French impressionists. Hear Grammy Award-winning pianist **Marc-André Hamelin** and **Mozart's Symphony No. 38, Prague**, **Strauss' Burleske**, **Piano Concerto in G** by **Ravel** and **Debussy's La Mer**—a tonal piece that places ultimate demands on the orchestra and creates and aural thrill for the audience.
- “**Symphony of a Thousand**” (May 3-5) brings the 18-19 season to an epic conclusion with **Mahler's Symphony No. 8**. Join the Madison Symphony Orchestra, Madison Symphony Chorus, and soloists **Alexandra LoBianco**, Soprano; **Emily Birsan**, Soprano; **Emily Pogorelc**, Soprano; **Milena Kitic**, Mezzo-Soprano; **Julie Miller**, Mezzo-Soprano; **Clay Hilley**, Tenor; **Michael Redding**, Baritone; and **Morris Robinson**, Bass. John began his career 25 years ago with Mahler's first symphony and excitedly celebrates his silver anniversary with this show-stopping epic.

**Advance tickets for Beyond the Score® are available only to MSO 18–19 season subscribers prior to single tickets going on sale to the general public on Saturday, August 18, 2018. Beyond the Score® is a production of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Gerard McBurney, Creative Director for Beyond the Score®*

ABOUT THE MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Madison Symphony Orchestra celebrates its 93rd season in 2018–2019 and its 25th season under the leadership of Music Director John DeMain. The MSO has grown to be one of America's leading regional orchestras, providing Madison and south-central Wisconsin with cultural and educational opportunities to interact with great masterworks and top-tier guest artists from around the world. Find more information at madisonsymphony.org

Link to photos of John DeMain, the orchestra, and 18–19 concert and artist photos: <https://goo.gl/QhGmRF>

Link to 18–19 Madison Symphony Orchestra season website pages: <http://madisonsymphony.org/18-19>

Additional information, detailed artist bios, and other photos available upon request.

Contact: Peter Rodgers, (415) 713-0235, prodgers@madisonsymphony.org

Program previews presented on the following pages.

Programs and artists subject to change.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

PROGRAM PREVIEWS

Madison Symphony Orchestra

2018–2019 Season

John DeMain, Music Director

SEPTEMBER 2018

Season Premiere: AX IS BACK!

Friday, Sept. 28, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 29, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 30, 2:30 p.m.

John DeMain, *Conductor*

Emanuel Ax, *Piano*

PROGRAM

Higdon, *Fanfare Ritmico*

Prokofiev, *Romeo and Juliet Suite*

Brahms, *Piano Concerto No. 2*

Jennifer Higdon's Fanfare Ritmico celebrates the rhythm and speed of life. Written on the eve of the new millennium, the work reflects on the quickening pace of life as time progresses. Higdon herself notes, "our lives now move at speeds much greater than what I believe anyone would have imagined in years past. As we move along day to day, rhythm plays an integral part of our lives—from the individual heartbeat to the lightning speed of our computers. This fanfare celebrates that rhythmic motion, of man and machine, and the energy which permeates every moment of our being in the new century."

Prokofiev originally wrote the *Romeo and Juliet Suite* in 1935 for the titular ballet produced by the Kirov theatre (now Mariinsky). In addition to the somewhat standard instrumentation, the ballet orchestration also requires the use of tenor saxophone, a voice that adds a unique sound and contributes to the sense of drama prevalent in Shakespeare's original work. This particular *Romeo and Juliet Suite* is created by John DeMain, pulling together the best excerpts from across the work to create one breathtaking orchestra piece.

Piano Concerto No. 2 is separated by 22 years from **Johannes Brahms'** first piano concerto. Concerto No. 2 is dedicated to Brahms' teacher Eduard Marxsen and premiered in 1881 in Budapest, with Brahms playing the piano solo. The work was an immediate success and demonstrates Brahms' ability to blend beauty with fire, tenderness with drama.

About Emanuel Ax

Emanuel Ax is considered one of the best-known concert pianists of the 21st century. Mr. Ax captured public attention in 1974 when he won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. In 1975 he won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists, followed by the coveted Avery Fisher Prize four years later.

