

## **NEWS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release: November 17, 2010

### **Santa Rosa Symphony December 4-6 concerts feature world premiere**

#### **French composer Aubert Lemeland dies less than three weeks before performance**

(SANTA ROSA, CA) – Playing the *Requiem* by Fauré will take on a particular poignancy for the Santa Rosa Symphony with the news that the 78-year-old composer of the concert-opening world premiere piece passed away on November 15. A September 2010 video interview with Aubert Lemeland is in the process of being edited and will be shown at the pre-concert talks at 7 p.m. on December 4 and 6, and 2 p.m. on December 5.

The Lemeland work, actually five pieces grouped under the general title *Battle Pieces*, has been written especially for the Santa Rosa Symphony string section and piano. As a child living in Normandy in June 1944, the composer saw the first U.S. troops disembark on his country's beaches, and he felt an extreme debt to them, and to America. His respect and admiration for those in military service is observed in this composition and throughout Lemeland's music.

Santa Rosa resident and World War II veteran Bernie Sugarman will narrate *Battle Pieces*. Sugarman, a former English teacher and actor, makes the composition come alive by reading poetic excerpts from WWII American soldiers' letters which introduce each movement.

Pascal Ianco of Lemeland's Paris publisher Les Editions Le Chant du Monde, wrote:

The homage of his native city La Haye-du-Puits and the commission of the Santa Rosa Symphony were the last joys he has had in a long and busy life. I saw him shortly before his passing and he was still in high spirits. He compared himself to the wounded American soldiers he met when he was a child. Somehow, he considered himself as "wounded in action," and was very emotional when he thought of the coming premiere in Santa Rosa. He was

sure that, through music, time and space, will be created an affective tie, a link of solidarity between him and the audience.

SRS Music Director/Conductor Bruno Ferrandis said of his countryman, “I wanted to commission Lemeland because I was drawn to his highly passionate, melodically intricate works. I appreciate his fluid tonal music that modulates constantly. I believe that it represents the direction French music is taking. That he has passed away at this time is very sad. Our program will honor the man as well as his music.”

### **Santa Rosa Symphony Honor Choir**

In addition to the Lemeland commission, the December program consists of two choral gems not often heard: Poulenc’s *Gloria* and Faure’s *Requiem*. Doing the vocal honors will be the Santa Rosa Symphony Honor Choir, 150 voices strong, enhanced by the sparkling soprano Cyndia Sieden and the accomplished baritone Marcus DeLoach. The Honor Choir is directed by SRS Choral Director Robert Worth.

Of Sieden, it has been written, “She is queen, vocal gymnast and daredevil all wrapped up in one.” (Australian Brandenburg Orchestra). Her [complete bio here](#). Of DeLoach, the *London Times* has said, “He has that elusive fusion of instinct and understanding which sparks a quality of imagination transcending mere accomplishment.” His [complete bio here](#).

### **Concert Sponsors**

Santa Rosa Symphony’s December concert set is sponsored by Ava and Sam Guerrero. Guest Artist Cyndia Sieden is underwritten by Will Craig. Guest artist Marcus DeLoach is underwritten by an anonymous donor.

### **Get Cued in with Pre-Concert Talks and Online Notes**

To hear Maestro Ferrandis’ musings on, and insights about, the December program come to “Conversations with the Conductor,” a pre-concert talk with Q & A beginning one hour before each performance (excluding the Saturday Discovery Open Rehearsal). This is an open-seating event that

is free to ticket holders. A video interview with the late composer Aubert Lemeland will be shown during the December talks. Program Notes for this concert are available [here](#).

### **Concert Times**

Concert times are Saturday, December 4 and Monday, December 6 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, December 5 at 3 p.m. at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts, 50 Mark West Springs Road, in Santa Rosa. The popular, family-friendly Discovery Series of open rehearsals continues at 2 p.m. on December 4. The Discovery concerts, economically priced at \$10 for adults and \$6 for youth, offer a sneak peek into the final rehearsal process before each concert set.

### **Tickets**

For tickets, call (707) 546-8742, purchase online at [santarosasympphony.com](http://santarosasympphony.com), or come in person to the Symphony Patron Services Office at 50 Santa Rosa Avenue (north door entrance, off the elevator lobby), from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, Wednesdays 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tickets may also be purchased at the door 1½ hours before each performance (based on availability.) Single tickets are \$28-\$55, with student and senior discounts available. \$10 Student Rush tickets (student I.D. required) can be purchased a half hour prior to curtain.

### **Composer Biography**

Aubert Lemeland (1932-2010) composed extensively for voice, chamber ensemble, and symphony orchestra. His music is now part of the fabric of the current European concert scene. Upon the recommendation of Music Director Bruno Ferrandis, the Santa Rosa Symphony decided to build one of seven concert sets of the 2010-11 Classical Series around a commission by Lemeland, who has a respected body of work that has been recognized with prestigious awards such as the Grand Prix du Disque from the Academie Charles Cros (1995) and Diapason d'Or (1998). He has also been called a “traditional contemporary” composer, meaning that he has a “harmonically refined sense of music, a natural sense of writing for voices, and glittering orchestrations.”

Lemeland has a special relationship with the United States, historically speaking. He has composed pieces like *Songs for the Dead Soldiers*, relating to D-Day, the Normandy landing in June 6, 1944. As a 12-year old boy, he saw the first U. S. soldiers disembark on his country's beaches. He feels an extreme debt to them, and to America, and this is observed and felt throughout his music.

## **CALENDAR LISTING**

**Heading:** Classical

**What:** Symphony Concert

Bruno Ferrandis, conductor

Cyndia Sieden, soprano

Marcus DeLoach, baritone

Santa Rosa Symphony Honor Choir, Robert Worth, director

### **Date and Time:**

Sat., December 4 at 8 p.m.

(Discovery Rehearsal, Sat., December 4 at 2 p.m.)

Sun., December 5, 2010 at 3 p.m.

Mon., December 6, 2010 at 8 p.m.

### **Program:**

LEMELAND: *Battle Pieces* (World Premiere)

POULENC: *Gloria*

FAURÉ: *Requiem*

The pre-concert talks start one hour before each performance (except Discovery Rehearsal).

**Venue:** Wells Fargo Center for the Arts, 50 Mark West Springs Road, Santa Rosa, CA

**Cost:** Single tickets \$28-\$55, with senior and student discounts available.

**Tickets:** Online [santarosasympphony.com](http://santarosasympphony.com), by phone 54-MUSIC (707-546-8742) or in person at the SRS Patron Services Office, 50 Santa Rosa Avenue, Santa Rosa, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.

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