



College of Music
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The Ringing 3:

Music for All Hallows Eve

Jon Lehrer, carillon
Alison Dobbins, animations

*Generously sponsored by
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Thursday, October 29, 2026
Beaumont Tower, 8:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Night Falls

Suite No. 1 for Carillon

II. Sonorities

John Courter

(1941–2010)

Evil Stepfathers

from *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*

The Bells of Notre Dame

Alan Menken

(b. 1949)

arr. Austin Ferguson

from *Pan's Labyrinth*

Mercedes' Lullaby

Javier Navarrete

(b. 1956)

arr. J. Lehrer

Rest in Peace

from *Requiem in D Minor, K. 626*

Lacrimosa

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(1756–1791)

arr. J. Lehrer

from *Requiem for a Dream*

Lux Æterna

Clint Mansell

(b. 1963)

arr. J. Lehrer

Undead Rising

from *Mad Father*

Old Doll

Senyuu

arr. J. Lehrer

Danse macabre, Op. 40

Camille Saint-Saëns

(1835–1921)

arr. G. Van den Bergh

Candy Break!

from *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*

Pure Imagination

Leslie Bricusse & Anthony Newley

(1931–2021) (1931–1999)

arr. Jennifer Lory-Moran

Hidden Away

from *Howl's Moving Castle*

Merry-Go-Round of Life

Joe Hisaishi

(b. 1950)

arr. R. Perfecto

Toccata, Lied, en Fuga

Staf Nees

op *Daar staat een klooster in Oostenrijk*

(1901–1965)

Back to Life

Bring Me to Life

Amy Lee, Ben Moody, & David Hodges

(b. 1981) (b. 1981) (b. 1978)

arr. J. Lehrer

Nocturne No. 20 in C-sharp Minor, Op. posth.

Frédéric Chopin

(1810–1849)

arr. J. Lehrer

Last Dance

Serenade II for Carillon

III. Flamenco

Ronald Barnes

(1927–1997)

PROGRAM NOTES

As darkness falls, the calm yet eerie echoing refrains of *Sonorities* beckon those who dare for a night of spook and wonder. The composer, John Courter, was an American composer, organist, and carillonneur raised in Lansing who earned his Bachelor degree in choral music education from MSU in 1962 before pursuing advanced study in Ann Arbor, Germany, and the Netherlands.

Monsters do not always hide in the dark. Some pose as friends, allies, protectors, even guardians. Quasimodo, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, is a kindhearted, disfigured bellringer who joins the Romani dancer, Esmeralda, to protect her people from his cruel, fanatical, adoptive father. In Guillermo del Toro's dark fantasy, *Pan's Labyrinth*, a young girl escapes the brutal reality of her fascist stepfather by entering a mystical labyrinth, where a faun assigns her three trials to prove she is a lost princess.

The *Requiem Mass*, the traditional Catholic mass for the dead, has been with us for at least 1500 years. Requiem translates to eternal rest. In 1791, Mozart succumbed to that rest before finishing the *Lacrimosa* movement, leaving his student Franz Süssmayr to complete it from only eight measures of material. Süssmayr rose to the occasion. *Lux Æterna* is a modern 21st century Requiem written for the 2000 film *Requiem for a Dream*, in which drug addiction slowly destroys the hopes, dreams, and lives of each of its characters. It was later reorchestrated as *Requiem for a Tower* for the trailer of *The Lord of The Rings*.

Who says death is the end? Certainly not Halloween. In the 2012 survival horror video game *Mad Father*, Aya discovers her father's secret basement laboratory where he turns his victims into living dolls or corpses, now reanimated by a spell and seeking revenge. Notions of a *Danse macabre* or "Dance of Death" harken back to at least the 13th century. In Saint-Saëns' rendition, he casts Death as the great fiddler, tuning his strings on Halloween night after the 12th stroke of midnight and calling all skeletons to dance wildly in the graveyard until the rooster's crow sends them back underground for another year.

