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VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION

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www.victoriabachfestival.org • info@victoriabachfestival.org



ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Wm. Buck Moore

EMERGING ARTISTS COORDINATOR

Faith Debow

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



community of music lovers to experience the beauty, harmony, and unity that only music can provide.

As I reflect on this incredible milestone, I am filled with gratitude to be a part of this extraordinary journey. Gratitude for our founders, who had the courage to set this Festival in motion 50 years ago. Gratitude for our board members, donors, and volunteers—whose tireless work and unwavering support sustain us. Gratitude for the musicians, past and present, whose passion and talent has stirred our souls and lifted our spirits. And gratitude for you - our audience-you are the spirit that carries us forward.

This season we are proud to present highlights such as Bach’s monumental Mass in B Minor, a revival of one of the very first Victoria Bach Festival performances, a solo recital by the extraordinary Anton Nel, who will also perform in an electrifying finale of *Rhapsody in Blue* alongside a world premiere of “MyGreat Dream”, a piece composed by GRAMMY®-nominated composer Juan Pablo Contreras, commissioned in honor of our 50th season.

We will also unveil a permanent monument on the University of Houston–Victoria campus on June 6—a tribute to the many individuals who have shaped our legacy. And for the first time, we are expanding beyond Victoria to Rockport, TX with a special performance of Bach’s Goldberg Variations at the Rockport Center for the Arts.

This year, we are especially honored and grateful as the City of Victoria, Victoria County, and the State of Texas have all officially declared May 31 – June 6, 2025 as Victoria Bach Festival Week. We deeply appreciate Victoria Mayor Duane Crocker, Victoria County Judge Ben Zeller, and Texas State Senator Lois Kolkhorst for their efforts in achieving this milestone recognition for the Festival.

The Victoria Bach Festival is an event that many eagerly anticipate year-round, as musicians, board members, supporters and friends are reunited during a week of world-class music. Here’s to the 50th season of the Victoria Bach Festival—and to the next 50 years ahead. May the music not only fill our ears, but remind us that with every note we share, we take one step closer to a world united by music.

With gratitude,



David Faskas
President, Victoria Bach Festival Board of Directors



SATURDAY, MAY 31
THE GOLDBERG VARIATIONS: JS BACH
7:30 PM | Presidio La Bahia: Goliad

SUNDAY, JUNE 1
THE GOLDEN VARIATIONS: JS BACH
3 PM | Rockport Center for the Arts

MONDAY, JUNE 2
BACH TO BASICS
3 PM | Our Saviour’s Luthern Church

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PERFORMERS, VENUES, AND CONCERTS, GO TO WWW.VICTORIABACHFESTIVAL.ORG OR LIKE US ON FACEBOOK.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE



that has inspired countless audiences and performers alike.

Adversity has never deterred us. Not even a global pandemic or a total blackout could interrupt this beautiful yearly ritual.

In 2019, we were poised to perform with the internationally renowned pianist Anton Nel and the VBF Orchestra—an evening featuring Saint-Saëns’ Piano Concerto No. 2 and Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony. Then, just 20 minutes before the concert, the lights went out at the Victoria Fine Arts Center. Without hesitation, the stage crew, musicians, and audience pivoted, relocating to Our Saviour’s Lutheran

Friends,
We gather here to celebrate five decades of extraordinary music-making in South Texas. Fifty years of bringing world-class performances to our community. Fifty years of placing Victoria on the national and international stage. Fifty years of dedicated board members, musicians, and staff pouring their time, talent, and passion into an organization

Church. The show went on, and the performance was nothing short of triumphant.

In 2020, when the pandemic took away our ability to gather, our soloists recorded music for online concerts, and our staff adapted, mastering new skills to bring virtual performances to you.

In 2021, when we were finally allowed to return to live music, we reunited—our faces masked, our hearts full. Many of us wept with joy to be back with our colleagues, performing once again for you.

Music draws us together. Beyond the joy of performing with one another, we cherish performing for you. This connection is reciprocal—our artists treasure your presence just as much as you treasure the music we create.

Here’s to the next 50 years!



Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez,
Artistic Director, Victoria Bach Festival

TUESDAY, JUNE 3
FAITH DEBOW, PIANO
9 AM | St. Mary’s Activity Center

BEACH & ARENSKY
12 PM | First United Methodist Church

THE GREAT MASS
7:30 PM | