

Concert Guide

2023 ————— 24

WINSTON SALEM SYMPHONY



Bringing Music To Life



2023

SEP 23 & 24	CLASSICS: Bernstein & Brahms
OCT 29	CHORUS: Considering Matthew Shepard
NOV 11 & 12	CLASSICS: Tchaikovsky & Shostakovich
NOV 13	YOUTH: Fall Extravaganza
NOV 25 & 26	POPS: Home Alone In Concert!
DEC 12	SPECIAL: Handel's Messiah

2024

JAN 6 & 7	CLASSICS: Enchanted Waters
FEB 3	POPS: Ricky Skaggs
MAR 2 & 3	CLASSICS: Edgar Meyer + New World
MAR 4	YOUTH: Premiere, Chamber, & Phil
MAR 9	SPECIAL: Concert for Community
APR 6	POPS: The Music of Fleetwood Mac
APR 13 & 14	CLASSICS: Beethoven's Ninth
MAY 4 & 5	CLASSICS: Scheherazade
MAY 6	YOUTH: Spring Finale
MAY 11	POPS: Nia Imani Franklin

Introducing Michelle Merrill Music Director



The Winston-Salem Symphony is thrilled to announce the appointment of Michelle Merrill as its new Music Director. Merrill has inspired audiences nationwide with her sharply detailed and vibrant performances.

A passionate and dynamic artist, she served four years as the Assistant and then Associate Conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, where she also carried the title of Phillip and Lauren Fisher Community Ambassador. Merrill most recently served as the Music Director of the Coastal Symphony of Georgia, where she ignited the growth and expansion of the orchestra's offerings both on and off the stage.

We invite you to join Michelle in concert this season and to experience the splendor of the symphony orchestra under this talented conductor.

“ It is truly a privilege and an honor to be named Music Director of the Winston-Salem Symphony. From the first time I came to the city, I could tell it was a special place, full of vibrancy and innovation. I immediately felt a strong artistic and personal connection with everyone involved in the organization, and I look forward to continuing the traditions that have been cultivated over the past 76 years while adding my own style and perspective. This orchestra has the power to inspire every person who walks through the door with unforgettable musical experiences, and I am incredibly excited to be a part of the symphony's mission to bring music to life.

I believe that we can make the Symphony's programs relevant to people from all walks of life, creating experiences that invite as many people as possible to personally experience the joy of this great art form. It is invigorating to see how music can transform individuals, both young and old, and make them feel something they didn't know they could before. Music has a way of communicating emotions you cannot adequately describe in words. We all need that feeling, that escape, that way to react and respond to everyday life. Music – and especially live music – is the perfect outlet for that expression, and the music education of everyone from students to seniors is such an important component of what we do.

People always return to what excites them. The performances I experienced with the orchestra and chorus members this past May were electrifying, and moving towards the future, I look forward to working together with the incredibly dedicated musicians in this orchestra to awaken something in loyal patrons and newcomers alike so that they are compelled to return and discover what the Winston-Salem Symphony has to offer next. ”

Join us for concerts in Reynolds Auditorium!

Reynolds Auditorium has long been our home for *Pops Series* concerts, but during the multiyear renovation of the Stevens Center, most *Classics Series* concerts will also be performed in Reynolds. Enjoy your favorite music in a historic venue that has hosted classical music icons such as Vladimir Horowitz, Gregor Piatigorsky, and in recent years, James Galway, Renée Fleming, and Yo-Yo Ma with your Winston-Salem Symphony.

Classics Series

Season Opening Concerts:

