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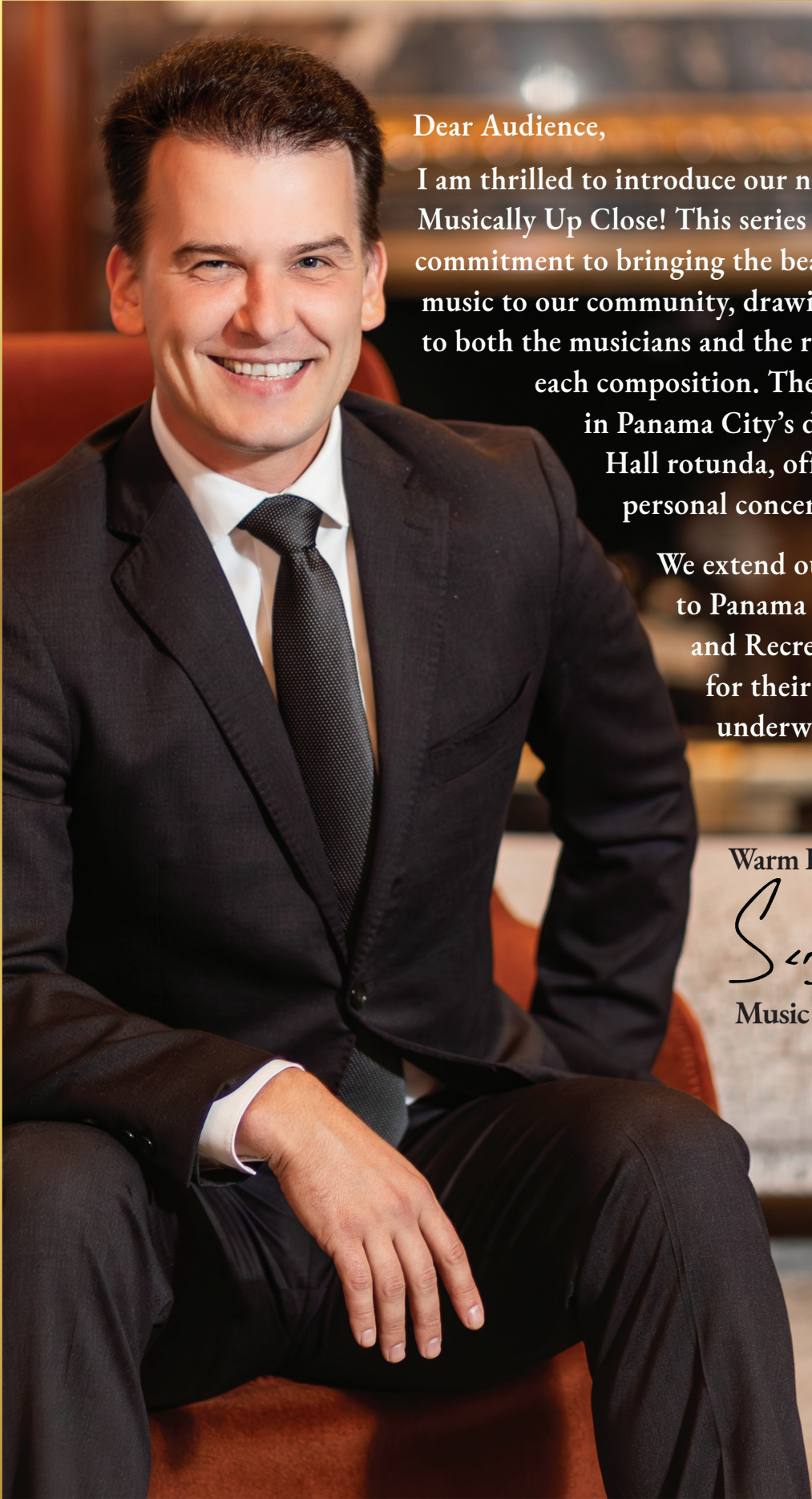
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Dear Audience,

I am thrilled to introduce our new music series, Musically Up Close! This series reflects our commitment to bringing the beauty of chamber music to our community, drawing audiences closer to both the musicians and the rich stories behind each composition. These events take place in Panama City's downtown City Hall rotunda, offering a unique and personal concert experience.

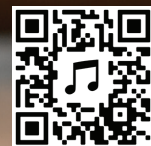
We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Panama City's Parks, Culture and Recreation Department for their generous support in underwriting this series.

Warm Regards,

Sergey Bogza

Music Director & Conductor

*Scan QR code for information
about Musically Up Close*



*Message sponsored by
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Sergey Bogza

Music Director and Conductor

Sergey Bogza, described as "a charismatic conductor whose passion radiates from the podium" (The Virginian-Pilot), is known for his unique approach to working with orchestras and engaging audiences on and off the podium. In his third year as the Music Director of the Panama City Symphony, he leads masterworks and holiday concerts, curates a monthly chamber music series, and serves as the Director of Music Education. In 2024, he was named the Music Director and Conductor of the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra and has made his professional debut with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and the Alabama Ballet. Bogza has previously held Music Director roles with orchestras such as the Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra, Willmar Symphony, and Heartland Symphony Orchestra.

