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Arapahoe Philharmonic Presents “Eastern Powers”

Littleton, CO – The Arapahoe Philharmonic presents “Eastern Powers,” a musical glimpse at two prolific Russian classical composers: Dmitri Shostakovich and Modest Mussorgsky. The performance takes place on **Friday, February 17, 2017, at South Suburban Christian Church, 7275 S. Broadway, Littleton, CO 80122**. The concert begins at 7:30 p.m. and will be preceded by a talk with Maestro Devin Patrick Hughes and guest soloist Phoenix Avalon at 6:45 p.m.

Violinist Phoenix Avalon, an extraordinary talent who has won a number of awards and has been featured on NPR’s *From the Top*, is featured in **Shostakovich’s virtuosic First Violin Concerto in A minor**. The work was composed during a time of heavy censorship in Soviet Russia. Musical compositions incorporating perceived anti-government propaganda or not complying with other regulations were subject to the work being banned. This concerto is a complex work that represented Shostakovich’s own artistic ideals instead of those imposed by the Kremlin, and so was not published until after Stalin’s death. In an act of defiance in this and other works, Shostakovich included the DSCH motif, a musical theme representing the composer’s initials, in the second and third movements.

The second half of the program is dedicated to **Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition** as orchestrated by Maurice Ravel. Originally composed for solo piano, the work includes ten movements, interspersed with a recurring Promenade, and was written as a tribute to his artist friend Viktor Hartmann. An exhibition of Hartmann’s works was displayed following his untimely death – including two owned by Mussorgsky – which inspired the composition to be completed in just 20 days. Each of the ten movements musically depicted specific paintings in the exhibition. Unfortunately, most of the paintings that inspired the composition are lost, but it is easy to imagine the scenes from Mussorgsky’s vivid musical writing.

About Phoenix Avalon

Phoenix Avalon, 15, is in his second decade of violin obsession. He has performed with the national radio show *From the Top* twice, as a soloist in 2015 and in ensemble with the Cleveland Institute of Music’s Cecelia Octet in 2016. He soloed with the New Mexico Philharmonic (2016, 2015), the Boulder Symphony (2016, 2015, 2014, 2013), Performance Santa Fe (2014) and at Meadowmount School of Music public concerts (2016, 2015, 2014, 2013). He plays with the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra and is coached in chamber music by the Cavani Quartet.

Phoenix has played in master classes for Jinjoo Cho, Joseph Silverstein, Chad Hoopes, Kathryn Lucktenberg, Daniel Han, Kimberly Fischer, Richard Rood, Martha Caplin and for the Apple Hill, Szymanowski, Atrium, Brentano, Harrison, Jasper and Cavani String Quartets. Active in the Santa Fe community, Phoenix was honored to mentor the St. Michael's High School Orchestra, in addition to playing for numerous fundraisers, including the Gerard House, the Food Depot, the Santa Fe Farmer's Market, the Albuquerque Boy Choir, the Santa Fe Children's Museum and many others. In 2015 Phoenix participated in the *From the Top* Leadership Training and developed an interactive presentation of classical music history which he offered at 4 different schools in New Mexico and Colorado.

Phoenix is a four-time recipient of the Performance Santa Fe Davis Award, as well as a five year recipient of Starling Foundation grant for study at the Meadowmount School of Music. In 2015 he was the strings winner of the Jackie McGehee Young Artist Competition, received second place in the Music Teachers National Association National Competition in Junior Performance and was awarded the Jack Kent Cooke scholarship.

In August 2015, Phoenix began study at the Cleveland Institute of Music with Jaime Laredo and continues his studies with Jan Sloman, formerly of the Dallas Symphony. He was a student of Carmelo de los Santos at the University of New Mexico for 6 years and began his violin training with Rick Lohmann of Santa Fe Talent Education at the age of 3.

Phoenix is playing on an Amati Bros. violin, c. 1617, generously loaned by Kenneth Warren and Son Ltd. of Chicago. In addition to violin, Phoenix studies composition with Dr. Andrew Thomas of Juilliard and piano with Sandra Shapiro at CIM. He enjoys philosophical debate, history and snowboarding.

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 welcomed the exciting new conductor Devin Patrick Hughes to the podium in the 2013–2014 season. 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 feature repertoire spanning the centuries, from the great masters to composers of the current day. The Philharmonic is invested in future generations, presenting an annual children's concert, providing outreach to schools, working with area student Honor Orchestras, coaching the new Civic Youth Orchestra in partnership with Avanti Music Academy in Highlands Ranch, and presenting three collegiate-level competitions, the T. Gordon Parks Collegiate Concerto Competition and the Vincent C. LaGuardia, Jr. Collegiate Conducting and Composition Competitions.

About the Music Director

Devin Patrick Hughes is highly regarded for his exhilarating score interpretations, advocacy for music accessibility and promotion of music of our time. He is concurrently serving as Music Director and Conductor of the Arapahoe Philharmonic and Boulder Symphony, and has established himself as a musical leader in the region through previous positions with the Santa Fe Youth Symphony Association, Denver Young Artists Orchestra, Denver Philharmonic Orchestra and Denver Contemporary Chamber Players. Hughes was the only American selected with eleven other finalists in the 2010 Arturo Toscanini International Conducting Competition in Parma, Italy, was a conducting fellow at the American Academy of Conducting at Aspen, and has conducted ensembles across North America and Europe, including the Winnipeg Symphony, Colorado Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Green Bay Symphony and Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini. More information may be found at www.devinpatrickhughes.com.

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