



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Scott Lykins – scott@lakesareamusic.org | 585.355.6868

Carol Russell – carol@russellherder.com | 218.820.3024

Lakes Area Music Festival Presents Annual Gala

An Elegant Evening of Music, Dance, Celebration, and Impact

Brainerd, MN (June 23, 2026) – The Lakes Area Music Festival's 18th season begins with its most anticipated evening of the summer—the annual Gala, on Friday, July 31, 2026, at the Gichi-ziibi Center for the Arts in Brainerd. This year's season-opening celebration, *Pas de Deux*, promises a captivating evening of music, dance, and community support for the Festival's artistic and educational mission.

Headlining the evening are dancers SunMi Park and Brady Farrar of American Ballet Theatre, who join conductor José Luis Gutiérrez and the Lakes Area Music Festival Symphony Orchestra for a distinctive collaboration of music and movement. Inspired by the ballet tradition of a *pas de deux*—a dance for two—the program features music from classical ballet, sweeping ballroom waltzes, fiery tangos, and beloved orchestral favorites, all reflecting the season's theme of *Passion*.

“Each summer we bring world-class artistry to our community, and the Gala is our opportunity to celebrate that with a spectacular kickoff,” says Scott Lykins, LAMF Executive and Artistic Director. “It’s a chance to come together in support of the musicians who bring such transformative experiences to the Lakes Area. This year’s gala features dancers from American Ballet Theatre, one of the best ballet companies in the world. We are proud to partner with Minnesota Dance Theatre to make this possible, and to laying the groundwork for more dance programming in future seasons”

The evening begins at 6:00 p.m. with a dinner and concert package, followed by the Gala performance and live auction at 8:00 p.m. Guests attending the concert program will enjoy an unforgettable evening featuring exclusive auction experiences and performances by internationally acclaimed artists, all in support of the Festival's mission.

Proceeds from the Gala support LAMF’s year-round performances, youth education programs, and community engagement initiatives. Premium dinner packages include reserved concert seating, personalized experiences with LAMF musicians, and unique recognition opportunities.

Tickets and dinner packages are now available at lakesareamusic.org/gala or by calling 612-371-5656.

###

About the Lakes Area Music Festival

The Lakes Area Music Festival is Minnesota's summer home for world-class opera, orchestra, and chamber music. Celebrating its 18th anniversary season, more than 200 artists from the nation's top orchestras and opera companies will present 60 concert, education, and community outreach activities this July and August. Founded in 2009, the Lakes Area Music Festival sparks connections between its central Minnesota community and the nation's top classical performers to create transformative musical experiences. The Lakes Area Music Festival is a 501c3 non-profit based in Brainerd, MN. To find out more visit lakesareamusic.org or call 218-ASK-LAMF (218-275-5263).