Equally comfortable leading productions of opera, ballet, and concert repertoire, Bogza's energy and artistic integrity are highly regarded by audiences and musicians alike. He has been awarded top prizes at international conducting competitions and is an active composer of symphonic and chamber music. Combining the roles of a conductor and a composer, the premieres of his works are enthusiastically received by audiences and musical ensembles across the United States and Europe.

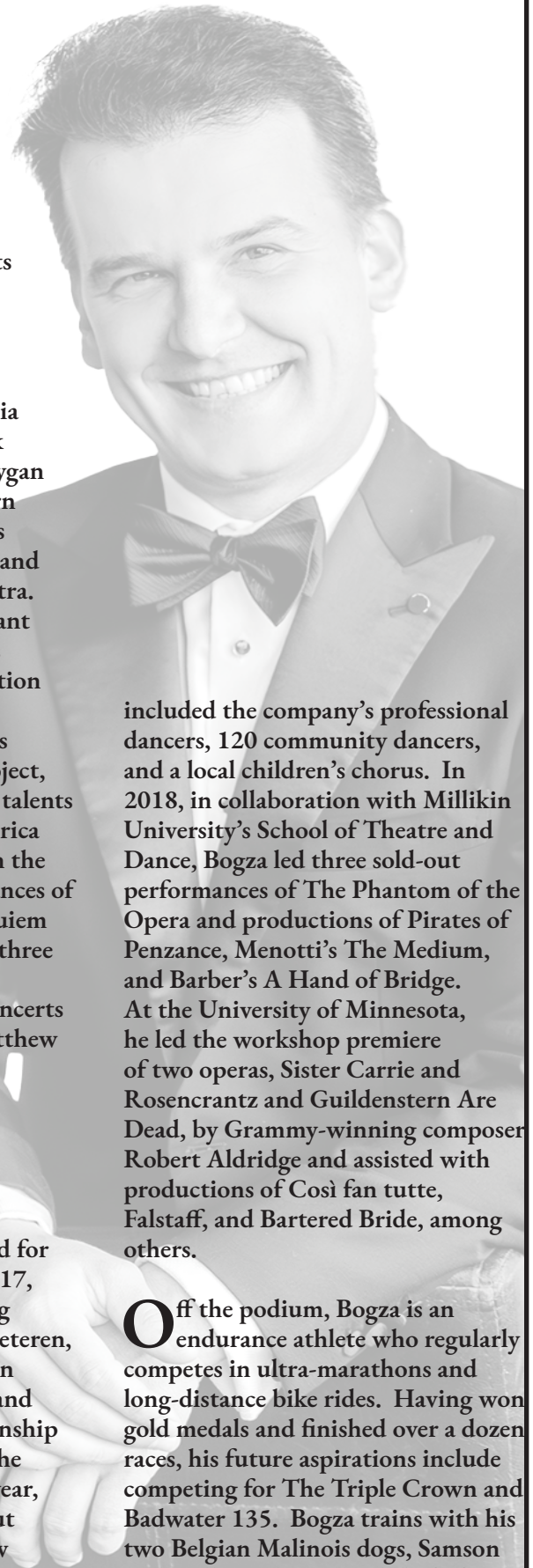
As a guest conductor, Bogza cultivates a burgeoning international presence that

has brought him engagements in the USA and Europe with orchestras, ballet companies, and festivals. He has guest conducted musicians of the Minnesota Orchestra, Virginia Beach Symphony, Pazardzhik Symphony Orchestra, Sheboygan Symphony Orchestra, Auburn Symphony Orchestra, Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra, and Gwinnett Symphony Orchestra. Bogza also served as an assistant conductor for Joffrey Ballet's 100-year anniversary production of The Rite of Spring, and the University of Minnesota's Benjamin Britten's Peace Project, which combined the musical talents of students from North America and Germany, culminating in the critically acclaimed performances of Benjamin Britten's War Requiem in the USA and abroad. For three consecutive summers, he was selected to conduct public concerts of the B-Minor Mass, St. Matthew Passion, and the Christmas Oratorio at the Oregon Bach Festival.

Bogza is responsible for a number of successful collaborations and is regarded for his sensitive approach. In 2017, he engaged an award-winning choreographer, Roger Van Fleteren, to present an abridged version of Prokofiev's ballet Romeo and Juliet and the fruitful relationship led to future projects with The Alabama Ballet. That same year, Bogza conducted two sold-out performances of The Moscow Ballet's The Great Russian Nutcracker, a production that

included the company's professional dancers, 120 community dancers, and a local children's chorus. In 2018, in collaboration with Millikin University's School of Theatre and Dance, Bogza led three sold-out performances of The Phantom of the Opera and productions of Pirates of Penzance, Menotti's The Medium, and Barber's A Hand of Bridge. At the University of Minnesota, he led the workshop premiere of two operas, Sister Carrie and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, by Grammy-winning composer Robert Aldridge and assisted with productions of Così fan tutte, Falstaff, and Bartered Bride, among others.