Let us, of course, not forget the other spirit of Halloween: Candy, and lots of it. *Pure Imagination* was written over the telephone within a single day for the film *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* for Wonka to sing as the guests enter the factory's magical confection garden. So enjoy the delectable delights of this magical realm, just do not be a brat.

PROGRAM NOTES (cont.)

Castles and monasteries are sanctuaries for some, prisons for others. *Howl's Moving Castle* sets creator Hayao Miyazaki's anti-war themes in a fictional kingdom where both magic and early 20th-century technology are prevalent. There, a young and recently cursed girl encounters Howl, a wizard who refuses to fight for the king. Together they take refuge in his camouflaged moving castle, forming their own chosen family with several other cursed beings who join them. Unfortunately, there is no magic in the old Dutch folk song *Daar staat een klooster in Oostenrijk*. Here, two young lovers are forever separated when the young girl's father sends her away to live out the rest of her life in a distant cloister. Staf Nees, former director of the Royal Belgian Carillon School, wrote a grand suite upon the song that remains one of the most celebrated and technically challenging staples in the international carillon repertoire. Its dramatic, highly virtuosic toccata yields to a slow Lied (song) movement before proceeding to the final Fugue, in which the theme weaves, layers, and morphs itself across the entire range of the instrument, jovially on occasion, but generally skewing dark and stormy.

Amy Lee penned the lyrics to Evanescence's debut single *Bring Me to Life* at age 19, inspired by her experience of becoming desensitized to the harm of her abusive relationship. Through writing it, she came to realize that the more honest she was, the more powerful she felt.

For 200 years, the *Nocturne in C-sharp minor* has calmed, consoled, and opened hearts worldwide. It could have easily been lost to history, as Chopin wrote it as a mere exercise for his older sister and never published it during his lifetime. Over a century later, it was the last piece of music to be heard on Polish radio before the broadcast signal was destroyed by German bombs. Jewish pianists Władysław Szpilman and Natalia Karp each endured the horrors of what followed, and when asked to perform for their tormentors, both independently chose this Nocturne, eliciting enough humanity from the German officers to survive another day. When Polish radio was re-established after WWII, they picked up with the same Nocturne they had left off with six years earlier, coming back to life, but a life far starker than the one they left.

From the stillness that follows, we turn to the rhythm and fire of Barnes' *Flamenco*. Ronald Montague Barnes was an American carillonist, composer, and musicologist, and a major force in establishing a distinctive style of American carillon composition. Today, much of his music is considered part of the standard core carillon repertoire for students and professionals. *Flamenco* draws inspiration from the passionate and emotional Spanish dance form, alternating between ferocity and elegance, rhythm and lyricism, spark and darkness.

CARILLON HALLOWEEN CONCERT

ARTIST-FACULTY BIOS

Jon Lehrer is the sixth University Carillonist of Michigan State University and the second University Carillonist of Grand Valley State University. A laureate of five international competitions for carillon (including the Queen Fabiola, the Nederlandse Klokkenspel Vereniging, and the Alexius Julien Baroque competitions), he is now a prolific soloist on the global stage, with a CV that includes touring overseas on behalf of the Canada Council for the Arts, teaching masterclasses at universities across the nation, and performing hundreds of shows on the North American renaissance festival circuit. Jon studied carillon with Geert D'Hollander, Eddy Marien, Koen Cosaert, and Ellen Dickenson and holds degrees from Yale University and the Royal Carillon School of Belgium. Having recently retired from data science and cancer research, he is focused on creating moments of beauty for busy university communities, growing the carillon art, and helping to train the next generation of expressive carillon virtuosi. Jon lives in Michigan with his partner Christy and their two cat-café adoptees, Henry and Juliet.

Alison Dobbins

ABOUT THE CARILLON

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Summer concerts with touring performers from around the world, 6 Wednesdays in July and August from 6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

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