

MICHIGAN POPS ORCHESTRA PRESENTS

THE BATTLE FOR POPS



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2021
7PM AT THE MICHIGAN THEATER

MUSIC DIRECTOR - LEONARD BOPP

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - KATIE SESI

WELCOME TO THE BATTLE FOR POPS!

To Our Beloved Audience,

Welcome to the Pops battlefield where we fight with dragons, ride on horses, duel with lightsabers in a galaxy far, far away, search for a fallen soldier, and bring honor to us all. As I reflect on the past year and a half, I think of all the personal and musical battles we have fought, combating COVID-19, loneliness, and isolation. We are so excited to share our music together as a full orchestra once again and hope you have as much fun listening as we did preparing this program.

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 Patty Havey, Scott Clarke, and Scott McWhinney; the Michigan Marching Band staff including Kimberly Smith, Dr. Richard Frey, and Dr. John Pasquale; Cort Toschlog-Green for lighting design; Dave Schall for audio recording; Irene Ng for poster design; Mary Blaske and the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra; and the staff at the School of Music, Theatre, & Dance for the use of their facilities and equipment.

We owe immense gratitude to Leonard Bopp and Robert Meese, our Music Director and Assistant Music Director, respectively, for their guidance and persistence to drive us to perform at the highest level. I want to also offer many thanks to the members of the Executive Board, all of whom work tirelessly to ensure that our concert is a success each semester. Additionally, thank you to all of the dedicated Pops musicians ("Popsicles") for sharing your talents with our group. A large part of being in Pops is not only the music we play, but the Pops Family that we all come together to make. Pops has single-handedly been my favorite part of attending the University of Michigan, and I owe much of the great experience I've had to all my amazing Popsicles. It has been my honor to serve as your Executive Director, and all of your hard work and dedication to Pops has inspired me to put just as much diligence and passion as you all have into this organization.

Lastly, we would like to thank you, our wonderful audience! We work hard each semester to prepare a concert of the highest music and entertainment quality for you - the families, friends, and fans of Pops. I know you will not regret your decision to assemble here tonight and hope you'll be back for our next show. For now, welcome to The Battle for Pops!

Pops Love,
Katie Sesi
Executive Director

PROGRAM

Marche Slave	Pyotr Tchaikovsky
How to Train Your Dragon	John Powell Arr. Sean O'Loughlin
Finlandia	Jean Sibelius
Robert Meese, Conductor	
Suite from Disney's Mulan	Jerry Goldsmith Songs by Matthew Wilder & David Zippel Arr. Alexander Courage
The Magnificent Seven Symphonic Suite	Elmer Bernstein Edited by Patrick Russe
Robert Meese, Conductor	
You'll Be Back from Hamilton	Lin-Manuel Miranda Arr. Douglas E. Wagner
Christopher Tamayo, Soloist Robert Meese, Conductor	
INTERMISSION	
"Battle of the Heroes" from Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith	John Williams
Mars, the Bringer of War from "The Planets"	Gustav Holst
Avengers Suite	Alan Silvestri Arr. Alex Johansson
Hymn to the Fallen from Saving Private Ryan	John Williams
The Lord of the Rings - The Fellowship of the Ring	Howard Shore Arr. John Whitney
Robert Meese, Conductor	

ORCHESTRA MEMBERS



Violin I

Katie Sesi*~
Katie Zhao
Andy Chen
Rose Sproat~
Alex Zhang
Matthew Yao
John Yang
Frank Wang
Lucas Tittle
Aruna Ganesan
Sophia Lee
Adham Fattah
Melissa Beyrand~
Oliver Gao
Marcus Schubert
Ranya Liu

Violin II

Julie Zhou*
Sydney Proudlock
Max McLoughlin
Jennani Jayaram
Atticus Driver
Alexandra Fortune~
Calise Wang~
Michelle Li
Jennifer Meng
Tanushree Rathi
Shannon Liang
Kevin Wang
Luke LaMere
Sarah-Marie Jabre

Viola

Stephen Moss*~
Taylor Murray
Paul Fedorowicz~
Matthew Proefke
Anthony Medei
Sarah Gellman
Alexander Gedeon
Vatsal Joshi
Minnie Sun
Anna Shinohara
Lindsey Choi

Cello

Peter Nam*
Jeffrey Lin
Mitchell Chang
Pavani Anand
Lauren Hertzner
Sean Tant
Jinwook Lee~
Jagienka Timek~
Richard Liu
Ben Stefadu
Avi Weingarten
Malin Andersson~