Off the podium, Bogza is an endurance athlete who regularly competes in ultra-marathons and long-distance bike rides. Having won gold medals and finished over a dozen races, his future aspirations include competing for The Triple Crown and Badwater 135. Bogza trains with his two Belgian Malinois dogs, Samson and Stella, and is an avid chef of Slavic cuisine.



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in the
City Hall Rotunda



February 7, 2025, 2:30 pm

Victor Shlyakhtenko, Piano

2024 Emerging Artists Competition Winner, College

Division

Free Admission



Thursday, April 17, 2025, 6 pm

Mary Matthews, Flutist

Flutellore

VIP \$50 for 2; \$10 General



March 7, 2025, 2:30 pm

Teddy Branson & French Horn

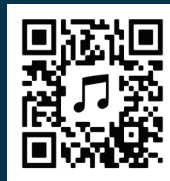
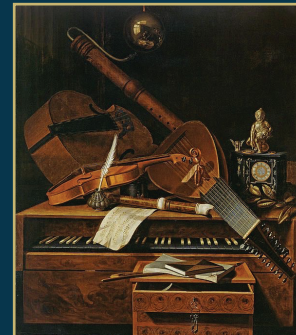
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May 2, 2025, 2:30 pm

Baroque Journeys

Free Admission



April 4, 2025, 2:30 pm

Jim Colvin & the Bass Trombone

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*Fountain Five Wind Quartet
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MUSIC EDUCATION



The Heartbeat of Panama City Symphony

Panama City Symphony offers innovative, interactive music education programs to all ages to foster music appreciation, build confidence, and nurture talent.

Enjoy photos & learn more about our music education programs on the next two pages! →

Make Music Magic

Kindergarten - 2nd Grade

Designed for our youngest audiences, Make Music Magic creates awareness and appreciation for the 'language' of music. This program guides students as they listen and share their thoughts associated with a variety of music genres. The program includes interactive singing, clapping to various beats and melodies,



imaginative exercises, and discovering how music can express emotion and connect them to others.

Guest Artist Outreach & Masterclasses

In addition to being world-class performers, the Symphony's guest artists are educators and community builders. Throughout the season, the Symphony's guest artists teach masterclasses in local high schools and colleges, perform for students, and play a vital role in the community leading up to their concert appearance with the Symphony. Artists perform recitals at Musically Up Close events, retirement communities, high schools and colleges.



the Symphony. Artists perform recitals at Musically Up Close events, retirement communities, high schools and colleges.

Discovering Music

3rd Grade - 5th Grade

Featuring musician ensembles, Discovering Music helps students explore the 'ingredients' of music. To engage curious young minds, the Panama City Symphony conductor and musicians demonstrate distinctive attributes of musical instruments and convey how these unique attributes provide the 'recipe' for creating a full musical performance. Students actively listen to discover how music is built, observe individual instrument demonstrations, learn how melody connects the senses, and interactively learn through narrated stories.



Students actively listen to discover how music is built, observe individual instrument demonstrations, learn how melody connects the senses, and interactively learn through narrated stories.

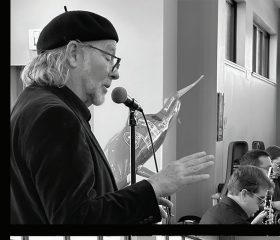
Moments with the Maestro

Hosted by the Panama City Center for the Arts, the interactive lectures take place from 4:00-5:00 pm on the Friday before each Masterworks concert. The Maestro and guest artists share thoughts behind the selections, history of the composers and their works, and the nuances to listen for during the concert.



Music is a more potent instrument than any other for education because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul.

– Plato (Source: *The Republic*)



MUSIC EDUCATION

The Heartbeat of Panama City Symphony

Panama City Symphony aims to inspire the next generation of musicians!

Panama City Symphony Mentoring Program

The Panama City Symphony's Mentoring Program places advanced musicians (9th grade and beyond) with a mentor who guides and serves as an intermediary between the conductor and the orchestra. Mentees shadow experienced musicians during rehearsals and concert performances, receiving high-level orchestral training in a nurturing and professional environment. Panama City Symphony often invites mentees to participate in community outreach performances. Since 2009, forty (40) students have been mentored representing homeschools, public and private high schools in Bay and Walton counties, and Gulf Coast State College. Taliah Bohlen will continue as a mentee in 2024-25.



Pictured are the 2023 - 2024 mentees (L to R) with Music Director Sergey Bogza: Emily Kent (violin), Taliah Bohlen (violin), and Sarab Vaden (french horn).

The talent you attracted with the competition was incredible!

~Ben Keating

I'm eternally grateful to all who made Emerging Artists Competition an enjoyable and wonderful experience.

~Sam Vaillancourt

I want to send my warmest thank you to everyone who has helped me grow into a better musician for the past two years. I am not sure where I would be without all your support, love, and guidance. You have taught me not to be afraid of new challenges but to instead face them with courage. You have pushed me to be better and more importantly, strive for greatness. I am so grateful for the opportunities provided by you and the wisdom imparted on me along the way. Thank you, thank you. I hope to see you all again soon!