MERRILL CONDUCTS BERNSTEIN & BRAHMS

SEP 23, 2023 7:30 PM

SEP 24, 2023 3:00 PM

Reynolds Auditorium

Antonín Dvořák

Carnival Overture

Johannes Brahms

Violin Concerto

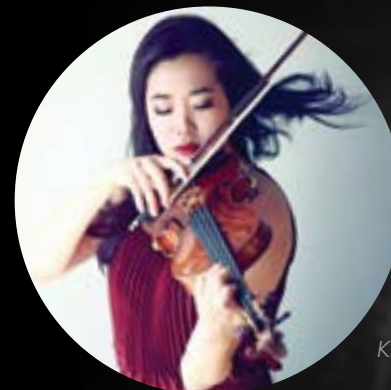
Leonard Bernstein

Symphonic Dances from West Side Story

Michelle Merrill Conductor

Kristin Lee Violin

Michelle Merrill takes the podium for her debut concert as Music Director, leading the Winston-Salem Symphony through a captivating program celebrating Bernstein and Brahms. Experience the mesmerizing artistry of violinist Kristin Lee as the rising star takes center stage to perform Brahms' timeless Violin Concerto. The evening reaches its pinnacle as you are swept away by the iconic rhythms and electrifying energy of Bernstein's *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*. Opening the program is Dvořák's *Carnival Overture*, a boisterous and festive work fitting this celebratory occasion.



Kristin Lee





Symphony Chorus

CONSIDERING MATTHEW SHEPARD

an oratorio by Craig Hella Johnson

OCT. 29, 2023 3:00 PM

Brendle Recital Hall
Wake Forest University

Winston-Salem Symphony Chorus
Members of the Winston-Salem Symphony
Christopher Gilliam Conductor

In October of 1998, Matthew Shepard, a young, gay student at the University of Wyoming in Laramie was kidnapped, severely beaten, tied to a fence and left to die in a lonely field under a blanket of stars. Five days later, when Matt passed away, the world was watching. Craig Hella Johnson has responded with his first concert-length work, *Considering Matthew Shepard*.

This three-part fusion oratorio speaks with a fresh and bold voice, incorporating a variety of musical styles seamlessly woven into a unified whole, setting texts by poets including Hildegard of Bingen, Lesléa Newman, Michael Dennis Browne, and Rumi alongside passages from Matthew's personal journal, interviews with his parents, and newspaper reports.



Michelle Cann

Classics Series

MIGHTY TCHAIKOVSKY & SHOSTAKOVICH

NOV 11, 2023 7:30 PM

NOV 12, 2023 3:00 PM

Reynolds Auditorium

Jared Miller

Luster

Pyotr Illich Tchaikovsky

Piano Concerto No. 1

Dmitri Shostakovich

Symphony No. 5

Michelle Merrill Conductor

Michelle Cann Piano

We invite you to explore the colors and textures of the orchestra in *Luster* by acclaimed composer and UNCSCA faculty member Jared Miller and to feel the thunderously triumphant opening chords of Tchaikovsky's mighty Piano Concerto. Pianist Michelle Cann has been heralded as a "compelling, sparkling virtuoso" (*Boston Intelligencer*), and her interpretation of this iconic and powerful composition will draw you in with its famous first melody and keep you on the edge of your seat as it races to the conclusion.

Following intermission, the orchestra performs Shostakovich's monumental Fifth Symphony, an indomitable piece composed amid Stalinist terror.



Pops Series

A Carolina Christmas: **HOME ALONE** In Concert!

NOV 25, 2023 7:30 PM

NOV 26, 2023 3:00 PM
Reynolds Auditorium

Get into the holiday spirit with the beloved comedy classic Home Alone. Accompanied by your Winston-Salem Symphony, renowned composer John Williams' charming and delightful score comes to life as it is performed live to the film. Join Macaulay Culkin as he shines in the role of Kevin McCallister, the resourceful 8-year-old boy who must defend his home from two bumbling thieves. Home Alone is a holiday treat that promises laughter and joy for the entire family.



© 1990 Twentieth Century Fox

Home Alone In Concert is a sponsored project of the Arts Council of Winston-Salem & Forsyth County and funded through ARPA supported by the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners.

Additional Event

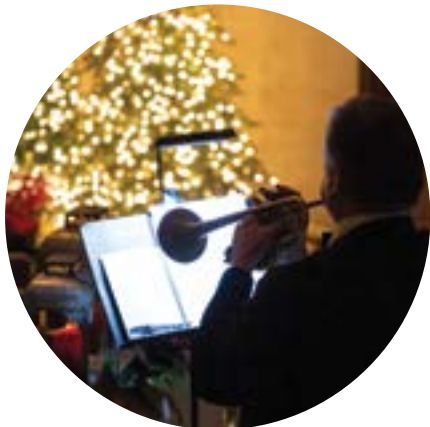
HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Dec 12, 2023 7:30 PM

Wait Chapel
Wake Forest University

Michelle Merrill Conductor
Winston-Salem Symphony Chorus
Christopher Gilliam Chorus Director

Handel's Messiah is one of the most celebrated oratorios of all time. The glorious "Hallelujah" chorus, tenderly expressive arias, and the majestic choruses have been drawing crowds since the composition was premiered in 1742. Let Handel's melodies lift your spirit and fill your heart this Christmas season as Music Director Michelle Merrill invites you to rediscover the magic of this enduring work.



