



Director's Message



We are so excited to finally share with everyone our long awaited "Rhapsody" concert. I am personally honored to have another opportunity to bring together all ages and levels of ability for a full symphony orchestra experience.

On stage this afternoon we have beginner students to experienced professionals, ages 9 to 82! I am delighted that VCE, along with the support of my esteemed colleagues, are able to offer such a high level experience to our students and our community. Today's performance provides our students with an educational, fun and special musical experience that will forever be in their memories.

On behalf of the Virginia Cello Ensembles "Symphony Orchestra", I would like to thank everyone for attending our concert today where 50 cellists get to be the full string section of a symphony orchestra.

Christine Hartigan Music Director, Virginia Cello Ensembles

Concertmaster

Lucas Miller



Lucas Miller began playing cello in fifth grade with Spartanburg County Public Schools in South Carolina. Over the course of his career, he has studied privately with Jennifer Diehn, Kathleen Foster, Claire Bryant, and Robert Jesselson. During high school, under the tutelage of Kathleen Foster, Lucas was chosen to perform in numerous solo masterclasses, including a masterclass with Michael Mermagen, cellist in the Aspen String Trio. While studying to receive his Music Education degree at the University of South Carolina, he performed with the UofSC Symphony and performed in numerous chamber ensembles every semester. He was also chosen to perform in masterclasses with the Parker

Quartet each semester. While at UofSC he and a group of fellow students became the first undergraduate group to win the Spark Creativity in Music Award with their work to bridge music and community. In his junior year he won the Cello Award, an award given to one cellist each year who showed dedication and progress throughout the year. Upon graduation Lucas moved to Fredericksburg, Virginia to direct the Riverbend High School Orchestra program. Since then he has performed with the Virginia Cello Ensembles and the Fredericksburg Symphony Orchestra. Lucas has also performed in the pit orchestra at the University of Mary Washington and subbed for the Riverside Center for the Performing Arts pit orchestra.

VCE Program

The Cello Song	
Andante Festivo	Jean Sibelius arr. by Matteo Delfino
Smile	Charlie Chaplin arr. by Sebastien Walnier
A Tale as Old as Time	Alan Menken arr. by M. Knowles
→ *\$• ~ *\$• ~ +\$• ~ +	
Spring From The Four Seasons - Dolce Ensemble	Vivaldi arr. by RK Deverich
Basse Dance 'La Mourisque' Dolce Ensemble	Tielman Susato arr. by David Burndrett
The Medallion Calls	Badelt arr. by Renyer
	
Theme from 'Schindler's List'	John Williams
Intermezzo from Cavalieria Rusticana	Peitro Mascagni arr. by David Johnstone
Pavane, op. 50 String parts for cells	Gabriel Faure transcribed by C. Hartigan
INTERMISSION	
Estampas Mexicanas (Mexican Vignettes)	Jose L. Elizondo
BRIEF PAUSE	

String parts for cello transcribed by C. Hartigan

Mikenzie Sweeting, piano

Scholarship

The Mary Barnwell Memorial Music Scholarship

The Virginia Cello Ensembles annually presents the Mary Barnwell Memorial Music Scholarship in memory of Ms. Hartigan's former teacher/coach, mentor, and life-long family friend. Each scholarship is given to an eligible graduating high school senior who has demonstrated overall involvement in school, community and work, as well as maintained a minimum GPA of 3.0 and is committed to studving music in an institution of higher education.

VCE is proud to award this year's scholarship to Timothy Johnson.

Timothy Johnson



Timothy is an accomplished instrumentalist. In addition to cello, he has also experience playing the clarinet, piano, and quitar. Timothy has performed with many different orchestras and bands, including the All-Virginia District Band, All-Virginia Regional Orchestra, All-Virginia State Band, Fredericksburg Areas Young Musicians, and the Fredericksburg Symphony Orchestra. While taking cello lessons with Christine Hartigan, he has also studied clarinet under Teresea Cerritelli and piano under E'juanna Andrews. Timothy plans to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Clarinet Performance.