*My best wishes,
Emily Kent*

Emerging Artists Competition

The inaugural Emerging Artists Competition was held in June 2024 at Gulf Coast State College Amelia G. Tapper Center and will return bi-annually. Winners receive exciting cash prizes and awards and perform with various Panama City Symphony events and recitals in the year following a competitions.

Judges were Maestro Sergey Bogza, Music Director and Conductor, Panama City Symphony; Dr. Gregory Jones, Associate Dean of Engagement, College of Music – FSU; and Erika Sciascia, Panama City Symphony Concertmaster. Sharing the stage as accompanists for the finalists at Panama City Symphony's Emerging Artists Competition were Valerie Trujillo and Mikayla Rogers.



**Grand Prize Winner - High School Division
Croft "Didi" Stone, violin**



**Grand Prize Winner - College Division
Victor Shlyakhtenko, piano**



**College Division - Second Place
Sam Parrini, violin**



**College Division - Third Place
Antonio Jarvey, saxophone**

Symphony organizations have long noted the need to have music education specific to early education, effecting improved math and language skills, improved test scores, heightened listening skills and increased creativity.



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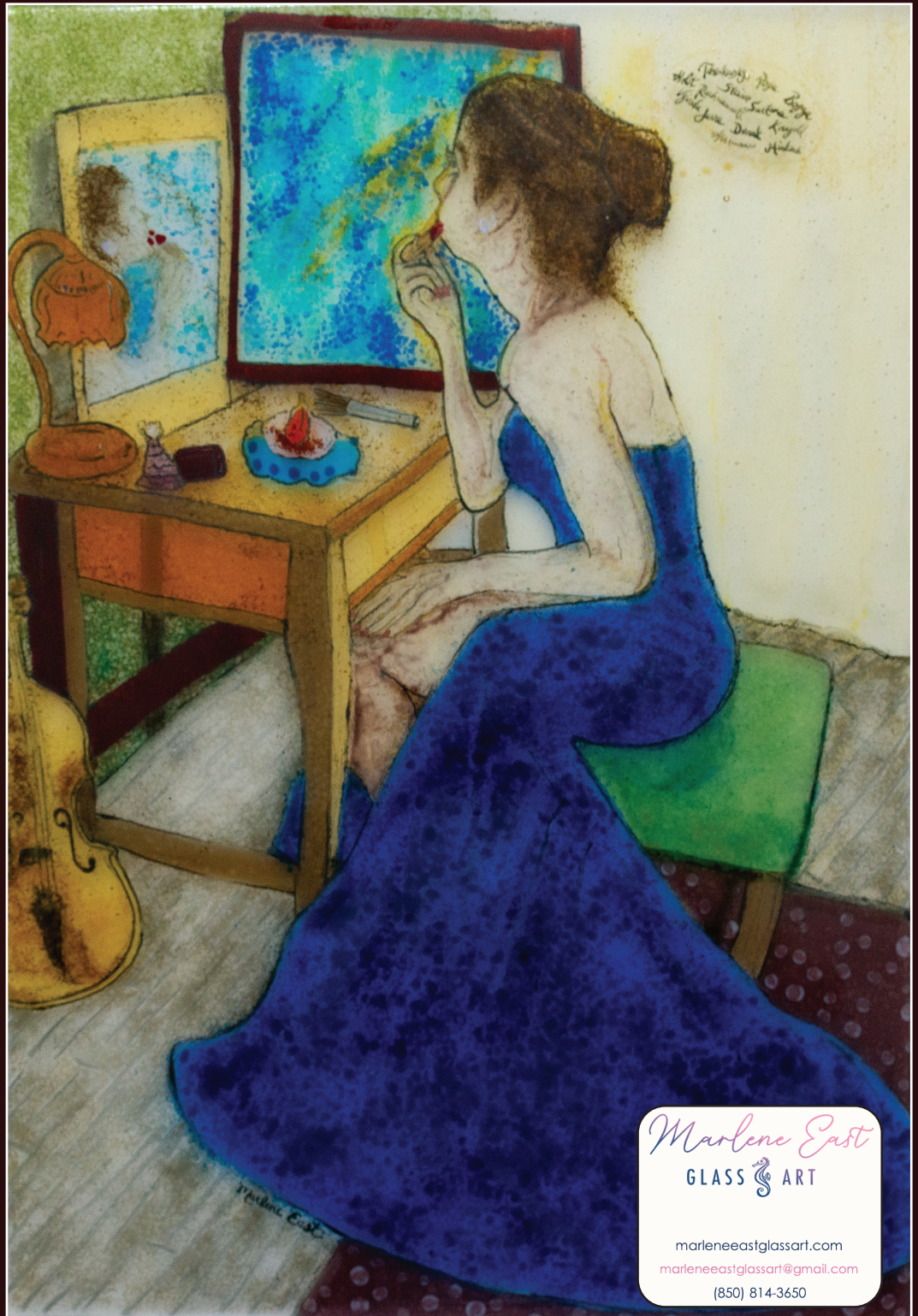
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"It's Opening Night!"

