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## 'Raiders of the Lost Ark' with symphony to open festival [+](#)



Cirque de la Symphonie will be performed March 12 in the Mizner Park Amphitheater in Festival of the Arts BOCA. (submitted photo / FPG)

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**T**he curtain goes up on the 10th annual Festival of the Arts BOCA March 4 with the 1981 "Raiders of the Lost Ark" movie and a live symphony orchestra.

After last year's successful "West Side Story" with orchestra, reprising the combo to open the shows and authors' talks was not a hard sell.

"We got the chance to present the Florida premiere of probably the best action movie ever made, with **John Williams'** epic score and a live symphony orchestra – an opportunity we could not pass up," said Charles Letourneau, the festival's artistic administrator.

Also look for a semi-staged "Magic Flute" opera in English on March 5 and jazz trumpeter Herb Alpert and his wife singer Lani Hall on March 6. The festival continues under a tent in the seated Mizner Park Amphitheater, 590 Plaza Real, through March 16, capped by violinist Joshua Bell among the other performers. The Authors and Ideas talks run concurrently.

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"This year's festival is seeing its best ticket sales in many years, a testament to the tremendous support we are seeing in the community," Letourneau said in an email. "Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons' with Joshua Bell is our top seller so far, but all the others are close behind. We really have something for everyone this year – from movies, opera, cirque, jazz to symphonic classics...plus an extremely varied lecture series."

"John Williams, what a genius of a guy," the festival's musical director Constantine Kitsopoulos said by phone before coming into Boca. "The Raiders' march doesn't even appear until 15 or 20 minutes into it, but there's a lot of really cool music you may not have noticed because it accompanies dramatic action."

The maestro will conduct the Henry Mancini Institute orchestra at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music.

"It's very demanding," he said about synchronizing the score with the movie. But Kitsopoulos has done this many times before, especially with "The Wizard of Oz" and "Singin' in the Rain."

"As an opera conductor, I'm trained to be ready for everything," he said. "In addition to learning the music, you have to learn all the cues. It's very painstaking. It's one of the most difficult things I do, but one of the greatest."

He and Letourneau approached co-executive producers Charlie Siemon, the founder, and Wendy Larsen with the idea.

"It's a great film and a great way to open a festival," Kitsopoulos said.

He'll also conduct The Symphonia Boca Raton in "The Magic Flute," The Joey Alexander Trio concert on March 11 and the Cirque de la Symphonie on March 12 with the Symphonia.

"My daughter Antonia is directing the 'Magic Flute,'" he said. "She was in 'La Boheme' on Broadway."

Tickets and a full schedule are available at <http://festivalofheartsboca.org/> or by calling 866-571-2787.

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