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WELCOME



Good Evening and welcome to Love In The Air!

We are so happy that you chose to make us a part of your Valentine's Weekend. Once again, Maestro Topilow has woven a tapestry of tunes that will touch your heart strings and will have your toes tapping.

We welcome Natalie Green as she brings her talents to the stage with a variety of songs to capture our hearts. We are also blessed to have talented soloists from the FSO itself: Victor Beyens, Kimberly Zaleski, Emily Laurance, and Julia Simpson as they add to this evening's festivities.

We are currently in our Annual Fund Campaign and would like to thank all of you who have sent in donations to keep this orchestra vibrant. If you haven't sent your donation in, we'd love to hear from you. If you didn't receive a letter, please contact me or the office and we'll be sure to get one to you. This is your opportunity to help continue the highest quality of music and musicians in your community.

Thank you all again for coming and supporting live music and enjoy the show.

A handwritten signature in pink ink that reads "Ron Brooker". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional yet personal style.

Ron Brooker, FSO Executive Director

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CARL TOPILOW



During Carl Topilow's tenure as the Firelands Symphony Orchestra's Music Director and Conductor, the orchestra has seen a dramatic improvement in the orchestra's quality, a significant rise in subscriptions and the appearance of world class soloists to our stage.

In addition to his work with the FSO, Topilow is Founding Conductor of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, Conductor Laureate of the National Repertory Orchestra, a summer festival in Breckenridge, Colorado, and was named Faculty Emeritus at the Cleveland Institute of Music. He has served as principal pops conductor of the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, the Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, and the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra.

Topilow has performed as guest conductor with 132 different orchestras in 37 states and 12 foreign countries. This year, he will be hosting his fourth conducting workshop in Cleveland.

Topilow's wife Shirley is President and CEO of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra. Their daughter Emily is a marketing associate with the Cleveland Clinic, and their daughter Jenny is a violinist with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra.

Carl's book, *The Orchestral Conductor's Career Handbook* published by Rowman and Littlefield, is now available through www.carltopilow.com and www.rowman.com.

PODIUM NOTES



We are looking forward to celebrating Valentine's Day weekend with a variety of romantic music, from the classics, to Broadway, to Hollywood, and more!

Our charming and talented guest vocalist, Natalie Green, will be making her Firelands Symphony debut with a Broadway song, a jazz standard, and a song from Hollywood: *My Heart Will Go On* from *Titanic*, one of the most popular love songs ever written.

We will be featuring four of our orchestra members as soloists: violinist Victor Beyens, oboist Julia Simpson, flutist Kimberly Zalesky, and harpist Emily Laurance, in several selections which are sure to create an emotional connection with our audience.

Two classics often heard at wedding ceremonies are Mendelssohn's *Wedding March* from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Pachelbel's *Canon*. The orchestra will be heard in Tchaikovsky's powerful *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture* and *Tara's Theme* from *Gone with the Wind*. I'll be starting the concert with Rodgers and Hart's *My Funny Valentine*, which I'll play on my red clarinet.

Giacomo Puccini's grand opera *Turandot* includes a fantastic section of music connecting the two scenes of Act 2 which I've adapted and called *The Entrance of the Emperor*. This colorful music will be the first performance by the FSO.

To close the program, all will be invited to sing Harry Warren's *That's Amore*, made famous by Ohio native Dean Martin.

We look forward to an evening of beautiful and inspiring music!

Carl Topilow, Music Director and Conductor



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GUEST ARTISTS



NATALIE GREEN, VOCALIST

Natalie Green is delighted to appear onstage with The Firelands Symphony Orchestra. She has also starred with Maestro Carl Topilow and the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, as well as The Cleveland Pops Orchestra Ensemble, where they headlined the Arts at Altitude Festival in Estes Park, Colorado. Natalie is a graduate of Point Park University's

Conservatory of Performing Arts. She is the lead singer & owner of Grand Avenue Band, and has performed regularly with The Sunrise Jones, Intense and Collision Jazz. She works as voiceover artist with American Greetings and has appeared as a contestant on American Idol. As an Equity actor, Natalie has been seen regionally at Dobama Theatre, Ohio Shakespeare Festival, Cleveland Public Theatre, EJ Thomas Hall, Cleveland Play House, Pittsburgh Repertory Company, Beck Center for the Arts, and many more.



VICTOR BEYENS, VIOLIN

One of Northeast Ohio's most versatile violinists, Victor Beyens is currently the concertmaster of the Mansfield Symphony, as well as assistant concertmaster of the Firelands Symphony and assistant principal second of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra. Victor is an active member and musical/pops arranger for Opus 216, an eclectic group of

musicians who perform a variety of repertoire and genres in the Cleveland area. He also performs many house concerts and private events with M.U.S.i.C. (Musical Upcoming Stars in the Classics), with which he also serves as a board member. Victor has recently performed a variety of concerti as a soloist with the Mansfield Symphony, Chagrin Falls studio orchestra, National Repertory Orchestra, and the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra. He has also performed in the violin sections of the Phoenix Symphony, The Cleveland Orchestra, Erie Philharmonic, and several others.