Expressing heartfelt appreciation to the orchestra musicians, *It's Opening Night* is a donated art piece created by local glass artist Dr. Marlene East, President, Panama City Symphony Board of Directors.

Getting ready for the season opener, the violinist ponders honoring the leadership of Maestro Bogza and the composers of the pieces to be performed by Panama City Symphony in the 24/25 season.

Purchase Tickets Online

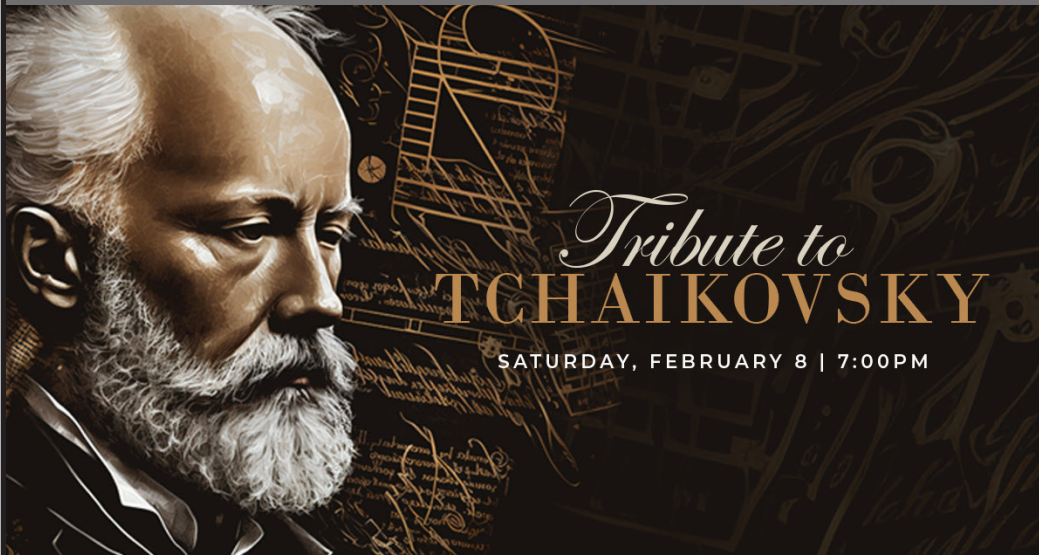


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It's Opening Night is displayed in the foyer on concert nights. Raffle tickets may be purchased online or in the foyer on concert nights. The winner's name will be drawn at the season finale on April 12, 2025. Winner need not be present to win.

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-Hans Christian Anderson

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Erich Wolfgang Korngold *The Adventures of Robinhood*, 7'
(1897 – 1957)

Old England
Robinhood and His Merry Men

Bernard Herrmann *Psycho Suite*, 10'
(1911 – 1975)

Maurice Jarre *Prelude & Lara's Theme from Doctor Zhivago* (arr. Palmer), 7'
(1924 – 2009)

Miklós Rózsa *Parade of the Charioteers from "Ben Hur"*, 4'
(1907 – 1995)

Sergei Rachmaninoff *Vocalise* (arr. Rachmaninoff), 6'
(1873 – 1943)

Erich Wolfgang Korngold *The Adventures of Robinhood*, 7'
(1897 – 1957) *The Fight, Victory and Epilogue*



Intermission



Sergei Rachmaninoff *Piano Concerto No. 2*, 33'
(1873 – 1943)

Ilya Yakushev, piano

Guest Artist, Ilya Yakushev



Russian pianist Ilya Yakushev, with many awards and honors to his credit, continues to astound and mesmerize audiences at major venues on three continents.

In the 2023-24 season, Ilya Yakushev performed as piano soloist with San Luis Obispo Symphony, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Glacier Symphony, and Panama City Symphony in addition to over 40 recitals in North America and Europe.

Highlights of Yakushev's 2024-25 season include return appearances with Cheyenne Symphony, Panama City Symphony, and Glacier Symphony, as well as a performance with the Youngstown Symphony.

In February 2014, British label Nimbus Records published "Prokofiev Sonatas Vol. 1" CD. American Record Guide wrote "*Yakushev is one of the very best young pianists before the public today, and it doesn't*

seem to matter what repertoire he plays – it is all of the highest caliber". Volume 2 was published in January 2017, as well as an all-Russian repertoire CD in September 2017.

In past seasons, he has performed in various prestigious venues worldwide, including Glinka Philharmonic Hall (St. Petersburg), Victoria Hall (Singapore), Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall (New York), Davies Symphony Hall (San Francisco), and Sejong Performing Arts Center (Seoul, Korea). His performances with orchestra include those with the Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, BBC Concert Orchestra, Boston Pops, Rochester Philharmonic, Utah Symphony, and many others.

Winner of the 2005 World Piano Competition which took place in Cincinnati, OH, Mr. Yakushev received his first award at age 12 as a prizewinner of the Young Artists Concerto Competition in his native St. Petersburg. In 1997, he received the Mayor of St. Petersburg's Young Talents award, and in both 1997 and 1998, he won First Prize at the Donostia Hiria International Piano Competition in San Sebastian, Spain. In 1998, he received a national honor, The Award for Excellence in Performance, presented to him by the Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation in Moscow. Most recently, Mr. Yakushev became a recipient of the prestigious Gawon International Music Society's Award in Seoul, Korea.

