



**Jack Price**  
**Managing Director**

220 West Pershing  
Phoenix, AZ 85029

e-mail:  
[jp@pricerubin.com](mailto:jp@pricerubin.com)

phone:  
1-800-848-3360

fax:  
1-888-439-1186

web site:  
[www.pricerubin.com](http://www.pricerubin.com)

# MARLIN WOLFE

## CONDUCTOR



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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Marlin Wolfe is in his eleventh year as artistic director and conductor of the Vancouver Island Symphony and is a regular guest conductor throughout Canada.

Maestro Wolfe has just returned from Italy where he conducted The Orchestra Sinfonica di Lecce to critical acclaim. Wolfe has conducted concerts in Moscow and St. Petersburg in Russia, Helsinki Finland, and Stockholm Sweden. He has also conducted National tours of Nutcracker with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and performances with the Banff festival Ballet.

Maestro Wolfe founded the Edmonton Chamber Players Orchestra and was its Music Director and conductor for five years. During this time it was heard regularly on national CBC radio in Canada and the US. Other Orchestras he has conducted are the Calgary philharmonic, CBC Vancouver Orchestra, the Canadian Chamber Orchestra, the Vancouver, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Regina And Victoria Symphonies as well as the Vancouver Opera Orchestra.

In 2001 Marlin Wolfe was awarded the Excellence in Culture award by the city of Nanaimo for his contributions and accomplishments With the Vancouver Island Symphony.

## CRITICAL ACCLAIM

“Like a multi-handed puppeteer, Wolfe seemed to manipulate each player... in a manner that produced the purest blend of symphonic music heard in Edmonton for some time.”

- Richard de Candole, Edmonton Sun

“...delicate accompaniment by the Edmonton Chamber Players Orchestra under Marlin Wolfe, (Lois Marshall’s voice) captured the drama and emotion beautifully.”

- Richard de Candole, Edmonton Sun

“...a violinist of distinction, displayed additional talents in the role of conductor, urging from his ... players some of the most expressive playing heard in a long time.”

- Clayton Lee, Edmonton Journal

“This movement... ended with two superbly-secured pianissimo orchestral chords that I would like to have had framed! ... Wolfe’s tempi were always immediately established and his shapings and dynamic demands got scrupulous attention from the orchestra.”

- Keith Ashwell, Edmonton Journal

### Successful serenade

By RICHARD de CANDOLE

The Edmonton Sun

A string serenade will do it to you every time. Its rapturously sweeping emotion touches the heart with irresistible force.

And Czechoslovakian composer Josef Suk’s *Serenade for Strings* was no exception Monday night when the Edmonton Chamber Players Orchestra played it at Robertson Wesley United Church.

With each reprise of the work’s splendid theme you felt transported further and further into a world of pastoral bliss.

For the audience of 200, the serenade was a soothingly sweet conclusion to an evening of chamber music which featured the Edmonton Symphony’s principal violist Nick Pulos as guest soloist.

During both his solo flights, Pulos displayed a deeply moving sensitivity to the melodic meaning and mood of his part

Under Marlin Wolfe’s stylish direction, the nearly two dozen members of the chamber orchestra soared to equally inspired heights of expressiveness.

The bittersweet discord of 20th century composer Paul Hindemith's *Trauermusik* was projected by Pulos with haunting clarity and purity of tone. In the second movement the bright cheeriness of his melody line contrasted satisfyingly with the disquieting sadness of the earlier movement.

Luigi Boccherini's *La Musica Notturna di Madrid* gave the orchestra many moments of delight with its country dance feel in the third movement and abundance of plucked melody in the first two.

### **A musical puppeteer**

By RICHARD de CANDOLE

The Edmonton Sun

If ever a conductor appeared to be in total control of directed the Edmonton Chamber Players Orchestra.

Like a multi-handed puppeteer, Wolfe seemed to manipulate each player Monday night in a manner that produced the purest blend of symphonic music heard in Edmonton for some time.

