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**PONCA CITY PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS**

# Press Release

## **Symphony Orchestra to Present Spring Concert**

The Ponca City High School Symphony Orchestra will be presenting their Annual Spring Concerto Concert Friday evening, May 12, at 7:00, in the High School Howell Auditorium. The group is under the baton of Dan P. Larson, Director of Orchestras at the high school. Paula Cochran and Katie Rolf assist each day and teach orchestra at the middle and elementary schools. Andrew Orr has assisted with the wind and percussion section of the Symphony Orchestra.

The 2017 OSSAA Sweepstakes Award winning Symphony Orchestra will open with *Overture to Egmont* by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827). The subject of the music is the life and heroism of 16<sup>th</sup>-century Dutch nobleman, the Count of Egmont. Beethoven expressed his political concerns through the music exaltation of the heroic sacrifice of a man condemned to death for having taken a stand against oppression.

Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859-1935) was a Russian composer who studied under Rimsky-Korsakov and later was the director for the Moscow Conservatory for many years. His most famous composition, *Procession of the Sardar*, will be performed next, as arranged by Merle Issac. This work is the fourth movement of the *Caucasian Sketches* for orchestra, which was inspired by the folk music of the Caucasus mountain region.

In March, a concerto contest was held to select the senior performers to be featured in this year's final concert. First up will be Noah Raza on violin. He will perform *Concerto in D Major for Solo Violin, Strings, and Continuo Op.3 Nr. 9*, by Antonio Vivaldi (1680-1743). Noah will be performing the first and third movements from this work. The next soloist will be Joshua Chrisman performing the Adagio movement from *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra in A* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791). Joshua earned a spot in the Oklahoma Music Educators Association's All-State Orchestra this year. The final soloist of the evening will be by Macy Willett, a two-year OMEA All-State Orchestra member. She was recently selected to perform in the Brevard Summer Music Institute, beginning in June. Macy will be performing the first movement of *Concert in B*

*Minor* by Giovanni Bottesini (1821-1889). Bottesini was an Italian Romantic composer, conductor, and double bass virtuoso.

Two more musical works will bring the orchestra to intermission. First, will be *Marche Slav* by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), as arranged for string orchestra by Carrie Lane Gruselle. This selection exemplifies the spirit of 19<sup>th</sup>-century nationalism, as it was growing in Europe. *Marche Slav* was written for a concert dedicated to wounded Russian soldiers, and includes regional folk melodies. A full orchestra selection, *Into the Storm* by Robert W Smith, will take the orchestra to intermission. *Into the Storm* was composed during the March 1993 weather event that gripped the eastern half of the United States. Following a brief mysterious introduction, the storm is unleashed. As with any major storm, there is an eye, which is a period of beauty and calm in this work. Then the back half of the storm returns with a vengeance, driving the work to an intense conclusion.

Recognition of senior musicians and their parents will be done at this time during the program. The Symphony Orchestra has 27 senior members this year, of which 20 are string musicians. This group of musicians helped lead this organization to its fifth consecutive OSSAA Sweepstakes Award, the first time this has happened in the history of the Po-Hi orchestra program.

Opening the second part of the concert will be *Beach Boys Medley for Orchestra*, arranged by Calvin Custer. This medley includes *Good Vibrations, I Get Around, and California Girls*. The Beach Boys are finishing up celebrating 50 years together as a group this year. This group was an important part of the music culture of our country during the Vietnam War, as they lifted the spirits of soldiers and their families during a turbulent time in America.

Up next, will be *Selections from Phantom of the Opera* by Andrew Lloyd Webber, as arranged by Calvin Custer. Included in the medley is *The Phantom of the Opera, Think of Me, Angel of Music, The Music of the Night, Masquerade, and All I Ask of You*. This musical is based on the novel by French writer Gaston Leroux. It is partly inspired by historical events at the Paris Opera during the 19<sup>th</sup>-century. The novel has received many successful stage and film adaptations.

The next selection for string orchestra will feature the eight senior violists in the orchestra. The work is entitled *Serenata* by Enrico Toselli (1883-1926). This arrangement featuring violas is by Ian Ellund. Toselli lived a short but brilliant life. He achieved fame as a concert pianist at an early age and became a popular Italian composer. He settled in Florence, where he wrote many songs. His first work, composed at the age of 17, was this *Serenata*. It is still the most popular of all his compositions. This arrangement shows a wide range of the viola and the warm tones it can produce.

The Symphony Orchestra will perform its final section of the night with Symphonic Highlights from Walt Disney Pictures' *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*. Music for this was composed by Hans Zimmer, with this arrangement written by Paul Lavender and Robert Longfield. After the

introduction, works featured in this fun selection are *Singapore*, *I See Dead People in Boats*, *Up is Down*, and *Drink Up Me Hearties*. This arrangement by Lavender and Longfield has adapted the exciting film score with this well-paced medley that captures the most dramatic moments of the original soundtrack.

It has become tradition by the string section to conclude the final concert of the year, the final selection the senior class will perform as a member of this organization, with *On a Hymnsong of Philip Bliss* by David Holsinger. This beautiful work is based on the moving hymn *It is Well with My Soul*. Mr. Larson said, “This is one of the orchestra’s favorite pieces to perform. They know the history of the hymn and how to bring the music to life. I can’t believe there is a group anywhere who can perform this selection any better than they do when they play from their hearts.”

The community is cordially invited to the last performance to be given by this award-winning group of musicians. “They have been great ambassadors for our community during their time here at Po-Hi,” added Mr. Larson. “They are a terrific group of young people. Come see what they do.” There is no admission charge to the event.