Mr. Yakushev attended the Rimsky-Korsakov College of Music in his native St. Petersburg, Russia, and subsequently came to New York City to attend Mannes College of Music where he studied with legendary pianist Vladimir Feltsman. Ilya Yakushev is a Yamaha artist.

RACHMANINOFF & THE GOLDEN AGE OF CINEMA

Program Notes

Compiled by Sergey Bogza

Erich Wolfgang Korngold
The Adventures of Robin Hood
estimated duration: 7 minutes



Korngold's vibrant score for *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938) set a new standard for film music, blending orchestral richness with thrilling swashbuckling themes. Drawing on his background as a classical composer, Korngold's music exudes drama and heroism, mirroring the daring escapades of Robin Hood and his merry band. The seven-minute excerpt captures the essence of Errol Flynn's legendary portrayal, with lush melodies and dramatic flourishes that evoke the excitement and romance of Sherwood Forest. Korngold's groundbreaking work earned him an Academy Award and solidified his legacy as one of Hollywood's greatest film composers.

Bernard Herrmann
Psycho Suite
estimated duration: 10 minutes



Few film scores have left as indelible a mark as Bernard Herrmann's music for Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960). The suite features the iconic shrieking strings of the infamous shower scene, a sound that has become

synonymous with psychological terror. Herrmann's stark, all-string orchestra intensifies the claustrophobic tension and unease of the film, reflecting the fractured minds of its characters. The suite masterfully alternates between moments of eerie calm and frenzied dissonance, cementing Herrmann's reputation as a master of suspenseful scoring.

Maurice Jarre
Prelude & Lara's Theme from Doctor Zhivago
(arr. Palmer)
estimated duration: 7 minutes



Maurice Jarre's unforgettable score for *Doctor Zhivago* (1965) combines sweeping romanticism with haunting melancholy, perfectly capturing the epic scale and emotional depth of the story. "Lara's Theme," the film's central musical motif, is instantly recognizable, its wistful melody evoking the bittersweet romance between Yuri and Lara amidst the turmoil of the Russian Revolution. This arrangement highlights Jarre's gift for creating themes that linger in the heart, transporting listeners to the vast, snow-covered landscapes of Russia.

Miklós Rózsa
Parade of the Charioteers from "Ben Hur"
estimated duration: 4 minutes

Miklós Rózsa's score for *Ben-Hur* (1959) stands as one of the most celebrated achievements in film music history. The "Parade of the Charioteers" is a thrilling musical depiction of the grandeur and tension of the legendary chariot race. Combining bold fanfares with rhythmic intensity, Rózsa's composition evokes the power and danger of the Roman arena. His masterful use of leitmotifs and historical authenticity in the music won him an Academy Award and immortalized this sequence as a cinematic masterpiece.

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Vocalise, (arr. Rachmaninoff)

estimated duration: 6 minutes



Originally composed as a wordless song for soprano and piano, Rachmaninoff's Vocalise transcends language to express pure emotion through melody. In this arrangement, the lyrical theme unfolds with aching beauty, showcasing Rachmaninoff's

genius for poignant simplicity. Its seamless flow and heartfelt expressiveness have made Vocalise a beloved favorite among audiences and performers alike. This arrangement for orchestra enhances its haunting quality, allowing the music to soar with added depth and color.

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Piano Concerto No. 2

estimated duration: 33 minutes

When he was in his mid-twenties, Rachmaninoff completed his First Symphony (1895). With the exception of his Piano Concerto No. 1, which he regarded as a student work, the Symphony was Rachmaninoff's first large-scale composition, and it was a disaster. The Russian composer César Cui derided it as a musical representation of the Seven Plagues of Egypt. The trouble seemed to come from the premiere performance (1897) rather than from the composition itself—the conductor was allegedly drunk on the podium—but whatever its cause, this serious professional embarrassment sent Rachmaninoff into an extended bout of apathy. He continued to perform and conduct, but he did not complete any new compositions for the next three years.

His family and friends were seriously concerned about his condition, and so, beginning in early 1900, they convinced him to seek help from Dr. Nikolai Dahl, a Russian physician especially known for using hypnotherapy. According to Rachmaninoff's account of this period, he met with Dahl every day for several months. During

these meetings, Dahl repeated positive messages to the composer, encouraging him to write a new piano concerto by telling him, "You will begin to write your Concerto . . . You will work with great facility . . . The Concerto will be of an excellent quality." This treatment was apparently effective because Rachmaninoff completed two movements of his Piano Concerto No. 2 in late 1900, and after he completed one more movement the following year, he dedicated the work to Dahl. Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto was both an immediate and a long-lasting success. When only two movements were complete, he felt confident enough in the work to play it at a benefit concert for prison inmates, arranged by Princess Dorothea von Lieven, and he premiered the completed composition in 1901. After the success of these concerts, Rachmaninoff asked for and received financial support from a cousin, the conductor Alexander Siloti. Having a reliable source of income enabled Rachmaninoff to stop giving piano lessons, which he regarded as a distraction, and to devote much more of his attention to composing, which he did for the next two years.

