



BRAZOS VALLEY
Symphony Society

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BRAZOS VALLEY SYMPHONY'S CARMEN PROMISES TO BE SENSATIONAL

College Station, TX—October 22, 2010—

The Brazos Valley Symphony's 29th season continues on Sunday, November 14, 2010 with the next classical subscription concert "Carmen" led by Music Director Marcelo Bussiki. The program will take place at Rudder Auditorium on the Texas A&M University campus. The concert version of Bizet's classic opera will include orchestra, 3 choral groups, and many solo artists. The Brazos Valley Symphony will join forces with the Brazos Valley Chorale, Texas A&M Century Singers, Brenham Children's Chorus and **ten** guest artists, including operatic stars Emily Pulley, soprano and Sasha Cooke, mezzo-soprano, who both hail from the Brazos Valley. The symphony expects a large audience for this popular operatic performance, so get your tickets early.

What: "Carmen"

When: Sunday, November 14, 2010 at 5:00 PM

Where: Rudder Auditorium in College Station

Program:

Bizet – *Carmen* (Concert Version)

Brazos Valley Chorale

Texas A&M Century Singers

Jess Wade, Music Director & Conductor

Brenham Children's Chorus

Pam Bennett Young, Founding Artistic Director

Full Cast:

Sasha Cooke as Carmen

Emily Pulley as Micaela

Daniel Snyder as Don Jose

Kelly Markgraf as Escamillo

Jennifer Wise as Frasquita

Phillip Hill as Morales/Zuniga

Maureen Papovich as Mercedes

Casey Papovich as Le Dancaire

Chris Hoffman as Le Remendado

Greg Wise as Narrator

Music Director Marcelo Bussiki tells us more about the concert version of *Carmen* and what audiences can expect from this magnificent performance sponsored in part by the Plass Arts Foundation.

Q: Tell me about your decision to do Carmen, why did you choose this piece? Will it be difficult?

MB: The plan to do Carmen is a long-standing one, one that I had to wait a few years for, until I felt that the Orchestra had the infrastructure to undertake such a complex production. I feel confident that we have reached the maturity level that is required to present such a massive work.

-more-

Q: What is special about Bizet's Carmen, why do audiences love it? Why is it so popular?

MB: Carmen is one of the most popular and beloved works in the operatic repertoire. It has it all: an exotic setting, a good drama, psychologically powerful and unique characters, a lot of action and more than anything else: great music. Carmen is a constant stream of beautiful tunes with great orchestration. Put all of that together and you have the recipe for an operatic hit, which, paradoxically, was an initial failure . . . like many other masterpieces that were ahead of their time.

Q: How will the concert version be different? What should the audience expect?

MB: In the concert version, since the action has been limited, I decided to eliminate the spoken dialogs, later transformed into recitatives, and a few numbers that were not structural pillars for the opera. To compensate for those adjustments, I decided to create a script that will be narrated from the stage by a professional actor. The script will help the audience fill-in the potential gaps that such cuts might have generated. In other words, we have planned it so that the musical strengths and the story of the opera were not weakened.

Q: Tell me about the guest artists, there are so many . . . what are you most excited about with all of the fantastic guest artists that will be performing?

MB: I am very excited to work again with both Emily and Sasha but more than anything else I am excited that they will be singing together, for the first time, in this production. I am happy that we made this happen right here in their hometown. I am equally happy to be working for the first time with some of the soloists. I would love to be able to talk about each one of the soloists and their accomplishments but we lack time. The short answer to your question is that our audience will have the opportunity to hear a cast that is, by any standards, of the highest caliber. I am also thrilled to work together again with the Brazos Valley Chorale, and the Texas A&M Century Singers, the combination of these groups produces an energy on stage that is invigorating. I also want to point out the return of the Brenham Children's Choir to our stage. A few years ago we did a performance of Carmina Burana with the group and they left a lasting impression of excellence. Every year, I look forward to that special moment in November, when the lights come down and we have this wall of singers giving all the music they have. That synergy quickly takes hold of the stage . . . that is what music-making is about.

Individual tickets (\$32 adult, \$12 student/child) for all subscription concerts are on sale now and can be purchased in person at the MSC Box Office, located in the Rudder Auditorium lobby, by phone (979) 845-1234, , or on-line at <http://boxoffice.tamu.edu>. Please call the Symphony Office at (979) 696-6100 with any further questions or visit our website.

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About the Brazos Valley Symphony: The Brazos Valley Symphony is a non-profit performing arts organization with the mission to maintain a symphony of high artistic standards, and to promote the musical arts for cultural and education purposes in the Brazos Valley. For more information about the Symphony's 2010--2011 Season, please visit the Brazos Valley Symphony Web site at www.bvso.org.

The Brazos Valley Symphony Society wishes to recognize and thank our programming sponsors, grant funding providers, and charitable trust contributors (next page):

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