

For Immediate Release

Unwrap the Holidays with the Grand Rapids Pops

Wolverine World Wide Holiday Pops, Old National Bank Cirque de Noël return to DeVos Performance Hall in December

GRAND RAPIDS, MI., November 29, 2017 – Decking the halls with boughs of holly and hanging the stockings by the chimney with care are favorite December traditions for many West Michigan families.

So is spending the [holidays with the Grand Rapids Pops](#).

The [Grand Rapids Symphony](#) celebrates the season with two enduring holiday traditions in Grand Rapids including the **Wolverine Worldwide Holiday Pops** and the **Old National Bank Cirque de Noël** in DeVos Performance Hall.

The **Wolverine Worldwide Holiday Pops**, an institution that’s lasted for decades, draws entire families from children to parents, grandparents and great-grandparents. Join the [Grand Rapids Pops](#) to celebrate the season in five performances Dec. 14-17.

Old National Bank Cirque de Noël welcomes Cirque de la Symphonie back to Grand Rapids for cirque artistry accompanied by the Grand Rapids Pops. See amazing acrobats and aerial artists in two appearances Dec. 21 and 22.

The [Wolverine Worldwide Holiday Pops](#), part of the **Fox Motors Pops Series**, is home-grown entertainment especially for a hometown audience.

Principal Pops Conductor **Bob Bernhardt** leads performances including such favorites as Leroy Anderson’s “Sleigh Ride” and highlights from Tchaikovsky’s *The Nutcracker*. The **Grand Rapids Symphony Chorus**, conducted by Pearl Shangkuan, joins the orchestra to sing G.F. Handel’s “Hallelujah” Chorus from *The Messiah*.

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The **Grand Rapids Symphony Youth Chorus**, directed by Sean Ivory, will be featured on John Rutter's "Star Carol." Both choruses will sing music from the 1990 movie *Home Alone* with orchestra.

Embellish handbell ensemble, directed by Stephanie Wiltse, will join the Symphony Chorus for "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," and will play a solo number, "Change Ring Prelude on *Divinum Mysterium*" by Fred Gramann," on a battery of handbells.

Guest vocalist **Leon Williams** joins the Grand Rapids Symphony to sing "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and "Sweet Little Jesus Boy" in his third Holiday Pops appearance with the orchestra.

Though Williams doesn't live in West Michigan, he's made many appearances here. In October, he sang for the funeral of Grand Rapids Symphony benefactor and philanthropist Helen DeVos.

Wolverine Worldwide is the Concert Sponsor. **Jim and Ginger Jurries** are the Guest Artist Sponsor of Leon Williams.

The Wolverine Worldwide Holiday Pops will be held at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 14, and at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Dec. 15-16. Matinees will be at 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 16-17 in DeVos Performance Hall.

Families with children are invited to the Grand Rapids Symphony's **Wolverine World Wide [Holiday Pops Spectacular](#)** on Saturday, Dec. 16, just before the 3 p.m. matinee concert. Beginning at 1 p.m., children can enjoy festive treats, arts and crafts, games, and much more leading up to the concert at 3 p.m. Tickets for the Holiday Pops Spectacular plus the Holiday Pops are \$20. Supporting Sponsor is **Meijer, Inc.** Community Partners are **Amerikam** and **Calvin College**.

The **[Old National Bank Cirque de Noël](#)**, part of the **Gerber SymphonicBoom Series**, returns to DeVos Performance Hall for the eighth annual holiday show.

See aerial artists, gymnasts, jugglers and strongmen and hear classical favorites and seasonal music.

Acts include aerial artists Nataliya Tolstikova and Sergey Parshin performing on silk above the DeVos Hall stage while the Grand Rapids Symphony plays the "Waltz of the Flowers" from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*.

Associate Conductor John Varineau leads the orchestra in music from the 2004 film *The Polar Express* plus familiar melodies such as "The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers." **Old National Bank** is the Concert Sponsor.

Tickets

Tickets for the **Wolverine World Wide Holiday Pops** start at **\$18**.

Student tickets for concerts on Thursday, Dec. 14 and for the matinee on Saturday, Dec. 16 also are available for \$5. Full-time students of any age are able to purchase tickets for only **\$5** on the night of the concert by enrolling in the [GRS Student Tickets](#) program, sponsored by **Comerica** and **Calvin College**. This is a [MySymphony360](#) eligible concert.

Tickets for **Old National Bank Cirque de Noël** start at **\$32**.

Tickets for both program are available at the **GRS ticket office**, weekdays 9 am-5 pm at 300 Ottawa Ave. NW, Suite 100, (located across from the Calder Plaza), or by calling 616.454.9451 x 4. (Phone orders will be charged a \$2 per ticket service fee, with a \$12 maximum.)

Tickets are available at the **DeVos Place box office**, weekdays 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. or on the day of the concert beginning two hours prior to the performance. Tickets also may be purchased online at [GRSymphony.org](#).

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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