

## SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S FINALE OVATION-WORTHY

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FOR THE SAGINAW NEWS

Gershwin's "'S wonderful, 'S Marvelous" is the perfect description of the Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra concert Saturday at the Temple Theatre in Saginaw.

Music Director and Conductor Patrick Flynn led the orchestra in the final concert of the 70th anniversary season. The near capacity audience, including the camera crew from Delta College Public Television, heard exciting and detailed performances of works by Catherine McMichael, George Gershwin and Antonin Dvorak.

The audience was so taken by the performances that they almost spent more time on their feet cheering and applauding than sitting and listening.

The program began with the world premiere of "A Joyful Noise" by Saginaw composer Catherine McMichael.

Her three movement composition is based on Psalm 121 "Unto the Hills," Psalm 137 "By the Rivers of Babylon," and Psalm 104 "Upon the Wings of the Wind."

McMichael's style is lyric, programmatic and visual. She writes music that is accessible at first hearing and provides deeper rewards on successive hearings.

McMichael's compositional palette includes rich soaring melodies, exciting dance themes and bold anguish laden phrases. Her creative use of scales and harmonies flavored with Mideast colors is captivating.

She writes beautifully for strings, but it is her brilliant and colorful use of woodwinds and percussion that defines her sound. When one follows the text of each movement, one sees how wonderfully she sets the scenario and emotion of each Psalm.



McMichael's music does something miraculous: It paints pictures in your imagination. As the last note sounded the audience jumped to their feet with loud bravos and prolonged applause.

It was an evening of music that lived in the moment. The music touched us at a personal level and we experienced something greater than our mortal existence.