Double Bass

Sylvia Wei*

Tanya Lai~

Flute/Piccolo

Nicholas Cemalovic*

Elayna Sabelhaus*~

Claire Wan

Jessica You

Olivia Kulawiak

Oboe

Stephanie Turner*

Megan Wieger

Clarinet/Bass Clarinet

Isabella Panse*

William Zhang

Benjamin Stensen

French Horn

Matthew Riddel*

Siwei Sun*

Emma Workman

Noah Stevens

Trumpet

Greg Papefthymiou*

Keenan Bakowski

Kohler Briggs

Ian Loree

Trombone

Isaac Brooks*

Austin Lan*

Evan Chung

William Knudsen

Tuba

Alexander Tran

Piano

Nat Shi

Percussion

Noah Zimmerman*

Ben King

Shreya Mani

*Section Principal

~Member of Executive Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD



Executive Director	Katie Sesi
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Co-Technical Director	Jagienka Timek
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Co-Social Director	Melissa Beyrand
Co-Social Director	Paul Fedorowicz
Librarian	Calise Wang

MUSIC DIRECTOR

LEONARD BOPP

Leonard Bopp is a current student in the masters degree program in Orchestral Conducting at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance, where he studies with Kenneth Kiesler. In addition to serving as Music Director of the Michigan Pops, Bopp serves as Assistant Conductor of the Life Sciences Orchestra. Throughout his time at Michigan, he has also served as a Cover Conductor for the University Symphony Orchestra and the Contemporary Directions Ensemble. Bopp is also Artistic Director and a founding member of the BlackBox Ensemble, a New York City-based contemporary music ensemble devoted to using new music as a platform to advance the social justice causes of our time.

After graduating from The Juilliard School Pre-College Division, where he studied trumpet with Raymond Mase, Leonard attended Williams College, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Music and English, where he was Assistant Conductor of the Berkshire Symphony and Student Director of the I/O Contemporary Music Festival. Upon graduation, he was awarded Highest Honors in Music for his senior thesis on Benjamin Britten's wartime compositions, and was named the 2019 recipient of the Hubbard Hutchinson Fellowship in Music. At the University of Michigan, Leonard's compositional and research work has been supported by the U-M Libraries Mini-Grant, the International Institute Individual Fellowship, and ArtsEngine.



ASSISTANT MUSIC DIRECTOR

ROBERT MEESE



Emerging conductor Robert Meese currently serves as the Assistant Music Director of the Michigan Pops Orchestra, Assistant Conductor of the University Symphony Orchestra, and Assistant Conductor and Manager of the Campus Symphony Orchestra. Robert studies Orchestral Conducting with Kenneth Kiesler at the University of Michigan, and has recent masterclass experience with Christian Măcelaru, Gerard Schwarz, Jose-Luis Novo, and Grant Cooper.

Previously, Robert graduated from Duke University with Highest Distinction, having earned the Julia Wilkinson Mueller Prize for Excellence in Music and the Duke Symphony Orchestra Conductor's Award. His artistic study was supported by the Music Department, the Benenson Award in the Arts, and the Undergraduate Research Support Office. While at Duke, Robert studied conducting with Verena Mösenbichler-Bryant, and led the Duke Chamber Players for four years as Artistic Director. The culmination of his undergraduate studies included performances of Aaron Copland's Appalachian Spring Suite, Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphony no. 6, and his own arrangement of Robert Schumann's Kinderszenen, op. 15.



SOLOIST **CHRISTOPHER TAMAYO**

A multi-instrumentalist and performer, Christopher Tamayo is a Senior Undergraduate currently pursuing a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from the University of Michigan, as well as a Minor in Musical Theatre Composition. He has performed in several productions across campus, most recently in U-M alum Andrew Lippa's *The Wild Party* at the Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre. In addition to studying stage performance, Christopher also takes a keen interest in music production and voiceover work. He has also played violin for the Michigan Pops Orchestra during their 2018-19 season (hi, Seconds!). During his free time, he will often be found immersing himself in the next great third-person RPG or learning some obscure skill/hobby online that he will never practically use. All the love and gratitude goes out to his friends and family for allowing him the opportunity to sing, dance, and play every day.

GRADUATING MEMBER **TAYLOR MURRAY**

Taylor has been a violist in Pops since 2018 and was the Outreach director during the 2019-2020 season. Her favorite moments in Pops are the small ones: doing interpretive dance while selling tickets with Stephanie, riding in her carpool with Joel, Malin, and Sahil singing songs from the Sound of Music, plotting a murder mystery party where she gets to die dramatically, filming pops movies and trying not to laugh at those with dinosaur masks on, miming "Nicholas Cage stealing the Declaration of Independence" at a Pops Prog, acting like an old married couple with her stand partner (love you Rachel + Stephen), doing a parody of Stars from Les Mis at Pops Got Talent, and jaywalking home after exec board meetings with Tanya. She feels extremely grateful to have found this weird, lovely family and to have been accepted and celebrated by the people in it. Pops love forever <3



GRADUATING MEMBER **ALEXANDER GEDEON**

Alongside his Computer Science degree, Alex has had the pleasure of pursuing a Minor in Music as well. His Minor has taken him through a multitude of music theory, composition, and performance courses, culminating in learning how to play the carillon in the bell towers on central and north campus. Alex has also studied piano and violin for many years in the past, learning viola after coming to college. He's been a part of the MPO as a violist since his second semester freshman year and has many fond memories from his various experiences with the orchestra. Some of his favorite moments come both from social events like Progressive or Popsluck and just learning interesting and challenging pieces like the Infernal Dance from Stravinsky's Firebird Suite. The MPO has transformed him as a musician, and he feels very fortunate to have been a part of such a unique community.