He is a particular supporter of contemporary composers and has given three world premieres in the last few seasons; *Century Rolls* by John Adams, *Seeing* by Christopher Rouse and *Red Silk Dance* by Bright Sheng. Mr. Ax has received Grammy awards for the second and third volumes of his cycle of Haydn's piano sonatas and has also made a series of Grammy-winning recordings with cellist Yo-Yo Ma of the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas for cello and piano. Mr. Ax is currently a faculty member of the Juilliard School of Music, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a recipient of Yale University's Sanford Medal.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

OCTOBER 2018

EPIC ROMANCE

Friday, Oct. 19, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 20, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 21, 2:30 p.m.

Tania Miller, *Conductor*

Zuill Bailey, *Cello*

PROGRAM

Michael Oesterle, *Home*

Elgar, *Cello Concerto*

Tchaikovsky, *Symphony No. 5*

Michael Oesterle's Home had its world premiere in November 2017 with the Royal Conservatory Orchestra and conductor Tania Miller. The piece is a homage to the great geographical ebb and flow of humanity, also known as the immigrant experience. Oesterle notes, "I wrote it through the filter of my personal impressions as an immigrant, and with the realization that this subject is humbling in its breadth."

Cello Concerto was **Edward Elgar's** last notable work, composed in 1919 in the aftermath of WWI. Upon regaining consciousness following a 1918 tonsillectomy, Elgar immediately asked for pencil and paper and wrote down the melody that would become the first theme in this concerto. Despite today's renown as crowd favorite, the piece did not achieve wide popularity until the 1960's, when a recording by Jacqueline du Pré caught the public imagination and became a classical best-seller.

Composed between May and August 1888, **Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5**, was first performed in St. Petersburg at the Mariinsky Theatre with Tchaikovsky conducting. Unlike its two predecessors, there is no known program for the Fifth Symphony, save for a recurring main theme heard throughout all four movements. Over the years this theme has become known as the "fate" motive; its original ominous character undergoes various metamorphoses, emerging triumphant in the score's concluding pages.

About Zuill Bailey

Zuill Bailey, widely considered one of the premier cellists in the world, has been featured with symphony orchestras worldwide, including Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, Toronto, Israel, Cape Town, and the Bruchner Orchestra in Linz, Austria. Mr. Bailey has appeared at Disney Hall, the Kennedy Center, the United Nations, Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, where he made his concerto debut performing the U.S. premiere of Miklos Theodorakis' "Rhapsody for Cello and Orchestra."

In 2017 Mr. Bailey won a best solo performance Grammy Award for his Live Recording of "Tales of Hemingway," by composer Michael Daugherty. His celebrated "Bach Cello Suites" and recently released Britten Cello Symphony/Sonata CD with pianist Natasha Paremski immediately rose to the Number One spot on the Classical Billboard Charts.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

About Tania Miller

Canadian Conductor Tania Miller has distinguished herself as a dynamic interpreter, musician and innovator, on the podium and off. Ms. Miller has appeared as a guest conductor in Canada, the United States and Europe with such orchestras as the Bern Symphony Orchestra, NFM Wroclaw Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, Oregon Symphony and the Vancouver Symphony, among others.

Over a 14-year tenure as the Music Director of the Victoria Symphony in Canada, Ms. Miller gained national acclaim for her passion and commitment to the orchestra and community. Recipient of the 2017 Friends of Canadian Music award from the Canadian League of Composers for her acclaimed commitment to contemporary music in Canada, Ms. Miller has been an example about the impact of commitment and dedication to an orchestra and to the future of orchestral music through creative innovation and vision.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

NOVEMBER 2018

REMEMBERING LENNY

A celebration of the 100th birthday of Leonard Bernstein

Friday, Nov. 9, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 10, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 11, 2:30 p.m.

John DeMain, *Conductor*

Christopher Taylor *Piano*

PROGRAM

Bernstein, Overture to *Candide*; Three Dance Episodes from *On The Town*; Symphony No. 2, *Age of Anxiety*

Beethoven, Symphony No. 7

Leonardo Bernstein's operetta *Candide* is based on the 1759 novella of the same name by Voltaire. The Overture is quick-paced, with a feverish excitement that begins from the first breath of sound. Many of the meters are in seven beats, or of other non-traditional types, and quickly change. Each player of the ensemble is required to perform with simultaneously the utmost of virtuosity and togetherness.

