Tuesday, November 17, 2015
7:30 pm
in the BJ Haan Auditorium
on the campus of Dordt College

Principal Conductor
Christopher Stanichar

Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra
Symphonic Journey 2015-2016
WELCOME

NISO Guests and Space Travelers,

Welcome to our Symphonic Journey that takes us around the world and tonight to outer space -- a “Musical Universe”. Ours has been a journey of 29 years with a 30th anniversary to celebrate next season. The Board will be sharing many celebratory events with you to highlight a wonderful anniversary.

Tonight, let’s get our feet on the ground and then together head to outer space. A space odyssey through the stars and around the planets with, hopefully, no wars – what a delightful musical trip!

Stay firmly seated and “strapped in” as we feature John Pennington, timpani soloist, on Raise the Roof!

Thank you to all who have so generously given to ensure the variety of music and level of excellence that you expect and that the orchestra experiences from student players to seasoned pros. The Board is honored to be leading and supporting this organization. We will also introduce the new NISO Foundation and encourage your participation and questions.

Make a brief stop at intermission to refuel on coffee and “heavenly” truffles.

Your fellow space traveler,
Norma Snyder Jones
NISO Board Chairperson

PROGRAM

THE NORTHWEST IOWA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Christopher Stanichar, Conductor
John Pennington, Timpani

STRAUSS  Also sprach Zarathustra (opening)

DAUGHERTY  Raise the Roof

HOLST  The Planets
   I. Mars
   II. Venus
   III. Mercury
   IV. Jupiter

Intermission

MOZART  Symphony No. 41 in C Major, “Jupiter”
   I. Andante; Allegro con anima

WILLIAMS  Star Wars Suite
   II. Princess Leia’s Theme
   III. The Imperial March (Darth Vader’s Theme)
   V. Throne Room & End Title

Please Note: Flash photography and the use of recording devices is prohibited during NISO concerts.
Please disable all cell phones and pagers.
"Sunrise" from Also sprach Zarathustra, op.30
Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

By the late 19th century, the formal conventions of sonatas, symphonies, courtly dances and the like were stretched to the breaking point. Composers sought new forms that could encompass grander notions of literature, legend, or philosophy. They turned more and more to “programmatic music”--music that tried to portray scenes, pictures or events. Though this was nothing new (composers had been writing such music for centuries), it was Richard Strauss who developed the practice to its fullest extent. For its rich, narrative sweep, his “Don Juan” in 1888 was dubbed a tondichtung, or “tone poem”.

From 1883 until 1891, Friedrich Nietzsche published the four volumes of his Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Novel for All and None. Nietzsche himself dubbed it “...the greatest gift that has ever been made to mankind.” (Writing in 1994, Harold Bloom declared it a “gorgeous, unreadable disaster.”) Strauss set out in 1896 to depict in music the epic travels of Zoroaster as imagined by Nietzsche. The result was a nine-movement tone poem premiered in November in Frankfurt with the composer himself conducting.

The first movement, “Sunrise,” begins with the sepulchral rumble of the organ and contrabassoon over which Strauss depicts nature itself using the overtone series in C major. This movement gained notoriety in 1968 with its appearance in 2001: A Space Odyssey by Stanley Kubrick and Arthur Clarke. Strauss’s “Sunrise” accompanies a vision of the dawn of man: a tribe of apes has been driven from their water hole by a rival tribe. With the thundering of Strauss’s timpani in the background, one ape figures out how to use a bone as a weapon, eventually killing the leader of the rival tribe and reclaiming the water hole.

Raise the Roof
Michael Daugherty (b. 1954)

Excepting a few novelty works written during the 18th century by composers such as Jiří Družeký and Carl Christian Fischer, it was not until well into the 20th century that composers started to see percussion instruments as serious solo vehicles. Since then, however, the percussion section has enjoyed a wealth of new music. Professor of Composition at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor since 1991, Dr. Michael Daugherty wrote the present work for his colleague, Michael Haithcock, in 2007. It was premiered with Haithcock as soloist at a conference of the College Band Directors National Association on March 30th of that year.

