



PSO Music Director
George Stelluto

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THE AWARD-WINNING PEORIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES ITS 120th ANNIVERSARY SEASON

Inspired Programming – World Class Guest Artists – Interactive Concert Experiences - Community Engagement

Peoria, IL – Inspiring musical masterpieces, world-class guest artists, an imaginative concert experience, and exciting community engagement highlight the 2017-2018 Peoria Symphony Orchestra (PSO) 120th Anniversary concert season. George Stelluto, PSO Music Director says;

“We are celebrating our past and embracing our future for the PSO’s 120th. We will be commemorating many international, regional, and local anniversaries connected to the PSO throughout the season as well as introducing some exciting new concert experiences for Peoria audiences!”

The PSO’s 120th Anniversary season begins Saturday, September 23, 2017, at 7:30 pm in the Peoria Civic Center Theater with **REFLECTIONS**. This gala opening concert celebrates the PSO’s history and the important anniversaries of Bernstein, Brahms, and Bradley University! The concert begins with Bernstein’s *Candide Overture*, from the comic operetta full of satire. The masterful pianist Jorge Federico Osorio makes a triumphant return to Peoria performing Brahms amazing *Piano Concerto No. 1*. 2017 marks both the 120th anniversary of Brahms’ passing and the PSO’s founding. The concert ends with Mussorgsky’s masterpiece *Pictures at an Exhibition* featuring projected images of the original artwork that inspired the music as well as a kindred art from the Bradley University (also celebrating its 120th Anniversary!) collection and local artists. A Gala Anniversary party in the lobby will follow the concert.



“Osorio gave one of those ‘where have you been all my life’ performances in collaboration with Maestro Honeck. He unveiled a luxurious tone capable of infinite variation.” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

A first for Peoria! Join us Saturday, October 21, 2017 at 7:30 pm in the Peoria Civic Center Theater and experience the original musical film **LA LA LAND IN CONCERT** like never before. The audience will see the complete film with the score performed live by the PSO. Set in modern day Los Angeles, this original music, about everyday life, explores the joy and pain of pursuing your dreams. Watch Mia and Seb struggle and the bittersweet triumph as the PSO provides the soundtrack. After working with the film’s award-winning composer, Justin Hurwitz, Maestro Stelluto is giving performances of this film in Peoria, Ravinia, and Philadelphia.



On Saturday, November 18, 2017 at 7:30 pm at Grace Presbyterian Church, the PSO's 120th Anniversary season continues with "strings attached." In **SERENADE FOR STRINGS**, the beauty of lush, lavish string sounds envelope you with some of the most beautiful music ever written. Tchaikovsky's famous and beloved *Serenade for Strings*, written in 1892, is full of youthful charm and innocence, while at the same time revealing its inner passion. Pianist Orion Weiss returns to Peoria to perform Ernest Bloch's hauntingly beautiful *Concerto Grosso No. 1* to complete what Maestro Stelluto calls "a dark chocolate musical evening."



"When you're named after one of the biggest constellations in the night sky, the pressure is on to display a little star power – and the young pianist Orion Weiss did exactly that..." *The Washington Post*

From snowstorms to sleigh rides, the great composers give you their take on Winter Saturday, December 16, 2017 at 7:30 pm in Riverside Community Church. The PSO is returning to one of its historic halls, the former Mosque Theater, as part of the 120th Anniversary Season. The program titled **WINTER DREAMS**, as Maestro Stelluto calls it, "is as warm as hot chocolate and exciting as a fast sled ride," and perfect to share with family and friends. PSO Concertmaster Marcia Henry Liebenow performs *Winter* from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. Tchaikovsky's rousing Symphony No. 1 "Winter Dreams" opens the program followed by works from Mozart, Haydn, Vaughan-Williams, and more.



On Sunday, January 14, 2018 at 3 pm in the Peoria Civic Center Theater the popular innovative ensemble **TIME FOR THREE** performs with the PSO in a special matinee concert. With its newest member (Peoria's favorite guest violinist) Charles Yang, and Nick Kendall, violin, and Ranaan Meyer, double bass this groundbreaking, category shattering trio transcends traditional classification, blending classical, gypsy and jazz idioms. In "mash-ups" that ingeniously combine Beethoven, Mozart, and Mahler with the Beatles, Lady Gaga, and others, "Tf3" presents impassioned improvisations, original compositions, and clever "mash-up" arrangements the entire family will enjoy. Their special interactive "surprise" even gets the audience in on the fun.



