



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Madison Symphony Orchestra Performs Tchaikovsky's Last Symphony *"Ultimate Tchaikovsky" 2016-17 Season Concerts on Fri. 2/17, Sat. 2/18 and Sun. 2/19*

MADISON, WI – Pianist **Stephen Hough** returns for his fourth appearance with the Madison Symphony Orchestra (MSO), led by Conductor John DeMain, for a program of "firsts" Feb. 17, 18 and 19!

The concert will open with **Samuel Barber's** *Second Essay*, a dramatic piece written in-the-midst of World War II followed by a performance of the exotic **Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No. 5 (The Egyptian)** featuring Stephen Hough. The concert will close with a performance of **Tchaikovsky's** emotional *Symphony No. 6 (Pathétique)*.

The concerts are Friday, Feb. 17, at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 18 at 8:00 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 19 at 2:30 p.m., in Overture Hall, 201 State Street.

Samuel Barber is one of the new generation of American composers with contemporaries Hanson, Copland, Diamond, and later, Bernstein. His piece *Second Essay* was written in 1942, in the middle of the Second World War. Barber once wrote: "Although it has no program, one perhaps heads that it was written in a war-time." This will be the first time this piece is performed by the Madison Symphony Orchestra.

Camille Saint-Saëns' Concerto No. 5 (The Egyptian) was composed while he was on a winter vacation in the Egyptian temple city of Luxor, in 1895-96. The location of this piece is important because it helped give the piece its nickname, and also influenced the sound of the score. This will be the first time this piece is performed by the Madison Symphony Orchestra.

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky wrote his final piece between February and August 1893. *Symphony No. 6 (Pathétique)* was then performed in Oct. 1893 and was conducted by Tchaikovsky himself. Nine days later he was dead. Tchaikovsky's late symphonies are autobiographical, and the sixth being "the best, and certainly the most open-hearted" said Tchaikovsky himself. Seeing as though he was a troubled man, dealing with a dark depression, *Symphony No. 6 (Pathétique)* is filled with poignancy and deep sorrow.

One hour before each performance, Randal Swiggum, *Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestra Artistic Director*, will lead a 30-minute **Prelude Discussion** in Overture Hall to enhance concertgoers' understanding and listening experience. For more background on the music please visit the Program Notes at: <http://www.allsenmusic.com/NOTES/1617/5.Feb17.html>

Single Tickets are \$16 to \$87 each, available at madisonsymphony.org/hough and through the Overture Center Box Office at 201 State Street or call the Box Office at (608) 258-4141.



Groups of 15 or more can save 25% by calling the MSO office at (608) 257-3734.

For more information visit, madisonsymphony.org/groups

Student rush tickets can be purchased in person on the day of the concert at the Overture Center Box Office at 201 State Street. Students must show a valid student ID and can receive up to two \$12 or \$15 tickets. More information is at: madisonsymphony.org/studentrush. Students can receive 20% savings on seats in select areas of the hall on advance ticket purchases.

Seniors age 62 and up receive 20% savings on advance and day-of-concert ticket purchases in select areas of the hall.

Discounted seats are subject to availability, and discounts may not be combined.

ABOUT THE MADISON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Madison Symphony Orchestra celebrates its 91st season in 2016-2017 and its 23rd season under the leadership of Music Director John DeMain. The MSO has grown to be one of America's leading regional orchestras, providing Madison and south central Wisconsin with cultural and educational opportunities to interact with great masterworks and top-tier guest artists from around the world. Find more information at madisonsymphony.org

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