PROGRAM NOTES

March Slave - Pyotr Tchaikovsky

Tchaikovsky's *March Slave* was written in 1876 for a charity concert commissioned by the Slavonic Charity Committee and organized to raise money to supply equipment for Russian volunteer soldiers and provide relief for war victims. Throughout the piece, Tchaikovsky incorporates segments of traditional folk songs that are symbolic. The first section describes the oppression of the Serbians by the Turkish. Tchaikovsky uses the full orchestra to build an immense climax to represent the atrocities of the Balkans. The turbulent mood then mellows into the second section, which describes the Russians rallying to help the Serbians. An upbeat four-bar melody is passed around the orchestra until it finally gives way to a solemn arrival of the Russian national anthem "God Save the Tzar". The third and final section portrays Russian volunteers marching to help the Serbians, utilizing another blazing rendition of "God Saves the Tzar", which portrays triumph against tyranny. The overture finishes with a victorious full orchestra coda.

How to Train Your Dragon - John Powell

How to Train Your Dragon is a tale about a teenager, Hiccup, living on the fantastical island of Berk, where dragon fighting is the way of life. Despite being the son of the macho village leader, Hiccup is clumsy, quirky, and a bit of a misfit on the island. After being thrown into dragon fighting school, Hiccup tries his best to prove himself strong and valiant. Instead, Hiccup befriends an injured dragon, Toothless, which ultimately transforms the relationship between humans and dragons on the island. The selections from the movie's soundtrack offer sweeping melodies, extravagant fanfares, and Nordic folk music influences, which are sure to transport listeners to a Viking village (that may or may not be swarmed by dragons!)

Finlandia - Jean Sibelius

1899 was a pivotal year for Finland, as the country was at the mercy of the Russian Empire. With their autonomy being threatened by increasing amounts of censorship, the fight for Finnish freedom grew, supported by Jean Sibelius, who was an activist in addition to being a composer. *Finlandia* is a symphonic poem composed by Jean Sibelius in 1899 for performance at a political demonstration held in Helsinki that year and was later revised in 1900. Originally titled "Finland Awakes!", Sibelius instead opted for "Finlandia" to avoid sparking the negative attention of Russian censors. The popularity of the piece was a great surprise to Sibelius, but the central melody is now an unofficial national anthem for the Finns: an anthem for a free Finland.

PROGRAM NOTES

Suite from Disney's *Mulan* - Jerry Goldsmith

Disney's *Mulan* portrays the story of a brave girl who experiences battles in many forms. Concerned that her old and feeble father will be drafted into the Chinese military, *Mulan* courageously takes his spot. However, being a female living under a patriarchal regime, she is not allowed to serve. Therefore, she pretends to be a man and keeps this a secret throughout her battle training. The famous song "Reflection", which is included in our performance today, portrays *Mulan*'s battle to overcome societal expectations placed on her. In the end, *Mulan* overcomes stereotypes about women in battle and uses her cleverness to fight off the invasion of the Huns. The "Suite from *Mulan*" is based on songs and score from the film, but composed just for orchestra, so listen for hints of other classic songs from the film throughout our performance today.

The Magnificent Seven Symphonic Suite - Elmer Bernstein

The Magnificent Seven Symphonic Suite brings a familiar 1960s film soundtrack to life. Written by Elmer Bernstein specifically for John Sturges western film of the same name, this piece brings up mental images of a band of gunslingers in the Wild West. The movie has many action-packed battle scenes, as the cowboys must defend themselves and the Mexican border from bandits. Original movie advertisements emphasized that this crew of cowboys was tough, stating "they were seven, but they fought like seven hundred!" The movie was inspired by the Japanese film "Seven Samurai", which premiered in 1954. Additionally, Elmer Bernstein received an Academy Award nomination for this score and this music became familiar to the public as the music for Marlboro cigarette commercials in the 60s. The popularity of both the music and the story must have stood the test of time, as Columbia Pictures decided to remake the movie in 2016, starring Denzel Washington, Chris Pratt, Ethan Hawke, Vincent D'Onofrio, Lee Byung-hun, Manuel Garcia-Rulfo, and Martin Sensmeier as the "the seven".