Joe Lovano

Classics Series

ENCHANTED WATERS

JAN 6, 2024 7:30 PM

JAN 7, 2024 3:00 PM
Reynolds Auditorium

Claude Debussy

La Mer

Douglas Cuomo

a raft, the sky, the wild sea

Maurice Ravel

La Valse

Michelle Merrill Conductor

Joe Lovano Saxophone

"My old friend, the sea," Debussy once said. "It is always endless and beautiful. It is really the thing in nature which best puts you in your place." In the composer's ever popular *La Mer*, the orchestra paints a vivid sonic portrait of the ocean's vast beauty and mystery. GRAMMY®-winning saxophonist Joe Lovano joins forces with the Winston-Salem Symphony for a spellbinding performance of Doug Cuomo's *a raft, the sky, the wild sea*, a concerto that combines improvisation and gripping melodies to depict the perilous journey of those seeking refuge and hope on the open water. Finally, lose yourself in the intoxicating waves of rhythm in Ravel's *La Valse*, as the orchestra whirled you through a mesmerizing dance of light and shadow.

Douglas Cuomo's *a raft, the sky, the wild sea* was co-commissioned by the London Philharmonic, the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and the Winston-Salem Symphony.

Pops Series

RICKY SKAGGS

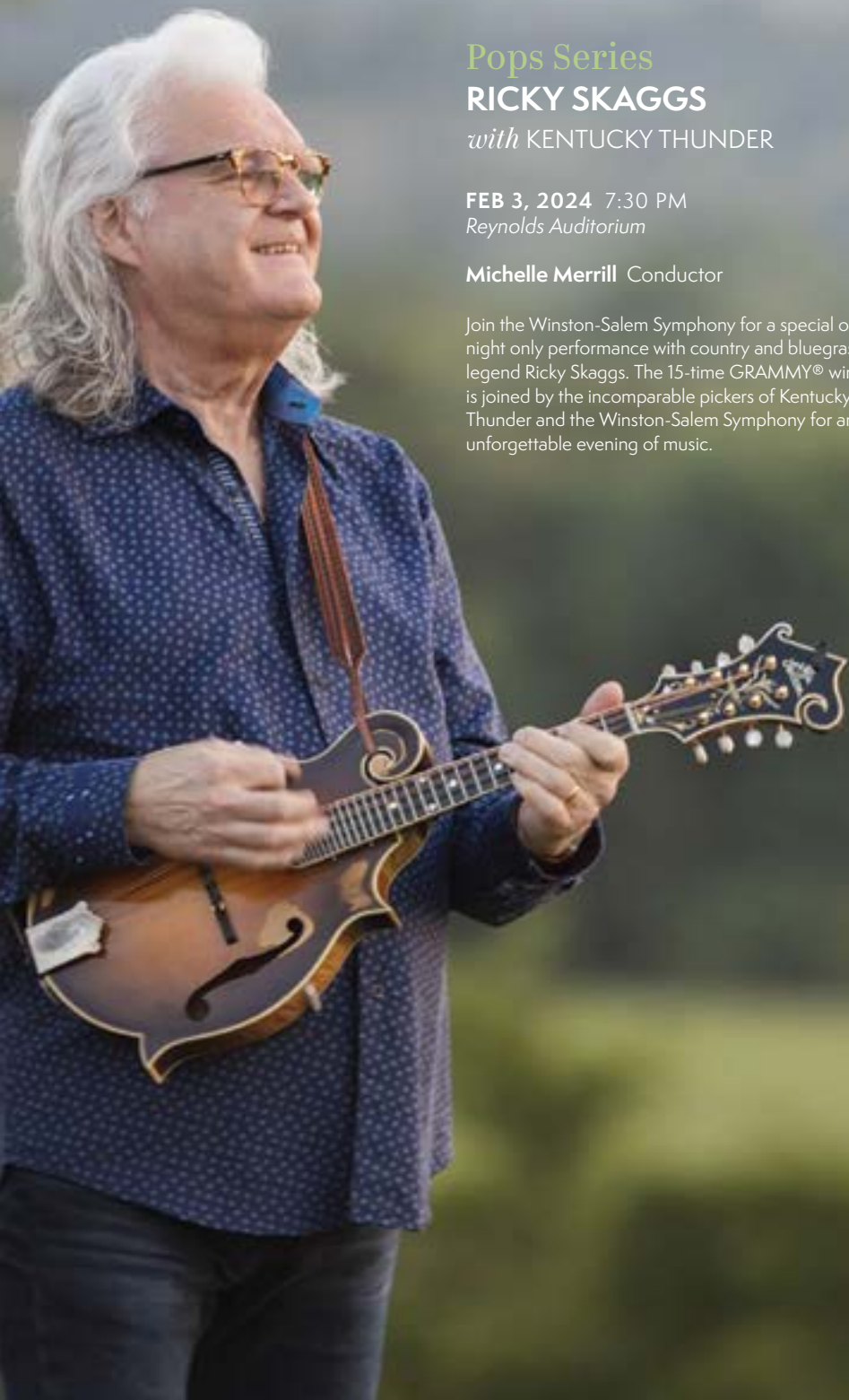
with KENTUCKY THUNDER

FEB 3, 2024 7:30 PM

Reynolds Auditorium

Michelle Merrill Conductor

Join the Winston-Salem Symphony for a special one-night only performance with country and bluegrass legend Ricky Skaggs. The 15-time GRAMMY® winner is joined by the incomparable pickers of Kentucky Thunder and the Winston-Salem Symphony for an unforgettable evening of music.



