

'Movie Magic' opens season at Live Arts with songs of cinema

Jenny Oaks Baker chats with J. Ernest Green during concert at the "Movie Magic and More" concert at Maryland Hall. (Photo by Bud Johnson, for The Baltimore Sun)

By Mary Johnson,
For The Baltimore Sun

NOVEMBER 16, 2014, 12:02 AM

To open Live Arts Maryland's season of "Broadway in Annapolis Pops" this month, J. Ernest Green led the Annapolis Chorale and Chamber Orchestra with Grammy-nominated violinist Jenny Oaks Baker as soloist in "Movie Magic and More."

Often lauded for his programming skills, Green offered his most innovative and artistically courageous pops program in memory on Nov. 7-8 at the newly refurbished Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts.

This opener promises an exciting 2014-2015 season, displaying new facets of the chorale and chamber orchestra and a brighter, livelier sound, thanks in part to reflective wood panels lining the back of the stage.

Next on tap at Maryland Hall for Green and company will be the holiday concert, "A Celebration of Christmas," at 8 p.m. Dec. 12. This concert traditionally offers a mix of carols and popular holiday favorites with appearances by

soloists who join in the holiday readings.

Other holiday happenings include Green conducting the Annapolis Chorale and soloists in three performances of Handel's "Messiah" at St. Anne's Church. "Messiah" by candlelight will be at 8 p.m. Dec. 19 and 20, with a 3 p.m. performance Dec. 21.

For tickets to "A Celebration of Christmas," call the Maryland Hall box office at 410-280-5640. Tickets to St. Anne's Church concerts are available online at liveartsmaryland.org or by calling 410-263-1906.

Looking at the season opening this month, some programming credit is due Baker, the veteran first violinist for the National Symphony Orchestra (2000-2007) whose recordings have consistently topped classical and pops charts.

Here Baker masterfully delivered classic pops from sources including Disney and Lloyd Webber, with rag and rock added to the mix. She brought new color to "Over the Rainbow" from 1939's "The Wizard of Oz," and reintroduced the audience to Disney's 1995 "Pocahontas" and "God Help the Outcasts" from Disney's 1996 "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." Together, these added up to a comfortable blend sprinkled with newer tunes.

As usual, Green delivered musical surprises — including a showcase piece for the Annapolis Chorale in "Vuelle," written by Norwegian composer Frode Fjellheim and used in Disney's 2013 blockbuster "Frozen." It's a hypnotic Scandinavian choral piece, totally unlike usual chorus favorites. Again, it had the added impact of serving as an introduction to Maryland Hall's much improved acoustics.

Another surprise was Baker's accompaniment of the Annapolis Chorale and Chamber Orchestra in "God Help the Outcasts" — although in some instances, Baker's microphone-enhanced violin overshadowed the chamber orchestra and at times rendered the Annapolis Chorale inaudible from balcony seats. This was also the case in parts of "May It Be" from "Lord of the Rings" and "Pie Jesu" from Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Requiem."

Aside from introducing his audience to exciting new music, Green excels at showcasing home-grown and solo talent. The Annapolis Chorale's women's ensemble, called "Cantori," delivered a heartfelt romantic change of pace with "When I Fall in Love."

The Annapolis Chorale was also showcased in pieces from Leonard Bernstein's ground-breaking musical "West Side Story" — shining in an upbeat "America," a heartfelt "A Place for Us" and a gorgeously nuanced "Maria," sung by tenor David Merrill, who added operatic drama to prove the song's title can be "all the beautiful sounds of the world in a single word."

Later, Merrill joined Laurie Hays to deliver an exquisite duet, blending her soprano with his tenor in "Make of Our Hands," a wedding duet.

Other highlights included the Beatles' "Yesterday," Simon and Garfunkel's "Scarborough Fair" and the symphonic theme from "Schindler's List."

All of this leads to the most rousing finale in memory when Baker played "Kashmir" — the Led Zeppelin tune, first heard in the group's 1975 album, that became a staple at concerts thereafter.

Not only was violinist Baker phenomenal, the Annapolis Chamber Orchestra stretched into new territory by using instruments rarely heard in concert halls but singularly appropriate on this evening at Maryland Hall.

Copyright © 2014, The Baltimore Sun

FROM AROUND THE WEB

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Please Don't Retire At 62. Here's Why.

