

Punta Gorda Symphony returns outdoors to present 'Strings on the Lawn'

Punta Gorda Symphony returns outdoors to present "Strings on the Lawn" at Florida SouthWestern State College Charlotte Campus lawn at 4 p.m. Feb. 20, featuring concertmaster Ming Gao along with his string and piano quartet set to perform the music of baroque composer Bach, American songwriter Michael McLean, selections from Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Phantom of the Opera" and beyond.

"This event is a not-to-miss for the music aficionado or those who want to spend an afternoon relaxing outdoors in the beautiful Florida weather," says Punta Gorda Symphony Music Director Maestro Raffaele Livio Ponti. "Grab your friends and family, and come to the lawn for an afternoon of spectacular music. Come see what everyone loves about our musicians and these outdoor chamber concerts."

The ensemble leader, Ming Gao, has been the concertmaster of and violinist with the Punta Gorda Symphony since 2015. Recently Gao left audiences clamoring with excitement after his recent feature at Punta Gorda Symphony's Feb. 6 concert on the breathtaking violin solos of "Scheherazade." Gao will dazzle concertgoers once again with his impressive technique at the outdoor chamber concert. But unlike in the concert hall, this concert format allows listeners to connect more intimately to the music through Gao's charming story-telling.

Alongside Ming Gao will be pillar musicians of the classical music community in Southwest Florida, including violinist and conductor Gregg Anderson and cellist Si-Cheng Liu. Anderson is a member of the celebrated Naples Philharmonic and conducts the Naples Philharmonic Youth Symphonia. Sharing Anderson's affinity for youth music education is cellist Si-Cheng Liu, an adjunct professor at Florida Gulf Coast University. In addition to being an outstanding chamber musician, performing with numerous local ensembles, Liu's private students have won top prizes at respected regional competitions like the Naples Philharmonic Youth Orchestra Concerto Competition and the Naples Music Club Scholarship Auditions.

Accompanying the string musicians will be classical pianist, chamber musician, and orchestra soloist Charis Dimaras. Dimaras currently serves as Professor of Piano and Collaborative Studies at Ithaca College, and has appeared in many of the world's leading venues, such as NYC's Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall.

Featured pieces on the program include: "Concerto for Two Violin" by Bach, "Fandango" by Michael McLean, "The Swan" by Camille Saint-Saëns, selections from "The Phantom of the Opera" by Andrew Lloyd Webber and more.

Original article published on Sun Go! can be read at https://www.yoursun.com/coastal/entertainment/punta-gorda-symphony-returns-outdoors-to-present-strings-on-the-lawn/article_5d5c408c-8e98-11ec-8f2a-dbb1ad1877db.html. For more information and ticketing, visit www.PGSymphony.org, or call 941-205-5996.



The Punta Gorda Symphony returns outdoors to present "Strings on the Lawn" at Florida SouthWestern State College Charlotte Campus lawn at 4 p.m. Feb. 20, featuring concertmaster Ming Gao along with his string and piano quartet set to perform the music of baroque composer Bach, American songwriter Michael McLean, selections from Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Phantom of the Opera" and beyond. Photo by Steve Donaldson.