Upcoming symphony more than ‘stuffy affair’

Jacob de Gruy
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With Halloween just around the corner, many organizations are preparing various festivities for the occasion. The UL Symphony is hosting their annual Halloween Concert on Oct. 29.

Michael Blaney, the symphony director, said he is most excited for the night's atmosphere.

"It's a very fun night for both the orchestra members and the audience members," Blaney said. "The orchestra members always show up in costumes, and we encourage the audience members to show up in their costumes as well. It's a chance for you to wear your Halloween costume not just on Halloween."

The symphony has done various collaborations with different departments over the years, showcasing singers, dancers and actors. This year, they will be bringing in the LSPA Ballet Studio as its newest addition to the Halloween concert.

"We take the musical side very seriously; we work a lot rehearsing this music and some of it is very challenging," Blaney said. "There's certainly a goal there. For me, as a music professor, to try to work with the students and help teach them what it's like to be part of a real symphony orchestra."

The students have been practicing for this specific event since the beginning of classes.

"I want to help them grow musically and artistically, while still having fun," Blaney explained. "This is also true for the audience, for them to get to come and be entertained by a symphony orchestra, which not many people get to experience. A symphony doesn't have to be a stuffy affair where everybody wears tuxedos; that's not what this night is about. It's meant to be fun and entertaining, while also exposing people to pieces of music that you hear in an orchestra."

The students in the orchestra are also excited for this event because it gives them the chance to play for their peers, teachers, friends and family.

"I always look forward to this concert because it's a fun opportunity. We get in our costumes and we play some fun music," Alex Boone, a sophomore trombone player in the symphony, said. Boone went on to explain the importance of outsiders being immersed in a classical experience.

"We play something for everyone," Boone continued. "Some things you know, some things you don't. It's fun to see the coordination between the music and the arts colleges."

While some of the students were more excited for the pieces being played, sophomore violinist Alyssa Trahan was most excited for the Halloween aspects of the event, specifically the costumes.

"It's always fun to see people dressed up in a Halloween costume, especially in the audience of a symphony orchestra. You never know what you're going to see," Trahan said. "Two other violinists and I are dressing up as the Three Blind Mice, and our bows will be the mice's canes."

Blaney said he also enjoys seeing his students perform in their costumes.

"It's a lot of fun to conduct while they're in costume because they don't look like themselves," he said. "Sometimes, it's hard to keep a straight face."

The concert will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 29 at 7:30 p.m. It is free for students and faculty, and $10 for adults. Audience members are encouraged to come wearing their best costumes.

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