"You'll Be Back" from *Hamilton* - Lin-Manuel Miranda

"You'll Be Back" is the seventh song from the musical *Hamilton*, which was written by Lin-Manuel Miranda and is based on the life of founding father Alexander Hamilton. After the musical's 2015 premiere, the show gained incredible popularity, as fans were captivated by Miranda's modern and inventive approach to telling American history. "You'll Be Back" is essentially a breakup song from King George III to the rebelling American colonies. King George expresses his prediction that the colonies will come crawling back to him and the British Empire when their rebellious efforts fail. Overall, the song is a playful and lighthearted take on King George's grievances of the Revolutionary War.

PROGRAM NOTES

"Battle of the Heroes" from Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith - John Williams

Battle of the Heroes, composed by the renowned and well-celebrated composer John Williams, was written for Episode III – Revenge of the Sith, the sixth film of the Star Wars series. This particular piece depicts a tragic duel between two former friends: Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi. The main theme is at its climax during this battle, while fragments of other Star Wars themes are intertwined into the intense composition. The themes referenced in Battle of the Heroes, subtle though they are, include Vader's theme, Across the Stars, and two Shmi-related themes. In the movie, the track begins after Obi-Wan and Anakin are caught in a collapsing control arm on Mustafar and ends when Obi-Wan leaves Anakin on the edge of the lava river.

Mars, the Bringer of War from "The Planets" - Gustav Holst

"The Planets" is an orchestral suite written by Gustav Holst in 1914, who aimed to create a series in which each movement depicts a different planet. Mars, the Bringer of War, has a large emphasis on high and low brass in 5/4 rhythm. The combination of ear-catching dissonance and an atypical time signature makes this piece extremely ferocious. The association of the planet Mars with war dates back as far as history records, so Holst's composition is sure to bring an intense battle scene to mind. English conductor Adrian Boult remembered and quoted Holst to say that he also wanted to emphasize the stupidity of war, so be sure to notice how the aggressive and wild nature illustrates the repercussions of war that our world faces.

Avengers Suite - Alan Silvestri

The Avengers Theme was written by American composer Alan Silvestri for the iconic Marvel Cinematic Universe. The first film in the MCU franchise was Iron Man, which premiered in 2008. The franchise has since grown to include 26 popular films, including *Avengers* (2012) and *Avengers Endgame* (2019). These two movies tell the story of how the superheroes we have met in the preceding films band together to form "The Avengers": a group of earth's mightiest heroes teaming up to defeat evil. The original core team of Avengers include heroes you know and love: Iron Man, Captain America, Thor, Hulk, Black Widow, and Hawkeye. After a long journey of combat, their final battle together takes place during Avengers Endgame. In tonight's performance, we hope you enjoy watching our interpretation of the action-packed glory of the films.

PROGRAM NOTES

"Hymn to the Fallen" from Saving Private Ryan - John Williams

Saving Private Ryan is a powerful movie that portrays the horrors of World War II. This particular piece, Hymn to the Fallen, is a memorial to the soldiers who passed and sacrificed themselves during the Normandy Invasion on June 6, 1944. This piece highlights John Williams's sensitivity as a composer, as his primary goal for this piece was restraint. He wanted to leave emotion in its raw form and not do too much to create artificial emotion. This piece is a chance for listeners to reflect and remember, as the simple melody creates an atmosphere of reverence and poignancy.

The Lord of the Rings-The Fellowship of the Ring - Howard Shore

The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring is the first installment of the LOTR trilogy. The fantasy film premiered in 2001 and was based on the 1954 novel by J.R.R. Tolkien. The score for the movie was written by Howard Shore, and today's symphonic suite includes a medley of the film's pieces, including "The Fellowship Theme", "The Prophecy", "Concerning Hobbits", and "In Dreams". The story tells of the Dark Lord Sauron, who seeks the One Ring to retrieve part of his soul and return to power. However, the ring found its way into the possession of the young hobbit Frodo Baggins. The fate of Middle-earth is in the hands of Frodo and eight companions, who form the Fellowship of the Ring, as they journey to Mount Doom in an effort to destroy the Ring. This concluding selection on our program is sure to remind you of the most epic aspects of battle, adventure, and teaming together against evil.





Rejected Concert Titles

- All is Fair in Popslove and War
- Pops Poppin Off in Battle
- Dishonor on you, Dishonor on Pops
- Pops Be Fighting
- Pops vs. America's Declining Budget Towards the Arts
- Pops, The Bringer of War
- Captain America: The Winter Pops
- From Pops, with Hate
- Popsvengers Assemble
- Boom Boom Pops
- Seconds vs. Cellos



photos by Ben Hsu

Thank you for coming to tonight's concert!
We hope you enjoy the show!