In addition to the role it played in ending a long period of writer's block, the Second Piano Concerto also reappeared at several key moments in Rachmaninoff's life. He received a warm reception when he first played the work in London (1908), and he played it in several cities with the Boston Symphony Orchestra during his first tour of the United States (1909–1910). Rachmaninoff emigrated from Russia amid the Russian Revolution, and in his first concert as an expatriate, he played the Second Piano Concerto in Copenhagen (1918). Besides the many live performances he gave of the work throughout his lifetime, he also recorded it with Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra (1923–1924 and again in 1929), when audio recording technology was still fairly novel.

Praise has been heaped upon the Second Piano Concerto for generations. In an early biography, published while Rachmaninoff was still alive, one author writes that among all piano concertos, Rachmaninoff's Second "ranks with the best-known masterpieces" and that the work bears "the stamp of immortality." A more recent book calls it "one of the best-loved pieces of music ever written."

The work has three movements: I. Moderato; II. Adagio sostenuto; and III. Allegro scherzando. It begins in C Minor and ends in C Major. Among the many interesting stops along the way, listen especially for the horn solo in the first movement, the flute and clarinet solos at the beginning of the second movement, and, of course, to the dazzling piano solo throughout.



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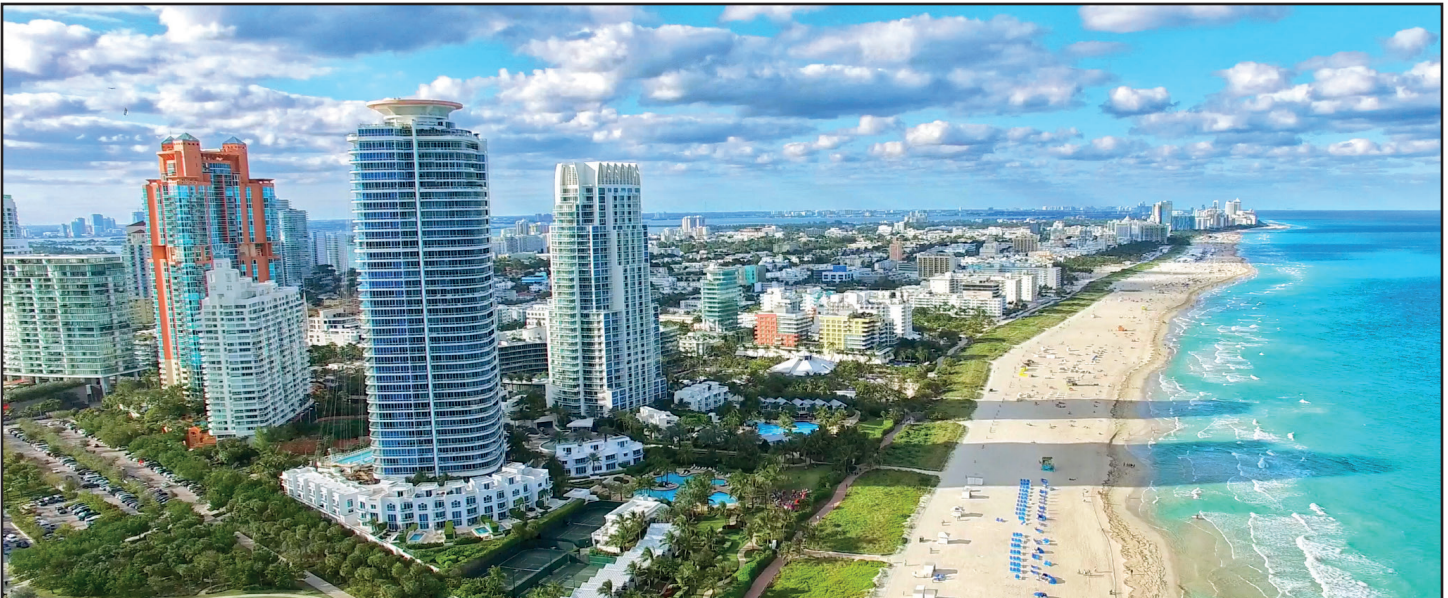
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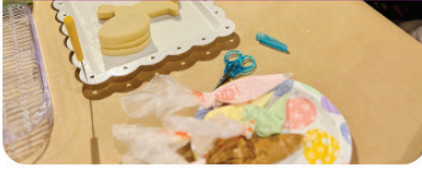
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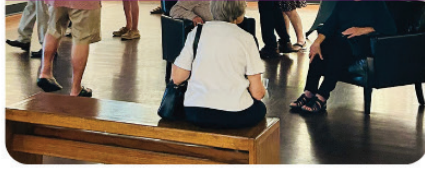




