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comments

Fort Wayne Philharmonic Pops concert draws music from Pixar's greatest hits

By James Grant of The News-Sentinel
Friday, May 1, 2015 - 10:46 am

Say "Pixar," and the first word that pops up in most people's minds is animation.

Add the names Woody, Buzz Lightyear, Dory and EVE, and most children within earshot will inundate you with shrieks of delight.

Animation and delight equals Pixar Animation Studios.

If you want to experience a sampling of the joy and wonder that Pixar has generated in millions of movie goers of all ages, head to Embassy Theatre at 2 or 7:30 p.m. Saturday for the Fort Wayne Philharmonic's Pops Series performance, "Pixar in Concert."

The final philharmonic pops concert of the season is a fun-filled overview of Pixar's feature films, which will include scenes on a wide screen from all of the most cherished films accompanied by the orchestra performing the film scores live.

Pixar has been thrilling the world with computer-animated short and feature films for more than 25 years and has created some of the most loved animation characters and films to ever grace the movie screen. The films "Toy Story," "Monsters, Inc.," "Finding Nemo," "The Incredibles," "Cars," "Wall-E," "Up" and "Brave" are among the highest-grossing animated films of all time.

"Toy Story," released in 1995, was the first feature-length, completely computer-generated animated film and broke box office records while winning critical praise.

With the success of "Toy Story," Pixar became one of the most successful and innovative animation film companies in the world using a new style of animation that relied on computers, which virtually killed off the traditional technique of hand-drawn animation.

Melysa Rogen, assistant director of marketing and public relations for Fort Wayne Philharmonic, says this touring production of "Pixar in Concert" has been performed by orchestras throughout the United States and will treat Embassy audience members to high-definition clips from all of the hit Pixar feature films.

The philharmonic, which will be led by Assistant Conductor Chia-Hsuan Lin, has a lot of fun with this concert, Rogen says.

"Most of the orchestra is familiar with these movies, having either watched the films as children or with their own children," Rogen adds. "Being able to play along with the soundtrack is a way to be even closer, more immersed in the movie experience."

Rogen says the highlight of "Pixar in Concert" is the music.

"All 14 Pixar movies have been scored by only four composers: Randy Newman, Michael Giacchino, Thomas Newman and Patrick Doyle," Rogen says. "Collectively, this music has won three Academy Awards, received 10 additional Oscar nominations and won 10 Grammy Awards.

"One of the distinguishing aspects of the Pixar films is serious and respectful attention to music and its role in that storytelling," she notes.

With various generations being moved by Pixar films, "Pixar in Concert" has a wide range of appeal for audience members.

Rogen feels this cross-generational appeal gives audience members the opportunity to come out as a family and enjoy the show together.

"We feel this show crosses generational boundaries and is a treat for young and old," Rogen says.

"Pixar movies have been a part of American culture for a decade, and, with their strong musical scores, they have become the millennial generation's classics," she says. "These movies will be the movies they remember when they are 70 years old.

"Beyond that, parents and grandparents of this age group remember the joy these films brought to their children and grandchildren, and now they have the chance to share those memories with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, continuing the cycle for years to come," Rogen adds.

"The Fort Wayne Philharmonic," Rogen says, "wanted to give this great opportunity to Fort Wayne for the entire family to come out and spend quality time together to create memories that will last a lifetime."



More Information

Animated music

WHAT: The Fort Wayne Philharmonic performs the Pops Series show "Pixar in Concert," which features the music of hit Pixar Animation Studios films.

WHEN: 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday

WHERE: Embassy Theatre, 121 W. Jefferson Blvd.

COST: \$32, \$42, \$56 and \$70. Call 481-0777, go to www.fwphil.org, or buy at the Embassy box office 10 a.m.-6 p.m. weekdays and before the concerts.