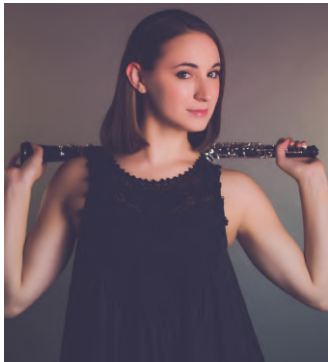
GUEST ARTISTS



EMILY LAURANCE, HARP

Cleveland-based harpist Emily Laurance is currently Principal Harp with the Firelands Symphony, and also performs frequently with the Erie Philharmonic and many other Northeast Ohio ensembles. Prior to relocating to Ohio, she served eight seasons as Principal Harp with the Stockton (CA) Symphony and was Chair of Music History

at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Her recording credits include Luciano Berio's *Sequenza II* on Neuma Records as well as the Squirrel Nut Zippers album *Perennial Favorites*, which won the Recording Institute Association of America's Gold Sales award. In addition to degrees in harp from the Oberlin and the New England Conservatories Dr. Laurance received her PhD in musicology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, after which she was a postdoctoral fellow at the John W. Kluge Center at the Library of Congress.



JULIA SIMPSON, OBOE

Julia Simpson, raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is an orchestral oboist and arts administration professional. Ms. Simpson graduated with her bachelor's degree from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in Houston, Texas, where she was a student of Robert Atherholt, retired principal oboist of the Houston Symphony. She has also

started her graduate studies at The Cleveland Institute of Music with Frank Rosenwein, principal oboist of The Cleveland Orchestra. Recently, Ms. Simpson has performed with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and The Cleveland Orchestra—under the baton of John Adams and Alan Gilbert. Ms. Simpson was a 2022 Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra Fellow, as well as the Oboe Fellow at the Bowdoin International Music Festival. While in Charleston, South Carolina for the Spoleto Festival USA, she premiered *Omar*—a new opera production by Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels that was listed among the “Best Classical Music Performances of 2022” by the *New York Times*.

GUEST ARTISTS



KIMBERLY ZALESKI, FLUTE

As the Touring Flutist with 5 Time Grammy Nominee, David Arkenstone, Kimberly Zaleski has performed throughout the U.S. Highlights include performances at The Grammy Museum in Los Angeles, and the Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, Arizona. She can be heard on two of his newest albums, "Fairy Fantasy" and "Quest for the

Runestone." Based in Cleveland, Ms. Zaleski is the Principal Flutist of the Firelands Symphony Orchestra and Second Flutist with CityMusic Cleveland Chamber Orchestra and has performed with The Cleveland Orchestra, The Cleveland Pops Orchestra, Erie Philharmonic, Akron Symphony, Toledo Symphony and many other ensembles throughout Ohio. Ms. Zaleski was a finalist of both Astral Artists Musical Agency and Carnegie Hall's Ensemble ACJW Program at The Juilliard School. She holds the distinction of being the first piccoloist on the nationally broadcast radio show, "From the Top."



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CONCERT PROGRAM

Love in the Air | February 15, 2025

The Firelands Symphony Orchestra
Carl Topilow, Music Director & Conductor
John McLaughlin Williams, Conducting Assistant

Guest Artist: Natalie Green, vocalist

My Funny Valentine from *Babes in Arms*.....Richard Rodgers & Lorenz Hart
Carl Topilow, clarinet

Wedding March from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.....Felix Mendelssohn

Gabriel's Oboe from *The Mission*.....Ennio Morricone
Julia Simpson, oboe

Concerto for Flute and Harp.....Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
II. Andantino
Kimberly Zaleski, flute | Emily Laurance, harp

Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture.....Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

INTERMISSION

Tara's Theme from *Gone with the Wind*.....Max Steiner

Tambourin Chinois.....Fritz Kreisler
Meditation from *Thais*.....Jules Massenet
Victor Beyens, violin

Entrance of the Emperor from *Turandot*.....Giacomo Puccini

Gimme Gimme from *Thoroughly Modern Millie*.....Jeanine Tesori
The Very Thought of You.....Ray Noble, arr. Paul Ferguson
My Heart Will Go On from *Titanic*.....James Horner
Natalie Green, vocalist

Canon.....Johann Pachelbel

That's Amore.....Harry Warren



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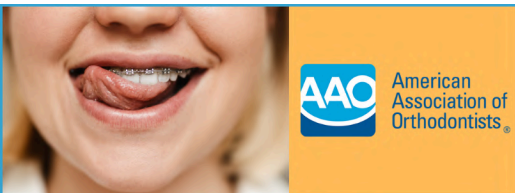
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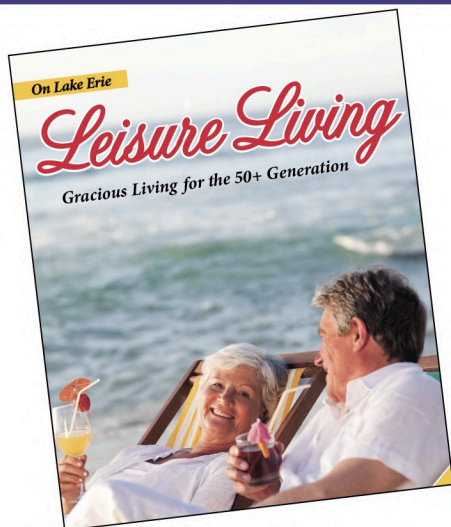
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