

Williamsport Symphony Orchestra

2017-2018 season *new beginnings* 51

New Beginnings : October 17, 2017
 Concert No. 1 - Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5*
 Guest Pianist: Jose Mendez

Holiday Concert : December 12, 2017
 Concert No. 2 - Beloved holiday tunes & WAHS Choir performing music from "Home Alone"

SUBSCRIBE & SAVE
 Buy all 5 concerts by August 10, 2017.
 Single tickets go on sale September 7, 2017.

The New World : February 13, 2018
 Concert No. 3 - Dvorak's *Symphony No. 9 "New World"*
 Guests: Mark Lusk & Dale Orris

Your Classical Favorites! : March 17, 2018
 Concert No. 4 - The return of Max Zorin, violin soloist

Musical Pictures : May 15, 2018
 Concert No. 5 - Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*
 Guest Pianist: Francisco Montero



Williamsport Symphony Orchestra E-Notes

October 2017

2017-2018 Calendar

October 2017

- 16 Behind the Scenes
with Gerardo and Friends
Capitol Lounge of CAC
5:00- 7:00 pm - \$30/person
- 17 WSO concert #1
Community Arts Center
7:30 pm - tickets:
www.caclive.com
- 28 WSO Junior Strings (WSJS)
Clarke Chapel, Lycoming College
4:00 pm - FREE CONCERT!
- 29 WSO Youth Symphony
(WSYO) Halloween concert
Community Arts Center
3:00 pm - pre-concert kids activities
4:00 pm - FREE CONCERT!

November 2017

- 18 WSO Billtown Brass
Trade & Transit Event Center II,
Michael Ross Event Center- 3rd
Floor
4:00 pm - FREE CONCERT!

December 2017

- 01 Holiday Open House
Malcolm Barlow's Historic

Conductor's Corner

The first concert of the season is around the corner and I could not be more excited to share with you the program we are preparing for you.

Beethoven wrote nine symphonies but aside from the "Ode to Joy" theme, the first eight notes (sol-sol-sol-mi, fa-fa-fa-re) of his fifth are arguably the most famous in the history of classical music. The first critics called the piece the Victory Symphony and the music has continued to awe audiences for many generations.



Rachmaninov had to thank his critics for destroying his first symphony because he was able to recover from a deep depression and compose one of the most popular and most played piano concertos ever. With beautiful and lashing melodies, the piano concerto no. 2 will touch your hearts and souls from the first sounds and for sure will not leave you for several days. We are glad to showcase the acclaimed Spanish pianist Jose Mendez as our soloist and I am sure he is going to deliver a memorable performance. The concert opens with an admirable symphonic poem for large orchestra by F. Liszt called "Les Preludes" inspired by a Lamartine poem and music taken from an earlier choral work.

Muncy Farms 6:00-9:00 pm
\$85/person: RSVP 570-322-0227

- 12 WSO concert #2
Community Arts Center
7:30 pm
tickets: www.caclive.com

February 2018

- 12 Behind the Scenes
with Gerardo and Friends
Capitol Lounge of CAC
5:00- 7:00 pm - \$30/person

- 13 WSO concert #3
Community Arts Center
7:30 pm
tickets: www.caclive.com

March 2018

- 04 WSYO & WSJS concert
Community Arts Center
4:00 pm - FREE
CONCERT!

- 17 WSO concert #4
Community Arts Center
7:30 pm
tickets: www.caclive.com

May 2018

- 14 Behind the Scenes
with Gerardo and Friends
Capitol Lounge of CAC
5:00- 7:00 pm - \$30/person

- 15 WSO concert #5
Community Arts Center
7:30 pm
tickets: www.caclive.com

For more info:
www.williamsportsymphony.org or
570-322-0227

Special thanks to our Season sponsors!



I am confident it is going to be a fantastic concert and you will not want to miss it! Come join us and bring all your friends and family and experience your symphony live!

See you at the concert.

