



EUGENE SYMPHONY

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Eugene Symphony to honor Steve Prefontaine on June 4

The concert will feature the world premiere of a new piece by David Schiff and tributes read by Oregon Contemporary Theatre actors



EUGENE, OR (May 10, 2022)— As the World Athletics Championships come to Oregon in July, Eugene Symphony will honor one of Oregon’s greatest champions, Steve Prefontaine. Before his untimely death in 1975, he set 14 American records in distance running, and legends of his accomplishments still resonate across the world today.

Featuring original music by Oregon’s best-known composer, David Schiff, this stirring multimedia project will be enhanced with imagery of Coos Bay and archival photos projected on a screen above the stage and punctuated with spoken accounts of

Steve’s life performed by Oregon Contemporary Theatre actors. Words of tribute and gratitude, submitted by Steve’s fans around the globe, will be woven into the performance to underline his impact that endures today.

The creative team includes [Oregon Contemporary Theatre’s](#) Producing Artistic Director Craig Willis, veteran sports journalist Curtis Anderson of [TrackTown USA](#) and [Oregon Track Club Elite](#), and Steve’s sister Linda Prefontaine.

“Few athletes have ever captured public imagination as Steve did, and still does,” says **Executive Director Scott Freck**. “His is a story of perseverance, heart, and unmatched drive. Steve’s legacy lives on, undimmed, and we are proud to showcase one of Oregon’s best and brightest in this extraordinary new way.”

Tickets: Tickets available now, ranging from \$29.00 to \$68.00. Student/youth tickets available for \$10.

Purchase at eugenesympphony.org or the Hult Center Ticket Office 541-682-5000

SPECIAL CONCERT June 4, 2022 – PREFONTAINE

Francesco Lecce-Chong, conductor

*In partnership with Oregon Contemporary Theatre

*Linda Prefontaine, Creative Consultant

Bernstein: Overture to *Candide*

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5

*David Schiff: Prefontaine (World Premiere)

Interview & Media Opportunities: High-resolution photos are available upon request. Interviews with ESA Music Director & Conductor Francesco Lecce-Chong, ESA Executive Director Scott Freck, and composer David Schiff are available for scheduling. Please contact Marketing & Communications Manager Julie Winsel at 541-687-9487 ext. 1106 or by email at julie.winsel@eugenesympphony.org.

About David Schiff

The wide-ranging, category-defying music of David Schiff, composed for symphony orchestras, opera companies, chamber ensembles, jazz musicians, blues musicians, klezmer musicians, synagogue cantors, church choirs and even for stand-up comedian, has been performed by major American orchestras, at music festivals around the world and by world-renowned soloists. His music often brings together artists from different parts of the musical world, notably in *Four Sisters*, a concerto for jazz violin and orchestra, which Regina Carter has performed many times with the Detroit Symphony (and two years ago with Portland's Metropolitan Youth Symphony), *Bridge City*, which was premiered by the Oregon Symphony and the Curtis Salgado Blues Band, *Singing in the Dark*, premiered jazz saxophone great Marty Ehrlich and the Miami String Quartet, and *Road Maps*, for improvising musicians and chamber orchestra, played by such innovative improvisers as Larry Karush, Myra Melford, Marty Ehrlich and Eugene's own Brian McWhorter and Molly Barth.

About Oregon Contemporary Theatre

Over the course of its more than 20-year history, Oregon Contemporary Theatre has earned a reputation for high artistic quality and commitment to presenting challenging and diverse scripts. Oregon Contemporary Theatre creates outstanding performances and programs that inspire curiosity, challenge expectation, encourage dialogue and support positive change. They build a better world by opening minds and transforming hearts.

About Craig Willis

Craig has been at the helm of Oregon Contemporary Theatre since 2003. He has worked with theatre

and dance companies in California, Ohio, and his native Washington state. Select directing credits include Buyer & Cellar, The Roommate, Stupid F@#*ing Bird, I and You, and Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, as well as world premiere productions of Blackberry Winter and Dontrell Who Kissed The Sea all at OCT. Craig's musical directing credits include: Fun Home, The Last Five Years, Next To Normal, and Assassins. He has recently served as a guest artist with Western Washington University and Oregon State University and collaborated on the Eugene Ballet's adaptation of the children's story of The Large Rock and The Little Yew. Craig has an MFA in Directing and a PhD in Theatre Arts from the University of Oregon. In 2008, he received an Oregon Arts Commission fellowship to train with Anne Bogart and SITI Company.

About Curtis Anderson

Curtis Anderson has held a 35-year newspaper career, which included stops in Newport and Coos Bay before joining The Eugene Register-Guard in 1986. He spent 27 years at the R-G, where track and field eventually became his main beat. He was the 2008 recipient of the Jesse Abramson award for excellence in track and field journalism by the Track Field Writers of America. In the fall of 2013, he left the newspaper industry to become Director of Communications at TrackTown USA. After five years in that role, Curtis became the press officer for Oregon Track Club Elite, and he remains active on a part-time basis with TTUSA. He will officially hit the finish line at the conclusion of this summer's World Athletics Championships.

About Eugene Symphony

Now in its 57th season, the Eugene Symphony is a nonprofit and 83-member part-time orchestra based in Eugene, Oregon led by Music Director & Conductor Francesco Lecce-Chong with a mission of enriching lives through the power of music. With the addition of virtual programming initiated during the COVID-19 pandemic, Eugene Symphony reached more than 60,000 people around the world. Now back in the concert hall, Eugene Symphony presents annual classical and pops concerts, as well as music education and community engagement programs, regularly commissioning and premiering new American works, and disseminating its performances via radio broadcasts and recordings. More at eugenesymphony.org

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