On the Town is a dance-centric musical with music by Leonard Bernstein based on Jerome Robbins' idea for the 1944 ballet *Fancy Free*. The story concerns three American sailors on a 24-hour shore leave in New York City during wartime 1944 where each man meets and quickly connects with the woman of their dreams. The musical is the source of the ubiquitously popular "New York, New York."

Bernstein's Age of Anxiety was composed from 1948-1949 and is titled after and inspired by W. H. Auden's poem of the same name. The 80-page poem follows four lonely strangers who meet in a wartime New York bar and spend the evening ruminating on their lives and the human condition. Subtitled "a baroque eclogue" (a pastoral poem in dialog form), the characters speak mostly in long soliloquies of alliterative tetrameter, with little distinction among the individual voices. *The Age of Anxiety* has a dazzling and at times jazzy part for the piano and carries with it still a timely social statement.

Composed from 1811–1812, **Beethoven's Symphony No. 7** premiered with Beethoven himself conducting in Vienna on December 8, 1813 at a charity concert for soldiers wounded in the Battle of Hanau. The Symphony's dance elements, vitality and sense of celebration are conveyed principally through rhythm. It is not the melodies that are so striking and memorable as the general sense of forward movement.

About Christopher Taylor

Pianist Christopher Taylor has performed across the globe. At home in the US, he has appeared with numerous orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Colorado Symphony, Houston Symphony Orchestra, and the Boston Pops. As a soloist he has performed in New York's Carnegie and Alice Tully Halls, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, as well as the Ravinia and Aspen festivals.

In 1990 Mr. Taylor took first prize in the William Kapell International Piano Competition and became one of the first recipients of the Irving Gilmore Young Artists' Award. He received an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 1996 and the Bronze Medal in the 1993 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, where he was the first American to receive such high recognition in twelve years. In addition to his busy concert schedule, Mr. Taylor currently serves as Paul Collins Associate Professor of Piano Performance at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

DECEMBER 2018

A MADISON SYMPHONY CHRISTMAS

Friday, Nov. 30, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 1, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 2, 2:30 p.m.

John DeMain, *Conductor*

Cecelia Violetta Lopez, *Soprano*

Kyle Ketelsen, *Baritone*

Madison Symphony Chorus, Beverly Taylor, *Director*

Madison Youth Choirs, Michael Ross, *Artistic Director*

Mount Zion Gospel Choir, Tamera and Leatha Stanley, *Directors*

Filled with traditions, from caroling in the lobby before the concert to the culminating sing-along, where John DeMain and the Madison Symphony Orchestra don their Santa hats, “**A Madison Symphony Christmas**” is a joyous time for all. Christmas classics are interwoven with enchanting new holiday music featuring members of the Madison Symphony Chorus, the Madison Youth Choirs, and the Mount Zion Gospel Choir. It’s no wonder that this concert is Madison’s unofficial start of the holiday season!

About Cecelia Violetta Lopez

Celebrated soprano Cecilia Violetta Lopez has been named one of opera’s “25 Rising Stars” by *Opera News*. Ms. Lopez has received accolades for her signature role of Violetta in *La Traviata*, which she has performed countless times throughout North America. Her debut of the role was with Martina Arroyo Foundation’s prestigious summer festival, Prelude to Performance. She has also performed the role with Opera Tampa, Opera Idaho, Ash Lawn Opera, and in her company debut with Virginia Opera. Ms. López also recently made her European debut as Norina in *Don Pasquale* with Zomeropera in Belgium.

About Kyle Ketelsen

Kyle Ketelsen is in frequent demand by the world's leading opera companies and orchestras for his vibrant and handsome stage presence and his distinctive vocalism. He has won first prize in several international vocal competitions, including the Metropolitan Opera National Council, the Richard Tucker Music Foundation (Career Grant), the George London Foundation, the Licia Albanese Puccini Foundation, the Sullivan Foundation, Opera Index, and the MacAllister Awards. Highlights of Mr. Ketelsen’s recent seasons include performances at the Opernhaus Zurich, Staatsoper Berlin, Minnesota Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Canadian Opera Company, and the Metropolitan Opera, as well as performances with the San Francisco Symphony, the National Symphony and performances at Carnegie Hall.

