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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ***Fanfare for Four Concertmasters & Bolero*** **Robert Moody & The Festival Orchestra**

Friday, February 25 at 7:30 p.m.

Pinnacle Presbyterian Church

25150 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale 85255

**Tickets:** \$40; Premium Seating \$55; Student (K-College) free

Call (480) 488-0806, toll free (866) 488-0806 or visit [www.azmusicfest.org](http://www.azmusicfest.org) for tickets.

Complimentary valet parking is available.

#### **Fanfare for the Common Man**

**Aaron Copland**

(1900-1990)

#### **Cuatro estaciones porteñas (Four Seasons of Buenos Aires)**

**Astor Piazzolla**

(1921-1992)

*Otoño (Autumn)*

**Robin Mayforth, Violin**

*Invierno (Winter)*

**Yuriy Bekker, Violin**

*Primavera (Spring)*

**Charles Dimmick, Violin**

*Verano (Summer)*

**Corine Brouwer, Violin**

*Intermission*

#### **Toward the Splendid City**

**Richard Danielpour**

(Born 1956)

#### **Interplay**

**Chris Brubeck**

(Born 1952)

**Robin Mayforth, Yuriy Bekker**  
**Corine Brouwer, Charles Dimmick**

#### **Bolero**

**Maurice Ravel**

(1875-1937)

continued

In 1928, **Aaron Copland** (1900-1990) headed to Paris to discover the world of music outside the USA. Stravinsky and the French composers known as *Les Six* were there; the sound of jazz was everywhere. The young American absorbed the excitement of these new influences. From Nadia Boulanger, the legendary teacher of so many, he learned clarity and “to keep instruments out of each others’ way.” Most important perhaps, Copland came home determined to write music that was distinctly “American.” The rest, as they say, is history! The composer’s spare, often dissonant, always rhythmical style distinguishes his ballet, movie and theater works, his songs and symphonies. That sound was indeed widely tagged as the “American sound.”

By definition, a “fanfare” is a celebratory piece for percussion and brass. *Fanfare for the Common Man* was commissioned during the Second World War by conductor/composer Eugene Goossens, who wanted to open his Cincinnati Orchestra concerts with a work to honor the courage and sacrifice of the American people. Of this piece, Copland said, “The challenge was to compose a traditional fanfare, direct and powerful, yet with a contemporary sound. To this end, I used bi-tonal chordal harmonies that add ‘bite’ to the brass and some irregular rhythms.” The degree of his success is measured by the piece’s popularity throughout the world. Enjoy this jubilant, brilliant explosion of brass and percussion!

The Argentine composer, **Astor Piazzolla** (1921-1992) was another who traveled to Paris in order to study with Nadia Boulanger. The young composer showed her “kilos of symphonies and sonatas,” but Boulanger dismissed them as derivative. When Piazzolla finally confessed that he played bandoneon (Argentine concertina) in a Buenos Aires nightclub, Boulanger insisted he play one of his own tangos. “She suddenly opened her eyes, took my hand and told me: ‘You idiot, *that's* Piazzolla!’” Thus inspired, he went on to create *nuevo tango* (the new tango).

It is not surprising that tango “traditionalists” deplored Piazzolla’s use of complex, dissonant harmonies and his experimental, classical approach to the rhythmic and sensual national dance. Only in the last two decades of his life was Piazzolla fully recognized at home as a leading composer, whereas in Europe and America, his tangos gained popularity much earlier among both pop and classical audiences. His compositions were used extensively in the 1986 Broadway musical, *Tango Argentina*.

The work we hear tonight, *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*, is a musical tapestry of rough “street tango,” the romantic dancehall sensuality heard in classic tango, and the jazz pulse and abrupt shifts of tonalities and rhythms that are the basis of the composer’s own “new tango.” It has become one of Piazzolla’s most beloved and often performed works.

Unlike Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*, Piazzolla did not compose the work as a suite. The first three sections we hear -- *Autumn*, *Winter* and *Spring* -- were all written in 1970. The final movement, *Summer*, was written five years earlier. (Any thoughts as to why the piece is played in this order? Answer below.)

To be sure, Vivaldi’s well-known composition certainly influenced Piazzolla’s *Seasons*, although the Argentine’s music is original and develops through his own powerfully idiosyncratic language. As in Vivaldi, you will hear some decidedly “natural” sounds coming from our soloists, including scraping and rapping of the bows as they portray raucous street sounds and crude bird noises. Do listen for the moment when Piazzolla quotes directly from Vivaldi’s suite. (You won’t need a nudge from your neighbor to recognize it.) But what an ending we get from the Argentine tango master for this musical borrowing!

