

Friday, May 9 and Saturday, May 10, 2014 7:30 pm

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### A Message from the Music Director

Welcome to an evening with the Russian Masters. I'm thrilled that we can present to you music written by some of the greatest



composers ever—all from Russia. We feature music tonight of Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, Borodin, Prokofiev, Glinka, and Ippolitov-Ivanov. I hope you will enjoy it as much as I do.

Our featured number on this evening's program is

Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2. This concerto is one of the most famous and recognizable pieces of classical music ever written. You might find it interesting to note that this Rachmaninoff concerto was featured at the inaugural concert of the Timpanogos Symphony Orchestra in April of 2011. This is the first time we have re-performed a piece of music during our short history.

I am delighted to have Josh Wright as our

guest soloist. We booked Josh almost a year ago when we were planning the 2013-2014 season and feel very lucky to have him soloing with us. He is a busy performing and recording artist. He is a fabulous pianist and musician and a real joy to work with.

Also on tonight's program is the winner of our conducting competition. We held our first young artist competition last year and plan to hold the full-blown competition on a biannual basis. But, we felt that we wanted to repeat the conducting part of the competition annually. So, a few weeks ago we held our competition. The competition consisted of five young people, each conducting the orchestra for ten minutes. After the competition the orchestra member voted and chose Jacob Dame as the winner. It is always a thrill to work with aspiring young musicians and I'm sure you'll recognize Jacob as a talented conductor.

I thank you for you attendance tonight and your continued support of the Timpanogos Symphony Orchestra. Enjoy the concert!



The Timpanogos Symphony Orchestra is funded in part by grants from the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation and the Utah Arts Council.

GEORGE S. AND DOLORES DORE ECCLES





Procession of the Sardar (1894)

## Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov

March from The Love for Three Oranges, Op. 33 (1921)

Sergei Prokofiev

Vocalise, Op. 34, No. 14 (1912)

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Ruslan and Ludmilla (1842)

Mikhail Glinka

Act II Scene 10 from Swan Lake (1876)

**Pyotr Tchaikovsky** 

Polovtsian Dances (1890)

Alexander Borodin

INTERMISSION

Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op 18 (1901)

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Josh Wright, piano

#### Contributors

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TSO members receive two season tickets and entrance to the "Meet the Artist" pre-concert reception before each concert. Membership begins at \$120 for the season or \$10 per month.





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#### Our Music Director

John Pew, music director and founder of the Timpanogos Symphony Orchestra, is a deeply feeling musician blessed with an innate sensitivity for orchestral music and a warm rapport with musicians and audiences alike. His passion for the music is evident in his conducting style and his interactions with the orchestra and the audience.

He began his study of the piano at age five. As a teenager, he performed piano concertos of Grieg and Mendelssohn and played the saxophone and bassoon in the high school band. A native of San Carlos, California, he found that the rich cultural life of the Bay Area fed his love of orchestral music. His high school choir director took him to Oakland to hear Vladimir Horowitz, and he also attended a live performance of Arthur Rubinstein.

As a high school student he attended music classes at Cañada College, a local community college, through which he was able to purchase season tickets to the San Francisco Symphony, which Seiji Ozawa conducted. At home, he amassed a large collection of classical music, both



records and scores, and spent hours studying the artistry of the masters.

John studied piano with Reid Nibley at Brigham Young University, but pursued a career in software engineering. He now telecommutes from American Fork to Ariba, Inc., in Sunnyvale, CA.

His conducting experience began as a church choir director, which eventually led to his appointment as assistant conductor of the Santa Clara Chorale and as Music Director of the Oakland Temple Pageant. After working with the orchestra of the Oakland Temple Pageant in 1998 and 2000, John was invited to assume the role of Music Director of the Temple Hill Symphony in Oakland, CA, a position he held for eight years.

Conducting a symphony orchestra is "a dream come true," John says. "I'm doing the music that I have dreamed about since I was a kid!" He adds, "I really love the musicians. They're amazing. You know they're participating for the pure love of the music because they are doing so without compensation. There's a particular satisfaction that comes from that."

