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CIVIC SYMPHONY CELEBRATES 25 YEARS WITH A “FESTIVAL DI MUSICA ITALIANA”

The Civic Symphony of Green Bay continues its 25th anniversary with a musical celebration of all things Italian in our third concert of the season at the Meyer Theater on Saturday, February 15th at 7 p.m. The concert will include great works by Italian composers, or those inspired by Italy, including Verdi, Puccini, Respighi, Tchaikovsky and Sartori. The evening features guest vocalists Yi-Lan Niu and Scott Ramsay, along with collaborations with the St. Norbert College Chamber Singers and the Northeast Wisconsin Dance Organization (NEWDO).

The evening kicks off with the *Overture* to Giuseppe Verdi’s opera, *La Forza del Destino*, which translated means *the force of destiny*. Verdi was to Italian opera what Beethoven was to the symphony and this overture to his tragic opera has a driving force and passion that is unmistakable.

Rounding out the concert’s first half is *Capriccio Italien* by Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky, a Russian composer who was inspired by a trip to Rome with his brother to write this Italian fantasia on folk tunes which he believed a “good fortune may be predicted.” This exciting work not only brings good fortune to all who hear it, but also highlights the instrumentalists of the orchestra in a virtuoso way, bringing them to their limits in thrilling fashion.

The exciting second half begins with Ottorino Respighi’s *Ancient Airs & Dances Suite No. 2*, which features the dancers of NEWDO under the direction of Timothy Joseph. This 20th century composer’s take on dances from the 16th century is beautifully accentuated by the original choreography and performance of the young members of the Northeast Wisconsin Dance Organization.

Moving from dance to opera, our Italian festival continues with the aria “*Quando m’en vo’ Soletta*” from Giacomo Puccini’s opera, *La Boheme*, featuring Soprano, Yi-Lan Niu, who has performed throughout North America & Asia while currently serving as an Associate Professor of Music at St. Norbert College.

Another Puccini favorite, “*Nessum Dorma*,” from his opera, *Turandot*, features Tenor, Scott Ramsay, who is a Green Bay native and attended UW-Milwaukee before launching into a impressive career as a soloist worldwide while recently joining the voice faculty of DePaul University School of Music in Chicago.

Both Ms. Niu & Mr. Ramsay will join forces with the St. Norbert College Chamber Singers, under the direction of Sarah Parks, to frolic in performing selections from Verdi’s opera, *La Traviata*.

Club Italo Americano of Green Bay will be co-hosting a special pre-concert dinner at the Angelina Restaurant in Green Bay, which will include a multi-course dinner of authentic Italian specialties. Doors open for the dinner at 4:30 p.m., which starts promptly at 5:15 p.m. The dinner is \$50/person with a cash bar. Tickets for the concert range in price from \$10-\$18. For more information about the concert, preceding dinner and to purchase tickets, visit our website at: www.gbcivic.org.