Daugherty frequently claims his inspiration in comic books and pop music. Here, he draws heavily on the rhythms of Cuban rhumba. Writing to celebrate grand soaring architectural achievements such as Notre Dame Cathedral and the Empire State Building, he draws on nearly every conceivable special or unorthodox effect possible with timpani. The result, in the words of critic Lawrence Budmen, is a “…joyous romp that adds rock and big band sounds to the classical mix with lovable irreverence.”

The Planets, op.32 (I. Mars, the Bringer of War; II. Venus, the Bringer of Peace; III. Mercury, the Winged Messenger; IV: Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity)
Gustav Holst (1874-1934)

Born into a musical family in Gloucestershire, Gustav Holst learned to play piano, violin and trombone at a young age. He studied at Oxford, then took a minor job as organist and choirmaster, supplementing his income by playing trombone in local theaters. As a student of Charles Villiers Stanford, he became a lifelong friend of Ralph Vaughan Williams. Holst taught at the St Paul Girls’ School in Hammersmith and at Morley College, significantly improving musical standards among the students at both institutions.

The genesis for the present orchestral suite dates to 1913. Disappointed by the lukewarm reception given one of his recent works, Holst accepted an invitation to travel to Spain with H. Balfour Gardiner and the brothers Clifford and Arnold Bax. While there, Clifford introduced him to the practice of astrology. Holst was hooked. He would often cast horoscopes for his friends and later called astrology his “pet vice.” The following year, Holst began work on a series of pieces to depict the mythological characters for which the planets had been named. “Mars,” “Venus” and “Jupiter” were composed first; “Mercury” as well as “Neptune,” “Saturn” and “Uranus” followed in 1915 and 1916.

When World War I broke out, Holst was turned down for military service. At the very end of the conflict, however, he was offered a post with the YMCA in Thessaloniki to help demobilized troops in Europe. Before his departure and as a going-away present, Balfour Gardiner offered him the chance to program a private concert with orchestra in the Queen’s Hall. Time was short: Holst enlisted his friend Adrian Boult to conduct; girls from St Paul worked as copyists and as choristers for the final movement, Neptune. Despite having only two hours of rehearsal with the orchestra, the concert was a success.

Orchestras continued to program The Planets, most frequently excerpting the four movements heard tonight. Curiously, Holst was still alive when Pluto was discovered in 1930. By then, however, he had become so tired of the suite’s popularity that he professed no interest in writing another movement. He did, however, extract the central melody of “Jupiter” as a hymn tune, naming it Thaxted after the parish where he lived and worked from 1917 to 1925. This melody is most commonly found in American hymnals with the text “O God, Beyond All Praising” (Lift Up Your Hearts hymnal #557) written by Michael Perry in 1982. In Britain, it is most commonly associated with a text “I Vow to Thee, My Country,” written by Sir Cecil Spring Rice to honor the sacrifices made by British troops during World War I.

Symphony No. 41, “Jupiter” (I. Allegro vivace)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

The final decade of Mozart’s life began in an angry rift with his employer, Archbishop Colloredo. Mozart was publicly dismissed “with a swift kick in the arse” administered by the archbishop’s assistant. Leaving the employ of the archdiocese (and turning his back on his father’s protestations), he pursued an independent career in Vienna, giving concerts, composing and teaching. At first, this was quite successful, enabling Mozart to get married and enjoy a comfortable life. He networked extensively, cultivating connections with Clementi and Haydn as well as engaging in detailed study of the works of Handel and Bach.