John and his wife, Renee, reside in American Fork, Utah, and are the parents of five children.





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#### Our Guest Artist

Billboard #1 artist **Josh Wright** has delighted audiences across the United States and in Europe. His self-titled album "Josh Wright" topped the Billboard Classical Traditional chart just three weeks after its release in April 2011. He performed his Carnegie Hall debut at Zankel Hall in January 2014. Josh currently attends the University of Michigan, pursuing his Doctor of Musical Art degree as a pupil of Dr. Logan Skelton. Josh received his undergradu-



ate and Masters degrees from the University of Utah, studying under Dr. Susan Duehlmeier. Josh is also a private student of concert pianist Sergei Babayan.

Josh won first prize at the 2013 Heida Hermanns International Piano Competition, first prize at the 2013 Rosamond P. Haeberle Piano Award competition, the gold medal at the 2010 Seattle International Piano Competition, and first prize at the 2010 American Protége International Competition of Romantic Music. He was the second prize winner of the 2011 Music Teachers National Association National Competition. He has competed in several other competitions, including the International Chopin Piano

Competition Preliminaries, the Gina Bachauer International Artists Competition, the National Chopin Competition, the New York Piano Competition, the Louisiana International Piano Competition, the Julia Crane International Piano Competition, and the Eastman International Piano Competition.

Josh has appeared numerous times with symphony orchestras including: the Utah Symphony, the Temple Square Orchestra, the Salt Lake Symphony, the SummerArts Orchestra, and the University of Utah Student Chamber Orchestra.

He has released five albums, including My Favorite Things (2013), Josh Wright (2011), Gaspard (2010), The Complete Chopin Etudes (2003), and Josh Wright Debut (2000).

Josh has participated in master classes and lessons with numerous concert pianists, including Leon Fleisher, Menahem Pressler, Garrick Ohlsson, John Perry, Boris Slutsky, Nelita True, Paul Schenly, Ian Hobson and Awadagin Pratt.

In addition to performing, Josh is passionate about teaching. He has appeared as a guest lecturer and masterclass presenter at several festivals and colleges, including the Amalfi Coast Music Festival, University of Utah International Keyboard Institute, Utah Valley University Piano Festival, Snow College, and Shoreline Community College. He has created a free online piano instructional series to assist piano students of all ages and abilities with various aspects of technique and musicality. This can be found on his YouTube Channel – www.youtube.com/joshwrightpiano.

### Program Notes

Mikhail Glinka, 1804-1857. Overture to Ruslan and Ludmila. Mikhail Glinka remembered well the Russian army's triumph over Napoleon, and burned with a nationalist fervor. Born in 1804 to nobility, he was educated in languages but spent most of his time writing music. In 1830, he toured Italy and was profoundly inspired by the country's art and culture, music and musicians. It was here, while shedding "torrents of tears—tears of emotion and enthusiasm" over the operas of Bellini and Donizetti, that he conceived the idea of an art music with a distinctly Russian face. Now regarded as the father of Russian classical music, he began experiments into a musical language which would be spoken by composers for the next century.

The overture to Ruslan and Ludmila opens an opera based on Alexander Pushkin's fanciful tale of Ludmila, the beautiful daughter of the Prince of Kiev, who has three suitors. She chooses the knight Ruslan, but is thwarted by the dwarf Chemomor, a wicked sorcerer who spirits her away during the wedding ceremony. Modeled on a classical overture, the work features distinctive Russian melodies set in a German framework. Counterpoint and scales recall Mozart and Weber, but Chemomor's theme, a descending bass whole-tone scale, suggests the dark, gnomish machinations of the evil dwarf, and anticipates Debussy by 50 years.

Alexander Borodin, 1833-1887.

