

# LANSING SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

TIMOTHY MUFFITT • MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## LANSING SYMPHONY TO PRESENT “TCHAIKOVSKY & SIBELIUS” OCTOBER 1ST

**Lansing, MI – September 16, 2010** – The **Lansing Symphony Orchestra** will present the second concert in its MasterWorks Series “**Tchaikovsky & Sibelius**” on **Friday, October 1st at 8 p.m.** at Wharton Center for Performing Arts. The concert will open with **Vaughan Williams’s *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis***, which presents a strikingly original blend of ancient themes and English Pastoral Romanticism. The phenomenal pianist **Michael Gurt** will join the orchestra for the strength and passion of **Tchaikovsky’s First Piano Concerto**. The *New York Times* has proclaimed, “Mr. Gurt displayed an almost superhuman command of the keyboard.” The evening will end with a trip through the rolling hills and beautiful lakes of Finland in **Sibelius’s** beloved **Fifth Symphony**, which he was commissioned to write in honor of his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, a national holiday in Finland.

Tickets start at \$12, available by calling **(517) 487-5001** or online at **www.LansingSymphony.org**. Four-concert **MasterWorks Sampler Subscriptions** are also available, with a 25% discount offered to first-time subscribers. Student discounts available on all concerts and subscriptions.

Pianist **Michael Gurt** is Paula Garvey Manship Distinguished Professor of Piano at Louisiana State University. Mr. Gurt serves as Piano Mentor at the Hot Springs Music Festival, and he served as head of the piano department at the Sewanee Summer Music Festival for two decades. He has served as Piano Chair of the Louisiana Music Teachers Association, and he has taught at two summer music seminars held at Tunghai University in Taichung, Taiwan. Professor Gurt holds degrees from the University of Michigan and the Juilliard School. In 1982, he won First Prize in the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition and was also a prize



winner in international competitions in Pretoria, South Africa and Sydney, Australia. Gurt has performed as soloist with the Chicago Symphony, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Utah Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Memphis Symphony, the Capetown Symphony, the China National Symphony Orchestra and

the Natal Philharmonic Orchestra in Durban, South Africa. He has made solo appearances in Alice Tully Hall in New York, Ambassador Auditorium in Los Angeles, Orchestra Hall in Detroit, City Hall in Hong Kong, the Victorian Arts Center in Melbourne, Australia, Baxter Hall in Capetown, South Africa, and the Attaturk Cultural Center in Istanbul, Turkey. Mr. Gurt has collaborated with the Takacs String Quartet, and he recently performed at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Townsville, Queensland. He has served on the juries of both the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition and the New Orleans International Piano Competition, and he has recorded on the Naxos, Centaur and Redwood labels.



This is **Music Director Timothy Muffitt's** fifth season with the Lansing Symphony Orchestra. In addition to his role with the LSO, Muffitt is in his 12<sup>th</sup> season as Music Director & Conductor of the Baton Rouge Symphony. In the summer, he also serves as Music Director of the Chautauqua Institution's Music School Festival Orchestra, one of the country's premier orchestral training ensembles. Previously, Muffitt served as the Associate Conductor of the Austin Symphony and as Artistic Director of the Louisiana Philharmonic's Casual Classics Series, for which he was awarded a Certificate of Meritorious Service from the American Federation of Musicians. Muffitt has appeared with leading orchestras throughout the country and is recognized as a strong proponent of community arts education. He also has appeared with the San Francisco Symphony, the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, the Long Beach Symphony,

Columbus Ohio's Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Virginia Symphony, the Grant Park Music Festival Orchestra in Chicago, and the Symphonies of Houston, Phoenix, Edmonton, Harrisburg, and Spokane. He has worked with many prominent performers, including Renee Fleming, Yo Yo Ma, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Andre Watts, Alicia de Larrocha, Pinchas Zukerman, Van Cliburn, Lynn Harrell, and Itzhak Perlman; and many prominent composers, including John Cage, Joseph Schwantner, Ellen Taffe Zwilich, John Harbison, Joan Tower, and Bernard Rands. Born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Timothy Muffitt studied at the Eastman School of Music, where he earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree.

The Lansing Symphony Orchestra was established in 1929. More than 20,000 people attend Lansing Symphony concerts each year, and more than 250,000 listeners are able to hear broadcasts of the orchestra's performances by NPR affiliate WKAR-FM Radio. The Symphony's highly acclaimed education programs reach students in kindergarten through 12th grades. For more information, visit [www.LansingSymphony.org](http://www.LansingSymphony.org) or find us on Facebook® or Twitter.

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