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SPO presents “Immortal Beloved” concert in February

SPARTANBURG, SC— Sarah Ioannides returns to the stage to lead the Spartanburg Philharmonic Orchestra (SPO) with an evening of beautiful and intimate classical music, showcasing some of Spartanburg’s finest musicians. The concert will be held on Saturday, February 4 at 7:00pm in Twichell Auditorium at Converse College. Doors open at 6:00pm, and the pre-concert chat, “Classical Conversations” hosted by Dr. Chris Vaneman, will be held from 6:15-6:45pm in the Lawson Academy Recital Hall next door to the auditorium. Tickets start at \$25 each and can be purchased by telephone — (864) 596-9724 — or in person at Twichell’s box office. Tickets are also available online at SpartanburgPhilharmonic.org.

In August of 2015, Maestro Ioannides announced that she would be stepping down from the podium, ending her 12 year tenure with the SPO in the spring of 2017. For the February 4th concert, her penultimate performance with this symphony, Sarah has prepared a program specially for Spartanburg with well-known and joyous classics by Fauré, Mozart, and Beethoven. The concert will open with Gabriel Fauré’s famous *Pavane*, op. 50 which will feature the *Spartanburg Sings* choral ensemble.

Dr. Terry O. Pruitt, Chairman of *Spartanburg Sings* said, “Spartanburg Sings, a county-wide middle school honors chorus has become a tradition in our county and a signature program of the Spartanburg Rotary Club over the past seven years. Having the opportunity to partner and sing with the Spartanburg Philharmonic Orchestra is a wonderful experience for our young musicians and is certainly a fitting tribute to the excellent choral programs and teaching in Spartanburg County public schools.”

Following the *Pavane*, the orchestra will perform Mozart’s *Sinfonia concertante* in E-Flat Major, K.297b, chosen to showcase the amazing local talent that can be found in the SPO. The performance will feature four soloists from the woodwind section of the orchestra: Ginny Metzger (oboe), Karen Hill (clarinet), Anneka Zuehlke-King (horn), and Frank Watson (bassoon). Though considerable mystery and intrigue surround the authenticity of the piece – scholars disagreeing as to whether or not Mozart was the composer – audiences are sure to enjoy the delightful and lighthearted music of this concerto.

The evening will conclude with a performance of Beethoven’s exuberant Eighth Symphony, from which the concert garners its name. In the summer of 1812, Beethoven penned two of his most famous and most lasting works: a “little” symphony in F Major (his eighth symphony) and a deeply moving love letter to woman of mystery. The identity of the person who received such adoration from the great composer has never been learned, but in listening to the joyous music of the Eighth, audiences will hear the excitement and the passion that Beethoven felt for a woman he only ever referred to as his “Immortal Beloved.”

The Spartanburg Philharmonic Orchestra’s mission is to enrich, inspire and educate the Spartanburg community through live performances of high quality music. Founded in 1948 and led by Music Director and Conductor Sarah Ioannides, the SPO is comprised of professional musicians from diverse backgrounds who form an ensemble capable of performing a variety of musical styles and repertoire. www.spartanburgphilharmonic.org