

## N.H. Music Festival to begin July 7

By BOB MARTIN | Apr 16, 2015

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BOB MARTIN/CITIZEN

DONATO CABRERA is the music director for the New Hampshire Music Festival, which runs from July 7 to Aug. 6.

**PLYMOUTH** — The New Hampshire Music Festival has been a mainstay in the central New Hampshire area for 63 years, and while there are some things that never change, the festival has a few tricks up its sleeve this summer.

There is a Chamber Music Concert on July 7 to kick things off for the Music Festival. The Festival Orchestra will play every Thursday at 8 p.m. beginning on July 9 and until Aug. 6 at Plymouth State University's

Hanaway Theatre in the Silver Center for the Arts, as well as on Tuesdays for the Chamber Music Series at the Smith Recital Hall.

However, the festival will also branch out and play a variety of different settings.

Brand new this year is a collaboration with the Bank of New Hampshire Pavilion at Meadowbrook, where the *Wizard of Oz* will be put up on a big screen backed by the New Hampshire Music Festival Orchestra. Tickets go on sale May 1 and the special event will take place on Monday, July 27 at 7 p.m. at Meadowbrook.

“You get to see the movie, but with 3D sound,” said Donato Cabrera, who for the third year will be the music director for the festival coming over from San Francisco, California. “The impact that a live orchestra can have on a screening of a movie is beyond compare. I’ve done a few of these with the San Francisco Symphony and it is really phenomenal. Also, what makes it so cool is being at Meadowbrook in the outdoors on a sunny night. It’s a wonderful new collaboration and a great way to reach out to new audiences young and old.”

July 9 will feature American Landscapes with Dan Perkins conducting. This includes “Big Bang” by Nathaniel Stookey, “Grand Canyon Suite” by Ferde Grofe, “School or Scandal Overture” by Samuel Barber and Leonard Bernstein’s “Symphonic Dances from West Side Story.”

The following week, on July 16, will have Cabrera as conductor. The event will be called Dvorak in America and features multimedia and narration by Joseph Horowitz. This was made possible through a grant from the National Endowment

for the Humanities as part of the “Music Unwound” consortium. Cabrera said this is about how classical music created an American voice, and how Dvorak was instrumental in creating that sound.

“There is a community engagement and education component that is a wonderful addition to the festival,” said Cabrera.

Cabrera will continue his conducting duties on July 23 with an event called “The Four Seasons” and also on July 30 for the Composer Portrait featuring Nico Muhly, who Cabrera calls “the real deal.” There will be at least two pieces of his done. Cabrera said they are observing that it is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Civil War, and they are doing it through Muhly’s piece called “Pleasure Ground.”

He initiated the composer portrait last year, saying that it celebrates the history of the New Hampshire Music Festival.

“For many years this festival was known to promote and perform music by living composers,” said Cabrera. “When I became music director I wanted to read into the history and see what was happening here. This was something that really caught my eye and I thought it would be wonderful to bring back. This is a great opportunity to celebrate a living, American composer.”

The final show on Aug. 6 will be titled *Dona Nobis Pacem*, which features Cabrera conducting as well as Perkins directing the chorus and taking the baton as well.

This is the third summer that Cabrera will be coming over from San Francisco to lead the New Hampshire Music Festival. Cabrera is the resident conductor of the San Francisco Symphony, music director of the California Symphony, and the music director of the Las Vegas Philharmonic.

Cabrera said he enjoys coming to New Hampshire for many reasons.

“I love the connection the audience has with the orchestra and with this festival,” Cabrera said. “It’s palpable all the time, on and off the stage. It obviously means a great deal to a lot of people. It keeps all of us coming back. What makes this festival so special is the love affair the community has with music.

He said there are many people who are returning musicians, some who have played for up to five decades like trumpet player Keith Johnson. He said people with this type of experience has their skill rub off on the younger musicians.

“There’s nothing that can replace experience,” said Cabrera. “It’s a very special thing.”

Cabrera admits that classical music is most often listened to by an older crowd, but they are making efforts to reach out to families through the “Families Making Music” series. These are educational and interactive for families, and will be all over the region.

Cabrera said he is most excited for the living composer coming, but he is also interested in some of the new activities going on. Cabrera said throughout the summer there will be outdoor concerts set up, which stems from an article about the festival in the New York Times in 1975.

“The Music in the Mountain” series focuses on bringing the music outdoors. Brad Dumont, the concert operations and artistic administrator for the festival, said some of the events will include a sunset concert on the top of West Rattlesnake Island with the principle cellist. There will be a concert at Church Landing in Meredith, in Rumney, various campgrounds and even a show at Biederman’s Deli.

“You never know where you’ll find the music festival this summer,” Dumont said. “We are bringing the concerts to people. We want to get outside, find people, and let them find us.”

Cabrera said they are lucky to be located in a place with such outdoor beauty with people with a rich appreciation for music.

“We are in one of the most beautiful parts of the country, and to combine that with music is just a no-brainer,” Cabrera said.

For additional information, as well as how to purchase tickets, log onto [nhmf.org](http://nhmf.org).

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