Fondly,

Gerardo Edelstein

October Guest Pianist - Jose Mendez

Jose Ramon Mendez will be the guest artist performing Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 with the Orchestra on October 17.



Assistant professor of piano at Penn State, Mr. Mendez is described as "an artist with a polished sound and tremendous constructive power" and hailed by the Hoja del Lunes de Madrid, as "the Spanish pianist of his generation." Jose Ramon Mendez is one of the most exciting Spanish pianists on the concert scene today.

Mendez received his first music instruction from his father, and by the age of seven was already performing on Spanish television and radio stations. He first gained international recognition when he performed Liszt's first piano concerto under the direction of Sergiu Commissiona at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Since then, he has concertized extensively in his native Spain, the United States, Italy, England, Portugal, Holland, and Japan to great acclaim. With his poetic performance expression, intellect, and masterful technique, he has been praised by critics and celebrated by audiences around the world.

At the age of 18, Mendez's success brought him to the United States, where he began his studies with Solomon Mikowsky at the Manhattan School of Music. He also completed his Doctor of Musical Arts degree there under the tutelage of legendary pianist Byron Janis, a pupil of Vladimir Horowitz and Miyoko Lotto. While a student, he won top prizes in the Pilar



Bayona International Piano Competition, the Hilton Head Island International Piano Competition, the Frederick Chopin Competition in New York, and the Hermanos Guerrero International Piano Competition, among others.

Mendez has been a guest performer at many music festivals, including the Caramoor Festival, the Barge Music Series, the Festival Internacional de Piano de las Islas Canarias, and the Santander International Music Festival, to name a few. As a chamber musician, he has collaborated with such distinguished artists as Karl Leister, Itzhak Perlman, Michael Tree, and Pinchas Zukerman.

He previously held faculty positions at the University of Texas at Austin and at New York University's Steinhardt School. During the summers, Mendez serves as executive director of the Stony Brook International Piano Festival and is also co-director of the Gijon International Piano Festival in Gijon, Spain.

Program Notes by Dr. Boerckel

Popular Classics

The three works on the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra's October concert are among the best-known of the entire orchestral repertoire. Critics, musicians, and audiences would agree that they represent their respective creators at the summit of their achievement. But quality alone does not account for their fame. Popular culture had a hand in this. Liszt's *Les Préludes* was used for much of the theme music of the *Flash Gordon* serials starring Buster Crabbe in the 1930s and shown on television in the 1950s. Rachmaninov's second piano concerto began its association with the movies in England with David Lean's 1945 *Brief Encounter*, starring Celia Johnson and Trevor Howard. Hollywood got on the bandwagon in 1946 with Republic Pictures *I've Always Loved You*. Probably the most memorable, and certainly the most hilarious film accompaniment to Rachmaninov's passionate music Billy Wilder's 1957 classic comedy *The Seven-Year Itch* featuring Marilyn Monroe and Tom Ewell. The first four notes of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5*--the "fate" motif--represented classical music in Chuck Berry's *Roll Over, Beethoven* [1956] and, during World War II, it symbolized British and American hopes for victory in countless radio broadcasts because the Morse code for the letter "V" is dot-dot-dot-dash--the same rhythmic pattern as the opening of Beethoven's *fifth*.



That Darned New Music

Hector Berlioz was a student at the Paris Conservatory of Music when he fell in love with Beethoven's symphonies during the 1820s. All Paris, it seemed, was in the audience at a series of concerts presenting Beethoven's orchestral music, but Berlioz's composition teacher, Jean-François Lesueur, professed no interest. Finally, Berlioz managed to convince Lesueur to accompany him to a performance of the *Symphony No. 5*. Here is Berlioz's description of what ensued. *When it was over...I found him in the corridor, striding along with a flushed face. "Well, master?" I asked. "Ouf, let me get out. I must have some air. It's amazing! Wonderful! I was so moved and so disturbed that when I emerged from the box, and attempted to put on my hat, I couldn't find my head. Now, please leave me be. We'll meet tomorrow."...The next day I hurried round to see him...Lesueur let me talk on for some time, assenting in a rather constrained manner to my exclamations of enthusiasm. But it was easy to see that my companion was no longer the man who had spoken to me the day before, and that he found the subject painful. I persisted however, and dragged from him a further acknowledgement of how deeply Beethoven's symphony had moved him; at which he suddenly shook his head and smiled in a curious way and said, "All the same, music like that ought not to be written." "Don't worry, master," I replied, "there is not much chance of that."*

