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Concert to portray water's natural beauty with powerful music *MSU Symphony Orchestra and Choirs close their season at Wharton Center.*

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EAST LANSING, Mich. – The MSU College of Music’s Symphony Orchestra and choirs will perform a panoramic program that blends the idyllic words of honored poetry with the symphonic beauty of music portraying the mystique of the sea. Titled [“Songs of the Sea,”](#) this creative tour de force unites 80 orchestra members with more than 250 singers from MSU’s Choral Union, State Singers, and University Chorale on the Cobb Great Hall Stage of the Wharton Center on **Saturday, April 20, at 8 p.m.**

Considered the 2023–2024 season finale for the College’s orchestras and choirs, this grand-scaled thematic event will fill the stage with singers and instrumentalists led by conductors [Octavio Más-Arocas](#) and Sally Yu. These talented musicians will then fill the halls with the music of two prominently known British composers from the twentieth century.

Benjamin Britten, a visionary composer, was known for creating evocative melodies that resonate with emotional depth. Renowned for operatic masterpieces and vocal compositions, his progressive yet accessible works have left an enduring mark on classical music today. The opening piece of the concert will present the beauty and wonder of Britten’s magical *Four Sea Interludes*.

The iconic composer Ralph Vaughan Williams enriched his music with pastoral elegance and folk-inspired melodies. His compositions were rooted in tradition yet innovative and known for evoking qualities in nature and human emotion. The concert will conclude with his *Symphony No. 1, A Sea Symphony* with texts from poet Walt Whitman, including “The Waves” and “On the Beach at Night Alone.” Highlighting this piece are soloists from the College of Music: baritone Derrick Fox, MSU professor of choral music and associate dean of graduate studies, and soprano Elary Mede, who earned her master’s in vocal performance from MSU in 2023.

“We are delighted to present such a beautiful and powerful program to end the choirs and orchestra season,” said conductor Más-Arocas, associate professor of music and director of orchestras at MSU. “This is the first time the Vaughan Williams piece will be performed by our ensembles, which is challenging and requires immense effort and stamina from all the performers and the conductors to help prepare. The spirit of collaboration is incredible and speaks to the amount of artistry, curiosity, and commitment we all share to perform as a group and to bring to the public. This massive concert is not only an ode to a majestic, mysterious, and beautiful sea, but also an ode to humanity, and we eagerly await to share the performance with the audience and experience, as one.”

The Symphony Orchestra and MSU Choirs concert “Songs of the Sea” is generously sponsored by Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D. and Thomas V. O’Halloran, Ph.D.

Reserved seating tickets are \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors (age 60 and older), and free for students with an ID or under 18. Information on this and other concerts, recitals and performances can be found on the MSU College of Music website: www.music.msu.edu.

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