The answer? Of course: Argentina is not in the *Northern* Hemisphere. As Maestro Moody put it, “This is the ‘southern hemisphere’ counterpoint to Vivaldi.”

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One of the most sought-after composers of his generation, the prolific, award-winning American Richard **Danielpour** (born 1956) has a distinctive voice that finds expression in symphonies, concertos, ballets, opera, and vocal music. The title for his 1992 work, *Toward the Splendid City*, comes from the 1971 Nobel Prize Lecture by the Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda. To be sure, Neruda's "splendid city" may well lurk in the background as a metaphor for his philosophical and political views; however, Danielpour has made it clear that the work is in fact a salute to his home town, New York City: a portrait of Big Apple energy and vitality, rather than a contemplation of deep ethical issues.

Listening to it, can't *you* feel the pulse and excitement that is NYC? Don't you sense in this powerful music a slow stream of heavy traffic and blaring taxi horns? Now, there is a pause in the relentlessly-paced tempo: what is this if not streetlights turning red and crowds of people crossing the avenues? Surely, a chorale-like phrase depicts the looming, majestic skyscrapers, just as short, quieter passages suggest the city at rest, way after midnight and towards dawn. If so, the respite is very brief! Morning comes quickly in this grand city: the swirl of activity begins anew. The hectic pace resumes.

This short work is a true orchestral tour de force, filled with contrasts in mood, tempo and texture as it explores the timbres of many instruments. The strident measures for brass, the bell-like intonations from strings and woodwinds, the incessant beat of the timpani: all combine to describe the heartbeat of the composer's own "splendid city." And yes, indeed, Gershwin's swinging New York can be heard in this music, as well as the syncopated, angular, jazzy NYC of Leonard Bernstein. But Danielpour has created his own unique orchestral design that "paints" a crowded, boisterous canvas. It shouts, "Hear this City!" in bold brush strokes of instrumental color.

So, sit tight in your virtual Yellow Cab while the meter ticks inexorably, and enjoy the vigor and the sounds that surround you on your trip *Toward the Splendid City*. It is a most compelling ride!

*Interplay* by **Chris Brubeck** (born 1952) opens on a tear: the music is discordant and vigorous! The work is a brilliant showcase of different violin techniques, materials and moods, with buoyant, colorful orchestral backing. This is not a fusion of stylistic techniques or materials. As Brubeck's title tells us, it is an interplay of musical thoughts that unfolds seamlessly and quite magically.

The boisterous beginning tells us that "classical" violin of enormous technical difficulty will be alternating with two other styles, folk and jazz. After a short section for all, we hear a blues passage of intense melancholy and "cool" that defines the "torch song" style perfectly. The soloists join in to reiterate the mood, then segue into a long solo passage, a Celtic air that is both lilting and plaintive. Again, the soloists play together, exploring different techniques while playing much the same material. The Celtic fiddle -- yes, "fiddle" is the appropriate term -- now delivers a stomping, fast-paced Irish jig. Together once again, we hear the intertwining voices of the individual instruments. Next, the classical approach surfaces in a pyrotechnical, show-off passage that parodies the cadenza typically found in violin concertos: think Paganini or Mendelssohn.

In the final section, a dazzling paraphrase of melodic material previously heard impels the music forward in a syncopated, frenzied Latin style introduced by the orchestra. All the soloists give simultaneous renditions of the musical materials. Listen to the double-string technique of the Celtic fiddle, the still-haunting "blues" violin, now played in a fast-paced rhythm, and the rapid flourishes of classical style as the musicians conclude with a rip-roaring attack and final, exuberant bravura strokes on their violins!

continued

French composer, **Maurice Ravel** (1875-1937) wrote that *Bolero* was the result of his wish to write “quelque chose d’insistant” (“something with an insistent quality”). Certainly that word – insistent -- is key to the mood and the fascination of this composition. Early in 1928, the Russian ballerina Ida Rubinstein asked Ravel to write music for a ballet to be choreographed by Diaghilev and, of course!, starring her. While the ballet is rarely staged today, the music is heard constantly throughout the world in concert halls, on radio and in countless other settings. Carole Lombard and George Raft starred in the 1934 film, *Bolero*; Torvill and Dean skated their stunning Gold Medal Free Dance Program to the piece at the 1984 Olympics; *and* you all surely remember its prominence in the movie, *Ten*, with Dudley Moore and Bo Derek!

