On the Nature of Daylight

Wesley Schulz, Music Director and Conductor

Thursday, April 22, 2021, 7:30pm
Federal Way Performing Arts and Event Center

Program

On the Nature of Daylight ................................................. Max Richter (b. 1966)
Grasping for Light ......................................................... Jessica Meyer (b. 1974)
Amazing Grace ............................................................... arr. Jennifer Higdon (b. 1962)

Auburn Symphony Orchestra Musicians

VIOLIN 1
Sol Im
Concertmaster

Lynn Bartlett-Johnson
Asst. Concertmaster
Anne Cady
Louanne Lotz
Rachel Nesvig

VIOLIN 2
Ingrid Fredrickson
Principal

Libby Phelps
Coral Sepulveda
Janet Utterback

VIOLA
Betty Agent
Principal

Eileen Swanson
Sue Jane Bryant
Richard Neff

CELLO
Brian Wharton
Principal

Amy Windus
Paige Stockley

DOUBLE BASS
Stephen Schermer
Principal

Ross Gilliland

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Tell us what you think
Wesley Schulz, conductor

Wesley Schulz is in his third season as Music Director of Auburn Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, Schulz serves as the Associate Conductor of the North Carolina Symphony. Previously, Schulz served as Music Director of the Bainbridge Symphony Orchestra and Seattle Festival Orchestra, and as Director of Orchestras at the University of Puget Sound. Upcoming and recent conducting engagements include the Bozeman Symphony Orchestra, Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra, Fox Valley Symphony, and the Austin Symphony Orchestra.

In his first two seasons with the North Carolina Symphony, Schulz conducted 150 performances. This included a last-minute Masterworks debut conducting Bernstein's Serenade with violinist Philippe Quint as well as the entire ballet score to Bernstein’s Fancy Free and Schubert’s Unfinished Symphony. One reviewer wrote, “The North Carolina Symphony and Schulz definitely drew the utmost life out of Schubert’s themes....Schulz did a spectacular job.” As the main conductor of the Symphony's Pops series, Schulz has collaborated with Pink Martini, Cirque de la Symphonie, Broadway By Request, Leslie Odom Jr., Michael Cavanaugh and more. In addition, Schulz leads dozens of performances in the Young People’s Concerts, SummerFest, Holiday and Education series.

From 2014-2015 Schulz served as Conducting Fellow of the Seattle Symphony. He made his Benaroya Hall debut with the orchestra in a sold-out performance with singer and songwriter Gregory Alan Isakov. Schulz has received multiple invitations to return to the podium of the Seattle Symphony conducting a collaborative concert with singer and songwriter Amos Lee and to prepare the orchestra for the Oscar winning conductor and composer, John Williams. Additionally, Schulz has been a regular guest conductor of the Austin Symphony Orchestra developing and conducting family and educational performances that reach over 15,000 young people annually.

Program Notes

With this program, we would like to acknowledge both the difficulty and the optimism we have all experienced during the global pandemic. Covid-19 has brought untold suffering and hardship to all who walk the earth.

What does music mean during all of this? When folks are in the hospital or are unable to keep their home, does music matter anymore? In a world that is struggling to breathe, what else matters? As I wrestled with this question I came to realize that music is there for us when times are good, but it is also there for us when life is in crisis. Music, in fact, may be exactly what we need.

Through the music of three composers we hope to take you on an emotional if not cathartic journey. We’ll open with Max Richter's On the Nature of Daylight a poignant work full of melancholy and sadness. This is music in which we can hear the broken heartedness we may have felt and been holding on to over the last year. Next, is Jessica Meyer’s piece Grasping for Light. This piece picks up on the somber mood of Richter's music but takes us further on our journey but this time toward optimism. Jessica Meyer wrote this piece about a woman devastated by the loss of her only child, a daughter. But eventually, through travel and art this woman began to find herself, and life once again. She was able to push through the agony and move towards the light of who she needed to become. In this music, reflective of her story, she finds herself and relief. Our third and final piece of music is an arrangement of Amazing Grace by Jennifer Higdon. This universal hymn carries a multitude of meanings. For me, I think it reminds us of what can change for the good. We can turn loss into beauty, aloneness into empathy, hurt into healing.

Wesley Schulz