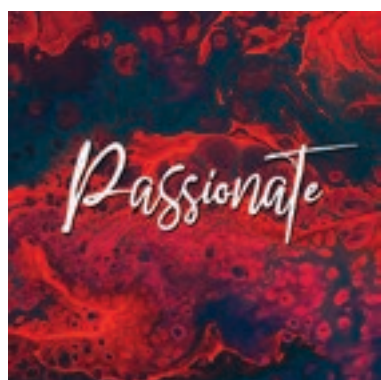


~ Life in LAMORINDA ~

Pacific Chamber Orchestra presents spirited program, 'Passionate'



Submitted by
Leslie Silberman

Pacific Chamber Orchestra (PCO) welcomes audiences to experience the passionate Nuevo tango of Piazzolla's "The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires," an exquisite blend of classical and jazz in its thrilling program, "Passionate," at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 25 at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in Orinda and at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 26 at Livermore's Bankhead Theater.

The performance celebrates the beginning of springtime with exhilarating music such as Telemann's

"Concerto for Oboe d'amore," elevated by Soloist Robin May. Audiences will relish the enchanting sounds of Corelli's "Suite for Strings," and Vivaldi's "Concerto for Four Violins." These four masterful composers revolutionized the traditional music world, by creating timeless works that still captivate and mesmerize audiences today.

Lawrence Kohl, PCO's Music Director and Conductor remarks, "Piazzolla's Nuevo tango draws inspiration from the evocative music of the Baroque era, a critical period during which influential composers like Vivaldi, Telemann and Corelli pushed musical forms and language in an entirely new direction."

Some say that Argentine composer Astor Piazzolla embodies the "Vivaldi of our times" with music that is sensuous, mournful, joyful and brooding, sometimes all at once. While Arcangelo Corelli's music evokes calmness and nobility, he was renowned for his passionate playing, and it was said that he got so deeply involved with his violin that he tried to make it

"speak."

German Baroque composer and multi-instrumentalist, Georg Philipp Telemann, is best known as being history's most prolific composer, and it has been suggested that he may have written more than 3,000 pieces. Kohl also notes, "Each of these composers, in their own way, express an intense passion and energy in their music and created masterful works that highlight the virtuosity of the soloist as both dancer and storyteller. This program, which features four brilliant violin soloists, Igor Veligan (PCO Concertmaster), Iris Stone, Hrabba Atladottir and Lylia Guion who represent the four seasons, culminates with soloists performing together as the dancers and storytellers."

To purchase tickets for the performance at St. Stephens Episcopal Church go to <https://www.pacificchamberorchestra.org/tickets>. For tickets at Livermore's Bankhead Theater, visit <https://livermorearts.org/events/pco-passionate/>

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Directed by
Salim Razawi

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'Cairo Conspiracy' – a spy thriller in today's Egypt



Photo provided

By **Sophie Braccini**

Tarik Saleh is the writer and director of the movie, "Cairo Conspiracy," that will be presented in Orinda for at least one week, starting on March 24. Saleh is a Swedish national of Egyptian decent with a keen knowledge of his father's country, as proved in his previous film, "Cairo Confidential." In the current film, Saleh describes Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi's Egypt as a country led by a military regime that desires controlling everything, including religion.

The story very aptly uncovers the state plot by focusing on the adventures of Adam, a young man (there are almost no women visible in this movie), son of a simple fisherman, who is selected because of his intelligence and piety to attend Al-Azhar, one of the oldest universities in the world that was founded in Cairo in 970 AD with an international reputation for the excellence of its Islamic studies. There young men from different Islamic countries come to further their religious study. It is a place of knowledge whose intellectual power radiates widely.

When the Imam leading the school dies, the fight for his succession starts among candidates from different obedience, some strongly against the current power structure and one in particular a close supporter of Al-Sisi. The government will try to help that man win the election. The naive fisherman's son will be manipulated and blackmailed into becoming its spy and later its agent.

The movie is a true thriller, full of mysteries, twists and rebuffs. Adam, the central character, is not really charming but he is touching and as the trap closes around

him, the spectator roots for the underdog. Ibrahim, the government representative who manipulates Adam, is an excellent bad guy and a remarkable actor (Fares Fares). He is nuanced, however; he has a conscience, and as a result may also get crushed by the determined state's machinery.

The purpose of the film is certainly to entertain as a very good thriller. The audience will fear that Adam's double game be discovered, and will enjoy the series of dirty tricks and dramatic shifts. But it is also an excellent demonstration of what it is for ordinary citizens to live under a military regime, with the oppression and dangers that come from it.

In an interview, Saleh explained that he understands that the Egyptian government has had to deal with Muslim extremism, which he says is not an easy task. It was one of the promises of Al-Sisi when he seized power that he would dismantle the Muslim Brotherhood, a transnational Islamist organization that Al-Sisi accused of inciting violence and terrorism. In the movie, a small group of the Brotherhood is present and it is one of Adam's jobs to infiltrate and help neutralize it.

The movie was filmed in Turkey since Saleh wanted to avoid what happened with the shooting of his previous film, which was interrupted by the Egyptian authorities and he was forced into a difficult re-organization. "Cairo Conspiracy" was awarded Best Screenplay at the Cannes Film Festival and made the short list for foreign films for this year's Oscars. It is brought to Lamorinda by the International Film Showcase and will open at the Tinketa Theater on March 24. Tickets at <https://www.orindamovies.com/>

Pacific Chamber Orchestra
Lawrence Kohl, Music Director
Artistry. Passionately Shared.

Sat. March 25 | 7:30pm
St. Stephens Episcopal Church
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