The achievement was, of course, as much the result of the orchestra's musical skills and interpretive instinct as his directorial guidance.

Robertson-Wesley United Church, with its near-perfect acoustics, was the ideal place. And, the more than 250-member audience showed its appreciation when this, the fourth Alberta College Series concert of the season, came to an end.

Guest soloist John Hendrickson, the 22-year-old pianist who won the Johnson Prize in the 1975 Chopin International Competition in Warsaw, gave a stunning performance of Haydn's Piano Concerto in D-major.

The piece's richly contrasting moods and rhythms were projected by soloist and orchestra with disarming intimacy. The leisurely-paced opening to his musicians' performance, Marlin Wolfe did as he the third movement gave flight to hauntingly sweet passagework by Hendrickson.

The disciplined enthusiasm and musicality of the Vivaldi *Concerto Grosso Opus 3 in D-minor* the first piece of the concert, was highly indicative of what was to follow.

### **Lusty cheers for symphony**

By KEN CAUNCE

Edmonton Journal

Maybe they don't yell "bravo" in Edmonton. Or maybe you just don't do it in a cathedral.

But the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, together with the All Saints' Anglican Cathedral organ, deserved lots of such cheers Saturday night.

They worked together in a concert that was a veritable triumph.

There can be no argument. The cathedral was the most exciting place to be in Edmonton Saturday night.

A program guaranteed to rouse the emotions with even mediocre performances, brought lumps to the throat as orchestra and organ produced outstanding efforts.

If there was a disappointment, it was that the concert is not to be repeated.

Jeremy Spurgeon, music director at All Saints', had the cathedral instrument fully charged as he overwhelmed when it counted. Marlin Wolfe, symphony personnel manager, as guest conductor, kept the musicians in the game from the opening note. His let's-get-right-into-it approach never let up.

It was a double knock-out of French culture with the playing of Poulenc's Concerto in G minor for organ, and the Saint Saens's Symphony, No. 3 in C minor.

The evening started innocently enough with Haydn's Symphony No. 94 in G major, the "surprise" symphony.

Conductor Wolfe extracted rich resonances from the violins and violas. The familiar second movement found the orchestra exciting in the brief frenzies, an attribute prevalent all night.

Adequate in the lazy periods, the orchestra burst with magnificence in the faster, fortissimo settings.

If the orchestra put one to sleep in the third movement, one could blame the composer for that. It was a set-up for the final movement which had enthralling moments.

The evening's sleeper almost stole the show. Who's Poulenc? Turns out he was a formidable French composer of this century and his many moored concerto is a spectacular piece of music.

Poulenc, once self-described as part monk, part street Arab, put everything into this piece. Paradoxically, it combined Bacchic moments with heavenly bliss, as if one were being uplifted spiritually, but allowed to sample the grapes on the ascent.

It was music that seemed to have everything. Alternately bombastic and mellow, haunting and jubilant. At times, the music appeared as a lost jogger following the trail, knowing it had to come out somewhere.

The performance made one forget the hard seats.

The orchestra didn't try to compete with the organ in this one. Poulenc didn't write it for blend. It's a statement for the king of instruments, and Mr. Spurgeon was so good, I'm sure the Sunday services had new parishioners.

The orchestra played with grace,, completing its assignment with dignity, knowing it was deliberately outgunned. Advantage to the home court.

Special kudos to Barry Nemish on the tympani. This was music as gripping as it can be.

It was followed by a symphony which I consider possessing one of the grand finales in all of music.

The final movement of the Saint Saens's work is a cosmic gift to mankind, and when everything is going right — organ, orchestra and piano — it makes the ears cry for joy. Saturday it was splendid.

Every musician was up to the task: the horns, the reeds, the percussionists, and the strings with their rich creams and melting velvets. Together with Mr. Spurgeon's gifts, they put on a feast.