

Latin IS America music festival returns to MSU

Bridgette Redman, For the Lansing State Journal 7:37 a.m. EDT April 2, 2015



Act I: Annual Festival Celebrates Latin Synergy

The Michigan State University College of Music festival isn't about a cultural exchange, it's about celebrating where two cultures have merged and influenced each other.

The Latin IS America returns for a third year to MSU and this year it features a pair of legendary Cuban jazz musicians, a Mexican-born composer, a Columbian trio along with choral and orchestral voices.

The festival includes music, dance and discussion and takes place in locations around campus including Fairchild Theatre, Cook Recital Hall, Demonstration Hall Ballroom and Cobb Great Hall.

"We're exceptionally pleased with the mix of outstanding artists and scholars who are committed to making Latin IS America a premier event for mid-Michigan," said James Forger, dean of the MSU College of Music.

"The festival has something for everyone to enjoy as we celebrate how music and art can transcend boundaries, merge cultures, and serve as a reflection of the rich diversity that surrounds us."

This year, festival highlights include participatory events and a series of concerts. The discussions are led by international musicians and scholars on musical composition and heritage.

Events, starting April 11 and running through May 2 include:

- Concert, MSU Women's Chamber Ensemble and Women's Glee Club, 8 p.m. April 11, Fairchild Theatre, MSU Auditorium, \$10 adults, \$8 seniors, students free. Conductors Sandra Snow, Meredith Bowen, Elizabeth Hermanson and Brandon Williams lead the women's choirs in performing well-loved songs and newly arranged choral works from North and South America.
- Concert and Dance, Swing Dance with Jazz Orchestra I, II, III, special guests Bobby and Roberto Carcasses, 8 p.m. April 17, Demonstration Hall Ballroom, \$10 adults, \$8 seniors, students free. Cuban vocalist and trumpeter Bobby Carcasses and his son, pianist Roberto Carcasses perform a dynamic blend of Latin rhythms and big band sounds. The Carcasses are part of the annual Jazz Spectacular series.
- Lecture, Guest Composer Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, "Composing Across Borders, 2:30 p.m. April 24, Room 245 Music Building, free event. Mexican-born composer and Pulitzer Prize finalist Zohn-Muldoon will speak about his career and about bridging the cultural divide between the U.S. and Mexico. Two of the guest composer's recent works will be featured during the Musique 21 concert on April 27.
- Concert, Edmar Castañeda Trio, 8 p.m. April 25, Cook Recital Hall, \$10 adults, \$8 seniors, students free. Colombian folk harpist Castañeda, trombonist Marshall Gilkes, and drummer David Sillman create an exciting and unique sound that has received critical acclaim around the world.
- Concert, Musique 21: This Love, 7:30 p.m., April 27, Fairchild Theatre, free. A Theatre of Music production featuring works and selections by Guest Composer Zohn-Muldoon. "Poetic description: This light, this fire that devours, this grey landscape that surrounds me, this sorrow centered round one idea, this anguish of sky, world and time."
- Lecture, Cuban musicologist Miriam Escudero, "Cuba's Sacred Musical Heritage: Composers Esteban Salas and Cayetano Pagueras," 8 p.m., April 28, Room 219, Music Practice Building, free event. Musicologist Escudero will speak about her work as director of the Esteban Salas Musical Heritage Cabinet of the Havana City Historian Office.
- Concert, MSU Choirs, 200 Voices, 8 p.m. May 2, Cobb Great Hall, Wharton Center, \$10 adults, \$8 seniors, students free. Choral Union, University Chorale, and State Singers join the MSU Symphony Orchestra performing works from colonial Cuba, 20th century Brazil, and a work by Aaron Copland, who championed Latin American music in the U.S.

All performances are open to the public and are a collaboration between university personnel, students and scholars.

Act II: All-of-Us and Riverwalk Collaborate

Every year, Riverwalk and All-of-Us Express Children's Theatre collaborate to put on a children's show. With a cast of more than two dozen children and a crew of students and children, the family show is designed for kids and by kids.

This year's collaboration is a children's classic, "House at Pooh Corner."

Christopher Robin is planning to run away with his friends Pooh, Piglet, Eeyore, Tigger and the rest. Why is our young hero running away? He's about to be sent away to "Education," a scary, dark mysterious threat that no one knows anything about. So they make plans to go to the North Pole, or maybe the South Pole, and ensure that they're always together. Or maybe it's not such a good idea.

All-of-us Express cast and produced the show while Riverwalk is providing the stage and promoting it as part of their season.

•The House at Pooh Corner, Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing, MI 48933, 7 p.m. Fridays, 2 and 4:30 p.m. Saturdays, and 2 p.m. Sundays, April 10-12, 17-19, \$7 for adults age 16 and above, \$5 for children.

Encore!

•The Mid-Michigan Family Theatre is producing William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" next weekend, April 9-12. Shows are 7 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 3 pm. Saturday and Sunday at Schmidt Community Center, 5825 Wise Road, southwest Lansing. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$5 for seniors and children 17 and under.

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