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Elmhurst Symphony Offers Two Opportunities to Enjoy a Bit of March Musical Madness

“Personages with long ears,” “Fossils,” and “The Swan,” among others, will be part of an on-stage menagerie in March when the Elmhurst Symphony Orchestra presents “Carnival of the Animals” in two concerts, at 7:00 pm on Saturday, March 14, and 3:00 pm on Sunday, March 15. Both concerts will be unforgettable experiences for concertgoers—feasts for the eyes and the ears.

The subscription concert on March 14 features Camille Saint-Saëns’ beloved “The Carnival of the Animals,” brought to life by a narrator from First Folio Theater Company and the graceful members of the Elmhurst Dance Theater troupe of the DuPage Dance Academy in colorful costumes. Audience members will also be treated to music by Ibert, Ravel, and Vaughan Williams.

At the family concert on March 15 “The Carnival of the Animals,” also with dancers and narration, along with Ibert’s music, will be repeated—a program sure to delight all ages. An instrument “petting zoo” from 1:45 to 2:45 pm, sponsored by Luscombe Music, offers a hands-on opportunity to try the different instruments of the orchestra. Other activities especially for children will be part of the entertaining afternoon. Tickets for this special family concert only are \$5 for children and \$8 for those 16 and up.

Jacques Ibert’s hilarious “Divertissement,” first performed in 1930 in Paris, “almost overflows with wit and high spirits,” with clever musical comments woven throughout. Maurice Ravel’s “Le Tombeau de Couperin” is his elegant homage to Baroque keyboard composer François Couperin and was written in memory of six soldiers who died during World War I. The first notes of “The Lark Ascending” by Ralph Vaughan Williams were written on the day Britain entered the First World War as the composer walked the cliff at Margate and watched ships engaged in naval exercises. The lyrical beauty and soulful introspection of the piece has made it part of popular culture, and it has been used in film, television, figure skating performances, theater, and by recording groups and novelists.

The performance of “Le Tombeau de Couperin” is underwritten by a generous gift from Art and Arlene Ahlgrim, and “The Carnival of the Animals” is underwritten by a generous gift from Rose Wilkes and John Leszczynski.

A silent auction to support the continuing programs of the Elmhurst Symphony Association will be held before the concert and during intermission with an array of exciting items to bid on, ranging from opera, ballet and sporting event tickets to gift certificates for local eateries and merchants.

The ESO, under the baton of Music Director and Conductor Stephen Alltop, will perform both concerts in the spectacular space at Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church, 149 W. Brush Hill Rd. in Elmhurst, which is handicapped-accessible and offers free parking. The March 14 concert experience will be enhanced by the informative and lively discussion, Behind the Music Stand, led by audience favorite Dr. Ted Hatmaker, which takes place at 5:45 pm, prior to the concert. To purchase tickets for either concert, please visit the ESO web site, www.elmhurstsymphony.org. Premium prices at the door on March 14 are an additional \$5 per ticket to the regular individual concert ticket price. For information visit the web site or call the ESO Box Office at 630-941-0202.

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