

THE MICHIGAN POPS ORCHESTRA PRESENTS:

LIFE ON PLANET POPS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PAVANI ANAND
MUSIC DIRECTOR LUCA ANTONUCCI

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023 7:30 PM
THE MICHIGAN THEATER



WELCOME TO LIFE ON PLANET POPS

Dear Friends,

Welcome to "Life on Planet Pops," and thank you for joining us for a wild evening of music, skits, movies, and all-around good times! We couldn't be more pleased to have you join us on our musical safari. Although it may seem like second nature, the wonderful musicians of the Michigan Pops Orchestra have been hard at work all semester preparing for tonight's concert with its wonderful selection of pieces — from the beautiful to the beastly. This is truly an orchestra that strives to be the very best, tackling difficult orchestral pieces like the "Jaws" Suite and excerpts from Stravinsky's "Firebird" with dedication and good humor.

As always, working with the amazing musicians of the Michigan Pops has been an absolute delight, and I am incredibly grateful for the members of the Executive Board, who go above and beyond to support the operations of the orchestra and keep the sparrows out of the cornmeal (except that time one made it into Revelli to join our rehearsal...).

Furthermore, I will always treasure my fond memories from this semester. A few that come to mind are when two separate sections dressed as me for Halloween, and when Alex Tran managed to somehow slide an Oreo down his forehead and into his mouth - almost as impressive a feat as William Tell shooting the apple off of his son's head!

Special thanks and congratulations are due to our amazing Executive Director, Pavani Anand, who has done an INCREDIBLE job in her first semester weathering the circle of (Pops) life. She has become a mighty ruler of the UAC savannah, so enemies beware!

The semester has flown by, and it's hard to believe we're almost there. We hope you'll be able to feel the love tonight, as we celebrate our amazing semester with one last hoedown. With that, it's time to draw this parade of musical references to a close and wish you an enjoyable evening with the Michigan Pops!

Luca Antonucci
Music Director



Dearest Audience Members,

Welcome to “Life on Planet Pops,” a walk through a jungle full of lively critters, and music to go along with it! Join us today as we walk through the forest planet of the Ewoks, the bizarre world of Pokémon, and the savannahs of Lion King, among many other exciting places we will visit. This animal-themed concert is sure to be an adventure, and we hope you enjoy your stay on Planet Pops tonight!

We extend our deepest gratitude to the University Activities Center and the Center for Campus Involvement for their support; FedEx; the incredible staff at Michigan Theater including Hannah Feuka, Scott McWhinney, and Greg and Michelle from Tech; the Michigan Marching Band staff including Kimberly Smith, Deaunna Dresch, and Dr. Richard Frey; Ian Hyatt for Lighting Design; Dave Schall for audio recording; Mia Chen for poster design; and the staff at the School of Music, Theatre & Dance for the use of their facilities and equipment.

I would also like to thank Luca Antonucci for his continued dedication to the Pops Orchestra and his fantastic leadership, guiding us to become the best orchestra we can be. Next, I would like to extend my gratitude to the other members of the Executive Board, who have worked tirelessly to make this concert a success. I could not be more thankful to work and be friends with these incredibly hardworking people. Lastly, I would like to thank the other members of Pops (my fellow Popsicles), for always putting out their best work and fostering this lovely community that we all get to share. Because of you all, I feel as if I am in a large (92-person) family that has made my college experience all the richer. I would not be the same person I am today if not for Pops and the people in it. I am honored to be Executive Director for all of you and to put together such a fun concert.

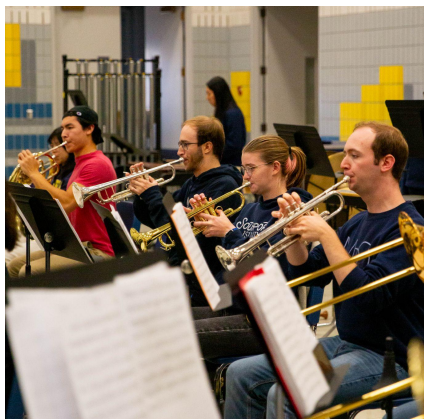
Lastly, we would like to thank you, the audience, for taking the time to join us tonight. This production cannot happen without you and whether you are a friend, an alumni, or a fan of the Pops Orchestra, we appreciate you and your support of us. Each semester, we constantly challenge ourselves and practice hard in order to create the best performance possible - for you! Now, sit back, relax, and immerse yourself in Life on Planet Pops!