Polovtsian Dances. Borodin considered himself a "Sunday composer" who plied his craft only in his spare time. By day, he was one of Russia's foremost experimental chemists, a noted surgeon, and the founder of the first Russian school of medicine for women. By night, he belonged to the circle of nationalist composers known as the Mighty Five, whose aims were to create an authentically Russian art music drawn from the native soil rather than the classical academy.

He began composing the opera, *Prince Igor*, in 1869, working piecemeal over the next eighteen years and leaving it at his death to be lovingly completed by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov. The opera re-enacts the twelfth-century invasion of Russia by the savage Polovtsi, a tribe descended from the Turks. The Polovtsian dances evoke a wild clash pulsating with the life and color of the half-barbaric Orient.

Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov, 1859-1935. Procession of the Sardar. Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov, a student of Rimsky-Korsakov, belonged to a second generation of Russian nationalists devoted to the ideals of the Mighty Five. While serving as director of the School of Music at Tiflis, in the Caucasus Mountains, he collected sketches and folk songs of the local ethnic groups. His Caucasian Sketches, among which the Procession of the Sardar is the best known, use folk melodies and Eastern scales to depict rugged mountain scenery, villages pitched on steep hillsides, an abundance of Turkish mosques, and the impressive entrance of the Sardar, a Persian military commander.

Sergei Prokofiev, 1891-1953. March from The Love for Three Oranges, Op. 33. Shortly after the Bolshevik revolution, Sergei Prokofiev, like many Russian intellectuals, applied for permission to leave the country. Granting his visa, the Soviet official said, "You are a revolutionary in music. We are revolutionaries in life."

As a child, Prokofiev learned music at the feet of his mother, who played the music of Beethoven and Chopin on the piano. She later hired the best names in Russian music to become his teachers: Liadov, Tcherepnin, Rimsky-Korsakov. From his training, he kept the classical influence of Beethoven, but leap-frogged over the Romantic influences of his teachers in favor of the twelve-tone



### Program Notes

theories of Schönberg, becoming known as the "enfant terrible" of Russian music. Eventually, after composing in Chicago, New York, and Paris, Prokofiev returned to his homeland to take his chances with the Soviets.

The Love for Three Oranges, a satirical opera, tells the story of a mythical prince who, cursed by a witch, falls in love with three oranges and travels day and night to find them. Written in 1919, the opera premiered to harsh critical reviews which characterized it as "Russian jazz with Bolshevik trimmings." However, when the opera was revived in 1949, it was with astonishing success, becoming a box-office sensation overnight.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, 1873-1943. Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18. A gifted composer, pianist, and conductor, Sergei Rachmaninoff was considered one of the finest pianists of his day and one of the last great representatives of Russian Romanticism. Born in 1873 to an aristocratic family in tsarist Russia, he died in 1943, an American citizen, at his home in Beverly Hills. California.

To the public, Rachmaninoff exhibited a massive reserve. Dubbed a "six-and-a-half-foot scowl" by fellow composer Igor Stravinsky, he bore heavily chiseled features, closely cropped hair and coldly melancholy eyes suggesting a character of granite. Not many guessed that the composer wore this mask to conceal his uncertainties, as, tortured by indecision, he could brood for days over minute details of composition.

The second piano concerto was written after a particularly difficult time.

Rachmaninoff's first symphony, the first extended work of his professional life, had been given a disastrous premiere in St.

Petersburg, drawing a cruel review from

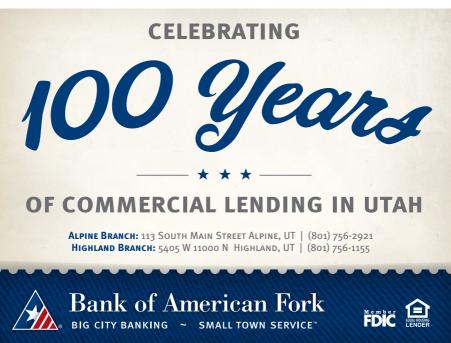
Cesar Cui, who wrote, "If there were a conservatory in hell, Rachmaninoff would get first prize for his symphony, so devilish are the discords he places before us." Shocked nearly to the point of insanity, Rachmaninoff sank into a depression that would last for three years, during which he wrote almost no music.

