

The Music Man

Joins The Phoenix Symphony

Text by Rebecca Sebek | Photo by Brendan Anderson

The Phoenix Symphony which has been serving the Phoenix metropolitan area and Arizona since 1947 kicks off the Pops Season with The Music Man. Michael Christie, Phoenix's own Music Man joins Artistic Director Michael Barnard for this show stopping semi-stage production. The combination of the innovative Michael Christie and titan of creativity Michael Barnard is proof that this is a performance the public won't want to miss.

The Music Man's book, music, and lyrics were created by Meredith Willson; it's based on a story by Willson and Franklin Lacey. The story takes place in River City, Iowa and involves con man Harold Hill who pretends to be a boys' band leader. He sells instruments and uniforms and promises to teach the town's marching band how to play them before leaving town with the cash. Marian Paroo, the librarian sees through Harold, but falls in love with him after he helps her younger brother. Harold falls for Marian as well and risks being caught to be with her. Who knew that a con man in a small Midwestern town would win not only the heart of Marian, but the hearts of people everywhere!

Maryellen H. Gleason, President and CEO of The Phoenix Symphony said, "The Music Man is from the golden age of music which is why it was chosen to kick off the Pops Season. The orchestra is important to Broadway and to musicals in general."

The Phoenix Symphony began with a handful of musicians and has grown into a 76-member ensemble that is Phoenix's only full-time orchestra. Based in Phoenix Symphony Hall, the orchestra plays before 300,000 music and performance enthusiasts each year and offers 275 concerts and presentation during its season from September to June. In addition to playing Symphony Hall, the orchestra performs in Scottsdale, Mesa, Prescott, and throughout central Arizona.

Virginia G. Piper Music Director Michael Christie has guided The Phoenix Symphony since 2005. In addition to his musical directorship in Phoenix, he serves as the Music Director of the Brooklyn Philharmonic and 2008 marked his ninth season as Music Director for the annual Colorado Music Festival. The Phoenix Symphony and the residents of Arizona are fortunate to have Michael Christie and his vast array of national and international experience.

The guest artists for this season won't disappoint and some of them are the youngest in the world! Former guest artists of The Phoenix Symphony have included Emanuel Ax, Van Cliburn, James Galway, Yo-Yo Ma, Midori, Itzhak Perlman, Isaac Stern, André Watts, Sarah Chang, Olga Kern, Karen Gomyo, and Pinchas Zukerman. Guest pop artists have included Sandy Duncan, Michael Feinstein, Marvin Hamlisch, Bobby McFerrin, Andrea Marcovicci, and Peter Nero. Doc Severinsen was the pops conductor from 1983-84.

The Phoenix Symphony is planning a powerful 2010-11 season. They play over 100 concerts each year and never cease to disappoint. This year's Pops performances include a date with The King himself, Elvis Presley; the music of Paul McCartney; a Home for the Holidays, and much more. The most awe inspiring performance will be the showcasing of composers who were suppressed by the Nazis. The Phoenix Symphony is the first North American orchestra to present this music and it's not to be missed.

The Music Man plays four performances beginning on Friday, September 10 and ending on Sunday, September 12. There's a surprise at the end of every show! You'll have to attend a performance to find out what it is.

For information on purchasing tickets for The Music Man and other performances, visit The Phoenix Symphony at <http://www.phoenixsymphony.org/> or call the Box Office at (602) 495-1999 or (800) 776-9080. Box Office hours are Monday through Friday, 10am to 4pm. If you wish to become a new subscriber or renew your season tickets, please visit The Phoenix Symphony at <https://www.phoenixsymphony.org/renewals>. □



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