

2 world premieres on ASO 2010-11 schedule

Spano, Runnicles mark 10-year partnership; summer slate unveiled.

By **Pierre Ruhe**
For the AJC

A decade ago, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra formed an innovative “creative partnership” with conductors Robert Spano and Donald Runnicles.

The two midcareer maestros – Spano is music direc-

tor, Runnicles is principal guest conductor – brought different sensibilities and artistic strengths to the orchestra, which, under their command, has flourished in almost every direction.

Wednesday afternoon, in a live Webcast, the ASO announced its 2010-11 season – the orchestra’s 66th – and

ASO continued on D4

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the 10th anniversary of the Spano-Runnicles dynamic duo. The ASO also announced its 2010 summertime concerts at Chastain Park and Verizon Wireless amphitheatres.

Reflecting the sour

economy, the 2010-11 classical season in Symphony Hall feels scaled back, yet highlights the ASO’s unique strengths.

“After 10 years,” said Spano, interviewed in his office beneath Symphony Hall, “I can do things here I can’t do anywhere else. I flick my eyebrow and they [the musicians] get what I mean. We feed off each other, and the familiarity is energizing.”

The two conductors’ artistic collaboration will be celebrated in January, when Runnicles leads Mozart’s Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor with Spano as solo pianist. A week before that Mozart, Runnicles conducts Beethoven’s “Missa Solemnis.”

Reached in Germany, where he’s conductor of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Runnicles said, “The ‘Missa Solemnis’ is one of a small handful of works that I feel I really have to push myself and grow as an artist just to perform adequately. It’s so exalted, it’s humbling to perform it with this orchestra and chorus.”

Next season there are

just two world premieres, both on the same concert in June 2011: a 20-minute work by Atlanta composer Alvin Singleton, who served as the ASO’s composer-in-residence under Robert Shaw; and James Oliverio’s Double Timpani Concerto for the Brothers Yancich. Mark Yancich is ASO principal timpanist, and Paul is principal of the Cleveland Orchestra.

With this season’s announcement, the ASO is also making key changes.

Gone is the organization’s old logo: a white arch representing architect Santiago Calatrava’s designs for a new Symphony Center. Unable to raise the \$300 million cost, the revised plan for an ASO concert hall will likely be for the main Woodruff Arts Center campus. The new logo looks like a stylized bass clef.

The bigger impact comes with concerts at Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre at Encore Park, the ASO’s summer home in Alpharetta – 2010 will be the pavilion’s third summer. Gone is the classical series: along with rock concerts and community events, the ASO will play only pops and family concerts.

The full calendar is at www.atlantasympphony.org.