Mozart’s fortunes took a turn for the worse when war broke out between Austria and Turkey in 1787. Opportunities for performances and composition dwindled as the population labored under an unpopular military campaign. He struggled to make ends meet. Increasing desperation led him on difficult trips to Berlin and Dresden to cultivate new contacts. The present work is part of a series of three symphonies (numbers 39, 40 and 41) that may have been written for a concert in a newly opened casino in downtown Vienna. Drawing on his success as an operatic composer, Mozart featured in the first movement part of an aria titled “A kiss of the hand” which he had composed to be inserted into an opera titled Lucky Jealousy by Pasquale Anfossi.
Alas, no record exists that this concert ever came to fruition. For that matter, Mozart may never even have heard the symphony performed. Plans for the casino concert were likely shelved and the symphonies sat forgotten amid Mozart’s continued efforts to turn his fortunes around. Three years later (ironically, just as wealthy patrons in Hungary and Amsterdam began to take interest in his work), Mozart’s health failed. After Mozart’s death, Ludwig Ritter von Köchel catalogued the present symphony as number 551. An early arrangement for piano eventually made its way to England in the early 19th century where the concert promoter Johann Peter Salomon crowned it with the king of nicknames: “Jupiter.” Sir George Grove, writing in 1906, went one better, naming it “...the greatest orchestral work of the world which preceded the French Revolution.”

Star Wars Suite (II. Princess Leia’s Theme; III. The Imperial March [Darth Vader’s Theme]; V. Throne Room & End Title)

John Williams (b. 1932)

If, in the mid-1970’s, George Lucas struggled to find a studio willing to roll the dice on his Flash Gordon inspired Adventures of Luke Starkiller, John Williams was by then a household name in Hollywood. During the 1960’s, he collaborated with Henry Mancini and wrote original theme music for the pilot episodes of Gilligan’s Island. The 1970’s brought him a string of successes on the big screen, particularly in his work for Fiddler on the Roof, jaws, and Close Encounters of the Third Kind.

ARTISTS

JOHN PENNINGTON is an educator, composer, performer, author, producer and conductor. Dr. Pennington is currently a Professor of Music at Augustana University and is the Artistic Director of the Animas Music Festival in Durango, Colorado. He holds degrees from the University of Michigan, University of Arizona, and Arizona State University. As an orchestral player, Dr. Pennington is currently the Associate Principal Timpanist and Percussionist with the South Dakota Symphony and Principal Timpanist with the Music in the Mountains summer music festival orchestra. Dr. Pennington is currently a Cultural Envoy for the State Department in the Middle East (Lebanon) where he has presented concerts, clinics and master classes. With performances on four continents and in over twenty-five states, he has performed on Prairie Home Companion and has been a featured performer at five Percussive Arts Society International Conventions. Active as a composer and arranger, he has over thirty compositions for soloist, duo, chamber ensemble and films in addition to dozens of arrangements for numerous instrumental and vocal combinations. With over thirty recordings to date he has recorded for the Ensemble 21, Summit, Cristo, OCP, and Equilibrium labels. Extensive studies in world music have included experience in African, Middle Eastern, Indonesian, Cuban and the South Indian Karnatak traditions. Please visit JohnPennington.com for more information.

CHRISTOPHER STANICHAR is the Principal Conductor of the Northwest Iowa Symphony, an ensemble of some of the finest musicians in northwest Iowa and southeast South Dakota. Stanichar was appointed to this position in 2011, following a number of guest appearances. Stanichar has continued NISO's tradition of artistic excellence, innovative programming, and collaborations with guest artists from the region and beyond. Stanichar leads NISO in three concerts per season, in addition to the annual Concert for Children given each November for over 1,000 area 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students. He has been praised for “his obvious energy, great joy directing, and outright enthusiasm.” (Peter Wagner, Northwest Iowa Review).

In addition to his position with Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra, Stanichar conducts the Worthington Area Symphony Orchestra in Minnesota. Stanichar has conducted professional orchestras in Europe, Russia, Mexico, and the United States, including the Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra, St. Petersburg Symphony Orchestra (Russia), Sochi Symphony Orchestra (Russia), Orquesta Sinfónica Juvenil del Estado de Veracruze (Mexico), and many orchestras in the United States.

