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Arapahoe Philharmonic Presents “Les Ballets Russes” Featuring Works of Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky

Winning score of Vincent C. LaGuardia, Jr. Composition Competition to open concert

Denver – The Arapahoe Philharmonic (AP) turns its focus to Russia for its second concert of the season, “Les Ballets Russes,” on Friday, November 7, 2014, 7:30 p.m. in Mission Hills Church, 620 SouthPark Drive, Littleton, CO, 80120. The performance features two pillars of the Russian ballet repertoire, Igor Stravinsky’s *Petrushka* and Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s *Swan Lake Suite*.

Petrushka, a puppet character from Russian folklore, comes to life in Stravinsky’s composition. Originally composed as strictly a concert piece, Sergei Diaghilev saw the staging potential of the work. Stravinsky finished the piece in 1911 when it was premiered by Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes company. The Arapahoe Philharmonic will perform the revised 1947 orchestration.

Swan Lake is another ballet created from Russian and German folk tales, portraying the story of a princess, Odette, turned into a swan by a sorcerer’s curse. Tchaikovsky borrowed themes from his opera *The Voyevoda* in the creation of *Swan Lake*, which he finished within one year. Despite its popularity today, the premiere performance was not received well. However, the ballet was performed often in its early years and has since secured Tchaikovsky’s place as one of classical music’s finest ballet composers.

Opening the program is *Isolation: Day 253* for soprano and orchestra by Edgar Girtain (b. 1988), the winning score of the inaugural Vincent C. LaGuardia, Jr. Composition Competition. Girtain’s piece was selected from 41 submissions and has earned him the title of Composer-in-Residence with the AP for the next two seasons. Girtain, a former sign maker from New Jersey, is currently finishing a M.A. in composition. His compositional output is varied and includes a number of pieces for orchestra, voice, chamber ensembles, film, and rarities like the glass harmonica. His composition mentors have included Charles Fussell and Tarik O'Regan, the latter being his current teacher. Additional information on *Isolation: Day 253* and the Vincent C. LaGuardia, Jr. Composition Competition is available on our website, www.arapahoe-phil.org.

Devin Patrick Hughes, Music Director and Conductor of the AP, will be joined by Edgar Girtain for a pre-concert talk on the program in the Mission Hills Church lobby at 6:45 p.m.

About the Arapahoe Philharmonic

Founded in 1953, the Arapahoe Philharmonic is among the longest established, continuously operating musical resources in Colorado. After thriving under just two conductors between 1953 and 2012, T. Gordon Parks and Vincent C. LaGuardia, Jr., we celebrated our 60th anniversary in 2013-2014 with an exciting new conductor, Devin Patrick Hughes. The orchestra's musicians are primarily volunteers playing for the love of music, with a core of compensated section principals who provide technical leadership and support the excellence of performance.

Concerts in our home of Mission Hills Church in Littleton feature repertoire spanning the centuries, from the great masters to composers of the current day. The Philharmonic is invested in future generations, presenting annual children's concerts, sponsoring masterclasses and outreach to schools, as well as our three collegiate-level competitions.

About the Music Director

Devin Patrick Hughes was appointed Music Director and Conductor of the Arapahoe Philharmonic in the summer of 2013. He had previously held conducting posts with the Santa Fe Youth Symphony Association, Denver Contemporary Chamber Players, Denver Philharmonic Orchestra, Denver Young Artists Orchestra and Lamont Symphony Orchestra. He is also currently Music Director of the Boulder Symphony. In 2010, Hughes was the only American selected with eleven other finalists in the Arturo Toscanini International Conducting Competition in Parma, Italy. More information may be found at www.devinpatrickhughes.com.

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