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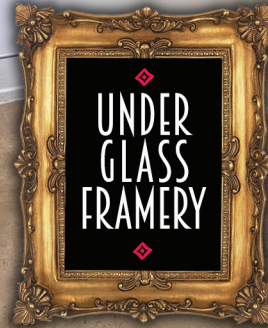
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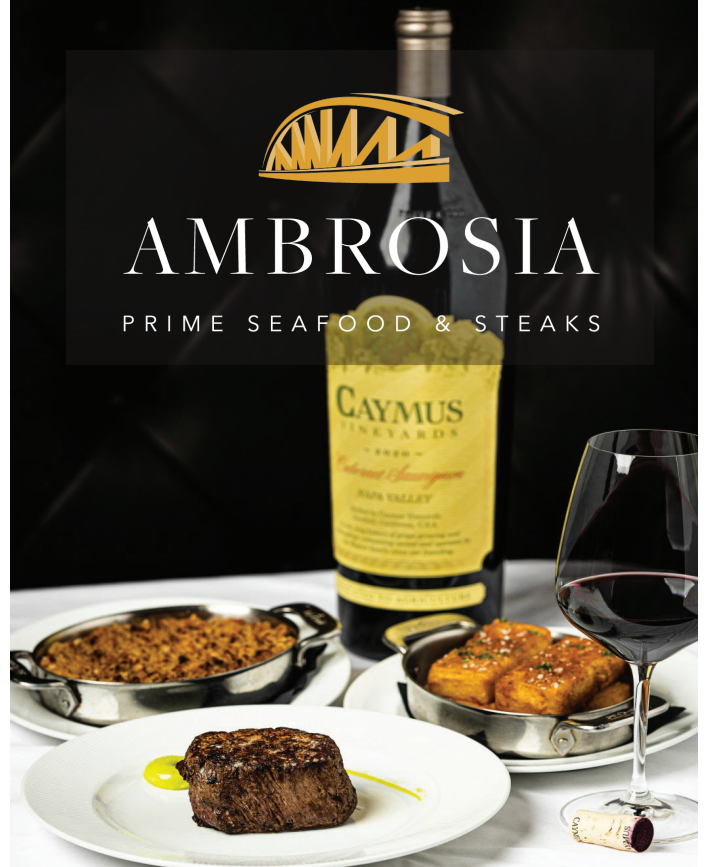


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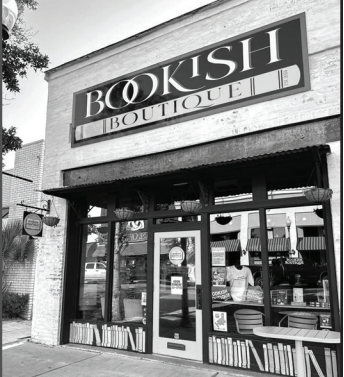
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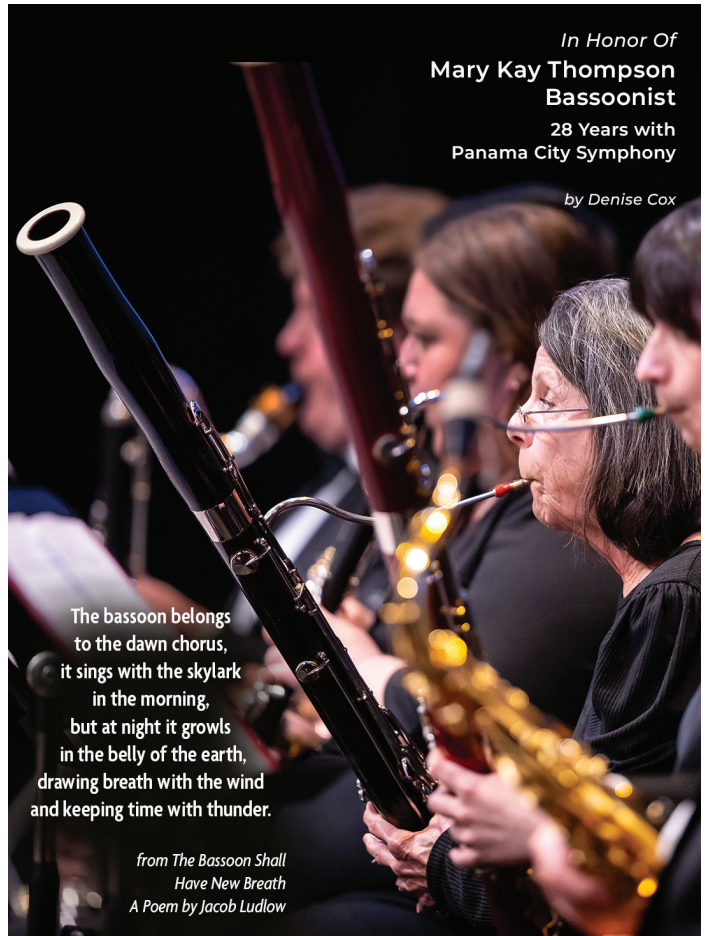
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

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by Denise Cox




*The bassoon belongs
to the dawn chorus,
it sings with the skylark
in the morning,
but at night it growls
in the belly of the earth,
drawing breath with the wind
and keeping time with thunder.*

*from The Bassoon Shall
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