Timothy will be performing the opening clarinet solo in Rhapsody in Blue



Past recipients of the Mary Barnwell Memorial Music Scholarship include Olivia Dempsey & Meredith Walburn (2023), Jasmine Sen (2022), Matthew Reffner (2021), Jacob Dean (2017), Christopher Hodges (2016), and Scott Havener (2015).

Senior Bios

Ian Archibald



Ian will be graduating from Mountain View High School in Stafford County this spring. His love for music began at an early age when he begged his parents to buy a piano so that he could learn to play it. He got his wish and started piano lessons at age seven. Thanks to "The Piano Guys", he became interested in the cello. He joined the T. Benton Gayle Middle School Orchestra in sixth grade and continues to study both piano and cello. Ian began taking lessons from Christine Hartigan and joined VCE in the fall of 2019.

lan has participated in the Stafford All-County Orchestra for both middle and high school and had the privilege to participate in the Senior Regional Orchestra in the fall of 2023. He studied at Brigham Young University at their Summer Music Festival 2023 where he played in a guartet and full symphony orchestra.

This fall Ian will be attending Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah with plans to study mechanical engineering with a minor in cello. He plans to continue learning and seeking opportunities to play the cello throughout his life.

Katherine Band



Katherine is a graduating senior at King George High School. She has been a member of VCE for the past two years. Additionally, Katherine has been involved in theatre at her high school and has held the responsibility of stage management for the past three years. After graduation, she

plans to attend Virginia Tech to study architecture. Katherine hopes to continue with cello and theatre in college.

Izait Bautista Bones

Izait is a soon-to-be graduate from Massaponnax High School in Spotsylvania County. He first picked up the cello in sixth grade and has remained dedicated ever since. In 2020, while searching to excel in his learning, he stumbled upon Ms. Hartigan's studio and has been a proud student ever since. Izait has been a member of the VCE since late 2020. He also hold the position of first chair cellist in his school's symphonic orchestra and has participated in Spotsylvania's All-County Orchestra multiple



times. In his free time, Izait can be spotted playing tennis, strumming on the guitar, spending time with his family and friends, and relaxing alongside his wonderful dog, Coco. As for future endeavors, Izait is looking forward to majoring in mechanical engineering at George Mason University while also considering minoring in music.

Genevieve Britten



projects in her free time.

Genevieve has been playing oboe for six years and will be pursuing a double major in music performance and English in the fall. Some of her high school accomplishments include admittance to the competitive American Youth Philharmonic (AYP), first chair oboe in Northern Central Virginia Senior Regional Orchestra, and second chair oboe in the Virginia All-State Orchestra. For fun, she likes to work on wood carving and wood burning

Sydney Charter



Sydney, a graduating senior from Riverbend High School, embodies a passion for music that permeates every aspect of her life. She has been playing the cello for just a year and a half, studying with Ms. Hartigan since March 2023, and a member of VCE since August. Along with the cello, she has been playing clarinet since sixth grade and is a member of her school's top wind ensemble. She has been singing since she was eight and is a member of her school's top vocal ensemble. She has participated in All-District

Choir and made alternate for All-State Choir. She has been playing the piano for two and a half years and has recently taken up the violin. Sydney also conducts her church's congregation weekly and frequently arranges and leads string quartets for her congregation. She is an officer for her school's chapter of the Tri-M Music Honor Society and was a recent participant in VCU's Future Music Educators Symposium led by Dr. Sandy Goldie. Sydney looks forward to a bright future as she heads to Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, this fall to pursue her dream of becoming a music educator.

Ailidh McKay

Ailidh has been studying cello since age eleven and has been a part of VCE for seven seasons. She has participated in several community events such as Cellobration, All-County, Solo and Ensemble, and other local concerts. Ailidh has also participated with the Fredericksburg Area Young Musicians and the Spotsylvanians Chorus. Along with accompanying many groups, she has also



played in musicals and other live music events in Virginia. Ailidh has incorporated her music into her Highland dance and art, and will continue to do so after graduation. Ailidh will be graduating from Spotsylvania High School in the spring and she is looking forward to majoring in animation and kinetic engineering.

