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MICHAEL SHIRTZ, DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

Fauré REQUIEM

SUNDAY, APRIL 6, 2025 | 4 P.M.
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WELCOME



Hello and welcome to the FSO Chorale's presentation of the *Fauré Requiem*!

We are delighted that you're here and hope that you enjoy the afternoon's music. We are just two weeks removed from the chorale's amazing performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and there is a very distinct difference in the way one sings Beethoven versus Fauré, as you will see. The chorale has worked very hard these last two weeks and I'm sure you will be delighted with their efforts.

We wish to thank our hosts, St. Mary's Catholic Church, and their Music Director, Tim Claubaugh, for allowing us to present our concert this afternoon.

The next FSO concert will be next Saturday, April 12, 2025, when we present *Through Time and Space*, featuring vocalist Connor Bogart O'Brien and retired astronaut Gregory H. Johnson. Tickets are still available – call our box office at 419-621-4800.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron Brooker". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Ron Brooker, FSO Executive Director

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PODIUM NOTES

Thank you for joining us as we move into the season of Spring, which often reflects a time of renewal and freshness, providing hope even if the world seems like an unsure place. The dreariness of winter fades as gardens begin to bloom, the breeze of the lake is warmed with sunlight, and blue skies take over the gray blanket that stretched above us since the fall. With spring being so much a time of renewal and celebrating life, why perform a requiem?

Fauré's *Requiem* is different. It isn't a dramatic setting of "Dies Irae," the Day of Wrath or Judgment we find as a focal point in other composers' requiems. Fauré hardly refers to the idea. He is focused more on the freeing of the spirit, the release of one's hardships to explore and examine one's faith, and the gift of eternal rest. We don't know Fauré's original intent for writing the *Requiem*, albeit speculation surrounds the passing of his parents. But unlike most major works, this was with no commission and written and rewritten over a span of 15 years (1887-1902) creating many different published versions. So many, that often in the music world when we discuss Fauré's *Requiem*, we need to clarify which dated version? (We are doing the 1893 version for those curious.)

Originally called a *Petit Requiem* in 1887, Fauré's original version was scored for a choir, solo violin and chamber orchestra of violas, cellos and basses, harp, timpani and organ. Only writing with the lower strings emphasizes the tender consoling landscape of the piece. In his 1893, he made several additions with the *Offertoire* and *Libera me*, which originally were compositions from his other projects, and added the bassoons, horns and trumpets. Later versions published asked him to create arrangements for full orchestra. But, in the latter half of the 20th Century, scholars such as composer John Rutter worked to reconstruct Fauré's original 1893 orchestration to be the closest to Fauré's original intent.

While many may not think of Fauré's *Requiem* with household notoriety as a Mozart or Verdi requiem, his beautiful themes from several of the movements like *Sanctus*, *Agnus Dei*, *Paradisum*, and the crystal melody of the soprano solo's *Pie Jesu* have been used in cinema, stand-alone concert pieces, and church music for over a century. It is with this compositional intention and beauty that Fauré's *Requiem* has been called "a lullaby of death." As he said he sees it "as a happy deliverance, an aspiration towards happiness above, rather than as a painful experience."

While Fauré's *Requiem* is a musical mass in remembrance of the dead, like our performance last year of Dan Forrest's *Requiem for the Living*, this piece is really written to comfort those of us left behind hearing the work, providing us the opportunity to listen, reflect, remember, and let go of our inner most turmoil, if even for just a few moments, to the healing power and peace found in the magic of the music.



Michael Shirtz, Chorale Director and Conductor

MICHAEL SHIRTZ



Michael Shirtz is a performer, educator, composer, and conductor, known for his versatility with jazz, contemporary, and classical music. Credited as a "songsmith," his vocals and arrangements feature jazz and singer-songwriter styles into his performances as both a solo artist and with his group, the Michael Shirtz Quartet. He has worked with such artists as Melissa Manchester, Evelyn Wright, and as music director for Maureen McGovern, among others. As an artist Shirtz is affiliated with the Prima Music Foundation and the Musical Theatre Project. His shows include tributes to legendary artists in "As We've Learned It," "In Finding Faith," and his "Blue Skies" show and album released in 2018.

With a passion for fostering creativity and collaboration, Shirtz has emerged as a respected figure in both the jazz and choral communities as a conductor and educator. Shirtz has directed educational, theatre, masterworks, and pops music productions for choral, symphonic, and festival organizations. As a producer he has served with Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland, Jazz@8 Series, Jazz Education Network, and jazz in schools initiative. Shirtz is a music director for Lakeside Chautauqua and conductor of the Symphony Chorale with the Firelands Symphony Orchestra. He has written compositions for jazz, choir, theater, and extended works such as the cantata *The Solemn Blessings*, the musical *Headliner*, and *To Rise Above: A Journey of a Tuskegee Airman*.

