



Ponca City High School Symphony Orchestra Presents Annual Spring Concerto Concert May 10

The Ponca City High School Symphony Orchestra will be presenting their Annual Spring Concerto Concert Friday evening, May 10, at 7:00, in the Ponca City Public School Concert Hall. The group is under the baton of Paula R. Cochran, Director of Orchestras at the high school. Katie Rolf and Jaryd Hinch assist each day and teach orchestra at the middle and elementary schools. Andrew Orr and Jaryd Hinch have assisted with the wind and percussion section of the Symphony Orchestra. Retired maestro Dan P. Larson has been invited back to conduct four pieces on the program. The Finale will include alumni from the Ponca City High School Symphony Orchestra.

The community is cordially invited to the last performance to be given by this award-winning group of musicians. "This orchestra senior class has worked hard to continue Dan Larson's legacy," added Paula Cochran. "They are an amazing group of young people that have left footprints in our hearts." There is no admission charge to the event.

The 2019 OSSAA Sweepstakes Award-winning symphony opens the night with a heroic quest as told in John Williams' *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Heavily featuring the brass section, *Raiders* sends the audience across the world to Cairo, Egypt. Here, Indiana Jones and Marion Ravenwood evade perilous traps like snake pits and cursed treasure to protect the Ark of the Covenant from German Nazi soldiers.

Next, the orchestra demonstrates the many definitions of "love" in an interpretation of Evan Call's *Across the Violet Sky* arranged by Assistant Director Jaryd Hinch. Love comes in many forms – parental love for a child, platonic love for a best friend, romantic love between partners, and even, as experienced by Po-Hi's orchestra program, a bus driver's love for his kids. The piece closes by painting a sentimental picture of looking up to the evening sky and experiencing the joys and woes of remembering a lost loved one – and knowing, across that violet sky, the loved one is listening.

Following is senior symphony member Joshua Branch performing Clarinet Concerto No. 1 by Carl Maria von Weber. The piece encompasses the full spectrum of emotions, ranging from pure ecstasy to dramatic tragedy. Regarded as a staple in clarinet literature, Mr. Branch brilliantly demonstrates the many styles capable of a clarinet through von Weber's concerto.

Using the lush and modal harmonies associated with the Impressionistic period, *Of Glorious Plumage* depicts birds both at rest and in flight. There are no "bird calls" heard here; rather a variety of effects and interesting orchestration, with all of the instruments eventually being featured. The second part of the piece depicts glorious flocks of birds in majestic flight using a hauntingly beautiful melody in 9/8. Senior violinist Annie Graham begins and ends the piece with a brief, majestic melody mirroring a bird beginning and ending its journey into the sky.

Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical sensation *The Phantom of the Opera* broke all records on Broadway and now is a film favorite. The orchestra next performs Lloyd Webber's impressive musical score, featuring some of his most powerful writing as well as sensitive and melodic moments, including *The Phantom of the Opera*; *Think of Me*; *Angel of Music*; *The Music of the Night*; *Masquerade* and *All I Ask of You*. Interlaced throughout the piece are instrumental solos that feature flute, oboe, horn, and violin.

Following the closure of *The Phantom of the Opera*, the senior members of the symphony orchestra will be recognized with an escorted walk to the stage. The Symphony Orchestra has 24 senior members this year, of which 15 are string musicians. This group of musicians helped lead this organization to its seventh consecutive OSSAA Sweepstakes Award.

After the senior recognition, the group is ready to travel to Westeros and challenge Cersei Lannister for the Iron Throne in Ramin Djawadi's *Game of Thrones*. The thundering drums of war persist throughout the piece as the strings tell the story of the tangled web of alliances and betrayals within the prominent families of power. The piece ends as abruptly as the period of prosperity ends in the war-torn continent.

In perhaps the most recognizable movement of the Peer Gynt suite, the symphony performs Grieg's *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. The tale begins with the lower registers of the orchestra mimicking Peer Gynt's slow, quiet tiptoeing around the Troll Mountain King's castle as he begins his escape. As the piece progresses, senior bassoonist Robyn Maloney voices the increasing chaos of the search for the escaping Peer Gynt as both the dynamic and tempo begin to increase. By the end of the piece, the frenzy of the Mountain King and his troll minions is pure chaos, as the tempo reaches a fortissimo prestissimo.

James Horner's simple and plaintive folk tune, *The Ludlows*, tells of both the hardships and pleasantries of living on the Montana frontier during the early 20th century. Backing the 1994 film *Legends of the Fall*, a solo piano intro is followed by a conversation between two violins, performed by senior violinists Madison Hurley and Kathrynne Cain.

For the final symphonic piece of the night, the group takes to the seas for Hans Zimmer's *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*. In Lavender and Longfield's arrangement, themes from the film flow seamlessly into one another, featuring auxiliary maritime percussion, a haunting oboe solo performed by Kylie Hopkins, and a triumphant finale by the brass section.

It has become a tradition of the string section to conclude the final concert of the year 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*. Retired Maestro Dan Larson says, "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 performs this selection any better than they do. They play with such heart." We are thrilled to invite our alumni to join us on the final piece.

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