Pops Love,
Pavani Anand
Executive Director



PROGRAM

<i>Beauty and the Beast</i> Overture	Alan Menken
“Parade of the Ewoks” from <i>Star Wars</i>	John Williams
<i>Pokémon</i> Medley	Junichi Masuda arr. Andrés Soto
“Memory” from <i>Cats</i>	Andrew Lloyd Webber arr. Bow Lowden
<i>The Firebird</i> Suite IV. Berceuse V. Finale	Igor Stravinsky
INTERMISSION	
“Hoe-Down” from <i>Rodeo</i>	Aaron Copland
<i>The Lion King</i> Suite	Elton John & Hans Zimmer arr. Brad Kelley
“Almost There” from <i>The Princess and the Frog</i> Soloist: Oluchi Nwaokorie	Randy Newman arr. Jonathan Sacks & Marshall Bowen
<i>JAWS</i> Suite	John Williams
Tico Tico No Fubá	Zequinha de Abreu & Aloysio Oliveira arr. Cliff Colnot
<i>William Tell</i> Overture	Gioachino Rossini



ORCHESTRA MEMBERS



VIOLIN I

Katie Zhao*~
Margot Helft
April Feng
Alex Zhang~
Hannah Deng
Igor Trifunovic
Frank Wang
Chiho Sung
Julie Zhou
Kayla Lang
Uma Malde
Alicia Xie
Oliver Gao
Peter Schwendeman
Andrea Liu
Radha Malde

CELLO

Pavani Anand*~
Sean Tant*~
Phoebe Huang
Richard Liu
Isabella Xu
Tate Fisher
Elliott Besirli
Thomas Ballbach
Carolyn Cullen
Jasmine Chou

VIOLIN II

Sydney Proudlock*~
Julia Tauro~
Mia Chen
Clara Liao
Emma Higbee
Madeline Poupard~
Ayan Nair
Joenne Lau
Alina Edgecombe
Joy Huang
Ella Kucisinski
Isabelle Holden
Julia Ruan
Meera Schenker
Avalon Yuhas
Elena Cangelosi

DOUBLE BASS

Sam Dykhouse*~
Lana Kinlaw
Paige Hendrickson
Ethan Moran
Dan Delano

* Section Principal
~ Executive Board

VIOLA

Stephen Moss*
Anthony Medei~
Ian Rosenberg
Sarah Gellman~
Anna Shinohara
Zannah Baker
Sofia Urbina~
Cassie Prokopowicz
Nhayeon Lee
Samantha Goldstein
Maximus Ji
Reegan Ketzenberger
Brigitte Kapnick

PIANO

Annie Lu

PERCUSSION

Shreya Mani*
Logan Edwards
Angela Lee
Jaeden Casasnovas
Aakarsh Verma
Ian Earl



FLUTE/PICCOLO

Jessica Hsu*
Andrew Lee*
Madeleine Hong
Jiahn Yoo

OBOE

Megan Wieger*~
Kayley Ge

CLARINET

Allan Zhao*
Kevin Wang*
Zach Ramsey
Daniel Muenz
Zoie Camp

BASSOON

Jacob Fernandez*
Amy Xiu

FRENCH HORN

Noah Stevens*
Matt Riddell*
Lucas Marra
Michelle Peng

TRUMPET

Kohler Briggs*~
Calliope Cutchins
Ian Loree

TROMBONE

Austin Lan*
Max Berkowitz*
Diego Karlin
Will Knudsen

TUBA

Alexander Tran



Violin I



Brass & Percussion



Cellos



Basses

EXECUTIVE BOARD



Executive Director	Pavani Anand
Music Director	Luca Antonucci
Personnel Director	Megan Wieger
Business Director	Alex Zhang
Co-Technical Director.....	Anthony Medei
Co-Technical Director	Kohler Briggs
Publicity Director	Madeline Poupard
Digital Media Director	Katie Zhao
Co-Social Director	Sarah Gellman
Co-Social Director	Sean Tant
Librarian	Sam Dykhouse
Co-Outreach Director	Sydney Proudlock
Co-Outreach Director	Sofia Urbina
Programs Director	Julia Tauro



MUSIC DIRECTOR

LUCA ANTONUCCI

Luca Antonucci is a second-year doctoral student in Orchestral Conducting at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre, and Dance studying with Kenneth Kiesler. A native of Watertown, MA, Luca holds an M.M. in Orchestral Conducting from the Hartt School, where he studied with Edward Cumming and Glen Adsit.