About the Madison Symphony Chorus

The Madison Symphony Chorus gave its first public performance on February 23, 1928 and has performed regularly with the Madison Symphony Orchestra ever since. The Chorus is comprised of more than 150 volunteer musicians who come from all walks of life and enjoy combining their artistic talent.

About the Madison Youth Choirs

Recognized as an innovator in youth choral music education, Madison Youth Choirs (MYC) inspires enjoyment, learning and social development through the study and performance of high-quality and diverse choral literature. The oldest youth choir organization in Wisconsin, MYC serves more than 1,000 young people, ages 7 – 18, in a wide variety of choral programs. In addition to a public concert series, MYC conducts an annual spring tour of schools and retirement centers, performing for more than 7,000 students and senior citizens annually.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

About the Mount Zion Gospel Choir

Under the leadership of Leotha Stanley and his wife, Tamera Stanley, the Mount Zion Gospel Choir has been a part of the MSO Christmas concerts since 2005. The choir is primarily comprised of members from Mount Zion Baptist Church and includes representatives from other churches as well. The choir has traveled extensively throughout the Midwest and has journeyed to Europe, singing in France and Germany.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

MADISON **SYMPHONY** ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

JANUARY 2019

Beyond the Score®

Mendelssohn Symphony No. 4: Why Italy?

Sunday, Jan. 20, 2:30 p.m.

John DeMain, *Conductor*

Nate Burger, *Actor*

Sarah Day, *Actor*

Jonathan Smoots, *Actor*

Created by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, **Beyond the Score®: Mendelssohn Symphony No. 4, *Why Italy?*** is a musical experience that involves a multimedia examination of the music with live actors, followed by a full performance of the work. This piece, published in 1851, is one of Mendelssohn's most popular compositions. Taking inspiration from the people, landscape and culture of Italy, Mendelssohn created a stunning tribute to the nation.

Nate Burger, Sarah Day, and Jonathan Smoots from American Players Theatre will appear with the MSO for this exciting and insightful production.

Beyond the Score® is a production of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.
Gerard McBurney, Creative Director for Beyond the Score®

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

FEBRUARY 2019

PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

Friday, Feb. 15, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 16, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 17, 2:30 p.m.

John DeMain, *Conductor*

James Ehnes, *Violin*

PROGRAM

Harbison, *The Most Often Used Chords*

Brahms, *Violin Concerto*

Mussorgsky, *Pictures at an Exhibition* (arr. **Ravel**)

John Harbison's *The Most Often Used Chords* is a satirical piece of "anti-art art," or "found object," art. According to Harbison, the found object that inspired this symphony (originally titled *Fli Accordi Piu Usati*) was the pre-printed "Fundamentals of Music" pages that he noticed in an Italian music-writing notebook. The work was originally composed in 1992 for the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

Written in 1878, **Brahms' Violin Concerto**, was dedicated to his friend Joseph Joachim and premiered in 1879 in Leipzig with Joachim soloing and Brahms conducting. An equal partnership between soloist and ensemble is on full display in this concerto; it is not a piece in which the orchestra serves as mere backdrop. Rather, the violinist and orchestra are a team, collaborating and interacting to recount an elegant and nuanced musical drama.

Originally written as a piano composition, **Pictures at an Exhibition** by **Modest Mussorgsky** was composed as a memorial to his friend, the Russian artist Viktor Hartmann, who died in 1873. The suite consists of 10 movements—each a musical depiction of 10 paintings by Hartmann. These movements are interspersed with a recurring promenade theme that represents a visitor strolling through the exhibition. The arrangement by **Maurice Ravel**, produced in 1922, represents a virtuoso effort by a master colorist. His instrumental colors—a trumpet solo for the opening Promenade, dark woodwind tones, the piccolo and high strings for the children's "chicks in shells"—are widely admired. The influence of Ravel's version may often be discerned in subsequent versions of the suite

About James Ehnes

James Ehnes has established himself as one of the foremost violinists of his generation. Ehnes's long list of orchestras includes the Boston Pops, Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, London Symphony, BBC Philharmonic, Czech Philharmonic, and the DSO Berlin.