This astonishing score, filled with wildly lush tonalities, consists of a two-part theme, which is repeated *nine* times. As the instruments hand off the melodic content to each other, the dogged tension of the ostinato (a persistently repeated rhythm or melody) mounts. The trombone timbre is particularly haunting. Note too, the snare drum, which marks the inexorable, relentless beat. Finally, the entire orchestra reaches the height of its crescendo journey. A huge glissando relieves the obsessive melodic tension and the percussive rhythm. The music’s hypnotic spell ends.

Ravel once said that *Bolero* is “orchestration without music.” But the universal verdict is that the music is itself, a C Major motif, is embedded in brilliant orchestral color! It is also reported, perhaps apocryphally, that a woman shouted from the audience after a performance, “Ravel is mad!” To which Ravel responded, “Ah, she understood the piece!”

### *Notes by Fran Rosenthal*

#### *About Tonight’s Soloists*

A native of Minsk (Belarus) and now a US citizen, **Yuriy Bekker**, violin, is Concertmaster of the Orlando Philharmonic. Formerly Concertmaster of the Charleston Symphony, he has played with the Houston Symphony, Houston Grand Opera and Ballet Orchestras, and the Louisville Orchestra. Recent appearances include recitals in New York City, Chicago, Miami, Asheville (NC), Flagstaff, and Graz (Austria), as well as numerous solo performances with the Charleston Symphony. This season includes solo appearances with the Charleston Ballet, Ensemble du Monde, Orlando Philharmonic and in New York City and abroad. Yuriy holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Indiana University, where he studied violin with Nelli Shkolnikova and Ilya Kaler, and chamber music with Atar Arad, Emile Naomoff, and Janos Starker. He earned a Graduate Performance diploma from the Peabody Conservatory. At Peabody, Yuriy served as concertmaster of the Conservatory Symphony under the tutelage of Herbert Greenberg. This is his third year at *Arizona Musicfest*.

Principal Second Violin **Corine Brouwer** is Concertmaster of the Winston-Salem Symphony, the Asheville Lyric Opera, and the Carolina Chamber Symphony. She has appeared as soloist with the North Carolina Symphony, Winston-Salem Symphony, Canton (Ohio) Symphony, and Carolina Chamber Symphony, among others. This season will include solo performances of Astor Piazzolla’s *Four Seasons* with the Portland Symphony (Maine). Her chamber music appearances include the Eastern Music Festival, the International Bartók Festival, and the Saugatuck Chamber Music Festival. Formerly Director of the Community Music School of the North Carolina School of the Arts, Ms. Brouwer has taught at Wake Forest University and the National Suzuki Institute in Wisconsin, and currently maintains a private studio. She earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees at the NC School of the Arts, where she studied with the late Elaine Richey. This is Ms. Brouwer’s fifth year with the Festival Orchestra.

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Associate Concertmaster **Charles Dimmick** is Concertmaster of the Portland (ME) Symphony. He studied at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music with former Tokyo String Quartet violinist Peter Oundjian and Dr. Won Bin Yim. After moving to Boston, he studied with former Boston Symphony Concertmaster Joseph Silverstein and joined the violin section of the Portland Symphony. He was appointed Concertmaster in 2002. He also serves as Concertmaster of the acclaimed Boston Modern Orchestra Project and Assistant Concertmaster of the Rhode Island Philharmonic. Mr. Dimmick appears frequently as soloist with orchestras throughout New England; most recently performing the Berg violin concerto with Maestro Moody and the Portland Symphony). In addition, he is highly sought after as a chamber musician and teacher. He lives with his wife, St. Louis Symphony piccolo player Rachel Braude, in St Louis. This is his third year at *Arizona Musicfest*.

**Robin Mayforth**, violinist, is making her 11<sup>th</sup> appearance as Concertmaster of the *Arizona Musicfest* Festival Orchestra. She also serves as Concertmaster of Symphony Silicon Valley and at the Music in the Mountains Festival (CA). A founding member of the highly-respected Lark Quartet in 1985, she toured with the ensemble throughout the United States, Europe, Russia, China and Australia until 1993. Ms. Mayforth is a native of Wilmington, Delaware. She received bachelor's and master's degrees from The Juilliard School, where she studied with the celebrated teachers Dorothy DeLay, Hyo Kang and Paul Kantor.

*This spectacular evening of solo and ensemble virtuosity  
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Thank you so much!*