

GUEST ARTIST PARTICIPATING IN THE MARCH 8, 2021, CONCERT



Michael Braz is an internationally known performer, music educator, composer, and clinician. For over a half century, his pianistic and teaching skills have made music accessible to a variety of children and adults on three continents.

Dr. Braz received his B.M. and M.M. degrees from the University of Miami, later completing a Ph.D. at Florida State University. A keyboard soloist in England's Haslemere Festival of Early Music (directed by Dr. Carl Dolmetsch), he has also collaborated with numerous orchestras, music festivals, and ensembles ranging from chamber music to jazz and rock. During a 2007-8 university sabbatical, he taught overseas at St. Benedict's Catholic School and Performing

Arts College (Derby, England), Nepal Music Center (Kathmandu), and Huazhong Normal University (Wuhan, China). Ironically, he began his HHSO keyboard affiliation in 2008, immediately before flying to Wuhan.

While teaching at Miami's Barry University, Braz wrote and premiered his first opera, *Memoirs from the Holocaust*, inspired by a visit to the Dachau concentration camp site. He has written orchestral/ choral commissions for professional, collegiate, and school/community ensembles across the country, and was a recipient of an American Composers Forum/Rockefeller Brothers Fund "Faith Partners" grant. In 2007, he premiered his second opera (*A Scholar Under Siege*) concerning racial politics in 1941 Georgia and the firing of a respected college president by the populist governor of that state.

Since beginning his professional career, Braz has been actively involved in community music projects, founding the Capital Children's Chorus (Tallahassee, FL) and the Statesboro (GA) Youth Chorale, in addition to serving as Music Director of the Boy Singers of Maine and Associate Director of the Miami Choral Society. A member of both Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and Sigma Alpha Iota music fraternities, he has received national recognition from both organizations.

As Professor Emeritus of Music at Georgia Southern University and a 24-year faculty member, Dr. Braz taught coursework in music education, theory, composition/arranging, and orchestration, as well as classes on such varied subjects as *Finale* music software and Wagner's *Ring Cycle*. In demand as a collaborative pianist, clinician, lecturer, and adjudicator, he has also presented scholarly papers at various national conferences, including those of the College Music Society, National Collegiate Honors Council, National Association of Humanities Educators, and the Conference on Christianity and the Holocaust.

In the past, Braz has served as President of the Statesboro Arts Council and received Georgia Southern's President's Medal (in addition to various other university awards), as well as the *Statesboro Herald's* "Humanitarian of the Year" honors. In fall 2009, he received recognition by

the David H. Averitt Center as its third—and first living—"Legend in the Arts." Dr. Braz is a member of the Statesboro Rotary Club and also participates in a variety of individual volunteer activities. His hobbies are travel, comparative religions and trekking in the Nepal Himalaya.