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## **Program traces an elegant melody line**

"Ancient Splendor" might seem an odd moniker for a program featuring a work that premiered in 1940, but linking Joaquin Rodrigo to musical ancestors Bach and Haydn created a sense of timeless elegance at Saturday's concert by the Springfield Symphony at Juanita K. Hammons Hall for the Performing Arts.

All three works offered a nice balance of rhythmic vitality, melodic invention and warmth of expression that allowed the orchestra to shine under the leadership of conductor Ron Spigelman.

Joining the forces as guest artist was a former colleague of Spigelman's from his days in Australia.

Noted guitarist Karin Schaupp proved a crowd favorite with her sovereign playing of Rodrigo's "Concierto de Aranjuez." Surprisingly, the performance marked the first time the popular work has been played in Springfield.

Schaupp, looking lovely and serene in purple silk, suggested a Madonna and child vision when gently cradling her guitar.

Her dexterous touch articulated the complexities of the outer allegro movements with utmost precision and clarity, while the work's centerpiece, the famous adagio, achieved just the right marriage of emotional expressiveness and technical reserve.

The intoxicating melodies, suffused with additional warmth by the strings, cast a haunting spell all the more impressive given Schaupp's seemingly effortless execution.

Warm string tone and bracing woodwind work shared the sound stage in the evening's opening piece, Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 in F Major."

Following the sprightly allegro, the adagio brought a certain tonal foreshadowing of Rodrigo's soulful elegance two centuries later.

For the final movement, Spigelman offered the novelty of spotlighting various sections of the orchestra in the minuet/trio repetitions, then rejoining the full forces for the concluding minuet.

The effect was somewhat like listening through the ears of a studio sound engineer who isolates each part of a performance, then edits the polished components into a satisfying whole.

Prior to playing Haydn's "Symphony No. 100 in G Major," nicknamed the "Military Symphony" because of its novel use of percussion and trumpet, Spigelman asked all military veterans to stand, then led the orchestra and audience in "The Star-Spangled Banner." Would that all wars were as sedate as Haydn's generally pacific work.

At several points though — especially in the finale — a stately quality emerged that brought the crisp precision of a military procession to mind.

The concert was recorded for broadcast at 10 a.m. Nov. 30 on KSMU 91.1 FM.

The orchestra next performs at its second annual "Home for the Holidays" concert on Dec. 8, at the Evangel University Chapel, 1111 North Glenstone Ave. The 7:30 p.m. program will feature pops and classical favorites, as well as an audience sing-a-long. For ticket information, call 836-7678.