The Motley Fool

Economist: "U.S. Headed for Crisis Worse Than 2008"

Money Map Press

Kate Middleton's Bizarre Behavior at Event Gets Everyone Talking

Stirring Daily

Jennifer Lawrence's Beverly Hills Home Is Beyond Extravagant

LonnyMag

Thinking of Selling Your Home? Get Rid of Granite

Reviewed.com

Millennials Are Drinking So Much Wine They're Changing How It's Sold

PopDust by Lot 18

Acclaimed Expert's Surprising Take on Paying Off Mortgage

Bills.com

12 Great Movies We Just Dont Ever Want to See Again

Movieseum

'Movie Magic' opens season at Live Arts with songs of cinema



Jenny Oaks Baker chats with J. Ernest Green during concert at the "Movie Magic and More" concert at Maryland Hall. (Photo by Bud Johnson, for The Baltimore Sun)

By Mary Johnson,
For The Baltimore Sun

NOVEMBER 16, 2014, 12:02 AM

To open Live Arts Maryland's season of "Broadway in Annapolis Pops" this month, J. Ernest Green led the Annapolis Chorale and Chamber Orchestra with Grammy-nominated violinist Jenny Oaks Baker as soloist in "Movie Magic and More."

Often lauded for his programming skills, Green offered his most innovative and artistically courageous pops program in memory on Nov. 7-8 at the newly refurbished Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts.

This opener promises an exciting 2014-2015 season, displaying new facets of the chorale and chamber orchestra and a brighter, livelier sound, thanks in part to reflective wood panels lining the back of the stage.

Next on tap at Maryland Hall for Green and company will be the holiday concert, "A Celebration of Christmas," at 8 p.m. Dec. 12. This concert traditionally offers a mix of carols and popular holiday favorites with appearances by soloists who join in the holiday readings.

Other holiday happenings include Green conducting the Annapolis Chorale and soloists in three performances of Handel's "Messiah" at St. Anne's Church. "Messiah" by candlelight will be at 8 p.m. Dec. 19 and 20, with a 3 p.m. performance Dec. 21.

For tickets to "A Celebration of Christmas," call the Maryland Hall box office at 410-280-5640. Tickets to St. Anne's Church concerts are available online at liveartsmaryland.org or by calling 410-263-1906.

Looking at the season opening this month, some programming credit is due Baker, the veteran first violinist for the National Symphony Orchestra (2000-2007) whose recordings have consistently topped classical and pops charts.

Here Baker masterfully delivered classic pops from sources including Disney and Lloyd Webber, with rag and rock added to the mix. She brought new color to "Over the Rainbow" from 1939's "The Wizard of Oz," and reintroduced the audience to Disney's 1995 "Pocahontas" and "God Help the Outcasts" from Disney's 1996 "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." Together, these added up to a comfortable blend sprinkled with newer tunes.

As usual, Green delivered musical surprises — including a showcase piece for the Annapolis Chorale in "Vuelle," written by Norwegian composer Frode Fjellheim and used in Disney's 2013 blockbuster "Frozen." It's a hypnotic Scandinavian choral piece, totally unlike usual chorus favorites. Again, it had the added impact of serving as an introduction to Maryland Hall's much improved acoustics.

Another surprise was Baker's accompaniment of the Annapolis Chorale and Chamber Orchestra in "God Help the Outcasts" — although in some instances, Baker's microphone-enhanced violin overshadowed the chamber orchestra and at times rendered the Annapolis Chorale inaudible from balcony seats. This was also the case in parts of "May It Be" from "Lord of the Rings" and "Pie Jesu" from Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Requiem."

Aside from introducing his audience to exciting new music, Green excels at showcasing home-grown and solo talent. The Annapolis Chorale's women's ensemble, called "Cantori," delivered a heartfelt romantic change of pace with "When I Fall in Love."

The Annapolis Chorale was also showcased in pieces from Leonard Bernstein's ground-breaking musical "West Side Story" — shining in an upbeat "America," a heartfelt "A Place for Us" and a gorgeously nuanced "Maria," sung by tenor David Merrill, who added operatic drama to prove the song's title can be "all the beautiful sounds of the world in a single word."

Later, Merrill joined Laurie Hays to deliver an exquisite duet, blending her soprano with his tenor in "Make of Our Hands," a wedding duet.

Other highlights included the Beatles' "Yesterday," Simon and Garfunkel's "Scarborough Fair" and the symphonic theme from "Schindler's List."

All of this leads to the most rousing finale in memory when Baker played "Kashmir" — the Led Zeppelin tune, first heard in the group's 1975 album, that o became a staple at concerts thereafter.

Not only was violinist Baker phenomenal, the Annapolis Chamber Orchestra stretched into new territory by using instruments rarely heard in concert halls but singularly appropriate on this evening at Maryland Hall.

Copyright © 2014, The Baltimore Sun

