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### **A NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR THE WICHITA SYMPHONY AUDIENCE**

#### **Symphony 360 Offers Opportunity to Sit Around the Orchestra**

Wichita, Kansas. July 18, 2022. The week of Symphony 360 at the Wichita Symphony Orchestra has arrived. This innovative concert takes place in the Century II Convention Hall on Saturday, July 23, at 7:30 p.m. Music Director Daniel Hege conducts the orchestra. Soprano Courtenay Budd is the guest soloist.

The WSO invites its audience to gain a new perspective by sitting on the Convention Hall floor on seats encircling the orchestra or in the hall's raked seating for a stadium-style view. With enhanced lighting, some sound amplification, and air-conditioning, the concert will be a satisfying way to beat the expected summer heat in Wichita.

The program consists of music offering different perspectives of youth. Adolphus Hailstork's lush work for orchestral strings, *Sonata da Chiesa* (Church Sonata), was inspired by cathedrals and composed for a talented youth symphony. Samuel Barber's nostalgic *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, featuring soprano Courtenay Budd and sung to a text by James Agee, is one of the great mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century works by an American Master that presents images of childhood in small-town America. Concluding the program, Franz Schubert's buoyant Fifth Symphony was written in 1816 when he was nineteen years old.

Tickets start at \$40 and are available at [www.wichitasymphony.org](http://www.wichitasymphony.org) or call the Symphony Box Office at 316.267.7658.

Events of the past two years forced the Wichita Symphony to adapt and innovate in a constantly changing environment. Unable to present indoor concerts during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Symphony sent small ensembles into community parks for free neighborhood concerts and began collaborating with Botanica – the Wichita Gardens for outdoor concerts at the recently opened Brown Family Grand Lawn and Stage in the Koch Carousel Gardens. The Symphony also developed music videos to substitute for in-person Young People's Concerts.

Symphony 360 came about less because of the pandemic but because of a mechanical failure. Seeking to return to an indoor performance during the Summer of 2021, the Symphony scheduled a concert in

its usual venue, the Century II Concert Hall. A malfunction and lengthy repair of the pit elevator at the front of the stage required moving the performance into the larger adjoining Convention Hall, a vast, less intimate space. The Symphony staff adapted and chose to seat the orchestra in the middle of the floor with overhead lighting and sound installed, thus offering the audience seating around the orchestra in a more intimate, club-like setting. Symphony CEO Don Reinhold noted that many patrons took advantage of the surround-seating, and the arrangement encouraged intermingling and talk between the audience and musicians after the concert.

Music Director Daniel Hege begins his thirteenth season with the Wichita Symphony this fall. Also the Music Director of the Binghamton (NY) Philharmonic and the Principal Guest Conductor of the Tulsa Symphony, Hege has held previous positions with the Syracuse, Baltimore, and Kansas City symphony orchestras. For more information about Maestro Hege, please visit the Wichita Symphony website at <https://wichitasymphony.org/about/artistic-leadership/daniel-hege>.

Soprano Courtenay Budd appeared previously with the Wichita Symphony for the performances of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* in November 2018. Frequently appearing on the stages of symphonies, operas, and recital halls, Ms. Budd is equally comfortable in music ranging from the Baroque and bel canto repertoire to contemporary works. She was a Metropolitan Opera National Finalist and a First Prize Winner with Young Concert Artists. For more information about Courtenay Budd, please visit her website at <https://www.courtenaybudd.com/Index.asp>.

Interviews with Maestro Hege and Ms. Budd by press and media representatives may be arranged by contacting the Symphony office. Opportunities are subject to availability.