

The Augusta Chronicle

Entertainment

Augusta Symphony seeks New Horizons in first season at Miller Theater

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Posted Jul 31, 2018 at 7:08 PM

Updated Jul 31, 2018 at 7:08 PM

New Horizons.

It's a fitting theme for the Augusta Symphony's upcoming season.

"We've settled into our new home of the Miller Theater, and we're going to look to the future," said Dirk Meyer, the Symphony's music director.

And the group is doing a few new things this year that will appeal to both the seasoned symphony follower as well as newcomers.

The season opener on Sept. 28 at the Miller Theater is called Obsession, which should please classical music lovers, but there's a twist.

Paired with Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 and Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique is a piece called the Red Cape Tango, which gives a nod to Superman. Also, concert goers are encouraged to download the EnCue app, a phone app that delivers real-time concert notes.

"It's really designed to enhance the concert experience," he said.

And patrons don't have to be worried about distractions of a bright screen in a dark theater. The app itself is dark and won't exert excess light.

The season finale takes another unusual twist.

Musical Pictures on April 27 will combine the symphony with a multimedia presentation.

"It has animated movies specifically made to go with that music," Meyer said.

The settings can be adjusted if the speed of the music changes to keep the pictures in sync with the orchestra, he said.

Those two concerts are part of the University Health Care System Symphony Series. Other concerts in that series include the Nov. 9 concert titled New Horizons with flutist Wendy Cohen and Vonda Darr on harp; European favorites will be played on Jan. 12; Mentors will be on Feb. 23; and Tragedy and Triumph will be March 23. All concerts in the symphony series will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Miller Theater.

Also part of the New Horizons theme are some new offerings to this year's calendar, including a family concert series that will be performed at the Hardin Auditorium in Columbia County.

"For the last few years, we've done a chamber concert series in Columbia County," Meyer said.

Those concerts won't include the entire orchestra, but they will be a larger ensemble. The two concerts will be one hour long and geared to families with children.

Planned for Sunday afternoons, the first will be Dec. 9, and will feature holiday music. The second concert will be on March 24 and will focus on stories such as Peter and the Wolf in which each animal is represented by an instrument and Ravel's musical illustration of the Mother Goose Suite.

Also part of the season is the popular University Health Care System Pops! Series, which features a salute to the Eagles on Oct. 18, a holiday spectacular will be on Dec. 6 with singer Joan Ellison, a community chorus and a brass ensemble all joining the symphony; the music of The Wizard of Oz on Feb. 14; and the Symphony of Illusions on March 7. All of the Pops! Series concerts will begin at 7:30 p.m. at Miller Theater.

Season tickets are available and individual tickets go on sale Aug. 1. For more information, visit augustasympphony.com or call the Miller Theater at (706) 842-4080.