Mr. Ehnes has an extensive discography and has won many awards for his recordings including a Gramophone Award for his live recording of the Elgar Concerto with Sir Andrew Davis and the Philharmonia Orchestra. His recording of the Korngold, Barber and Walton violin concertos won a Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Soloist Performance and a JUNO award for Best Classical Album of the Year. Mr. Ehnes graduated from The Juilliard School in 1997, winning the Peter Mennin Prize for Outstanding Achievement and Leadership in Music. He is currently the Artistic Director of the Seattle Chamber Music Society.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

MARCH 2019

Orchestral Brilliance, THREE VIRTUOSI

Friday, March 8 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 9, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, March 10, 2:30 p.m.

John DeMain, *Conductor*

Naha Greenholtz, *Violin*

JJ Koh, *Clarinet*

Joshua Biere, *Tuba*

PROGRAM

Schubert, Symphony No. 8, *Unfinished*

Prokofiev, Violin Concerto No. 2

Debussy, Rhapsody for Clarinet and Orchestra

Vaughan Williams, Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra

Gershwin, An American in Paris

Schubert began composing **Symphony No. 8, *Unfinished*** in 1822, but left the piece with only two movements despite living for six more years. It is presumed that Schubert gave the two-movement score to Josef Hüttenbrenner as a gift for his brother Anselm, the president of the Styrian Music Society in Graz. For reasons that remain unclear, the score was then shelved and not given another glance by either Schubert or Hüttenbrenner, until 1860 when the later (finally) realized he possessed a gem. He approached conductor Johann von Herbeck with assurances of a “treasure” on par “with any of Beethoven’s,” and Schubert’s *Unfinished* Symphony had its premiere in 1865.

About his **Violin Concerto No. 2**, **Prokofiev** reflects the work, “was written in the most diverse countries: the main subject of the first movement was written in Paris, the first theme of the second movement in Voronezh, the instrumentation was completed in Baku, and the premiere took place in December of 1935 in Madrid.” The concerto is more conventional than the composer’s early bold compositions. It starts off with a simple violin melody to recalls traditional Russian folk music. The graceful violin melody flows throughout the entire second movement and the third movement’s theme has a taste of Spain, complete with the clacking of castanets.

Composed between December 1909 and January 1910, **Claude Debussy’s Rhapsody for Clarinet and Orchestra** was dedicated to the French clarinet professor Prosper Mimart and was originally written as one of two test pieces for the clarinet examinations at the Paris Conservatoire. The piece is described as dreamily slow at the start, followed by a duple meter section that moves the music along until the joyous final section.

Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra by **Ralph Vaughan Williams** was written in 1953-54 to mark the 50th anniversary of the London Symphony Orchestra.

An American in Paris is one of **George Gershwin’s** most well-known and most-beloved compositions. Written in 1928, it evokes the sights and energy of the French capital in the 1920’s. As Gershwin explains, the work’s purpose is to, “portray the impressions of an American visitor in Paris as he strolls about the city, listens to the various street noises, and absorbs the French atmosphere.”

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

About Naha Greenholtz

Naha Greenholtz is concertmaster of both the Madison Symphony Orchestra and the Quad City Symphony Orchestra. Additional performance highlights include guest concertmaster appearances with the Oregon Symphony, Calgary Philharmonic, National Ballet of Canada, Omaha Symphony, and Memphis Symphony, among many others. Additionally, she performs frequently with the Cleveland Orchestra both domestically and abroad. Ms. Greenholtz has also held positions with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, joining the latter as Associate Concertmaster at age 21.

About JJ Koh

JJ Koh joined the Madison Symphony Orchestra as Principal Clarinet in 2016. In addition, he holds a position with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. Prior to joining the MSO, Mr. Koh was a member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. Mr. Koh is a founding member of the Arundo Donax Reed Quintet, a winner of the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition. As principal clarinetist of KammerMahler, Mr. Koh participated in a world premier recording project, which featured chamber versions of Gustav Mahler's Fourth and Ninth Symphonies.

About Joshua Biere

Josh Biere joined the Madison Symphony Orchestra as principal tubist in 2013. He also holds the principal tuba chair with the Kenosha Symphony and regularly performs with the new Chicago Composers Orchestra. Mr. Biere has also performed at the Grant Park Music Festival (Chicago), and with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. An established chamber musician, Mr. Biere is also a highly sought-after clinician and teacher, maintaining a studio of well over thirty-five tuba and euphonium students.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

APRIL 2019

An Auspicious Debut: MARC-ANDRÉ HAMELIN

Friday, April 12, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 13, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 14, 2:30 p.m.