His family persuaded him to consult Nicolai Dahl, a Moscow physician and practitioner of the newly emerging field of psychiatry. Seeking to replicate Parisian experiments in auto-suggestion and hypnotism, Dahl sat Rachmaninoff in a darkened room every day for three months, repeating the words, "You will write your concerto. You will work with great facility. The concerto will be of excellent quality." The results were like magic. Rachmaninoff returned to work and within months was able to complete the second and third movements of his second piano concerto, which would be performed in Moscow with great success, and has been hailed as one of the most successful pieces in Russian literature.

The concerto reflects Rachmaninoff's prodigious abilities as a pianist. Artists who play it become conscious of the composer's immense hands, able to maneuver easily through the most complex chordal configurations, and of his dexterous fingers of steel and velvet. It is a prime example of Rachmaninoff's compositional style, a style characterized by mellow, long-flowing themes, melancholy overtones, impassioned climaxes and lush, melting harmonies. An audience favorite, the work is a fitting tribute to Rachmaninoff's friend and one-time savior, Dr. Nicolai Dahl, to whom it was dedicated.

-Heidi Rodeback







#### Our Guest Conductor

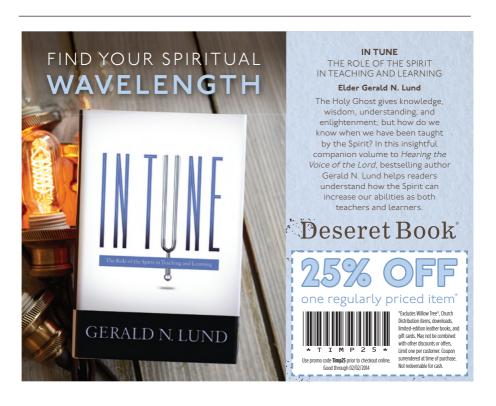
**Jacob Dame**, 18, began piano studies at age nine and currently studies with Dr. Ralph Van der Beek and Dr. Yu-Jane Yang. A sophomore at Weber State University, his greatest passions in music are teaching and collaborating, either as an accompanist or in chamber music. He



enjoys music history, music literature, and composers, among whom his favorites are Mozart, Brahms, Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, and anyone Russian. He has also played the viola since age nine, and hopes ultimately to become a conductor and a film score composer:

Jacob has been awarded first place in the UMTA Concerto Competition (high school division), first place in the Salt Lake Piano Competition, and was named an alternate in the MTNA Performance Competition. He recently performed Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 in D Minor with the Weber State

University Symphony Orchestra as a concerto competition winner. Outside interests include aviation and travel (he is also interested in becoming an airline pilot), politics, city planning, architecture, film, and history. He loves to snowboard.



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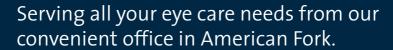
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Thank you for joining us this evening. As a member of the audience, you are an important part of tonight's concert. As a courtesy to all, please observe the following rules of concert etiquette:

- Arrive on time. If you are late, an usher will seat you during a break in the performance.
- Remain seated while the performance is in progress. If you must leave before the performance is over, please wait until a piece is finished and the audience is applauding.
- If young children disrupt others' ability to listen, please take them from the auditorium until they are quiet.
- Refrain from talking during the performance and be considerate of others by keeping programs, jewelry, and candy wrappers silent. Electronic devices should be kept silent and dark.
- Watch the conductor when the music stops to decide whether or not to applaud. Some musical works have several movements and the audience applauds only after all movements have been performed.

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The mission of the Timpanogos Symphony Orchestra is to present high-caliber performances which inspire musicians and audiences alike; to nurture understanding and appreciation of symphonic music; and to enrich the cultural life of the greater Utah County community.

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