



Courtesy photo

Maestro Kensho Watanabe will lead the Sarasota Orchestra in its guided tour of its “Masterworks: Copland and Stravinsky” performance.

THE MASTERS TOUR

Guided tours bring a contemporary context to a timeless art form.

EMILY LEINFUSS
CONTRIBUTOR

Throughout time immemorial, both music and language have been used to tell stories.

When combined, as in Sarasota Orchestra’s Guided Tours — the second and final of which is 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 24 at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall — it’s possible that something altogether new may emerge.

That may be some of what Bramwell Tovey was aiming for, in addition to providing a forum to help make classical music more accessible to newcomers, when he initiated the hybrid lecture/concerts as part of Sarasota Orchestra’s 2022-23 season. Tovey was music director from September 2021 to July

2022, when he died before he could lead the orchestra through the season.

For “A Guided Tour: Copland and Stravinsky,” Maestro Kensho Watanabe will be conducting the full orchestra and hosting the evening along with participation from contemporary classical composer Jessica Hunt and guest soloist Stefan Jackiw.

Watanabe muses that guided tours could become part of Tovey’s Sarasota legacy. The two maestros were close, and the program was developed collaboratively.

“He and I would get together maybe once a year to talk about the repertoire I might want to do,” Watanabe says. Turns out they were thinking about the exact same thing — Aaron Copland’s Symphony No. 3.

He explains that because Copland is considered the “Dean of American composers,” his work provides a platform to springboard into the larger story of American classical music.

“We were late to the classical music world, and it’s exciting to realize that what an Amer-

IF YOU GO

‘GUIDED TOUR: COPLAND AND STRAVINSKY’

When: 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 24

Where: Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

Cost: \$26-\$69

Info: SarasotaOrchestra.org.

ican composer is, or what American music should sound like, is still being defined,” says Watanabe.

All composers are influenced by those who came before and, in that light, Watanabe told Tovey he thought contemporary American composer Jessica Hunt’s “Climb” would be a great opener. The two also agreed that, because the music of Igor Stravinsky had a huge impact on Copland, that his violin con-

SEE MASTERS TOUR, PAGE 2



Photo courtesy of Irina Belashov

Maestro Kensho Watanabe worked with the late Sarasota Orchestra music director to form the guided tour for Masterworks: Copland and Stravinsky.



Photo courtesy of Her and Him Studios

Contemporary American composer Jessica Hunt’s “Climb” will open the Masterworks performance that runs Feb. 23-26.



Courtesy photo

Violinist Stefan Jackiw will perform in the Sarasota Orchestra’s Masterworks: Copland and Stravinsky.



VISIT OUR NEW **SHOWROOM & DESIGN CENTER**

to CUSTOM-ize your outdoor furniture.

PERSONAL DESIGN CONSULTANT

WHY PAY MORE

WHEN YOU CAN BUY DIRECT *from* THE MANUFACTURER

QUALITY

OUTDOOR FURNITURE HIGH END LOOK & QUALITY AT WHOLESALE PRICING

CUSTOM MADE

AT OUR PALMETTO FACTORY

EXTENDED WARRANTY ON ALL FURNITURE

OPEN to the PUBLIC



OPEN MONDAY-SATURDAY 9-5. CLOSED SUNDAYS.



FLORIDA PATIO FURNITURE, INC.
FLORIDAPATIO.NET
941-722-5643

FLORIDA PATIO FURNITURE INC.

2500 US BUSINESS 41 NORTH | PALMETTO, FL 34221



Photo courtesy of David Cooper

The idea of including guided tours came from Bramwell Tovey, the Sarasota Orchestra's late music director.

Masters tour

FROM PAGE 1

certo would round out the repertoire. "Stravinsky was creating chaos in France with 'The Rite of Spring,' and other incredible works," Watanabe says. "Copland moved to Paris because he wanted to check out what that scene was like, and he ended up really discovering the classical music that was being created at the time. He brought that home and infused it with the tradition of American folk music, things he heard while he was growing up. In his third symphony, Copland fused all the influences that he had into this mammoth work."

All that history is part of the story, or tour, of the music, Watanabe explains. "It's my responsibility to weave a story or narrative so that both the musicians on the stage and the people in the audience can all go on the same journey."

He takes that responsibility seri-

ously — particularly when it comes to exposing new audiences to classical music.

"I have encountered too many people who are either intimidated or perhaps feel inadequately prepared to come and listen to a piece of classical music," says Watanabe. "One of my missions in my artistic life is to convince them that this is not the case, and that there is something very special about encountering (the music) for the first time."

However, the evening is not just for the uninitiated. Already-dedicated concertgoers will enjoy what can be looked at as a live, supersized version of the kind of context and perspective usually gleaned from program notes, or when notes are presented from the podium.

"People read the program or do a Wikipedia search before a concert to get a sense of what they will experience," says Watanabe.

But guided tours are a novel setup, even for the conductor.

"I haven't done anything like this exactly," he says.

Experience
EXTRAORDINARY
AT The Ringling

ONE LOCATION
ENDLESS EXPERIENCES

ringling.org

The Ringling THE JOHN & MABLE RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART
STATE ART MUSEUM OF FLORIDA | FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

AVIVA PRESENTS

eight over 80

LET'S CELEBRATE!

SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 2023
10:30 AM Brunch
Michael's On East

AVIVA INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE
OUR HONOREES FOR THEIR
OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS

David Chaifetz	Fran Lambert
Rifka Glatz	Bernice & Ellis Lasberg
Dr. Larry Haspel	Bunny Skirboll
Carole Kleinberg	Anne Virag

Sponsorships available.
Contact Lynne Georgette,
941-203-6237, lgeorgette@avivaseniorlife.org

avivaseniorlife.org