John DeMain, *Conductor*

Marc-André Hamelin, *Piano*

PROGRAM

Mozart, Symphony No. 38, *Prague*

Strauss, *Burleske*

Ravel, Piano Concerto in G

Debussy, *La Mer*

Composed in 1786, **Mozart's Symphony No. 38, Prague** premiered in Prague during Mozart's first visit to the city. The lavish use of wind instruments plays tribute to the wind players of traditional Bohemian folk music and represents a major advance in Mozart's symphonic technique, imitated in his later symphonies.

Richard Strauss' Burleske was originally titled *Scherzo in D minor* and written for Hans von Bülow and the Meiningen Orchestra. Von Bülow, however rejected the work, calling it a "complicated piece of nonsense." After some retooling, Strauss renamed the piece *Burleske*, translating to "farce" or "mockery." The piece begins in a state of high excitement and ends quietly on the timpani.

Piano Concerto in G, composed between 1929 and 1931, is heavily influenced by the jazz music **Ravel** encountered while on a concert tour of the United States in 1928. The Concerto's livelier themes emerge from Ravel's fixation of the piano's percussive qualities, while the languorous melodies showcase his ear for jazz. The work was always intended to be frivolous; in contrast to many of the concertos of his day, Ravel was aiming to write something light and fanciful. This piece is a favorite of John DeMain's and contains a sultry, cabaret-like slow movement that climaxes with a raucous-but-fun last movement.

Composed between 1903 and 1905, **La Mer** was not initially well received, but soon become one of **Debussy's** most admired and frequently performed orchestral works. *La Mer* is often considered a masterpiece of suggestion and subtlety in its rich depiction of the ocean, which combines unusual orchestration with daring impressionistic harmonies. The work has proven very influential, and its use of tonal colors and its orchestration methods have influenced many later film scores.

About Marc-André Hamelin

Pianist Marc-André Hamelin is known worldwide for his unrivalled blend of consummate musicianship and brilliant technique, as well as for his exploration of the rarities of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries—in concert and on disc. Although primarily a performer, Mr. Hamelin has composed music throughout his career. He was a distinguished jury member of the 15th Van Cliburn Competition in 2017, where each of the 30 competitors in the Preliminary Round were required to perform Hamelin's "L'Homme armé." It marked the first time the composer of the commissioned work was also a member of the jury.

He was honored with the 2014 ECHO Klassik Instrumentalist of Year (Piano) and Disc of the Year for his three-disc set of Busoni: Late Piano Music. An album of his own compositions, *Hamelin: Études*, received a 2010 Grammy nomination and a first prize from the German Record Critics' Association. Hamelin is the recipient of a lifetime achievement award from the German Record Critic's Association.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

MAY 2019

SYMPHONY OF A THOUSAND

Friday, May 3, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 4, 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 5, 2:30 p.m.

John DeMain, *Conductor*

Alexandra LoBianco, *Soprano*

Emily Birsan, *Soprano*

Emily Pogorelc, *Soprano*

Milena Kitic, *Mezzo-Soprano*

Julie Miller, *Mezzo-Soprano*

Clay Hilley, *Tenor*

Michael Redding, *Baritone*

Morris Robinson, *Bass*

Madison Symphony Chorus, Beverly Taylor, *Director*

PROGRAM

Mahler, *Symphony No. 8*

Composed in December 1906, **Symphony No. 8** is the last work of **Mahler's** to premiere in his lifetime. It is one of the largest-scale choral works in the classical concert repertoire, and because it requires huge instrumental and vocal forces, it is frequently called the *Symphony of a Thousand*. The structure of the work is unconventional; instead of the normal framework of several movements the piece is in two parts. Part I is based on the Latin text of a 9th-century Christian hymn for Pentecost and Part II is a setting of the words from the closing scene of Goethe's *Faust*. The two parts are unified by a common idea: redemption through the power of love, a unity conveyed through shared musical themes. *Symphony No. 8* is revered as one of the greatest achievements of classical concert repertoire and expresses the composer's confidence in the eternal human spirit.