Stanichar earned his Doctorate of Musical Arts in conducting at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music where he was a student of Gerard Samuel. In 1996 he was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study conducting in Slovakia, where he appeared as a guest conductor of many top orchestras in that country. In 1997 he was appointed Conducting Assistant for the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, where he was mentored by maestros Jesús López-Cobos and Erich Kunzel.

Stanichar is an active composer; his works have been commissioned and performed throughout the world. His Trisagion was used in the Ric Burns’ PBS documentary, Andy Warhol. More recent projects include a full-length cantata, St. Mark Passion, written as part of a Granskou grant for the 150th anniversary of Augustana College. His Variations on a Theme by Handel for string orchestra is featured in the independent film, Dust of War. TrevCoVarner Music has published several of his works for English horn.

In his free time, Christopher’s interests outside of music include Russian icons, foreign languages, biking, and he is an avid pinball player. The most important thing to Christopher is his family, and his children are active in music. For more information about Christopher and a catalogue of his compositions, please visit christopherstanichar.com.

THE NORTHWEST IOWA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA comprises the finest musicians in the tri-state area. Teaching principals are of a professional caliber and function as first chair players and teachers in sectional rehearsals. The orchestra’s 80 members include adults of all ages as well as gifted music students ranging in age from high school through college. Six of these students are recipients of scholarships from Friends of the Symphony for the purpose of continuing their private music instruction. NISO presents three concerts each season in addition to the annual Concert for Children, which is given each November for over 1,000 area 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students.
FIRST VIOLIN
- Daniel Amin, Dordt College
- Faith Biemra, Dordt College
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- Holly Hiemstra, Dordt College
- Lisa Miedema, Sioux Center
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- Tara Tilstra, Dordt College
- Kylie Van Wyhe, Dordt College
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- Dane Hibma, Sioux Center
- Haley Moss, Dordt College
- Jonathan Nyman, Dordt College
- Jessica Setiawan, Dordt College
- Joseph Slegers, Orange City
- Victoria Tatsumi, Western Christian HS
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VIOLA
- Marissa Beatty, MOC-FV HS
- Kristin Buskohl, Augustana University
- Fei Chen, Sioux Falls
- Meagan DeGraaf, Dordt College
- Maggie Drexlere, Dordt College
- Katie Fictorie, Western Christian HS
- Derek Friend, Dordt College
- Kaitlyn Frye, Dordt College
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- Chris Haak, Sioux Falls
- Loretta Thomas, Vermillion

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- Dan Mangold, Orange City
- Karissa Van Surksum, Dordt College
- Craig Disselkoen, Sioux Center
- Tim Hillyer, Omaha
- Nathan Kanis, Dordt College
- Mark Van Der Zwaag, Hospers
- John Pennington, Sioux Falls

TENOR TUBA
- Michael Groenendool, Sioux Center
- Matt Honken, Orange City
- Vance Shoemaker, Hawarden
- Wade Vollenk, Dordt College

TRUMPET
- Peter Boerema, Sioux Falls

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- Matt Honken, Orange City
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- Wade Vollenk, Dordt College

TRUMPET
- Peter Boerema, Sioux Falls

PERSONNEL

Tonight’s Intermission Feature: Gourmet coffee and truffles.
Consider joining Friends and helping with rehearsal refreshments, ushering, serving coffee/truffles, and selling tickets to benefit the orchestra.

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Timothy McGarvey, Assistant Conductor
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WINTER POPS – Saturday, January 30, 2016
GUEST CONCERT - Friday, April 1, 2016
SPRING CONCERT – Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra
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Symphonic Journey
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Christopher Stanichar, Conductor

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Saturday December 5, 2015, 3:00 PM
Saturday, April 9, 2016, 4:30 PM