

# Anchorage Symphony Orchestra

## NEWS RELEASE

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## Anchorage Symphony Orchestra Silent Film Night featuring Buster Keaton's *Cops* and *One Week* and Charlie Chaplin's *A Dog's Life*

Rick Benjamin, guest conductor  
Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup> – 7:30pm  
Atwood Concert Hall, ACPA

**Anchorage, Alaska – December 5, 2023** – January is the perfect time for an extra teehee, ha-ha, chuckle, or deep belly laugh. And the Anchorage Symphony Orchestra is always ready to offer that at their annual Silent Film Night. This season, on January 13th, join the ASO for a comedy triple feature! Guest conductor Rick Benjamin joins ASO musicians for a screening of Buster Keaton's *Cops* and *One Week* and Charlie Chaplin's *A Dog's Life* with LIVE music, just like you'd hear in the 1920s.

Audience members will laugh out loud at Buster Keaton's deadpan antics in his 1922 police caper, *Cops*. Through a series of mistaken identities, Keaton ends up with a precarious load of furniture in the middle of a police parade, an anarchist's bomb, and falls in love with the Mayor's Daughter (played by Virginia Fox). What could go wrong?

The only thing better than a Buster Keaton comedy on the big screen with a live orchestra performing the score is TWO Keaton comedies! The evening of chortles and guffaws continues with Keaton's classic *One Week*. This DIY comedy follows newlyweds Buster Keaton (The Groom) and Sybil Seely (The Bride) as they receive Uncle Mike's generous wedding present: a build-it-yourself house. From then on, everything that can go wrong will go wrong, but can a few minor setbacks come between true love?

As audiences laugh and gasp at the seemingly death-defying stunts, they will be amazed to know that no models were used while filming *One Week*, not even the iconic scene when the front of the house falls, leaving Keaton miraculously safe, standing where a window is supposed to be. Keaton was known for doing all his own stunts, so Buster Keaton himself was standing there, probably feeling a lot of relief when it all worked out. Many of the crew and some of Keaton's family were so nervous about this scene they couldn't bear to be on set during filming.

After the intermission, the ASO presents Charlie Chaplin's *A Dog's Life*. This heartwarming film finds Chaplin, playing the loveable Tramp, living in a vacant lot where he rescues the stray pup, Scraps. Together, the unlikely duo find themselves in mishaps and fall for the beautiful girl working in a dance

hall (played by Edna Purviance). A stolen wallet finds its way into the duo's possession and adventure ensues. Will this unexpected windfall mean dreams come true, or more disaster?

Viewers should watch for Chaplin's brother Sydney, who makes his first appearance in a Chaplin film as the proprietor of the coffee stall where The Tramp and Scraps steal some goodies. Many audience members may also notice that Chaplin has abandoned his usual cane – presumably because he needed his hand free to hold the dog's leash. Cane or no cane, Chaplin still displays all his comedic genius, fantastic timing, and effortless stunts, sure to leave everyone smiling.

Silent Film composer, expert, and founder of the world-renowned Paragon Ragtime Orchestra, Rick Benjamin once again joins the ASO to conduct this special Silent Film Night. He is especially thrilled to be performing Chaplin's ***A Dog's Life***. "This is a rare opportunity to see this picture with the original 1918 orchestral score. A couple years ago I spent quite a while reconstructing it. We gave a premiere with my orchestra and now it is ready to go on the road. It's a rare document of beautiful music, put with a beautiful picture and putting them together with the ASO is going to be an event! No other orchestras in the US are putting the two together in 2024, so it is a big deal." It's not often that Alaska gets something first, and now Anchorage has early access to the rare opportunity of experiencing Chaplin's genius exactly as audiences did in 1918.

Tickets now available at CenterTix.com or by calling 907-263-ARTS (2787). Over the next few weeks, ASO social media channels will have guest artist interviews, pre-concert chats, fun facts, and more.

*Anchorage Symphony's Silent Film Night, Saturday, January 13, 2024, (7:30pm) in the Atwood Concert Hall, Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. Infrared headphones for the hearing impaired are available concert night from the House Manager on the Orchestra Level. Tickets: Adult, \$53-\$28; (prices include all surcharges and fees). Military, youth, senior, and group discounts available. To purchase tickets, go to [www.centertix.com](http://www.centertix.com) or call 263-ARTS (2787), toll free at 1-877-ARTS- TIX.*

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### **Program**

Buster Keaton's ***Cops***

Buster Keaton's ***One Week***

Charlie Chaplin's ***A Dog's Life***

- Interviews with guest conductor, Rick Benjamin, available upon request.
- Contact ASO Marketing Director, Jennifer Cargile at [ASO@YourASO.org](mailto:ASO@YourASO.org), or 907-227-1401 to make arrangements.