

# **PRESS RELEASE**

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THE SANTA FE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA & CHORUS

PRESENTS

*Spring Inspiration*

MARCH 27, 2011—4:00 PM AT THE LENSIC

FEATURING

**The Santa Fe Symphony Orchestra & Chorus**

*Steven Smith—Music Director & Conductor*

*Linda Raney—Choral Director*

Luigi Cherubini was regarded by Beethoven as the greatest of his contemporaries. On March 27, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. the Santa Fe Symphony, along with the full Symphony Chorus, is thrilled to present “Spring Inspiration” featuring Cherubini’s Requiem Mass, directed by Linda Raney. The Symphony will also perform one of Beethoven’s greatest musical works—Symphony No. 5. This will be an absolutely brilliant performance, one not to be missed!

Tickets for this performance range from \$20 to \$70 and are available through the Symphony box office (505) 983-1414 or (800) 480-1319, and the Lensic Box Office (505) 988-1234. Tickets are also available online. Visit [www.santafesymphony.org](http://www.santafesymphony.org) or [www.lensic.org](http://www.lensic.org)

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**Luigi Cherubini (1760 -1842)** was born in Florence, the tenth of the twelve children of the theatre harpsichordist at the Teatro della Pergola, his first teacher. As a child he had further instruction from leading Florentine composers and had an early composition, a Mass, performed in 1773. He continued in adolescence to write further church music and a smaller number of secular dramatic works. In 1778, after the performance of his cantata *La pubblica felicità* (Public Happiness) in honor of the Grand Duke Leopold of Tuscany, the future Emperor Leopold II, he was awarded by the Grand Duke the means of further study with the well known opera composer Giuseppe Sarti, a former pupil of Padre Martini. Cherubini’s period from 1778 to 1781 with Sarti in Bologna and from 1779 in Milan, where his teacher was *maestro di cappella* at the Cathedral and distinguished at the Teatro della Scala, brought the chance to compose operas for Florence and other Italian cities. In 1784 and 1785 he was in London, where he won success in the theatre, and from there he traveled to Paris. It was through the violinist and impresario Viotti, established in that city, that Cherubini was presented to Queen Marie Antoinette, and in 1786 he settled in

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France, collaborating with Viotti under the patronage of the King's brother at the Théâtre de Monsieur at the Tuileries, before his great success with the opera *Lodoïska* at Viotti's new Théâtre Feydeau, a venture curtailed by the Revolution, when Viotti took refuge in London and the wine-trade.

After a period of retirement to the countryside, Cherubini returned to Paris in 1793, eventually finding employment as an inspector at the new Institut National de Musique, the future Conservatoire. The decade brought settings of texts approved by the new, secular régime and operatic success with what remains his best known opera, *Médée* (Medea), and with *Les deux journées* (The Two Days), an opera that had its effect on Beethoven's own later *Fidelio*, the first performance of which Cherubini attended in 1805 during a successful visit to Vienna at the invitation of the director of the court opera, Baron Peter von Braun in 1805. Here he met Haydn, Beethoven and others and saw to the staging of his opera *Lodoïska* and of a new opera, *Faniska*. Napoleon's occupation of the city in that year brought Cherubini unexpected if perhaps grudging favor and Napoleon took advantage of Cherubini's presence in Vienna to make him his director of music in Vienna late in 1805 until early in 1806, responsible for concerts at Schönbrunn, where Napoleon had taken up residence. After this Cherubini returned to Paris, where he retained his position as inspector at the Conservatoire but now wrote relatively little, finding occupation in the study of botany and in painting. As time went on he was able to return to composition, with the one-act opera *Pimmalione* (Pygmalion) staged at the Tuileries in 1809 and with an *Ode à l'Hymen* the following year for Napoleon's second marriage. The restoration of the monarchy after Napoleon's defeat brought him appointment in 1816 as a superintendent of the King's music under his former patron, now Louis XVIII. Further official honors followed, with significant appointment in 1822 as director of the Conservatoire, a position he held with distinction until a few weeks before his death in 1842.

**Ludwig van Beethoven, (1770 -1827)** was the most predominant musical figure in the transitional period between the Classical and Romantic eras. Born in Bonn, Germany, Beethoven is widely regarded as one of the greatest composers of all time. He began his musical education under the tutorship of his father, who was a musician in the Electoral court at Bonn. The child's musical talent manifested itself early, and his father attempted unsuccessfully to exploit the boy as a child prodigy. Beethoven's incredible talent was soon noticed by others and in 1779 he became the protégé of Christian Gottlob Neefe, who taught him composition. His talent was also noticed and appreciated by the reigning prince, Elector Maximilian Franz, who subsidized his musical studies. After a very difficult childhood, Beethoven moved to Vienna at age 22. He quickly established a reputation as a piano virtuoso and composer. During the early period of his career, Beethoven was seen as emulating his great predecessors Haydn and Mozart, at the same time exploring new directions and gradually expanding the scope and ambition of his work.

There is evidence that Beethoven began work on his *Second Piano Concerto* as early as 1785. This concerto contains some of the earliest music he wrote that has made it into the standard repertory. He revised it thoroughly in his first years in Vienna, and then—after its premiere at a charity concert in 1795—he wrote an entirely new finale in 1798. During these same years, he wrote another piano concerto, in C major, which was published in March 1801. When the Concerto in B-flat was published later that year, it was inevitably listed as No. 2, though it had been the first to be written.

Between 1804 and 1808, Beethoven composed Symphony No. 5 in C minor (Op. 67). This symphony is one of the most popular and best-known compositions in all of classical music, and one of the most often played symphonies. It comprises four movements: an opening sonata, an andante, and a fast scherzo which leads *attacca* to the finale. First performed in Vienna's Theater an der Wien in 1808, the work achieved its prodigious reputation soon afterwards. E. T. A. Hoffmann described the symphony as "one of the most important works of the time."

Beethoven suffered through a troubled personal life and poor health for many years, which worsened over the years. The loss of his hearing led him to contemplate suicide. He was also attracted to unattainable (married or aristocratic women) whom he idealized, but never married. In 1826, his health took a turn for the worse. He died on March 26th. Unlike Mozart, who was buried in a pauper's grave, 20,000 Viennese citizens lined the streets at Beethoven's funeral.