Senior Bios

Victoria Pearson

Victoria is a senior at Riverbend High School and is a member of the Symphonic Orchestra. She has been playing cello since the sixth grade. This is her second year playing with VCE and she was also part of the All-County Orchestra. Victoria has a love of horseback riding and was on the Hazelwild IEA team. Victoria is



also a talented artist. She loves to draw, paint, and sculpt. She will be attending the University of Mary Washington in the fall, majoring in biology/pre-vet and minoring both music and art. She hopes to continue playing cello in school and with VCE.

Alexander Romanov



Alexander, a senior at Courtland High School in Virginia, is an exceptionally talented and dedicated musician, showcasing prowess in both the violin and trumpet. In addition to his position as the first chair violin in the Symphonic Orchestra at his school and principal trumpet in multiple ensembles, he holds key positions in the Capitol Symphonic Youth Orchestra as principal trumpet as well as first chair violinist in the chamber group. He also actively participates in local groups, including the Fredericksburg

Concert Band, Fredericksburg Big Band, UMW Jazz Band, UMW Philharmonic, and the Christian Youth Theater Pit Orchestra. Outside of the local area, Alexander participated in the Youth Patriot Trumpet Ensemble and the Summer Music Residential Governor School Program at Radford University. Additionally, Alexander founded the School Music Mentorship Program and the Courtland High School Chamber Group and Brass Quintet.

In the fall Alexander will be majoring in trumpet performance.

Senior Bios

Madison Simons

Madison has grown up in Stafford County for eighteen years. She has been playing cello for seven years and keeps busy with Mountain View High School's music program, where she plays in all three orchestras. Over the last year, she has learned to play viola and violin in order to support her school's music program. She also helps direct the class. Aside from music, Madison swims on a competitive team and loves coaching. She bakes often for her friends and family of eight (soon to be nine)! Following graduation, Madison will attend Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah to study music education.



A'den White



A'den is graduating from Riverbend High School in Spotsylvania. He has been playing cello for five years and was a member of Spotsylvania All-County Orchestra in 2021 and 2023. Additionally A'den earned the award for Most Improved Player in 2021. In his free time A'den enjoys building computers, playing basketball with his friends and at the gym, and watching movies. After high school he has plans to study finance and cybersecurity.

Technical Artist



Harry Roberson has been involved in music his entire life. Born of musical parents he grew to appreciate music from an early age. In college he became interested in musical instrument repair. From 1978 to 2016 he owned Roberson's Music in Fredericksburg, Va. providing instruments and repairs for the regions schools and area musicians. In 2016 Mr. Roberson formed Symphony Strings LLC, a personalized, custom sales and repair service focusing on orchestral string instruments. As he puts it: "I fell in love with the cello!"

He now devotes his time to Symphony Strings and to the Virginia Cello Ensembles where he provides cello repair

and maintenance for the ensemble members.

Our Musicians

VCE Symphony Musicians

Cello 1

Lucas Miller, Concertmaster
Matthew Reffner, Asst. Concertmaster
Ailidh McKay
Emma King
Kristian Dillon
Hannah "Andreas" Gould
Timothy Johnson
Mikenzie Sweeting

Cello 3

Jana Shepard, Principal Jacob Dean Madison Simons Stella Carroll Jonathan Blake Rocco Miner Izait Bautista Bones Grace Pegelow

Double Bass

Paul Henry Joey Lane

Cello 2

Ruth Sivertsen, Principal Meredith Walburn Ian Archibald Olivia Dempsey Kieron Speight Leah Perdue

Cello 4

Sean Miller, Principal Connor Lantz Alyssa Stephenson Patrick Wilt Marcelo McFarland A'den White Tristan Avery Carie Ruiz Emily D'Isidoro Katherine Band Susan Carpenter

