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Storytelling, dance, and song bring to life the symphony's *The Carnival of the Animals*
Conducting Fellow Enrico Lopez-Yañez makes Family series debut

OMAHA, Neb., February 9, 2017- Lions, elephants, kangaroos, tortoises, and more lively animals come to life in a symphonic safari in *The Carnival of the Animals*, Sunday, February 19, 2 p.m., at the Holland Performing Arts Center.

Led by Conducting Fellow Enrico Lopez-Yañez, making his debut on an Omaha Symphony series concert, this program features Camille Saint-Saëns' *The Carnival of the Animals*. The characteristic animal vignettes are presented with new orchestration by Bill Holcombe with an original narrative by Lopez-Yañez. Featuring the talented dancers of the Heartland Youth Ballet and actor Brian Priesman, *Carnival* tells the story of a young swan searching for her mother and encountering a menagerie of other animals on her journey. The tiny swan finds her way and is reunited with her mother in Kokowanda Bay, a magical place where all the animals sing and dance together.

This concert includes the world premiere of the original song "Kokowanda Bay," written by Enrico Lopez-Yañez and his mother Ruth Weber. Gershwin's "Walking the Dog," Anderson's "The Waltzing Cat," and Copland's "Hoe-Down" from *Rodeo* round out the program's animal-centered fun.

Enrico Lopez-Yañez was appointed conducting fellow of the Omaha Symphony in 2015 after completing his M.M. in Orchestral Conducting at the University of Maryland. He leads over 50 performances with the Omaha Symphony annually through education and community engagement programs, including writing and conducting this year's Mission Imagination program, *Symphony in Space*. Through his work with the symphony, Lopez-Yañez has developed a number of innovative and engaging new projects attracting a wide variety of audiences. *The Carnival of the Animals* marks his Omaha Symphony series debut, while he will lead next month's *A Tribute to Journey* concert featuring local tribute band ReCaptured on the Symphony Rocks series.

The Omaha Symphony Family Series features pre-concert activities at 1:15 p.m. in the orchestra level lobby, including the extremely popular instrument petting zoo. The petting zoo allows children to touch and play instruments that are usually hands-off to little ones, such as a violin, cello, flute, and trombone.

Tickets to *The Carnival of the Animals* are \$12. They can be purchased by visiting www.omahasymphony.org, or by calling 402.345.0606.

The Omaha Symphony is a non-profit organization that presents more than 100 live orchestral performances from September through June. In addition to MasterWorks, Symphony Pops, Symphony Rocks, Movie Music, Symphony Joslyn, and Family series concerts, the Omaha Symphony's nationally recognized education programs touch the lives of nearly 30,000 schoolchildren each year. For tickets or information regarding the Omaha Symphony, call 402-345.0606 or visit omahasymphony.org.

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