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## World music, symphony captivate crowd at POPS

By Dee Menear Irregular Staff Writer



Lucas Richman (center) conducts the Bangor Symphony Orchestra Saturday at the Kingfield POPS. (Heidi Murphy photo)

KINGFIELD — The 11th annual Kingfield POPS held at the Kennedy Farm June 29 brought the talent of the Bangor Symphony Orchestra and the Sultans of String, along with a solid representation of Maine talent to the Western Mountain region.

People began streaming onto the field as soon as the gates opened. The Kennedy Farm became a sea of color as pop-up tents went up around the perimeter, and chairs, make-shift tables and umbrellas were set up in the main part of the field as people found their perfect spot to settle in for the evening.

After a brief intermission to allow for a thunderstorm to pass, the skies cleared and the show went on under a full rainbow, which lasted for almost an hour.

The styles and sounds of the music were as varied as the performers themselves. The Western Mountain Trash Can Band played its Caribbean sounds on the steel drums, welcoming people as they arrived at the field. The local band has been playing since 1992 with a purpose to raise money to help support steel drum projects in local schools.

Bobby Brown, of Massachusetts and Kingfield, returned as Master of Ceremonies. With his unique humor and personable character, he made the crowd feel welcomed and ready for the act he was introducing.

Flight 317 from Yarmouth opened on the big stage. The group is made up of teens who study music at the 317 Main Community Music Center in Yarmouth. The teenagers mix bluegrass and country tunes with rhythm, vocals and picking on the fiddle, banjo, guitar and upright bass.



The Smith Brothers

The Smith Brothers were welcomed back to the POPS.

They are graduates of Mt. Blue High School in Farmington.

Jay and Shane's music style encompassed a variety of fiddling and guitar ranging from

bluegrass, old time traditional to Celtic. The brothers have performed at the POPS before, as well as venues throughout the state of Maine.



Chris McKhool

With a knack for storytelling through song, Maine’s own Anni Clark kept the audience laughing as she sang her memories of “Bill Shepard’s Van” and entertainingly made fun of being from Maine to the tune of “You’re So Vain.” Clark is an accomplished artist with seven recordings over the last 20 years; she was most recently nominated for Female Vocalist of the Year in the Texas Music Awards.

From Toronto, the Sultans of String are known as “Canada’s ambassadors of musical diversity.” Their show encompassed the musical genres of Spanish flamenco, Arabic folk, Cuban Rhythm and Gypsy jazz. Chris McKhool,

six-string violinist, led the group of four through passionate pieces that moved the audience and filled the area in front of the stage with dancing children and adults.

The Sultans of String were accompanied by the BSO for a set. McKhool told a story of Luna the whale. The folklore is that Luna the killer whale was a reincarnation of a former Chief Ambrose Maquinna of the indigenous people of British Columbia. The melodious, and authentic sounds of whale songs could be heard through the bass guitar played by Drew Birston. The percussionist played a variety of instruments, sometimes two or three at the same time. The unique sounds of the Sultans captivated the audience. The Sultans were given a standing ovation and pleased the audience with an encore.



The BSO conducted by Lucas Richman rounded out the evening with well known orchestral pieces including a tribute to all branches of the military, and songs from the musical “Guys and Dolls.” The BSO is one of the oldest continuously operating orchestras in the United States, playing since 1896. The evening ended with a grand display of fireworks.



Annie Clark

Early estimates are that approximately 1,500 people attended this year’s event.

In downtown Kingfield during the day, hundreds attended the POPS Artisan Fair and Live Music featuring local young artists.

The Kingfield POPS will return June 28, 2014 featuring Jonathan Edwards.