



O' Passionate Voice

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra

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The ASO Celebrates Valentine's Day with "O' Lovers' Voice" Featuring Ravel, Puccini, and former Baltimore Ravens player T'au Pupu'a

Who: Alexandria Symphony Orchestra & Maestro **Kim Allen Kluge**
Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia & Maestro **John Edward Niles**
Vocalists **Julia Rolwing, Leslie Mutchler, T'au Pupu'a, Peter Burroughs**

What: **Ravel** *L'heure espagnole (The Spanish Hour)*
Puccini *Love Duets from La bohème and Madama Butterfly*

When: Saturday, February 14, 2009 at 8:00pm
Sunday, February 15, 2009 at 3:00pm

Where: Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center
NOVA Community College, Alexandria Campus
3001 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria, VA 22311

Price: \$20-\$80. Sunday matinee youth tickets (ages 8-18) only \$5
Call **703-548-0885** or visit **www.alexsym.org** for tickets

Alexandria, VA, December 22, 2008 – The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra (ASO) celebrates Valentine's Day with "O' Lovers' Voice" featuring Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia on Saturday, February 14 at 8:00pm and Sunday, February 15 at 3:00pm. Held at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center (NOVA Community College, Alexandria), the program features some of the greatest love stories ever told – **Puccini's Love Duets from *La bohème* and *Madama Butterfly*** – as well as **Ravel's *L'heure espagnole (The Spanish Hour)***. Ticket prices are \$20-\$80 with **Sunday matinee youth tickets (ages 8-18) only \$5**. Tickets can be purchased online at www.alexsym.org or via telephone at 703-548-0885.

Continuing its dedication to collaborative partnerships across disciplines and city lines, the ASO is pleased to share the stage with the Arlington-based **Northern Virginia Opera Theatre**. First organized by Arlington music lovers in 1961, the company had grown from amateur productions by volunteers to innovative, professional opera productions. Incorporated in 1967, Opera Theatre is the second oldest opera company in continuous production in the Greater Metropolitan Area. Led by Artistic Director and Conductor **John Edward Niles**, the Theatre has been at the forefront of producing operas not previously heard in the Greater Washington Area with over 75 percent of its productions being area premieres.

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O' Lovers' Voice opens with Maurice Ravel's comic romp, *L'heure espagnole* (*The Spanish Hour*). Dubbed by ASO concert lecturer Colleen Fay as a "witty fast-paced take on human foibles, cheating spouses, and dimwitted sailors," **the piece is brought to new heights by three talented soloists: mezzo-soprano Leslie Mutchler, tenor Peter Burroughs, and bass-baritone Christopher Austin.**

The second half of the program is devoted to the love duets of Giacomo Puccini's *La bohème* and *Madama Butterfly*. "With their meltingly delicate phrases and immediate appeal," remarks Fay, it is no wonder the pieces "have kept audiences enthralled for over a century." **Indeed, patrons will delight in the sweeping vocals of celebrated soprano Julia Rolwing and lyric tenor T'au Pupu'a.** Rolwing has been hailed as a soprano with "a very dramatic presence" (*Scarsdale Gazette*) and as "absolutely transfiguring" with a voice "rounded and rich" (*Washington Post*). **Born on the South Pacific's Polynesian island of Tonga, Pupu'a was "discovered" by Bill Belichick while at Weber State University pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree on a football scholarship. He was drafted to the N.F.L.'s Cleveland Browns and eventually the Baltimore Ravens but decided to follow his passion for opera after sustaining an injury.**

The ASO continues its spring season with March's "O' Lyric Voice" featuring **Heritage Signature Chorale, The Metropolitan Chorus, and world-renowned saxophonist Branford Marsalis.** In May, the ASO concludes its subscription season with a program of Wagner, Rodgers, and Tchaikovsky but quickly embarks on an epic adventure in music with its highly anticipated annual Children's Arts Festival in June. In addition to art activities and an instrument petting zoo, the event includes an ASO performance of music from *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Lord of the Rings*, and the Looney Tunes classic, *What's Opera Doc?*

Founded in 1954, the ASO is Northern Virginia's premiere fully professional orchestra. The ASO exists to provide quality, affordable and accessible music in the greater Metropolitan area of Northern Virginia through its highly respected, innovative, professional performances and programming. To foster a life-long appreciation of symphonic music, the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra is dedicated to strengthening arts education in schools.

Members of the press, please contact Tara Conte – alex@alexsym.org – for press tickets, photos.

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