Make a night of it with romance from around the world and two Peoria favorites! Join the PSO on Saturday, February 11, 2018 at 7:30 pm in the Peoria Civic Center Theater for our annual **ROMANCE** concert. The popular local band, The BrazILionaires, enflame your passions with Latin rhythm in their symphony debut. PSO Concertmaster Marcia Henry Liebenow, violin, will make you swoon with a romantic performance celebrating her 25th Anniversary with the PSO in Bruch's Violin Concerto! After the concert, and back by popular demand, the Jim Markum Swing Band will perform in the lobby as we enjoy drinks and dancing at the Post-Concert Party!



On Saturday, March 10, 2018 at 7:30 pm at Grace Presbyterian Church the PSO presents **AMERICAN CLASSICS**. These iconic American masterpieces, four of the most famous American works ever written, show the breadth of our exuberance and depth of our souls. Three pieces by Barber; *Adagio for Strings*, *Capricorn Concerto*, and *Knoxville, Summer of 1915* will be performed. The PSO's first International Solo Competition (vocal) winner debuts in *Knoxville, Summer of 1915*. Copland's popular *Appalachian Spring*, instantly identified with capturing the essence of the American ideal, is the finale!



The Eternal City comes to Peoria as the PSO continues its Great Cities Series with **GREAT CITIES: ROME** on Saturday, April 28, 2018 at 7:30 pm in the Peoria Civic Center Theater. From the dances, to the songs, to the visions of this ancient, magical place, Rome comes alive in three masterpieces: Mendelssohn's vivacious *Symphony No.4 "Italian";* Martucci's gorgeous *The Song of Memories* (La canzone dei ricodi) and Respigi's inspiring *The Pines of Rome* brings the 120th season to a triumphant finish. Rising star vocalist Naomi O'Connell makes her Peoria debut in the Martucci.



"Ms. O'Connell proved a natural, winning over the audience with her rich, silvery voice and charming stage presence." The New York Times

THE PSO: ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE, INVITING, COLLABORATIVE

The Peoria Symphony Orchestra brings excellent music to the Central Illinois region by creating an inviting atmosphere surrounding its concerts, outreach, and educational efforts. Through its innovative subscription series and multi-year projects such as **Great Cities**, **American Classics**, and **Romance**; its two television series **Sound Bites** and **Musical Discoveries**; and with its broadcasts on Public radio and Public TV the PSO reaches thousands of people every season.

PSO Executive Director Susan Hoffman says,

"The PSO offers a great opportunity to new subscribers. They can purchase the eight-concert season ticket for a 50% discount. This offers tickets as low as \$12.50 per concert and is a wonderful opportunity to attend all concerts at a very affordable price. Other subscriber options and single tickets are also very attractive. Whether you are a connoisseur or a newcomer, there is something for everyone."

Ticket can be purchased by visiting the PSO Box Office at 101 State Street in Peoria, calling 309.671.1096 or by visiting the PSO website at peoriasymphony.org. PSO subscriptions offer discounts over single ticket pricing, special benefits, and are available in several ranges. Subscriptions may be purchased as an Eight-Concert Package or a "Pick Four" option. First-time subscribers may take advantage of the opportunity to buy the season eight concert season ticket at a 50% discount off single ticket prices. For more information on the season and tickets visit: peoriasymphony.org. **Single tickets start at \$25 and tickets are just \$10 for students** (add \$10 per ticket for La La Land in Concert).

MORE THAN JUST CONCERTS –

IMPORTANT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

The PSO is a regional leader in cultural outreach and educational initiatives, and the 2017-2018 PSO season brings increased innovation and efforts in these areas as it builds on the success of past seasons. The **PSO's Resident Artist Week (RAW) initiative** is an intense interactive week of inspiring community and educational events involving PSO 2017-2018 guest artists. Inspired by previous PSO Artist Residencies such as those of violinist

Charles Yang in 2013 (charlesyangmusic.com) and innovative cellist **Michael Block (mikeblockmusic.com)** in 2015, **PSO-RAW** participants are innovative, rising, and established artists who visit schools, hospitals, universities, senior centers, and community groups to perform, teach, and share their gifts with regional residents. And not just musical gifts, all **PSO-RAW** guest artists are selected with community impact in mind – especially their ability to interact and communicate with young musicians, different generations, and those exploring art and music for the first time. Many RAW participants also leave a lasting legacy in Peoria by their appearance on the PSO-WTVP series **Sound Bites** and **Musical Discoveries**, which are broadcast throughout Central Illinois.

