****

**For Immediate Release Contact: Martha Whiteley**

**973-435-7057**

**The August Symphony Orchestra Performs Ravel, Respighi and Famous Opera Arias in Free Concert in Westfield**

**Westfield, NJ (June 2025) –** The August Symphony Orchestra (TASO) will present its annual free concert on Sunday, July 20 at 2:00 pm at the First United Methodist Church in Westfield. Under the baton of conductor, Michael Avagliano, the orchestra will perform works by Respighi and Ravel and famous opera arias featuring world-renowned mezzo-soprano Cheri Rose Katz.

Dramatic mezzo-soprano Cheri Rose Katz has distinguished herself for her “beauty of tone and stylish musicality.” Her outstanding talent captured the attention of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, which engaged her for two seasons in over one hundred performances of the great Verdi and Wagner roles. She performed as alto soloist in a World Premiere Requiem with the New Jersey Symphony and a Verdi Requiem in London. Ms. Katz is a very active recitalist, producer, and recording artist, all of which has established her reach and influence as a musical luminary. Katz’s captivating performance of four famous arias will treat the audience to an unforgettable afternoon.

The concert opens with a brass fanfare entitled Spinning, composed by New Jersey’s own Richard Barrieres of Stockholm, NJ. Barrieres is a solo cornet player with the Imperial Brass and director of the College Conservatory of Music Wind Ensemble.

The orchestra will also perform Maurice Ravel's Mother Goose Suite, a delightful and enchanting work that brings to life the magical world of fairy tales. It is a testament to Ravel’s outstanding orchestrations and his remarkable ability to evoke vivid imagery and emotions through music. The suite includes five movements, each representing a different fairy tale, concluding with the exuberant and joyful "The Fairy Garden," transporting the listener to a magical realm where all the fairy tales converge.

### To conclude the concert, the orchestra will perform Pines of Rome, a tone poem for orchestra in four movements by Ottorino Respighi. It is the Italian composer's tribute to scenes around his country's capital, some contemporary and some recalling the glory of the Roman Empire, with the city’s signature pine trees as a unifying image.

Conductor Michael Avagliano enjoys a multifaceted career as conductor, performer, and educator. He currently serves as music director for The August Symphony Orchestra, the Summit Symphony, and the Somerset Symphony Orchestra. He serves on the faculty at Drew University and with Conducting Programs International, training emerging conductors alongside renowned pedagogue Markand Thakar.

“The August Symphony Orchestra has been providing music enjoyment to the community for the past 20 years,” states Robert Whiteley, President of TASO. “We are proud to have Maestro Avagliano lead the orchestra in great musical works at a high standard of performance.”

The concert will be performed at 2:00 p.m., Sunday, July 20 at the First United Methodist Church, located at One East Broad Street in Westfield, N.J. It is an accessible, air-conditioned facility with free parking in the [Ferris Place](https://www.google.com/search?sca_esv=b428ec610e3a7588&rlz=1C1RXMK_enUS1055US1055&cs=0&sxsrf=AE3TifNCnbB1pKtBNWb1Blrv4c3f_totjA%3A1750810195630&q=Ferris+Place&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwj34uudpIuOAxVbFFkFHf9mERYQxccNegQIBhAB&mstk=AUtExfBZZ_u8uJc3Su6FF1DHQY1aY8eHkrg2QQ2Naz5R-D8gMD1graUthFzy-1Nq9xHDLgVYhRex2W6elJlsxeMZx5HWNNv70vciausrlz-xRvlJzs1c0KEe8noKgXiVqMqg01fg3GHxxgYwYWvXT_dbFqLg7TbvPMcRqknN4WRIdE7sPWIzn_SOa0yRNPH1mtXRpNUNb1DFJZw_QO-31mBYBrWOuiGDFbYiwCQT0FShIeh49EmAZOE23PoJRC2wqfCoaK7wWqKhLBUwMS3Lw-VdS3Ht&csui=3) lot.

The program is made possible in part by funds from the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and supported by donations from lovers of music and the arts.

About The August Symphony Orchestra

The August Symphony Orchestra (TASO) is a non-profit organization whose objective is to enrich the Garden State community by offering an accessible way for classical orchestral music to be performed, listened to, and appreciated by all. TASO’s mission is to maintain a high standard of quality and performance while bringing people together and upholding a spirit of accessibility, community, and mutual love for classical music. The orchestra welcomes and appreciates the financial support from the public as well as from local companies, financial institutions, and New Jersey state grant foundations. For further information please visit [www.tasonj.org](http://www.tasonj.org). Follow us on Facebook.

# # #