

For Immediate Release

**Marcelo Lehninger debuts at D&W Fresh Market Picnic Pops with
Classical Fireworks!**

*Grand Rapids Symphony's new music director leads one-night only
special event at Cannonsburg Ski Area, Aug. 3*

GRAND RAPIDS, MI., July 21, 2017 – For 23 seasons, the rocket's red glare has been a part of the [Grand Rapids Pops'](#) summer season at Cannonsburg Ski Area.

[Classical Fireworks](#) has been an audience favorite at the **D&W Fresh Market Picnic Pops** since the series debuted in 1995. [Grand Rapids Symphony](#) Music Director **Marcelo Lehninger** is about to experience it for the first time.

Lehninger, who was named Grand Rapids Symphony's Music Director last summer, will make his Picnic Pops debut, leading the Grand Rapids Pops in music by Aaron Copland and George Gershwin.

Join the Brazilian-born conductor, leading your Grand Rapids Symphony in music including tangos by Argentinean composer Astor Piazzolla on Thursday, Aug. 3, at Cannonsburg Ski Area, 6800 Cannonsburg Rd NE.

The one-night only special event begins at 8 p.m. with Morton Gould's *American Salute*, a set of variations on the theme, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again*. It ends with Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* followed by a spectacular, grand finale fireworks display, sponsored by **Lacks Enterprises**.

Tickets in advance start at \$19 for adults, \$16 for college students and seniors, \$5 for ages 2-18, and free for children under age 2 for lawn seats for the concert underwritten by **Chemical Bank, Fox Motors, Universal Forest Products** and **United Bank** as Benefactor Sponsors.

Call the **Grand Rapids Symphony** at (616) 454-9451 ext. 4 during business hours or (616) 885-1241 evenings or go online to [PicnicPops.org](#)

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[Marcelo Lehninger](#), who began Grand Rapids Symphony's 14th Music Director in June 2016, spent five seasons on the conducting staff of the **Boston Symphony Orchestra**. On three days' notice in 2011, he replaced BSO Music Director James Levine for performances that included the world premiere of a new violin concerto by Harrison Birtwistle in Boston. With Lehninger on the podium, the BSO repeated the program weeks later in **New York City's Carnegie Hall**.

Awarded the 2014 **Helen M. Thompson Award for an Emerging Music Director** by the League of American Orchestras, Lehninger has guest conducted the symphony orchestras of Detroit, Chicago, Houston, Seattle and Toronto among others. Elsewhere, he has conducted the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, the Lucerne Symphony and the Orchestre National de France.

Besides his appearance at the **D&W Fresh Market Picnic Pops**, Lehninger's engagements this summer included the Brevard Music Center in June and a return appearance with the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra in July.

In July, Lehninger, his wife, Laura Krech, and their daughters, became new residents of Grand Rapids.

In 2017-18, Lehninger will conduct 11 concerts with the Grand Rapids Symphony. His guest appearances will include performances with the Slovenian Philharmonic in Ljubljana and in Vienna in February 2018.

For the D&W Fresh Market Picnic Pops, Lehninger will lead the Grand Rapids Symphony in audience favorites including Copland's "Hoedown" from his ballet *Rodeo* as well as the finale from Dvorak's "**From the New World**" **Symphony No. 9**, which Lehninger conducted in his very first appearance with the Grand Rapids Symphony in February 2015.

Along with the tangos by Piazzolla, Lehninger, who is fluent in Portuguese and Spanish in addition to English, will lead the orchestra in Copland's concert suite *El Salon Mexico* and Gershwin's *Cuban Overture*.

The 23rd annual summer season concludes two days later with the marvelous mariachi sound of [Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán](#) on Saturday, August 5.

About Cannonsburg Ski Area

Gates at [Cannonsburg Ski Area](#) open at 5:45 p.m. each night for picnicking and pre-concert entertainment, including free, kid-friendly activities such as face painting, crafts, and a musical instrument petting zoo.

Pack your own picnic baskets and coolers or purchase food from the grill at the Cannonsburg concession stand. Alcoholic beverages are permitted on the grounds, and parking is free for concertgoers.

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Tickets

Single tickets in advance for lawn seats for [Classical Fireworks](#) are \$19 for adults, \$16 for college students and seniors, or \$5 for ages 2-18. Single tickets for general admission chair seating are \$30. Single tickets for an individual, reserved table seats are \$51 or \$408 for an entire table for eight.

MySymphony360 members can attend for \$15. Active duty, reserve and National Guard members of the **U.S. Military** may buy up to two tickets for \$15 each. All children under age 2 are admitted for free.

All single tickets for all concerts are \$5 more on the day of the show.

Group discounts are available for groups of 10 or more people by calling (616) 454-9451 ext. 192.

Tickets can be purchased through the GRS box office by calling (616) 454-9451 ext. 4 weekdays or (616) 885-1241 evenings; or in person at 300 Ottawa Ave. NW, Suite 100; or online at GRSymphony.org.

Tickets also may be purchased through **Ticketmaster** at (800) 982-2787, or at Ticketmaster outlets at select D&W Fresh Markets, Family Fare stores and Walmart. Tickets purchased at these locations will include a Ticketmaster service fee.

About the Grand Rapids Symphony

Organized in 1930, the [Grand Rapids Symphony](#) is nationally recognized for the quality of its concerts and educational programs. Led by Music Director Marcelo Lehninger, Principal Pops Conductor Bob Bernhardt and Associate Conductor John Varineau, nine concert series are presented, featuring a wide range of music and performance styles. More than 400 performances are given each year, touching the lives of some 200,000, nearly half of whom are students, senior citizens and people with disabilities all reached through extensive education and community service programs. Affiliated organizations include the Grand Rapids Symphony Chorus; Grand Rapids Youth Symphony and Classical Orchestra; and Grand Rapids Symphony Youth Choruses. GRS provides the orchestra for performances by [Opera Grand Rapids](#) and the [Grand Rapids Ballet](#) and sponsors the biennial [Grand Rapids Bach Festival](#), which was held in March 2017 and returns in 2019.

To learn more about the [Grand Rapids Symphony](#), please visit the website or

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*This activity is supported in part by an award from the **Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs** and the **National Endowment for the Arts**.*

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