

Bainbridge Performing Arts 2014-2015 Season

BAINBRIDGE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONDUCTOR GUEST COLUMN

Submitted by BSO Music Director & Conductor **Wesley Schulz**, February 2015 Concert

One of my favorite aspects of Bainbridge Island is the sense of community and togetherness, especially with respect to art and culture. For a small town, Bainbridge Island has a remarkable number of musical groups, theater troupes, visual artists, and more. At the Bainbridge Symphony Orchestra we have made it a core part of our mission to collaborate with as many of these arts organizations as we can. This year we look forward to performing with the Shakespeare Society, the Bainbridge Island Youth Orchestra, the winner of the Young Artist Competition, and in late February, the Amabile Choir led by Anne Pell.

Our concerts on February 28 and March 1, 2015 are very special for the Bainbridge Symphony Orchestra. These performances celebrate the incredible gift of a new set of Yamaha timpani funded by the Fletcher Bay Foundation, a long-time supporter of the orchestra. The cornerstone of the program is Michael Daugherty's timpani concerto entitled "Raise the Roof!" in which the new set of timpani will be showcased with Gunnar Folsom serving as soloist. The work was commissioned and premiered by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in 2003 to commemorate the opening of the Max Fisher Music Center. A rare instrument to be featured as a concerto soloist, this work will highlight the timpani both as an expressive, melodic instrument as well as a tour de force of passion and rhythmic energy. This work lives up to its name, I promise; so don't be surprised if the roof of BPA is slightly ajar after these performances!

The remainder of the program continues to highlight the timpani but will also present works by some of America's greatest composers. We will perform two short works by Aaron Copland including his *Variations on a Shaker Melody*, a powerful opening number by Pulitzer Prize winner Kevin Puts called *Millennium Canons* and Dvořák's *American Suite*, which was written during an extended stay of his in the United States in 1894. The final work on the program is Ludwig van Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy* featuring Mark Salman on piano and Anne Pell and the Amabile Choir. I selected this work thoughtfully – envisioning it as the ideal finale for a program conceived from the idea of community spirit. As an orchestra we are grateful to *all* of our supporters: sponsors, grant foundations, donors, volunteers, musicians, and especially our audience. Beethoven's grand homage to music brings together an army of musicians (orchestra, pianist, and chorus) in unity and strength. Bainbridge Island is an incredible place to make music, and this program is our gift to you.