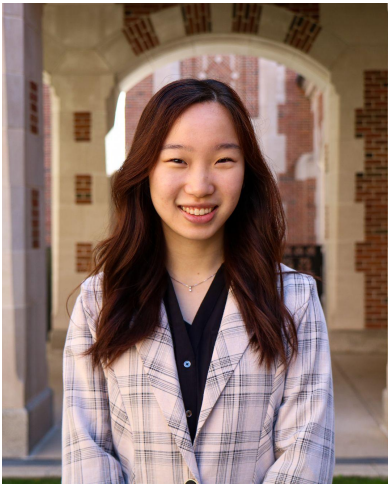
Luca earned his B.A. from Amherst College, where he graduated Summa Cum Laude with an honors conducting recital dedicated to works by Aaron Copland.

After graduation, Luca spent the 2014-15 academic year as a Fulbright fellow in Vienna, Austria, where he published musicological work in the Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center and performed with the award-winning community brass band “Musikverein Leopoldau.”

A multifaceted musician, Luca has worked as a choral and orchestral conductor in the Hartford and Boston areas as well as freelance trumpet player, private teacher, singer, church music director, and educator. Most recently, he was the Middle and Upper School Instrumental Music Teacher and Director of After-School Music at the Brimmer and May School in Chestnut Hill, MA. He was also the conductor of the Manchester Symphony Orchestra and Lincoln-Sudbury Civic Orchestra, leading both groups successfully through the first two years of the COVID pandemic. He is the founder of Orchestra Without Borders Boston and the Brookline Chamber Singers, which present programs each summer featuring underrepresented composers while raising money to fight hunger in Massachusetts.

In his free time, Luca enjoys cooking, dabbling in jazz piano, and listening to opera. At Michigan, he conducts the Life Sciences Orchestra and is one of the assistant conductors for the University Orchestras.





GRADUATING MEMBER

PHOEBE HUANG

Phoebe is graduating this semester with a B.A. in Communication and Media and minors in Music and Digital Studies. She has played cello in Campus Symphony Orchestra for the last few semesters but wanted to join Pops for her senior year! Making music every week and pumpkin painting with her fellow Popsicles have been some highlights of this last semester.

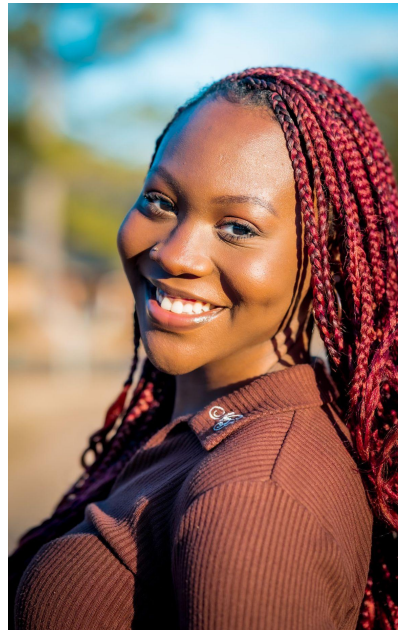
Phoebe has enjoyed and appreciated feeling so welcome in Pops despite having just joined this year and is glad to close out college with fun memories and the experience of playing incredible music together. After graduation, she plans to work in film and entertainment marketing.



SOLOIST

OLUCHI NWAOKORIE

Oluchi Nwaokorie is a junior at the University of Michigan, where she is pursuing a degree in Musical Theatre with a minor in Musical Theatre Composition. Originally from Jackson, Mississippi, she has made her mark on the stage in a variety of musicals. Notably, she recently performed as Joanne in *RENT*, Viveca in *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds her Chameleon Skin*, Dionne in *Hair*, and as a member of the ensemble in *Bernarda Alba*. Beyond her acting, Oluchi is a gifted songwriter and was recognized as a winner of the National Songwriting Challenge in 2021.