Shirtz currently serves on faculty with The Ohio State University School of Music where he teaches applied voice, studio, and jazz voice. He has served on the faculties of Capital University, Heidelberg University, director-in-residence at Pellissippi State-Knoxville, and Terra State Community College where he held the positions of lead faculty and dean. Shirtz is a member of ASCAP, American Choral Directors Association, African American Jazz Caucus, and the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Shirtz received a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Studies from Capital University and Master of Music in Conducting from California State University, Los Angeles.



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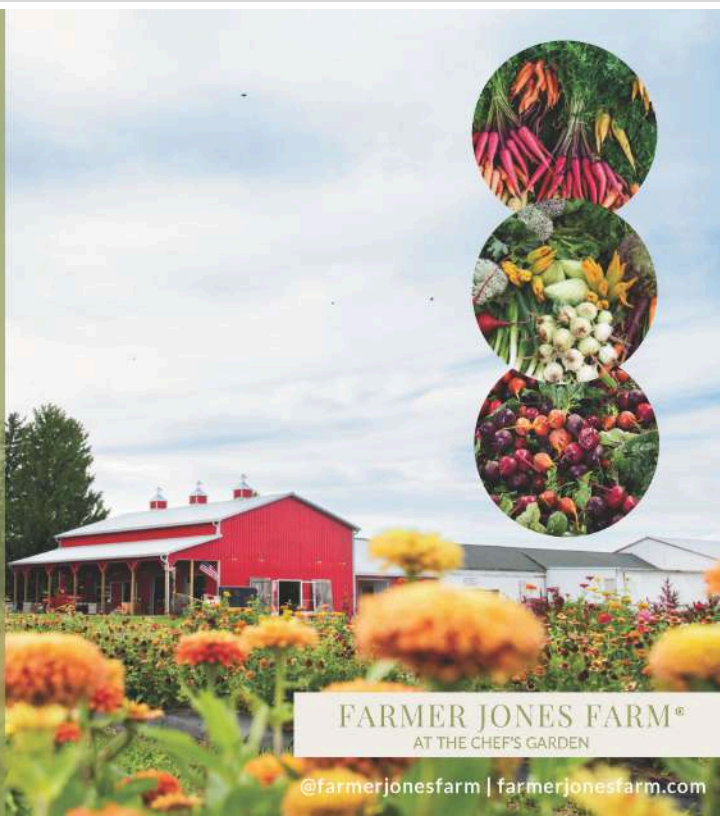
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CONCERT PROGRAM

Fauré Requiem | April 6, 2025

The Firelands Symphony Orchestra Chorale & Chamber Orchestra
Michael Shirtz, Chorale Director

REQUIEM, op. 48.....Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)

I. Introit & Kyrie

Translation from Latin text:

Rest eternal grant them, O Lord, and may light perpetual shine on them.

A hymn becomes Thee, God in Zion, and to Thee a vow shall be paid in Jerusalem;

Hear my prayer, to Thee all flesh shall come.

Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Lord have mercy.

II. Offertoire (Offertory)

Ron Blake, baritone solo

O Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of the departed from the pains of hell and from the deep pit. O Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of the departed from the lion's mouth that hell does not engulf them.

O Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, may they not fall into darkness.

Sacrifices and prayers to Thee, O Lord, with praise, we offer; do Thou accept for those souls whom this day we commemorate.

Make them, O Lord, from death to pass to life, which Thou once promised to Abraham. O Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of the departed from the pains of hell and from the deep pit. May they not fall into darkness. Amen.

III. Sanctus

Holy, Lord God of hosts.

Full are the heavens and the earth of Thy glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

IV. Pie Jesu

Melissa Cullen, soprano solo

Blessed Lord Jesus, grant them rest.

Grant them eternal rest.

V. Agnus Dei

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world:

grant them rest, eternal rest.

May light eternal shine upon them,

O Lord, with Thy saints forever,

for Thou art merciful.

Rest eternal give to them, O Lord,

and let light perpetual shine upon them.

VI. Libera me

Warren Brown, baritone solo

Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal death on that dreadful day,

when the heavens move and the earth,

while Thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.

I tremble and fear for the reckoning will come, and wrath befall,

when the heavens and earth are moved.

That day, day of wrath, of calamity and misery.

That day, a great day and most bitter.

Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord,

and let light perpetual shine upon them.

Deliver me, O Lord, from death eternal on that dreadful day
when the heavens and earth are moved,
and Thou shalt come to judge the world by fire.