Dolce Ensemble

Cello 1

Anna Kelly Harrison Howard Liv Baxter Lydia Pendleton

Cello 3

Ethan Cheng Amalya Lorenzo Isabella Allardice Victoria Pearson

Cello 2

Sydney Charter Enzo Uribe Desmond Pearson Lola Wood

Cello 4

Elisabeth Gill Suri Palomino Brycen Molaski Zachary Adams Robbie Ruiz

Flute 1/Piccolo

Tina Christie

Flute 2

Courtney King Deb Clare

Oboe 1

Brendan Shirk

Oboe 2

Genevieve Britten

Clarinet 1

Tony Moran

Clarinet 2

Timothy Johnson

Bass Clarinet

Brian Donnelly

Bassoon

Jarrett Rodriguez Eunice Richardson

French Horn

Ryan Scott, Principal Gabby Pocaro Klara Farren Val Perham

Harp

Bobbye Wardlow

Trumpet

Zach Smith Alexander Romanov Brooke Shimabukuro

Trombone

Earl Sams Jennifer Lewis Daniel Haverstock

Bass Trombone

Jim Breakiron

Tuba

Cary Carper

Timpani

Nora McIntire

Percussion

Kaitlin Gimm David Vita Rainier Homoroc Brach Cobb

Alto Saxophone

Brach Cobb Benjamin Peters

Tenor Saxophone

Allison Sweeting

Production Team

Stage Crew

Harry Roberson Richard Hartigan

Program Notes

Dr. Stephen Fischer

Videographer/Livestream
Diane Speight

Art & Graphic Design/Photographer Gina Adams

Program Design Carie Ruiz

Social Media/Website Manager

Cynthia Dement

Soloists

Matthew Reffner



Matthew Reffner, 21, is a student currently attending Shenandoah Conservatory and is studying cello performance under the instruction of Julian Schwarz. At Shenandoah Conservatory Matthew has been Principal of the Symphonic Orchestra and has performed works such as, Beethoven's Symphony No.8, Ravel's Piano Concerto in G Major, Poulenc's Piano Concerto in C# minor, and Britten: A Midsummer Night's Dream. As a versatile musician, he has also performed in the conservatory's pit in works such as Into the Woods and Tuck Everlasting. Matthew most

recently attended the Eastern Music Festival in the summer of 2023 and has also attended the Philadelphia International Music Festival. Matthew has participated in masterclasses held by John Koen, Patrick Jee, Lluis Claret, Amit Peled, Shar Prescott, and Gloria dePasquale. Matthew is also a member of the cello section in the Northern Neck Orchestra, which he has now been a part of for nearly two years.

Mikenzie Sweeting



Mikenzie Sweeting is a classically trained pianist and cellist. She is an alum of Duke Ellington School of the Arts and is currently a sophomore at Howard University, studying piano performance under the instruction of Dr. Natalia Kazaryan.

She has been a member of VCE for seven years. She has performed at various places, including the Hillwood Estate and the Arts Club of Washington, as well as numerous recitals at Howard University. She is continuing her studies to graduate with her Bachelors Degree in Piano Performance, then

plans to attend graduate school.

Accolades

Spotsylvania Junior All-County Orchestra Liv Baxter, Ethen Cheng, Anna Kelly, Connor Lantz, Desmond Pearson

Spotsylvania Senior All-County Orchestra
Izait Bautista Bones, Elisabeth Gill, Marcelo McFarland,
Victoria Pearson, Alexander Romanov, Alyssa Stephenson,
A'den White

Stafford Junior All-County Orchestra Patrick Wilt

Stafford Senior All-County Orchestra
lan Archibald, Tristan Avery, Rocco Miner, Madison Simons

North Central VA Junior Regional Orchestra Connor Lantz, Patrick Wilt

North Central VA Senior Regional Orchestra
lan Archibald, Genevieve Britten, Timothy Johnson,
Alexander Romanov

Spotsylvania All-County Band Alexander Romanov

<u>Stafford All-County Band</u> Stella Carroll, Brooke Shimabukuro

<u>District XV Band</u>
Genevieve Britten, Stella Carroll, Timothy Johnson,
Alexander Romanov, Brooke Shimabukuro

<u>Virginia All-State Band</u>
Genevieve Britten, Timothy Johnson, Alexander Romanov,
Brooke Shimabukuro

<u>District XV Chorus</u> Sydney Charter (Alternate for State)

Fredericksburg Symphony Orchestra Intern
Timothy Johnson (clarinet)
Alexander Romanov (violin)

