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BPO BACK IN FULL SWING WITH A MONTH OF 'FIRSTS'

Upcoming BPO concerts are cause for celebration with a Hispanic heritage festival, the Kleinhans debut of the Buffalo United Community Choir, and more



John Williams' Movie Music, September 29 & 30
Enrico Lopez-Yañez, conductor

Boléro, October 6 & 7
JoAnn Falletta, conductor; Tianwa Yang, violin

Aída Cuevas: The Queen of Mariachi, October 14
Fernanda Lastra, conductor; Aída Cuevas, vocals

Symphonic Spooktacular, October 15
Fernanda Lastra, conductor

Haydn's The Clock, October 21 & 22
Julius P. Williams, conductor; Tessa Lark, violin; Elena Roussanova, composer

A Gospel Symphony Celebration with Donald Lawrence, October 27
Henry Panion III, conductor; Donald Lawrence, vocals; Buffalo United Community Choir

Stephen Schwartz & Friends, October 28

Jason Seber, conductor; Stephen Schwartz, host/composer/piano;
Shaleah Adkisson, John Boswell, Scott Coulter, Debbie Gravitte, & Michael McCorry Rose,
vocals

Following a memorable opening night to their concert season, the BPO has a special month of performances ahead celebrating cultural heritage, musical icons, and community talent. This collection of concerts marks an array of firsts — both for this season and in the history of the orchestra — with many festivities for Western NY audiences to join in on.

Both the **Pops** and **Coffee Concert series** kick off this Friday with a program of beloved cinematic works by fan-favorite composer **John Williams**, including from *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars*, and *Schindler's List*. The first **Musician's Nightcap** of the season will follow Saturday's performance, giving audiences the opportunity to converse directly with BPO musicians over complimentary refreshments in the lower level of Kleinhans Music Hall.

The following weekend, JoAnn Falletta and the orchestra bring back a staple of the classical music canon: Ravel's famous **Boléro**. The piece is complemented by violin virtuoso **Tianwa Yang**'s interpretation of a concerto by film composer **Miklós Rózsa** (*Ben-Hur*), along with another Musician's Nightcap after Saturday's performance.

Saturday, October 14 marks the Western NY debut of legendary Mexican singer **Aída Cuevas**, the "Queen of Mariachi," performing with her mariachi band and the orchestra led by **Fernanda Lastra**, BPO Assistant Conductor and Diversity Fellow. In partnership with the **Hispanic Heritage Council of WNY**, the BPO hosts its first-ever **Festival Encanto Hispano** before the concert from 12-4pm at Kleinhans. This event features local performers, food, and artist vendors, celebrating Hispanic heritage as its month of celebration draws to a close.

On Sunday, October 15, the **BPO Kids series** begins with a thrilling Halloween-themed **Symphonic Spooktacular**, complete with a costume parade across the Kleinhans stage. Tickets are **\$7** for adults and children alike, with general admission seating.

The Classics series continues the next weekend with an exuberant Haydn symphony nicknamed "**The Clock**," two stunning works featuring the captivating **Tessa Lark** on violin, and a work by contemporary composer **Elena Roussanova** — wife of the program's conductor, Boston Pops cover conductor and Berklee professor **Julius P. Williams**.

Towards the end of October, gospel music icon **Donald Lawrence** joins the orchestra for a **Gospel Symphony Celebration**, conducted by Grammy award-winning conductor **Henry Panion, III**. This performance includes the special Kleinhans debut of the **Buffalo United**

Community Choir, formed in 2023 with representatives from 42 local churches and organizations across Western NY.

Closing out the month is the incomparable **Stephen Schwartz**, known for composing musical hits from *Wicked*, *Godspell*, and more, hosting a night of stories and song with several of his friends from the Broadway stage.

For a complete listing of 2023-24 concerts, including dates, times, and programs, visit bpo.org/events. Ticket prices for select concerts start at \$20 and can be purchased online at bpo.org/tickets, in-person at the Box Office in Kleinhans Music Hall, or by calling (716) 885-5000.

Find images [here](#). For additional information, interviews, photos, or video, contact Simone Viola at sviola@bpo.org or (716) 242-7814.

About Us: To learn more about our storied history, [distinguished conductors and world-class musicians](#), and commitment to [IDEA](#), visit the [Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra](#).



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