VII. In Paradisum

*Into Paradise may the angels lead thee,
at thy coming may the martyrs
receive thee and bring thee into the holy city Jerusalem.
May the chorus of angels receive thee,
and with Lazarus, once a beggar,
may thou have eternal rest.*

~ PAUSE ~

To Sit and Dream.....Langston Hughes & Rosephanye Powell

*To sit and dream, to sit and read, to sit and learn about the world.
Out of world of here and now, out of the world, our problem world.
Outside the world of here and now, our problem world.
To dream of vast horizons of the soul, of dreams made whole,
Unfettered, free, help me, help me, all you who are dreamers too.
Help me make our world anew, I reach out my hand to you.
To sit and dream, to sit and read, to sit and learn about the world.
To sit and dream.*

Pure Imagination.....Bricuss & Newly, arr. Nielson

*Come with me and you'll be in a world of pure imagination,
Take a look and you'll see into your imagination.
We'll begin with a spin traveling in the world of my creation
What we'll see will defy explanation.*

*If you want to view paradise, simply look around and view it.
Anything you want to, do it, want to change the world?
There's nothing to it.
There is no life, I know to compare with pure imagination
Living there, you'll be free, if you truly wish to be.*

I Plant You a Garden.....Lee & Gilpin

*I plant you a garden and tend it with care;
the beauty that grows there is far beyond compare.
So, I send you this wish with all of my heart
that its joy blooms forever, never to depart.
I plant you a garden and tend it with love,
As warm light and gentle rains nurture from above.*

*May the compass of color that enlivens the day,
cheer you, be near you, when darkness drifts your way.
I plant you a garden, an acre or more,
that brightens and blesses what life holds in store.*

*May it bring you and sing you its hope-healing song,
the music that follows you all your life long.
Come sit for a while and with peace be renewed,
in my garden, prepared for you.
I plant you a garden*

Let Everything That Hath Breath.....Jeffrey Ames

*Sing unto the Lord a new song.
Sing unto the Lord all the earth
Declare His glory among the nations.
Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.*

*Magnify the Lord with me and exalt His name together
Hallelujah, bless His name for He is worthy to be praised.
Clap your hands all ye people. Shout with the voice of triumph!
For the Mighty Lord is great and greatly to be praised.
Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.*

*Come on and praise the Lord Let's all praise His name.
Give him the highest praise. Praise Him, the Lord
Praise Him with the timbrel, praise him with the dance.
Stand up on your feet and just lift up holy hands.
Sing "Hallelujah" Praise His holy name.
For the Lord is worthy to be praised. Let's praise the Lord.*

*Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.
You ought to praise Him!*

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Kate Mackenzie

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Eva Mondragon

Victoria Goettel

Simon Schlenker

Jerri Lou Lugo

CELLO I

Nataliya Pshenychna

Brian Shifflet

Jeff Singler

CELLO II

Gayle Klaber

Peter O'Malley

Madeleine Hearn

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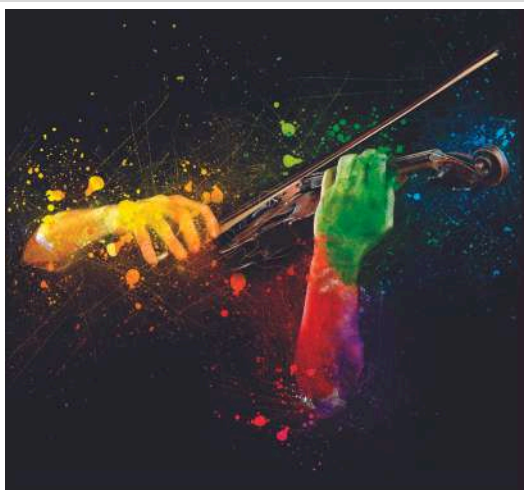
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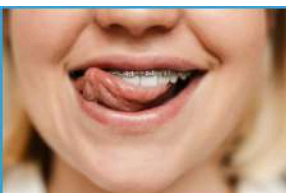
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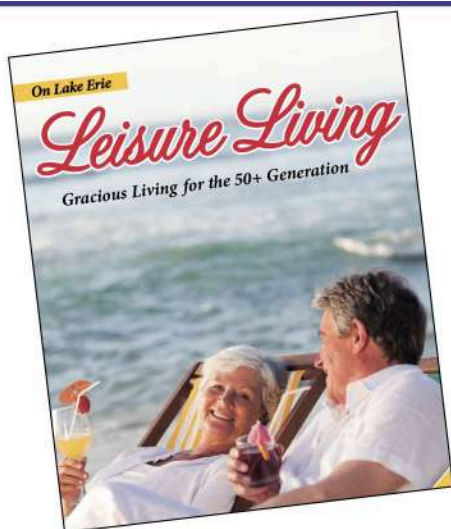
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