Program Notes

The Cello Song

Steven Sharp Nelson, after the Prelude from J. S. Bach's Cello Suite No. 1

The six delightful suites for solo cello by J. S. Bach (1685-1750), BWV 1007-1012, are as familiar and important to cellists as Bach's keyboard music is to pianists and organists. "The Cello Song" is a reworking of the prelude to the first of the suites by cellist Steven Sharp Nelson (1977-), best known as a member of The Piano Guys. Nelson expands the range of possibilities of the cello with unconventional techniques, often treating it as a percussion instrument, and adds a rock beat in places, while keeping Bach's original in mind at all times.

Andante Festivo

Jean Sibelius

Sibelius (1865-1958) composed this short piece in 1922 for string quartet, though he later arranged it for string orchestra with timpani. It is a fine example of Sibelius' gift for lyricism, though it sounds more solemn and hymnlike than festive.

Smile, from Modern Times

Charlie Chaplin

Though Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977) had little formal musical training, he wrote much of the music for his films, usually with assistance from someone who could work up his ideas into a full score. "Smile" was written for the classic 1936 "silent" (that is, with no spoken dialogue) film *Modern Times*, in collaboration with David Raksin (1912-2004), who would go on to score over a hundred films and over three hundred television shows. It was just an instrumental cue with no title until it was turned into a song in 1954. Its first recording, by Nat King Cole, was a hit, and it has been a widely performed standard ever since.

A Tale as Old as Time, from Beauty and the Beast

Alan Menken

Composer Alan Menken (1949-) and lyricist Howard Ashman (1950-1991) followed their success with *The Little Mermaid* (1989) with an even bigger success in *Beauty and the Beast* (1991). It was the first animated film to be nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture and won the award for Best Original Score, while "A Tale as Old as Time" won the award for Best Original Song. The film was the first Disney film to be adapted as a stage musical, running on Broadway from 1994 to 2007. Menken has written songs for numerous other films and stage productions, including the Disney hits *Aladdin, Pocahontas*, and *Tangled*.

Program Notes

Theme from Schindler's List

John Williams

Composer John Williams (1932-) has already collaborated with director Steven Spielberg on a long series of hit films, including Jaws and E.T., for both of which Williams won Academy Awards for Best Original Score, when Spielberg asked Williams for something very different from their usual fare. On learning that this new project was a film about the Holocaust, Williams reportedly said, "You need a better composer than I am," to which Spielberg replied, "I know, but they're all dead." Schindler's List (1993) was a triumph; Williams created one of his finest scores, winning another Oscar, and Itzhak Perlman, for whom the original violin solo part was written, has continued to perform this deeply felt music in concert.

Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana

Pietro Mascagni

In his long career Pietro Mascagni (1863-1945) wrote nearly twenty operas, but far and away his greatest success was *Cavalleria Rusticana* (1888; first performed in 1890), a one-act opera composed as he was starting out. It is a tale of passion and violence set in front of a church in a small town in Sicily. In the first of its two scenes the characters quarrel while the Easter Mass is being celebrated in the church, and the second scene ends in a fatal duel. The Intermezzo comes between the two scenes, momentarily breaking the tension. As the Mass has just ended, it incorporates the *Regina coeli* melody from the service.

Pavane, op. 50

Gabriel Fauré

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) composed his lovely Pavane in 1887 as a work for orchestra with optional chorus; it refers to a type of slow, stately dance that was in vogue two centuries previously. The tune has been arranged many ways and heard in many contexts; you may recognize it from its use in the first season of Only Murders in the Building.

VCE Supporter

The VCEI has recently put together a form for anyone interested in becoming a Supporter of the VCE. This form is for any friends, family, or businesses that you may think are interested in giving financial support to the VCE.

Please see the page at the back of the program for VCE Supporter information.