Behind the Scenes

Behind the Scenes with Gerardo and Friends is a revamped "Meet the Maestro". *Behind the Scenes* will continue to feature Gerardo and the guest artists in an intellectual gathering accompanied by a light fare dinner and a complimentary drink. Guests are welcome to attend the concert rehearsal afterwards. *Behind the Scenes* will be held at the Capitol Lounge of the Community Arts Center from 5:00 pm- 7:00 PM. Bring your colleagues, friends, and partner for a social gathering and a happy hour; relaxed set up, great food, and a drink to wind down. \$30 per person to include food and a drink.

The first event is on October 16th, the day before the Season opener. Jose Mendez, the Concert's guest pianist, and Gerardo will mingle with the crowd and answer any questions. The crowd might be also treated to some piano tunes by Jose.

To RSVP, please call WSO at 570-322-0227.

Welcome Kristin Fisher to WSO Board!

The Williamsport Symphony Orchestra, Board and Staff would like to welcome Kristin Fisher to the WSO Board of Directors. Mrs. Fisher was born and raised in St. Marys, PA, and moved to Williamsport in 1996. She spent eight years as a High School English teacher until she "retired" to start a family. Kristin is married to Don Fisher, a WASD music teacher and a percussionist in the WSO. Their two children Michael and Marcella are also musicians, members of WYSO and WSJS, and students in the WASD. Kristin's "work" is also music as a pianist and singer. She and Don lead the Contemporary music at St. Boniface church in Williamsport where Kristin takes care of music for many funerals and weddings. She maintains a small piano studio out of her home and is the accompanist for the Suzuki Violin group based at Robert M. Sides. Kristin is honored to serve on the WSO Board.



"The true beauty of music is that it connects people..." - Ayers

From the desk of the ED

Many articles appear to be written now about research that reports how beneficial music is to one's health. Recently, I read that if you want to improve your brain function, forget puzzles, and look to music - music, it reported, reaches parts of the brain that other things can't. And, playing a musical instrument is particularly beneficial. In our region, we are so fortunate to have a professional-caliber orchestra and one that engages in music programs such as our Youth Orchestra, Junior Strings program, Student Outreach with middle and high schools, and free tickets to students and group subscription discounts to seniors. It's all made possible by your support through your contributions and attendance! We are forever grateful for your investment in the enrichment of our community.



This season, we are equally pleased to reinstate a free, family concert! With a Halloween theme and pre-concert party, it's bound to delight children and adults of all ages.

At 3:00 PM Robert M. Sides Family Music Centers will bring their "petting zoo" of musical instruments which they will demonstrate and the children can touch. The festivities, planned by our Friends of the Symphony Committee, include much more, and the concert, played by the Williamsport Symphony Youth Orchestra, begins at 4:00 PM. Both events are at the Community Arts Center. Please come and join the fun!

Although it has felt like summer and year end may be far away, we ask that you keep the Symphony in your hearts and mind. We would be honored to be included in any future plans you might make and can work with you and your professional advisors to commemorate your passion for years to come. Please contact us, and as always we are grateful for any and all of your contributions and support.

Our community thrives and is a great place in which to live because of your commitment to the Symphony and the arts! We look forward to seeing you at the concerts!

Quick Links

Williamsport Symphony Orchestra
220 West Fourth Street
Williamsport, Pennsylvania 17701
570-322-0227



For information and tickets [Visit our website!](#)