

# Anchorage Symphony Orchestra

## NEWS RELEASE

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## Anchorage Symphony Orchestra

### *Opening Night*

*featuring Zuill Bailey, cello*  
Saturday, September 22, 2018 – 8:00pm  
Atwood Concert Hall, ACPA

**Anchorage, Alaska – August 24, 2018** – On September 22nd, Maestro Randall Craig Fleischer will give the downbeat to open his 20<sup>th</sup> season as Music Director of the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra. How do you begin a season celebrating such a milestone? Maestro Fleischer knows how, “I love to open with a splashy program and I think this one is plenty splashy! The whole program centers around Hemingway and his passion for travel. It’s a kind of high-energy tour of the world.”

This world tour begins in Cuba in 1932, after what Gershwin describes as “two hysterical weeks...no sleep was had.” He fell in love with the rhythms and instruments of the island nation and wanted to share them with American audiences. In just two months he wrote *Rumba* which was later renamed *Cuban Overture*. It was a smash hit from the beginning, loved by critics and audiences. After the premiere in New York Gershwin wrote, “It was, I really believe, the most exciting night I have ever had...17,845 people paid to get in and about 5,000 were at the closed gates trying to fight their way in – unsuccessfully.”

Michael Daugherty’s *Tales of Hemingway* was inspired by another American who fell in love with Cuba - Ernest Hemingway. Daugherty’s dramatic cello concerto evokes the turbulent life, adventure and literature of the Nobel Prize winning author. Premiered by Zuill Bailey in April 2015 with the Nashville Symphony, *Tales of Hemingway* and Bailey went on to win 3 Grammys: Best Classical Compendium, Best Classical Instrumental Solo Performance, and Best Classical Composition.

What better person to perform this piece, than the one it was written for, Zuill Bailey, who also took home the Grammy for Best Solo Performance for his live recording of the multi Grammy-winning piece. Bailey grew up in Northern Virginia with musical parents. He likes to tell the story of how he chose the cello. As an energetic four year old, while running furiously down a back hallway following a concert, Bailey had his first “run-in” with a cello. The instrument was broken following the encounter but not Bailey’s spirit. He announced then that the cello would be his instrument of choice. The rest is history.

Today, Bailey is an international soloist and holds Artistic Director positions at the El Paso Pro Musica, Sitka Summer Music Festival, Northwest Bach Festival, and Mesa Arts Center Series. He is also a Professor of Cello at the University of Texas at El Paso. When asked why he chose Bailey as the featured artist for the Anchorage Symphony’s Opening Night, Fleischer responded, “Are you kidding me? Zuill is a Grammy winning artist, and cuts a huge presence in Alaska. He is as close to a rock star as anybody can get in classical music and is a long-time friend of mine. He’s an amazing artist, and I love working with him.”

From the tropics of Cuba, we next travel to the Far East. For his *Secret of Wind and Birds*, Grammy and Academy award-winning Tan Dun took inspiration from yin and yang, new and old, natural and man-made, East and West, ancient and modern. Part of that inspiration led him to incorporate recorded birdsongs played on traditional Chinese instruments that are then played from audience members’ smartphones. After the piece’s premiere, the New York Times wrote, “...as with many of Mr. Tan’s works, this one teems with imagination and enticing sounds.”

Completing this round-the-world tour is Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol*. This Spanish piece written by a Russian composer shows off his incredible orchestration skills and love of percussion. Originally written for solo violin and orchestra, Rimsky-Korsakov decided that a full orchestra was necessary to do the lively Spanish melodies justice. And Respighi's love of Renaissance and Baroque music shines in *Ancient Airs and Dances*. Audience members will find the second suite instantly loveable.

*Anchorage Symphony's Opening Night, Saturday, September 22, 2018, (8pm) in the Atwood Concert Hall, Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. Infrared headphones for the hearing impaired are available concert night from the House Manager on the Orchestra Level. Tickets: Adult, \$52-\$27; Youth, \$24.75-\$12.50; Senior, \$46.50-\$24.50 (prices include surcharges and fees). Military, student and group discounts available. To purchase tickets, visit the CenterTix Box Office at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts or [www.centertix.com](http://www.centertix.com) or call 263-ARTS (2787), toll free at 1-877-ARTS- TIX.*

**Program**

GERSHWIN Cuban Overture

MICHAEL DAUGHERTY Tales of Hemingway

TAN DUN Passacaglia: Secret of Wind and Birds

RESPIGHI Ancient Airs and Dances (Suite No. 2)

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Capriccio Espagnol

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