

Barton Pine joins SIUE, SIUC orchestras



Segue • SIUE Friday, April 6, 2018

The orchestras of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and SIU Carbondale will combine once again for an exceptional music event in the Arts & Issues season finale.

On this week's episode of Segue, SIUE's premier radio show on WSIE 88.7 FM The Sound, Greg Budzban, PhD, College of Arts and Sciences dean, Michael Mishra, DA, chair and professor in the Department of Music, are excited

to welcome the event's guest performer, Rachel Barton Pine, for a conversation about the event.

An internationally acclaimed musician, recording artist and educator, Pine will join the combined SIUE and SIUC Orchestras in the Arts & Issues season finale at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 23, in SIUE's Dunham Hall Theater.

The entire conversation, which features a variety of topics including how Barton Pine combines music and her spirituality, her life as a touring musician and classical music's universality throughout genres, will air at 9 a.m. on Sunday, April 8, on WSIE 88.7 FM The Sound.

"We are incredibly excited to have you on campus, and whenever we get to combine our universities' orchestras and feature a renowned guest artist such as yourself, we like to talk to them about their career, their art," Budzban says. "You've shared with me that your love of music started early. Tell me about how you became a violinist."

"My parents decided upon attending church at St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Chicago when I was about 2-years-old," Barton Pine explains. "It's an historic German congregation going back to 1843, and there's actually a stained glass window of Bach in the sanctuary. The church retained much of the rich classical music as part of its worship. The choir would do performances of Handel's and Mendelssohn's oratorios, and the organist would play Bach's fugues as prelude music."

"One day, when I was 3-years-old, there were some middle school girls playing violin in church, and I heard the sound of the music. I fell in love with it."

Barton Pine began playing violin with her church a year later. Upon the suggestion of her school principal, she was homeschooled so she could dedicate more time to sharpening her skills as a musician.

At age 10, the young violinist made her debut with the Chicago Symphony. She went on to become the first American and youngest ever gold medal winner of the International Johann Sebastian Bach Competition.

"My passion for music always came back to what I had learned in church, which was that the purpose of music is to bring us together, to uplift the spirit, and to nurture the soul," she said. "It was never about performing, or the audience, but instead, we're all a part of this same thing and music can become bigger than yourself."

In preparation for the upcoming performance in the Dunham Hall Theater, Barton Pine will work with both orchestras on their campuses and instruct master classes.

“Those master classes are transformational for our students, especially when they have the opportunity to interact with artists of your caliber and are able to absorb the passion you talked about,” Budzban says.

“Classical music is one of the pinnacles of human achievement and speaks so deeply of our human experience,” Barton Pine replies. “I enjoy nurturing kids who are studying instruments and teaching students who don’t play instruments but want to listen to music and enjoy it. That’s what it means to be a musician.

“It’s not just playing music for the people who bought a ticket to the music hall, it’s about going and sharing your music with as many people as possible, no matter where they might be.”

Barton Pine’s upcoming performance with the SIUE and SIUC orchestras will feature the violin concerto by Aram Khachaturian, as well as a rendition of Tchaikovsky’s 5th Symphony.

“Since Rachel decided on the Khachaturian, which was composed by the Soviet Armenian artist in the 1940s, we paired it with this classic Tchaikovsky piece,” Mishra says. “The Khachaturian concerto is very melodic, colorful, but it doesn’t get played as often as others in this repertoire.”

“I love the Khachaturian piece, and I first learned it when I was 15,” Barton Pine reminisces. “It’s always a pleasure to return to it. I enjoy concertos that have a folk influence, and it’s fun to see the regional flavors in the music. It’s unusual, exotic and has soaring melodies.”

Tickets for the final Arts & Issues event of the season can be purchased by visiting artsandissues.com or by calling 1-866-698-4253.

To hear the conversation among Budzban, Mishra and Barton Pine, tune in at 9 a.m. on Sunday, April 8 to WSIE 88.7 FM The Sound.

By Madelaine Gerard, SIUE Marketing and Communications