@oluchinwaokorie

PROGRAM NOTES

***Beauty and the Beast* Overture – Alan Menken**

Beauty and the Beast is a tale as old as time: a beautiful and intelligent woman falling in love with a cursed prince, ultimately breaking his curse with true love. The story was originally a French fairytale written by novelist Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve. Although not the first film adaptation, Disney's 1991 animated film *Beauty and the Beast* launched this story to international fame. Composer Alan Menken drew on his Broadway composition experience (*Little Shop of Horrors*, *Sister Act*) to write the award-winning soundtrack. Songs like "Gaston" and "Belle" are still fan favorites today, and the original soundtrack has been dubbed into 38 languages. Please be our guest and enjoy this enchanting overture!

"Parade of the Ewoks" from *Star Wars* – John Williams

"Parade of the Ewoks," also known as the "Ewok Theme," was composed by John Williams for *Star Wars VI: Return of the Jedi*. In this episode, Luke Skywalker and the rebel alliance fight the Galactic Empire with help from the Ewoks. Roughly three feet tall – the equivalent of one R2-D2 – these adorable teddy bear-like creatures fit perfectly in the forest backdrop they call home. The Ewoks first appear when they rescue Princess Leia in the forest of Endor (filmed in California's Redwood forests). After some persuasion from C-3PO, they unite with the heroes to fight the tyrannical Emperor. Together, they disrupt the Dark Side and ultimately triumph over the villains. Did you know: Ewoks say "Yub Nub!" – their own intergalactic catchphrase.

***Pokémon* Medley - Junichi Masuda**

Pokémon began as a Japanese video game franchise in 1996 and has since only grown in popularity, spawning a trading card game, TV series, and a detective movie. In the video games, players are designated as "Pokémon Trainers" whose goal is to capture as many types of Pokémon as they can and

continued on the next page →

Pokémon contd.

train a team of Pokémon to battle other Pokémon. Each character has a unique personality and various capabilities. This medley features music from a variety of memorable moments – from the main menu music to Pokémon battles. Listen for the “Wild Pokémon Battle” theme, “Team Rocket Motto” and the “Johto Victory Battle” theme.

“Memory” from *Cats* – Andrew Lloyd Webber

The 1981 musical *Cats* is based on poetry from T.S. Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*. “Memory” is the most famous tune composed for this show, and has been presented in over 20 countries and about 250 cities. This lament is sung by Grizabella the Glamour Cat, once a great beauty, but now an exile from her own tribe. The mournful lyrics reminisce about the “old days” when “life was beautiful.” Although her life is just a shell of her glorious past, Grizabella looks forward with hope and declares her wish to start a new life. “Memory” has been famously recorded by Elaine Paige, Barbra Streisand, and, most recently, Jennifer Hudson. This song reminds us to cherish what once was, but it also encourages us to embrace the beauty of the present and the promise of what the future may hold.

Berceuse & Finale from *The Firebird* - Igor Stravinsky



The Firebird was commissioned in 1910 by Sergei Diaghilev at the Ballet Russes in Paris, marking the first of three musical collaborations between Diaghilev and Stravinsky. The ballet depicts the dashing Prince Ivan Tsarevich, who stumbles upon the garden of the evil King Kashchei. When attacked by the king, Prince Ivan summons the Firebird for aid. After the Firebird's enchantment causes Kashchei and his wicked minions to collapse, we hear the “Berceuse” (lullaby). This ethereal theme begins with a bassoon melody that lulls the villains to an eternal sleep. Finally, the newly liberated princess is free to marry Prince Ivan, and the two live happily ever after. They joyfully celebrate in the “Finale,” which opens with a horn solo inspired by Rimsky-Korsakov's music. Then, Stravinsky revisits the Firebird's motif to bring the ballet to a triumphant conclusion.

“Hoe-Down” from *Rodeo* – Aaron Copland

Rodeo is a hugely successful American ballet composed by Aaron Copland and choreographed by Agnes de Mille. The story follows the Cowgirl, who initially competes to gain the Head Wrangler’s attention. In part one, the “Buckaroo Holiday,” the Cowgirl is embarrassed after her public attempt to ride a bucking bronco fails spectacularly. After a journey of self-discovery, she returns to gain the admiration of every person at the rodeo and ends up with Another Cowboy, who showed her nothing but respect and kindness from the start. “Hoe-Down” signifies her rebirth, borrowing uplifting themes from “Bonaparte’s Retreat” and “McLeod’s Reel”. Characterized by these classic fiddle melodies, dynamic percussion and robust cheers, “Hoe-Down” is the ultimate triumphant celebration for our hero.