Program Notes

Estampas Mexicanas (Mexican Vignettes)

Jose Elizondo

Ferial (Parade)
Danza del Pájaro Sagrado (Dance of the Sacred Bird)
Teotlalli (Land of Gods)

Mexican composer José Elizondo (1972-) studied electrical engineering and music at MIT and furthered his musical studies at Harvard; he has continued to work in both areas. Much of his music features the cello; Yo-Yo Ma has recorded his *Otoño en Buenos Aires* (*Autumn in Buenos Aires*). *Estampas Mexicanas* (1995), his first orchestral work, is based on Mexican folk elements. He has arranged it for a number of different scorings, including cello ensemble.

For more information and insight about the composer Jose Elizondo, please visit his website at https://www.joseelizondo.com/

Rhapsody in Blue

George Gershwin

Late in the evening of January 3, 1924-exactly a century ago last Wednesday-the brothers Ira and George Gershwin were hanging out with their friend and collaborator, lyricist Buddy DeSylva. Ira was reading the New York Herald Tribune while George and Buddy played pool, until Ira interrupted the game to show George the announcement of an upcoming concert at Aeolian Hall by Paul Whiteman and his Palais Royale Orchestra. Titled "An Experiment in Modern Music," it would include new works commissioned by Whiteman from Victor Herbert and Irving Berlin, as well as a "jazz concerto" by George Gershwin-and it was set for February 12, less than six weeks away! Once he had recovered from the surprise, George set to work on the new piece while keeping up with other obligations—he said one section came to him on a trip to Boston, inspired by the rhythm of the train-and completed enough of it that Ferde Grofé (one of Whiteman's arrangers, who later became famous as the composer of the Grand Canyon Suite) could produce the orchestration in time, though George had not yet written out some of the solo piano part. The new piece, titled Rhapsody in Blue because it is such a gorgeous string of tunes, was a huge success and soon became the most familiar classical piece by an American composer. For George Gershwin, already a highly successful songwriter. it marked the transition to being a multifaceted composer; other classical pieces, including the Concerto in F and An American in Paris, would follow.

Notes © Stephen C. Fisher



Program annotator Stephen C. Fisher is the author of various learned publications in English and German and has been seen around the area playing viola or violin in the University of Mary Washington Philharmonic, the St. George's Chamber Orchestra, and the Rappahannock String Quartet, though his cats wish he'd just stay home and feed them.

VCE Executive Board

President - Diane Speight
President Elect - Tim Reffner
Treasurer/Secretary - Debbie Coe
Member at Large - Harry Roberson
Ex-Officio - Christine Hartigan

Our Mission Statement

The Virginia Cello Ensembles (VCE) is a unique, all-cello, intergenerational community orchestra dedicated to offering cellists of varied levels of ability, a challenging and enriching opportunity to cultivate their musical abilities and increase their technical proficiency through performance.

The VCE would like to give special thanks to:

The University of Mary Washington Dept. of Music
Stafford Crossing Community Church
Riverbend High School
Symphony Strings



And an extra special thank you to all of our families and friends for their continued support of the VCE and its musicians

SUPPORT THE VCE

About The VCE

The VCE (Virginia Cello Ensembles), under the direction of Christine Hartigan, is the only intergenerational community cello orchestra in the country - and it is based right here in Fredericksburg!



Since its formation in 2012, the VCE has delighted local audiences at many concert events, including performances at the Spotsylvania Towne Center and the Fredericksburg Nationals Stadium. The VCE has grown to almost 50 members ranging in age from pre-teens to seniors.

In August 2023, the VCEI (Virginia Cello Ensembles, Inc.) established itself as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization to support future growth and performance opportunities for the VCE.

Why Support The VCE?

Your tax-deductible contribution will help the VCE continue their local performances, collaborate with talented guest musicians, and travel for performance opportunities beyond the local area.

Support Opportunities

Soundpost \$10 - \$99 **Bridge** \$100 - \$499

Scroll \$500 and up

All Supporters will be listed in the next concert program.

Supporter Information

(please print clearly)

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Please send your support to:	VCEI 5501 Heritage Hills Circle Fredericksburg, VA 22407	

Cash or checks only. Checks made payable to VCEI.

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For information about VCE or private lessons, contact Christine Hartigan, Founder and Musical Director christine@fredericksburgcello.com

VCE is on Facebook and Instagram