



**For Immediate Release:
The Metropolitan Youth Symphony
in Collaboration with the Northwest Children's Theater
Brings "Firebird" to Life**

PORTLAND, OR (January 23) - This March, the Metropolitan Youth Symphony teams up with the Northwest Children's Theater to pay homage to the coming spring season with a brilliantly hued program of movement, puppetry, and spectacular orchestral fireworks inspired by birds.

**Sunday, March 3, 2019 at 7:30 pm
Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall, Downtown Portland**

The Starlings, Northwest Children's Theater's "all-puppet, all-bird acting troupe," enlivens the stage as the talented Symphony Orchestra perform the birdsong-infused showpiece *Gli uccelli* by master orchestral colorist, Ottorino Respighi. The five movement suite sparkles with life, playfully depicting the Dove, the Hen, the Nightingale, and the Cuckoo in Respighi's signature late-romantic style. Indulging his lifelong interest in exploring music of the past, Respighi uses 18th century keyboard pieces which depict birdsong as inspiration for this piece, applying his expert orchestration techniques to kaleidoscopic effect.

This program also includes the highly-anticipated WORLD PREMIERE of *Fugue for Orchestra* by Lakeridge High School junior Max Ball, the second in a series of three commissions which comprise "The Authentic Voice." This collaborative project between MYS and Fear No Music's Young Composers Project, sponsored by Ronni Lacroute, provides unparalleled training and

performance opportunity for promising young composers. *Fugue for Orchestra* adheres to fugal principals but incorporates a variety of elements from baroque and classical style in addition to those of contemporary classical music, jazz, and other genres. The talent of young composer Max Ball reveals itself in his exceptional ability to absorb the techniques and designs of compositional masters, and then create music that references those styles but is also uniquely his own.

In addition, MYS performs the third movement from Jacques Ibert's *Flute Concerto*, featuring a solo performance by Westview High School senior John Nguyen, one of the winners of the 2019 MYS Concerto Competition. Amazingly, John has only played the flute for three years, but is clearly a natural on the instrument. He is the principal flute for both the Westview Wind Ensemble and the Western International Band, and at MYS, participates in the Symphony Orchestra and Symphonic Band. John blew the judges away with his impassioned, whirlwind performance of this highly technical and engaging showpiece for the flute. With its breakneck speed melodies, upper register trills and flutter-tongues for an instrument that has long been associated with bird calls, this piece perfectly enhances the programmatic scope of aviary exploration.

The musical pyrotechnics continue with the highlight of the program: a uniquely staged production of the beloved original suite from one of the greatest ballets of the 20th century, Igor Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. Based in ancient Slavic folklore, the Firebird is a powerful spirit capable of bestowing both blessings and doom upon its captor. An object of difficult quest, the Firebird intervenes in this version of the fairytale to bring justice and joy to those who are deserving. Through borrowed Russian folk melodies Stravinsky honors the story's mythological origins, but the lion's share of this iconic work is the unique creation of this most distinctive and powerful composer.



Tickets for Firebird: \$11 - \$40 at playmys.org or call 503.239.4566

Arts for All tickets are available to Oregon Trailcard holders for only \$5 per ticket

Presented in partnership with the Audubon Society of Portland and Backyard Bird Shop

With a foundational commitment to access, the **Metropolitan Youth Symphony** educates, develops and promotes over 500 young musicians of all ages and levels of experience each year in one of the nation's largest youth orchestra programs. Learn more at playmys.org.

The mission of **Northwest Children's Theater and School** is to educate, entertain and enrich the lives of young audiences. NWCT produces four Mainstage shows per year and administers one of the largest theater schools on the west coast. nwcts.org



Composer Max Ball



Flutist John Nguyen

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