Edgar Meyer

Classics Series

EDGAR MEYER + THE NEW WORLD

MAR 2, 2024 7:30 PM

MAR 3, 2024 3:00 PM

Reynolds Auditorium

Jessie Montgomery

Strum

Giovanni Bottesini

Concerto No. 2 for Double Bass

Edgar Meyer

Concerto No. 1

Antonín Dvořák

Symphony No. 9 "From the New World"

Michelle Merrill Conductor

Edgar Meyer Double Bass

Genre-defying bassist and composer Edgar Meyer bridges the worlds of classical and bluegrass music to shine a new light on American music. The only bassist to ever be awarded a MacArthur 'genius' grant, his diverse lineup of musical collaborators includes Yo-Yo Ma, Chris Thile, and Béla Fleck. Meyer joins the Winston-Salem Symphony to perform his own Concerto for Double Bass and Giovanni Bottesini's Concerto No. 2.

Jessie Montgomery's *Strum* likewise salutes American folk music, creating a mesmerizing groove through the plucking of strings, and Dvořák's groundbreaking Symphony No. 9 masterfully fuses European classical traditions with the rich rhythms and melodies of the American landscape.



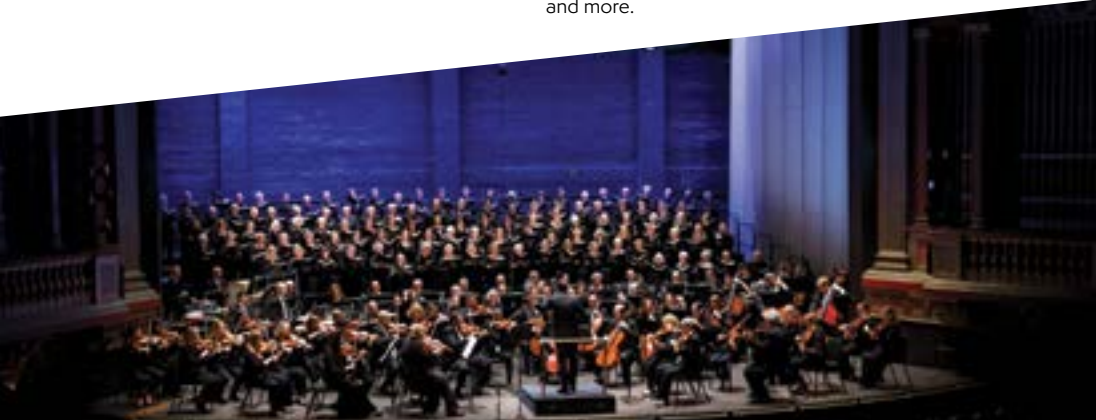
Pops Series

NEVER BREAK THE CHAIN: THE MUSIC OF FLEETWOOD MAC

APR 6, 2024 7:30 PM
Reynolds Auditorium

Jeans 'n Classics
Michelle Merrill Conductor

The Winston-Salem Symphony, guest vocalists, and the fan-favorite Jeans 'n Classics band come together to celebrate the supergroup's decades of hits, including "Rhiannon," "Say You Love Me," "Little Lies," "Landslide" and more.



