

Press Release

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KNOXVILLE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PRESENTS 31st ANNUAL CLAYTON HOLIDAY CONCERT DEC. 15 - 17: "MUSIC FROM THE MOVIES"

Knoxville, TN – November 22, 2017 – The Knoxville Symphony Orchestra presents the 31st Annual Clayton Holiday Concert on December 15, 16 & 17 at the Knoxville Civic Auditorium. Music Director **Aram Demirjian** conducts the Orchestra and special guests for "Music From the Movies." Children's tickets start at just \$8.50. There are four performances: **Friday, Dec. 15 & Saturday, Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 16 and Sunday, Dec. 17 at 3:00 p.m.** These concerts are sponsored by Clayton Homes, Clayton Volvo, Clayton Foundation and First Bank.

Musical selections include songs from favorite holiday films including *Home Alone*, *Frozen*, *Polar Express*, and *Miracle on 34th Street*. Other musical highlights include 'It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year,' "Have a Holly Jolly Christmas," and the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's *Messiah*. KSO will be joined by special guests **Knoxville Choral Society, Go! Contemporary Dance Works, Farragut High School Ensemble**, tenor **Alex Ward**, the **Knoxville Handbell Festival Ringers**, and **Santa Claus**.

Tickets may be purchased by calling 865-291-3310 or visiting the KSO [website](#). **Tickets range from \$16.00 - \$47.00 and children's tickets start at \$8.50.** Groups of 10 or more can purchase tickets at a discounted rate by calling 865-521-2337. Adult ticket prices are: \$16, \$23, \$30, \$36, \$40, \$47. Children's ticket prices are: \$8.50, \$12, \$15.50, \$18.50, \$20.50, \$24 (not including service charges).



Dynamic young conductor **Aram Demirjian** is currently serving as Music Director for the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra after a four-year stint as Associate Conductor at the Kansas City Symphony. American-born and of Armenian descent, Demirjian is already leaving his mark on the region's musical culture with creative programming, innovative collaborations and energetic community engagement. Demirjian is a recipient of the Solti Foundation U.S. Career

Assistance Award in 2017 and holds the 2011 Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize from the Aspen Music Festival, where he was a three-time Conducting Fellow in the Aspen Conducting Academy. Demirjian holds a Bachelor of Arts in music and government from Harvard University and a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from New England Conservatory. Demirjian's goal is to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, background, or circumstance, has access to great symphonic music.



Since 2003, **GO! Contemporary Dance Works** has served the Knoxville community by spreading enthusiasm for the performing arts, with exceptional and innovative performances to include original contemporary ballets such as *In the Shadows of Pine Mountain*, *Alice*, *Unsung Heroes: Women of WWII* and *Tata Ajache: Warrior Princess*. Directed by Lisa Hall McKee, GO! consists of over 45 dancers pre-professional through professional level and is known for blending classical and contemporary mediums of dance with daring artistry and athleticism that appeals to audiences far beyond the devoted dance-goer.



Since 1951, the **Knoxville Choral Society** has brought some of the world's greatest choral music to East Tennessee and is dedicated to maintaining a rich tradition of choral excellence. Now under the baton of **Dr. Eric Thorson**, the KCS is a 130-voice auditioned chorus that performs choral masterworks and chamber pieces in a yearly concert series. The KCS sings regularly with the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra in the Clayton Holiday Concerts and performs major choral works in the KSO Masterworks series. Conductor of the Knoxville Choral Society since 1995 and artistic director since 1996, Dr. Eric Thorson is professor of music and director of choral studies at Carson-Newman University, where he teaches conducting and music education courses and directs the A Cappella Choir, Men's Chorus, and Oratorio Chorus.



The Farragut High School Ensemble carries a longstanding tradition of excellence in choral music at Farragut High School, which has consistently been in the top three schools regarding number of All State students and has graduated students every year to the finest schools of music around the country. The Farragut High School Ensemble has served as the masterclass choir for groups like Chanticleer, King's Singers, and Voces8, and individual clinicians such as Dr. William Powell, Dr. Andre Thomas, and Sandra Snow.



Tenor **Alex Ward** was last seen with the KSO in the 2012 KSO Free Pilot Flying J Independence Day Concert, Haydn's *Theresienmesse*, and as Anthony in *Sweeney Todd* (Clarence Brown Theatre). Favorite credits include: *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Leaf Conebear, Clarence Brown Theatre), Disney's *The Little Mermaid* (Prince Eric), *Pasek and Paul's Dogfight* (Eddie Birdlace), and Sondheim's *Assassins* (Balladeer/Lee Harvey Oswald). Most recently, he originated the role of Kristoff in Disney's *Frozen: A Musical Spectacular* onboard the Disney Wonder. He lives in New York City.

The Knoxville Handbell Festival Ringers is led by Les Beaver, handbell director at Bearden United Methodist Church and Andrew Duncan, Director of Worship at Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church, this diverse group of 13-15 members is passionate about the art of handbell ringing. Using over 100 handbells and handchimes (a five-octave set of Malmark handbells and large number of handchimes) as well as mallets, pads, and other percussion instruments, this group is sure to entertain both visually and musically as the music is brought to life.

About the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra



Established in 1935, and now under the leadership of Music Director Aram Demirjian, the KSO has contributed to the cultural life in East Tennessee continuously for more than 80 years, providing excellence in musical and educational programs. The Orchestra consists of 80 professional musicians and performs 250 programs throughout the region each season, reaching audiences of more than 200,000 people. The KSO performs in traditional venues such as the Tennessee Theatre, Bijou Theatre and the Civic Auditorium as well as non-traditional places like hospitals, schools, city parks and churches. For more information regarding the KSO, please visit www.knoxvillesymphony.com or call 865-291-3310.

Social Media: KSO Clayton Holiday Concert: **Music from the Movies**, Dec. 15-17 at the Civic Auditorium. Group Discounts available! The KSO, Santa Claus & special guests! #KSOClayton 865-291-3310. [Follow @knoxsymphony on Twitter](https://twitter.com/knoxsymphony) and [Like KSO on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/knoxvillesymphony).

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