



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Jen Walencik, Director of Marketing

## Akron Symphony Orchestra Announces 2023-2024 Concert Season

The Akron Symphony Orchestra is proud to announce the opening of its 2023-2024 concert season with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony on September 29. The program celebrates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EJ Thomas Hall.

"We are thrilled to be a part of EJ Thomas Hall's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations and honored to have the opportunity to open the Akron Symphony Orchestra's 70th season at this historic venue. As the orchestra that performed at the hall's inaugural night on October 9, 1973, we are privileged to still be performing here 50 years later," said Paul Jarrett, Executive Director. "It is fitting that we open the season with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, a work that we performed at the opening of the hall, and, like EJ Thomas Hall, has stood the test of time."

This season promises to be one of the most exciting yet, with a diverse range of repertoire and world-class performers. It also celebrates the Akron Symphony Orchestra's 70-year history, and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a beloved Akron tradition, Gospel Meets Symphony.

"I am thrilled with the lineup for next year. It features great music, past and present," said Music Director Christopher Wilkins. "In this anniversary season, we'll perform many "greatest hits." But the classical tradition is wide and deep, filled with extraordinary works not widely known. We love to explore this music too. More than anything, it is our pleasure to share the exceptional talents of the Akron Symphony with the community that supports it so generously."

Maestro Wilkins leads the towering Ninth Symphony of Beethoven on opening night, Friday, September 29. During the program's first half, Cleveland Institute of Music-trained composer and conductor, Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate conducts his work, *Clans*, telling legends drawn from his Chickasaw heritage. Akron's own Dr. LaDonna Blue Eye, a citizen of the Choctaw Nation, narrates.

The January 13<sup>th</sup> concert features a sequel to last season's extraordinary co-creation with Akron-based EarthQuaker Devices. Composers Jake Gunnar Walsh and Jon Sonnenberg collaborate once again, bringing EarthQuaker's otherworldly sounds to the symphonic stage.

World-renowned cellist, and Baldwin Wallace University faculty member, Khari Joyner performs the Dvořák Cello Concerto on November 18. And superstar trumpeter Mary Elizabeth Bowden performs a new work for trumpet and string orchestra by the multi-talented Brazilian American composer, Clarice Assad.

The ASO is dedicated to bringing the highest quality performances to the Akron community and beyond, and with a season like this, there is much to celebrate!

The complete 2023-2024 Akron Symphony Orchestra concert lineup:

CLASSICS SERIES

- more -

**September 29, 2023**

**Beethoven Ninth**

Christopher Wilkins, *conductor*

Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate, *guest conductor*

Dr. LaDonna Blue Eye, *narrator*

Sirgourney Cook, *soprano*

Leah Heater, *alto*

John Pickle, *tenor*

Frank Ward, *bass*

Akron Symphony Chorus

Chris Albanese, Director

**Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate** "Clans" from *Lowak Shoppala' (Fire and Light)*

**Ludwig van Beethoven** Symphony No. 9

**October 21, 2023**

**Organ Symphony**

Robert Mollard, Organ

**Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson** *Worship*

**Ottorino Respighi** *Church Windows*

**Camille Saint-Saëns** Organ Symphony

**November 18, 2023**

**Dvořák & Tchaikovsky**

Khari Joyner, *cello*

**William Grant Still** *Festive Overture*

**Antonín Dvořák** Cello Concerto

**Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** Symphony No. 6 "Pathétique"

**January 13, 2024**

**Mozart Meets EarthQuaker**

**Arvo Pärt** *Fratres*

**Wolfgang Amadè Mozart** Symphony No. 29 in A

**Mary Lou Williams** *Zodiac Suite*

**Jake Gunnar Walsh & Jon Sonnenberg** *Conflagration* (with EarthQuaker Devices)

**March 2, 2024**

**Bruckner Fourth**

**Richard Wagner** *Lohengrin*: Prelude to Act I

**Anton Bruckner** Symphony No. 4 "Romantic"

**April 6, 2024**

**Tchaikovsky & Bowden**

Mary Elizabeth Bowden, *trumpet*

**Ralph Vaughan Williams** Fantasia on "Greensleeves"

**Jessie Montgomery** *Strum*

**Clarice Assad** *Bohemian Queen: Concerto for Trumpet and String Orchestra*  
**Jennifer Higdon** *Reel Time*  
**Julia Perry** *Prelude for Strings*  
**Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** *Souvenir de Florence*

**May 11, 2024**

**Mozart's "Great" Mass**

Akron Symphony Chorus

Chris Albanese, Director

Sonya Headlam, *soprano*

Amanda Powell, *soprano*

Tim Culver, *tenor*

Brian Keith Johson, *baritone*

**Lili Boulanger** *On a Spring Morning*

**Maurice Ravel** *Le Tombeau de Couperin*

**Wolfgang Amadè Mozart** *Mass in C minor "Great"*

SPECIALS

**December 8, 2023**

**Holiday Pops**

**February 10, 2024**

**Gospel Meets Symphony**

*(30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert)*

All performances start at 7:30 PM, at the University of Akron's EJ Thomas Hall.

All Classic Series concerts are preceded by a free *Preview from the Podium* talk by Music Director Christopher Wilkins.

The best way not to miss a note is to become a season subscriber. Patrons who subscribe enjoy steep discounts on a full season of concerts, guaranteed seats, a 10 percent discount on additional single-ticket purchases, and a flexible ticket exchange program.

**Subscription packages will go on sale in April.** Early bird pricing ends on May 14. Single tickets go on sale on August 1 and pricing starts at \$20.

All dates, artists, and programs are subject to change.

For more information, visit [AkronSymphony.org](http://AkronSymphony.org).

### **About the Akron Symphony Orchestra**

For more than 60 years, the Akron Symphony Orchestra has been a driving musical force throughout the Greater Akron area. Widely recognized for musical excellence and performance versatility, the Akron Symphony Orchestra is committed to enhancing the quality of life of our community through educational and musical excellence.

The Akron Symphony Orchestra is operated by the Greater Akron Musical Association, Inc. (GAMA). GAMA's vision is to be embraced and sustained as a community treasure that provides a welcoming environment for all people to experience great music. This vision is realized by operating the Akron Symphony

Orchestra, Akron Youth Orchestras, Akron Symphony Chorus, and numerous special outreach and educational programs.

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