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Review: “Baroque Brilliance,” Symphonia Boca Raton

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The Symphonia Boca Raton is back in session for its 2017 Connoisseur Concert series. The world-class chamber orchestra performed its second show at Roberts Theater in Boca on Sunday led by guest conductor Brett Karlin. He is the artistic director and conductor of the Master Chorale of South Florida.



Guest director Brett Karlin

Entitled "Baroque Brilliance," the concert truly lived up to its name. Sunday's concert took audiences on a listening tour of 18th century music, beginning with German/British composer George Frideric Handel.

A light, playful mood was evident during the first half of the concert. Most of the pieces offered happy, energetic notes, which kept toes tapping. Melodies were often carried from one instrument, such as the violins, to the oboe, the bassoon or the French horn.

Trumpet soloist Jeffery Kaye and vocal soprano soloist Sherezade Panthaki were harmonious throughout the entire performance. Panthaki revealed her wide vocal range and Kaye often imitated her song on trumpet. Their natural musical talents, combined with technical skill and interpretation, made Handel's "Water Music Suite No. 2 in D Major" and a troika of arias (three movements) come alive on stage.

After a brief intermission, three additional pieces were played. Italian composer Antonio Vivaldi's "Alma oppressa da sorte crudele" was followed by a French-style Baroque work, which translated to "The Egyptian," but wasn't listed in the original program. Both scores were a bit slower and heavier, which allowed the audience to spend time in thoughtful reflection.



Soprano soloist Sherezade Panthaki

The final arrangement was a selection from Johann Sebastian Bach called "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen." It was organized into five movements, the first and last being most joyful. Panthaki and the violins offered a slightly mournful tone during the middle movements, which offered another opportunity for silent reflection.

Most in the audience were on their feet at the end of the performance. Jeffery Kaye led a champagne toast after the concert.