“The Resident Artist Week initiative is an exciting addition to our already impressive programs,” said Maestro Stelluto. **“These artists become members of our community for a week or so, rather than just distant performers on a concert stage.”**

The PSO initiative adds to the orchestra’s current efforts, which include visits to Quest Academy and Peoria Public schools. PSO outreach activities bring musicians into area hospitals and senior living facilities to perform for those not able to attend concerts. The 2017-2018 Resident Artist Week (RAW) are scheduled for November of 2017 with pianist Orion Weiss and March 2018 with mezzo soprano Naomi O’Connell.

THE PSO WTVP & WCBU COLLABORATIONS

The PSO has had long collaborations with local and regional media. Its concerts are broadcast regularly on NPR affiliate WCBU as well as on PBS television station WTVP. Two television programs are now entering their fifth year of success. **Sound Bites** is recorded three times a year and features chamber music recorded in WTVP studios with a live studio audience. Designed to be a relaxing, comfortable experience, audience members interact with the musicians at a reception in between halves of the hour-long program. The programs are broadcast throughout the year on WTVP.

“I like to think of it as *Live From Lincoln Center meets Antique Road Show*,”
said Maestro Stelluto, **“... except without the antiques.”**

Many innovative guest artists appear on the program, often collaborating with members of the PSO. Guest artists have included violinists Arnaud Sussmann and Charles Yang; cellist Mike Block; pianists Orion Weiss, Harmony Zhu, and Jade Simmons; and the Lincoln String Quartet from the Chicago Symphony. PSO guests have included Concertmaster Marcia Henry Liebenow, Principal Violist Kate Lewis, Principal Cellist Adriana LaRosa Ransom, and Principal Flute John McMurtery. Titles for recently broadcast shows include: *Refined Revolutionaries*; *One Cello, One World*; *Piano Parables*; *The Virtuous Violin*; *Traveling The Orient Express*, *Sounds of Solitude*, and *Music and Mindfulness in Medicine*.

The PSO’s unique **MUSICAL DISCOVERY SERIES** continues this season offering a family musical outing where children have an opportunity to learn about one musical instrument. Each program features an instrument demonstration by a PSO player and a hands-on petting zoo where children can experience playing the instruments. Held in the WTVP studio with an audience of children and adults, the show is taped for future broadcast on WTVP.

THE PEORIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA – AWARD WINNING, INNOVATIVE, 120 YEARS YOUNG

The PSO is recognized as the 14th oldest symphony in the United States and since 2010 has been under the direction of **Music Director George Stelluto (georgestelluto.com)**. Founded in 1897, it is comprised of professional musicians from throughout the region. The PSO has long been a leading cultural force in the region and recently a growing influence

nationally. It is seen as an innovative national model combining artistic excellence, cultural leadership, community engagement, educational commitment, and fiscal responsibility. Recently, the PSO received the prestigious **ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming** by the League of American Orchestras.

Other recent awards include: the **2013 Professional Orchestra of the Year** by the Illinois Council of Orchestras and the **All American City Award** presented by the Peoria Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, the PSO's support organization, **The Peoria Symphony Guild**, has received numerous awards from the **League of American Orchestras** and the **Governor of Illinois** for its more than sixty years of support and service in the areas of education and outreach.

Recent nationally recognized musical and educational innovations pioneered by the PSO include: **Holst: The Planets**, a film the PSO commissioned to accompany Holst's masterpiece which has been used by orchestras in North America and Canada; and **Operation Superpower** (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Operation-Superpower/201993749881913>), a Superhero opera premiered by the PSO now performed throughout North America

The PSO world premiere of Illinois composer Edward Joseph Collins opera *Daughter of the South* written in 1938 received mention in the **Washington Post** as an event of interest during the Civil War Anniversary years. During the 2014-15 season the PSO gave the initial performances of **Classical Kids Live's** new multi-media educational program **Gershwin's Magic Key**, which received its official premiere at the **Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts** with the National Symphony Orchestra one week later.

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