From Pedals to Strings: An Exploration and Demonstration of the Modern Concert Harp

Tuesday, February 24, 2015 12:30PM-1:30PM @ Schaver Music Hall

The harp is a versatile instrument capable of producing numerous sound effects. While the perception of this instrument is commonly limited to ethereal glissandi and supple harmonics, the harp has a symphonic range of effects as realized through the ingenuity of master harpist Carlos Salzedo. The pedagogical legacy of Carlos Salzedo, his influence on compositional techniques for harp and his pivotal role in bringing the harp into the twentieth century will be discussed.

This presentation will cover the full spectrum of the harp and the evolution of the instrument from six to forty-seven strings. The function of the harp in various contexts (i.e. solo, chamber, harp ensemble and orchestra) will be discussed along with a live performance of pieces composed specifically for harp to demonstrate the subtle and striking nuances of the instrument. There will also be an opportunity for an up close examination of various types of harps after the demonstration.

Maurice Draughn is an experienced and versatile musician. He appears frequently as a soloist with orchestras and previously in performance with legendary performers such as Aretha Franklin and Ray Charles. In addition to being a performer, he is a self-published arranger and composer of music for harp. Maurice performs primarily as a freelance harpist with several orchestras and ensembles throughout Southeastern Michigan and Western Ontario. He also performs regularly as a recitalist, chamber musician, studio harpist and as a member of the Modern Harp Quartet.

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