

Music director bids adieu with La Porte County Symphony's season finale

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Philip J. Bauman, who is stepping down as La Porte County Symphony Orchestra music director after 23 seasons, conducts "From Hollywood to Broadway" May 5 at the La Porte Civic Auditorium to close the 2017-18 season. (La Porte County Symphony Orchestra)

Jessi Virtusio Post-Tribune

An exclusive premiere plus a fond farewell help to close out La Porte County Symphony Orchestra's 2017-18 season.

"From Hollywood to Broadway" on May 5 at the La Porte Civic Auditorium marks Philip J. Bauman's final concert as La Porte County Symphony Orchestra music director.

"I'm very proud of the musicians of the orchestra and the dedication that they've made into making this a first-class ensemble," said Bauman about the performers who include Crown Point, Munster and Valparaiso residents.

"I'm really proud that we've integrated young players into our orchestra. They like the repertoires we're playing. They like the selections that we bring.

"We've been able to tackle some significant pieces such as 'Carmina Burana' and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and had some really incredible moments over the years. It's the growth of musicianship and quality that I'm really proud of."

"From Hollywood to Broadway" includes the premiere of guest conductor Rick DeJonge's "A Tribute to Silent Films," a multimedia piece adapted for La Porte County Symphony Orchestra.

DeJonge, who began his career in music education in LaPorte, has been the official arranger and composer for Walt Disney World's Thanksgiving Day parade since 2011 and is the composer of "Ho Ho Ho," which premiered at Healthcare Foundation of La Porte's 2016 "Holiday at the Pops" concert.

"I'm really excited about what he did with the piece," said Bauman about the Hollywood composer and orchestrator's "A Tribute to Silent Films," which was composed years ago but has never been played by orchestra.

"It's somewhat of a challenge for us to play along with a click track and the drummer as well to make sure it lines up exactly with the film. It's very cleverly written and lines up well with the film that he's edited."

"From Hollywood to Broadway" includes selections from movies such as the "Harry Potter" series and Broadway shows such as "Hamilton," along with a tribute to composer Richard Rodgers.

La Porte County Symphony Orchestra's in-house choir Illumination sings along with selections from "Avatar" and "Mamma Mia!" while Trail Creek resident Andrew Tallackson, a co-producer on the film "The Looking Glass," is guest pianist for a selection from the film "La La Land."

"I was really excited to get some more modern arrangements and new additions to the pops repertoire for this concert," said Bauman (www.philipbauman.com). "It's a big diversity of selections and more of a modern age as opposed to doing all old-school pops and Broadway. I thought it was a good mixture."

"From Hollywood to Broadway" also includes a deleted scene from the 1986 sports film "Hoosiers" with the orchestra playing the theme in the La Porte Civic Auditorium, which Bauman noted is appropriately a basketball court with seats around it.

"Robert Swan, who was an actor in the film, lives in Rolling Prairie. We're going to have him say a few words on what it was like working on the movie," Bauman said.

“It’s a very catchy tune. It’s really hard to get out of your head once you’ve heard it.”

La Porte County Symphony Orchestra, which will feature two seasons of guest conductors while searching for a new music director, pays tribute to Bauman with a slide show from 6:30-7:15 p.m.

“As I look back on my career, 23 years is a really long time and I just felt like the time was right to move along and let someone else take over the orchestra. It was a hard decision to make especially when I’ve invested so much of my life and my being into a group like that,” Bauman said.

“There are other opportunities out there for me that I would want to experience and I should take the opportunity to do that so it was a very tough decision but one that I think will serve the orchestra well. I certainly wish them all the best and hope that they can build on what we’ve accomplished so far.”

Bauman continues as music director of Michigan City Messiah at First Presbyterian Church, conductor of the Munster-based Northwest Indiana Symphony Youth Orchestra and South Suburban College Orchestra in Illinois, and manager of the Munster-based Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra.

La Porte County Symphony Orchestra associate conductor Charles Steck has been booked as conductor for “Holiday at the Pops” in December.

‘From Hollywood to Broadway’

When: 7:30 p.m. May 5

Where: the La Porte Civic Auditorium, 1001 Ridge St., LaPorte

Tickets: \$20 adults; \$18 ages 65 and older; free students and children; \$30 table seats

Information: 219-362-9020; www.lcso.net

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