***The Lion King Suite* – Elton John & Hans Zimmer**

We are thrilled to reintroduce “The Lion King Suite,” making its fifth appearance in MPO programming after first being played in Fall 2007. This magnificent piece is a medley of 10 songs from the 1994 Disney soundtrack, composed by Elton John and Hans Zimmer. Together, John and Zimmer crafted soaring melodies and majestic orchestration, melding the sounds of the Pride Lands with the drama of a Shakespearean tragedy. In today’s performance, listen for the stomping of elephant feet (timpani), a hornbill’s anxious cry (piccolo), the growling of hyenas (bass clarinet and trombone) and the sound of lions falling in love (or at least Elton John’s interpretation).

“Almost There” from *The Princess and the Frog* – Randy Newman

The Princess and the Frog is a 2009 animated Disney film based on E. D. Baker’s 2002 novel *The Frog Princess* and a German folktale collected by the Brothers Grimm. Anika Noni Rose voices Tiana, a young woman who fantasizes about owning her own restaurant and works hard to realize her dream. Tiana’s character was inspired by Leah Chase (1923 - 2019), the owner of a landmark New Orleans restaurant and a prominent civil rights activist. Randy Newman, also known for his work on *Toy Story*, composed “Almost There” as a tribute to Tiana’s New Orleans roots and love for jazz.

Tico Tico No Fubá – Zequinha de Abreu & Aloysio Oliveira

“Tico Tico No Fubá” (“Sparrow in the Cornmeal”) was written in 1917 by Brazilian composer Zequinha de Abreu. Since its creation, “Tico Tico” has been adapted with lyrics by a variety of singers, including Carmen Miranda and the Andrews Sisters, making it one of the best-known Brazilian songs around the world. This piece belongs to the *choro* genre, a unique style of instrumental music that developed in 1870s Rio de Janeiro. Although *choro* means lament, the music is often upbeat and rhythmic, suggesting that good humor surpasses misfortune. Abreu’s composition was inspired by the Tico-Tico bird, also known as the Rufous-collared Sparrow. Their nickname comes from their vocal songs, which can be short “tsips” or longer trills.

JAWS Suite – John Williams



The 1975 thriller *Jaws* tells the story of a giant, man-eating great white shark threatening the peaceful waters of Amity Island. Together, a police chief, marine biologist, and professional shark hunter venture out to hunt and capture the shark. John Williams’ composition is critical to conveying a great sense of adventure through this movie. The ominous opening notes of “The Shark Theme” first strike fear within audience members. Next, the shanty-esque “Out to Sea” somewhat acts as a counterpoint to the shark, leaving listeners with a sense of catharsis. Finally, “The Shark Cage Fugue” enters as a combative theme for the movie’s hero. As the shark explodes and the carcass sinks, Amity Island can return to its peaceful ways.

William Tell Overture – Gioachino Rossini

Rossini’s *William Tell* Overture is one of the most frequently used classical pieces in American pop culture. You may recognize the main theme from *Tom and Jerry*, *The Princess Diaries* or even Super Bowl ads. *William Tell* was the last of Rossini’s 39 operas and premiered in 1829. This opera follows the titular character, a fictional 14th century Swiss peasant turned legendary hero. According to legend, Tell was able to shoot an apple off of his own son’s head. In this Overture, we hear Tell’s story summarized in four main sections – Prelude: Dawn, Storm, Ranz des vaches (melody of Swiss herdsmen), and Finale: March of the Swiss Soldiers.

THANK YOU

TO THE FOLLOWING GUEST MUSICIANS
FOR JOINING US IN OUR PERFORMANCE TODAY!

Lila Sareen, TRUMPET

Jacquelynn Wealer, FRENCH HORN

Beth Henson, HARP

Alex Miteza, GUITAR

AND THE UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES CENTER,
FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT!





THANK YOU

FOR COMING TO TONIGHT'S CONCERT!



images by Kate Hua

Rejected Concert Titles

Pops Patrol

Carnival of the Pops

The Very Hungry Popserpillar

Michigan Porkestra

Meow-sic by Pops

Gotta Pop 'em All

Club Popsguin

Its Raining Pops and Dawgs

Adopt a Pops

My Pops Ate My Homework!



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