

The logo for the Jackson Symphony Orchestra features the word "jackson" in a large, elegant, cursive script. Below it, the words "SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA" are written in a clean, all-caps, sans-serif font. The entire logo is framed by a thin horizontal line above and below the text.

JACKSON
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Stephen Osmond, Music Director

NEWS RELEASE

215 W. Michigan Ave. Jackson, MI 49201

**THIRD SUBSCRIPTION CONCERT, 60TH SEASON
8 P.M. FEBRUARY 13, 2010
POTTER CENTER MUSIC HALL
JACKSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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JSO's Valentine's Eve concert features romantic orchestral works

A *tribute* or *homage* can be an expression of admiration, respect or love. So, for a concert on Valentine's Eve, JSO musicians will perform a program titled *Homage* that explores how three famous composers paid tribute to composers they admired. In addition, the JSO will perform a piano concerto very closely associated with romanticism since it was featured in the 1967 film *Elvira Madigan* — Mozart's *Piano Concerto #21 in C major*.

"The February concert is a terrific way for couples to celebrate Valentine's Day," said JSO Development Director Mary Spring. "For \$25, the JSO is offering a limited number of ticket packages for couples that includes both a pair of concert tickets and passes for an after-concert sushi party at the JSO Rehearsal Hall in downtown Jackson. This package is available only for the February concert and is part of an on-going effort by the JSO to introduce community members to our great orchestra and to provide high-quality, affordable activities for the residents of Jackson County and beyond."

The concert will begin at 8 p.m. at the Potter Center Music Hall at Jackson Community College. Besides the Mozart piece, the program will include *Le tombeau de Couperin*, *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* and *Suite No. 4, Mozartiana op. 61*.

Le Tombeau de Couperin

Le tombeau de Couperin is a piano suite that French composer Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) started before World War I. His work was interrupted when he enlisted in the French Army. After the war, he finished the work and changed the title from *French Suite* to *Le Tombeau de Couperin* to honor the French Baroque musical genius François Couperin (1668-1733). He also dedicated each movement to friends who had died in military service to France. The composition is considered one of his most personal and patriotic works.

In French, *tombeau* means tomb or burial place, but the word also was used in music titles when French composers wrote pieces to memorialize departed teachers or respected fellow musicians. Ravel's *tombeau* is somewhat light-hearted with its inclusion of Baroque dance rhythms.

“Some criticized Ravel for writing music that wasn’t more somber,” said Bruce Brown, JSO Composer-in-Residence. “But Ravel replied: ‘The dead are sad enough, in their eternal silence.’ ”

Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis

David Schultz, the JSO’s Music School Director and Assistant Conductor, will be guest conductor for *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*, which Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) composed in 1910 as a tribute to the important English Renaissance composer Thomas Tallis (1505-1585). The tribute to Tallis calls for a large string orchestra divided into three parts.

“Thomas Tallis wrote primarily for the church, and this *Fantasia*, though not intended as religious music, has an unmistakable aura of sacredness,” Schultz said. “By dividing the strings into separate groups, the orchestra’s sound resembles that of a massive pipe organ, creating an image in my mind of a gigantic cathedral bathed in light streaming in through stained-glass windows. The piece contains some of the most expressive writing in all music, yet never becomes overly dramatic, remaining firmly grounded in the realm of the sublime.

“It has always been one of my favorite works, and I am thrilled and honored to be able to perform it with this talented group of musicians,” Schultz said.

Piano Concerto #21 in C major

“I thought it would be a good idea to include an original work of one of the honored composers,” said JSO Maestro Stephen Osmond, “and on the Eve of Valentine’s, nothing could be more appropriate than Mozart’s *Piano Concerto #21 in C major*.”

The piece, which Mozart (1756-1791) wrote in 1785, is nicknamed the *Elvira Madigan Concerto* because Swedish filmmaker Bo Widerberg featured the famous second movement in his 1967 film *Elvira Madigan*, a movie based on a true tragic love story. It also has been the musical backdrop for many well-known films including: *The Happening* (2008), *Superman Returns* (2006), *Virtual Sexuality* (1999) and *Regarding Henry* (1991).

Suite No. 4, Mozartiana op. 61

Suite No. 4, Mozartiana op. 61 was composed by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) in 1887 in Russia to pay homage to the musical genius Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Tchaikovsky was a life-long admirer of Mozart, and the suite is an adaptation of three Mozart piano pieces plus a Mozart choral work. *Mozartiana* is the only one of Tchaikovsky's four orchestral suites that he did not originally conceive as a symphony.

“The first movement is based on Mozart’s *Little Gigue* for piano, K. 574, the second on a *Minuet* for piano, K. 355, and the fourth on the *Variations on a Theme by Gluck*, K. 455,” Brown said. “The third movement, *Preghiera* (“Prayer”) is an adaptation of Mozart’s late choral masterpiece *Ave Verum Corpus*, but Tchaikovsky based his version on a piano transcription by Franz Liszt known as *À la Chapelle Sixtine*.

“Liszt’s and Tchaikovsky’s arrangements are both more ornate than Mozart’s beautifully austere original,” Brown said. “Tchaikovsky once said ‘Mozart is the highest, the culminating point that beauty has attained in the sphere of music.’ His treatment of Mozart’s music in this suite shows how much respect he had for the great master of Classicism, but it also reveals his admiration and affection for him.”

All ticketholders are invited to attend Brown’s free lecture, which will be held in the Potter Center’s Federer Rooms one hour before the concert.

This concert is sponsored by Heat Controller, Inc.

“Symphony and Sushi” tickets are \$25 per pair. Individual concert-only tickets are \$18, \$27, \$32 and can be purchased online, www.JacksonSymphony.org; by phone, 517-782-3221; or in person at the JSO Box Office, 215 W. Michigan Ave., downtown Jackson.