APR 13, 2024 7:30 PM

APR 14, 2024 3:00 PM

Wait Chapel, Wake Forest University

Michelle Merrill Conductor
Winston-Salem Symphony Chorus
Christopher Gilliam Chorus Director

Ludwig van Beethoven

Leonore Overture No. 3

Ludwig van Beethoven

"Mir ist so Wunderbar" from *Fidelio*

Carlos Simon

Fate Now Conquers

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 9

Classics Series

THE NINTH

In 1824, audiences experienced Beethoven's Ninth Symphony for the first time, and our musical world was forever transformed. Join us in commemorating the 200th Anniversary of this iconic masterpiece as the orchestra and chorus bring the glorious "Ode to Joy" to life. Immerse yourself in the transcendent beauty and message of unity in this immortal work as we explore why Beethoven's music continues to resonate with music lovers worldwide.

Preceding this masterwork are two others by Beethoven, both with roots in his opera *Fidelio*—plus a recent work by composer Carlos Simon that uses the beloved *Allegretto* of Beethoven's seventh symphony as a canvas.

Classics Series

SCHEHERAZADE

MAY 4, 2024 7:30 PM

MAY 5, 2024 3:00 PM
Reynolds Auditorium

Michelle Merrill Conductor

Joseph Bologne

L'amant anonyme

Matthew Aucoin

Eurydice Suite

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Scheherazade

Prepare to be transported to enchanting realms of romance and legend in this captivating finale to the 2023-24 *Classics Series*. The journey begins with the Chevalier's evocative melodies from *L'amant anonyme* (*The Anonymous Lover*), the only surviving opera by Joseph Bologne. You are then invited to take a tragic tour of the underworld in Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice* Suite, born of his surreal and heartbreaking opera, and the concert reaches its magical conclusion with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. Immerse yourself in the sensory pleasure of the orchestra's sound and let the imaginative melodies take you away as they animate the tales from *The One Thousand and One Nights*.

Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice* Suite was co-commissioned by The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Winston-Salem Symphony, and the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra.





Pops Series

NIA IMANI FRANKLIN
Gospel and R&B Favorites

MAY 11, 2024 7:30 PM
Reynolds Auditorium

Michelle Merrill Conductor

Following a wildly popular *Symphony Unbound* concert for which she was curator, conductor, featured composer, and vocalist, Nia Imani Franklin makes her subscription series debut in a program that highlights two of her passions: gospel and rhythm & blues.

Winston-Salem's own—and 2019 Miss America—Nia Imani Franklin is a thrilling performer. You won't want to miss this concert!

Additional Event CONCERT *for* COMMUNITY

MAR 9, 2024 3:00 PM
Wait Chapel at Wake Forest University

free!

Our annual **free** concert featuring an enormous, combined orchestra of youth orchestra students and their professional counterparts, plus solo performances by the 2024 Peter Perret Youth Talent Search winners!

Youth Orchestras

All concerts at Reynolds Auditorium

free!

Fall Extravaganza

NOV 13, 2023 7:00 PM

Premiere Strings, Chamber Sinfonia, & Youth Philharmonic

MAR 4, 2024 7:00 PM

Spring Finale!

MAY 6, 2024 7:00 PM



Education

P.L.A.Y. MUSIC SEMINARIO MAY 2024

The talented students of our *El sistema*-inspired P.L.A.Y. Music program have worked hard all year and are excited to show what they've learned! Enjoy this performance by all five P.L.A.Y. teams.

free!



Symphony Unbound

Symphony Unbound brings music out of the concert hall and into the community. Experience "classical" music in the least expected places: local bars, restaurants, nightclubs, bookstores, galleries and more.

Keep an eye out for these pop-up dates!



Bringing music to life.



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