About Alexandra LoBianco

American Soprano Alexandra LoBianco is a consummate singing actress whom *Opera News* praised for possessing a "wonderful voice that should be heard in major houses." She recently made her European stage debut in 2016 as Leonore in *Fidelio* with Wiener Staatsoper and met with success as Turandot with Des Moines Metro Opera in the summer of 2017. Other performance highlights include roles at the Minnesota Opera, Opera Colorado, Sante Fe Opera, and singing the role of Amelia in *Un ballo in maschera* with the Madison Opera in 2012.

About Emily Birsan

Emily Birsan is a critically acclaimed recitalist and well known for her prominent interpretations of concert and operatic repertoire. Ms. Birsan was last in Madison performing the role of Juliette in Madison Opera's 2016 production of Gounod's *Romeo and Juliette*. She has also performed with the BBC Symphony in London, the Chicago Philharmonic, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, in the Edinburgh International Festival, and at Carnegie Hall performing her debut with Mozart's Mass in C minor.

About Emily Pogorelc

Praised for her "lively, incisive soprano" by the *New York Times*, Soprano Emily Pogorelc currently attends the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music. A native of Milwaukee, Ms. Pogorelc has performed with the Opera Philadelphia, Glimmerglass Opera Festival, Curtis Opera Theatre, and Florentine Opera. Emily has won first place in numerous competitions, and she was featured on National Public Radio's, *From the Top*.

(4/10/18, MSO 18–19 Season, continued)

MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

JOHN DEMAIN | MUSIC DIRECTOR

About Milena Kitic

Milena Kitic, a renowned mezzo-soprano, has performed numerous roles with opera companies around the world. Perhaps best known for her performance as the title role in *Carmen*, Ms. Kitic has played *Carmen* in major performance venues across the United States and Europe including Belgrade, Serbia Opera, Essen Opera in Germany, National Opera, Baltimore Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Opera Pacific, and Metropolitan Opera. Ms. Kitic has received numerous accolades for her performances, including the German Music Critic's Award for "Performer of the Season" and the Opera Pacific Guild's "Diva of the Year."

About Julie Miller

Hailed by the *Register-Guard* as possessing a voice of "spell-binding power and intensity," Mezzo-Soprano Julie Miller has appeared as a soloist with many orchestras and in many major concert halls across the country. Ms. Miller is the recipient of the Jerome and Elaine Nerenberg Foundation Scholarship and the Rose McGilvray Grundman Award (American Opera Society of Chicago), the Richard F. Gold Career Grant (Shoshana Foundation), and the Edith Newfield Scholarship Award (Musicians Club of Women).

About Clay Hilley

Clay Hilley's recent credits include the title role in *Parisfal* at the Metropolitan Opera and performances with the San Francisco Opera, the Dallas Opera, and the Apollo Orchestra in Washington DC. On the concert stage Mr. Hilley has appeared at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, among others. In 2015 Mr. Hilley won the Wagner Society of New York's top prize, the Robert Lauch Award.

About Michael Redding

Michael Redding has been thrilling audiences in the U.S. and in Europe in roles ranging from Handel to classic American Music Theatre. Recent credits include performances with the Sarasota Opera, the Virginia Opera, and an international tour of *Porgy and Bess* with the York Harlem Theatre. Mr. Redding has also performed the concert suite arrangement of *Porgy and Bess* with the Belgrade Philharmonic and the La Verdi Orchestra. Mr. Redding last performed with the Madison Symphony Orchestra singing parts from *Porgy and Bess* as part of the all-Gershwin concert in May, 2012.

About Morris Robinson

Morris Robinson regularly appears at the Metropolitan Opera, where he is a graduate of the Lindemann Young Artist Program. He has also appeared at the San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Opera Australia, and the Aix-en-Provence Festival. Also a prolific concert singer, Mr. Robinson's recent concert engagements have included appearances with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic.

About the Madison Symphony Chorus

The Madison Symphony Chorus gave its first public performance on February 23, 1928 and has performed regularly with the Madison Symphony Orchestra ever since. The Chorus is comprised of more than 150 volunteer musicians who come from all walks of life and enjoy combining their artistic talent.

###