

Ring in the Holidays, Symphony Style

Written by Cynthia Mills

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Beaufort Symphony Orchestra is bursting with the season's spirit as they usher in the holidays with delicious hot chocolate, cookies, and Merry Christmas music during their "Tis the Season" concerts. These performances are the perfect place to bring the family for some warm holiday cheer.

Join the orchestra at USCB's Center for the Arts on Thursday, December 13 at 7:30 pm and Sunday, December 16 at 3:00 pm. The cost of admission for children and students up through college is only \$5.00. Admission for adults is \$37.50. You can purchase tickets on-line at www.BeaufortOrchestra.org or at the door.

Joining the Orchestra will be baritone Roger Moss, co-founder and director of the Savannah Children's Choir. Well-known in Savannah music circles, Moss will lend his rich, mellow voice to such holiday classics as *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*, *Let It Snow*, and *O, Holy Night*.

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Holiday music is timeless and familiar, so these concerts are a wonderful, fun way to introduce children to the classical style. Almost everyone has a favorite holiday or Christmas song that always gets the feet tapping and the soul singing, especially for the little ones. BSO hopes to play something special for children of every age. So get the kiddos all dressed up in festive clothes and let the holiday music of our full symphony orchestra inspire them.

Classical music is often considered boring or stuffy in the fast-paced, modern world of thumping stereos and shouted lyrics. Ironically though, classical music surrounds people every day. Television is one of the first places many children are exposed to it. Movie scores from all different genres use full orchestra arrangements to enhance the show. Music adds suspense to mysteries. It brings thrill to action scenes. It tugs at the heartstrings for romances and causes eyes to tear up in mournful scenes. Classical music, in full orchestral arrangements, can play on emotions and make a person feel truly alive as no other music can.

Beaufort and its residents are fortunate to have a full orchestra to kindle the spirit through music. The students of Beaufort County are immeasurably blessed to also have the Beaufort Youth Orchestra (BYO), a daughter organization of the BSO. Youth from all over Beaufort County are allowed to audition twice a year for the youth orchestra (next audition will take place on January 3 at Beaufort High School). Each musician who is selected for BYO spends months meeting for several hours with conductor Fred Devyatkin and the youth orchestra to rehearse their music and refine their skills. At the end of each session, the youth orchestra hosts two performances that are free and open to the public. The youth orchestra and Beaufort First Orchestra (geared toward younger, newer musicians) are both excellent opportunities for children who have discovered the love of music. They learn with other children, challenge themselves to improve, and grow in their musical abilities. For more information or to schedule an audition, contact Ron Maddox at 843-263-2190.

Both of these youth groups, as well as the parent organization Beaufort Symphony Orchestra, require some extra funds in order to continue performing and inspiring young musicians. To continue with the orchestra's programming, they need to raise \$20,000 this performance season. We will have several opportunities to help fund the continued music at the holiday performances. Our youth orchestra students will be serving FREE hot chocolate and cookies at the Christmas concert, so we encourage you to bring your entire family. We even have sing-a-long music for everyone to join in as the finale of the concert! Another way to close this \$20,000 gap is to donate \$49 for a drawing to win a new Honda Fit Sport. These donations are tax deductible and checks are written to the Beaufort Symphony Orchestra. You will also have

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the chance to win a weekend for four at either Fripp Island or Harbor Island, or a 42" flat screen television, with these same tickets.

Also, we've created a special Holiday Gift Bundle to help support the BSO. For a \$150-donation, you will receive two tickets to Beaufort Symphony Orchestra's February concert and two tickets for a chance to win the Honda Fit Sport. Keep this holiday gift for yourself or give it to someone special! Either way, the gift will be truly appreciated by the recipient and the orchestra. Each month, the orchestra will hold a drawing to give away an additional small thank-you gift to someone special who has donated to show their support through this fundraiser. The earlier you donate, the more opportunities you will have to win. You can donate at the concert, or on the website, www.BeaufortOrchestra.org, or contact Greta Maddox at 843-476-1310 for tickets.

Please join us for the holidays. Help us support the continued efforts to promote orchestra music and inspire the younger generation by teaching a passion for music. Our goal is to keep Live Symphonic music as the treasure we all know it to be in our beloved hometown of Beaufort, South Carolina.

Cynthia Mills is a Beaufort Youth Orchestra parent.

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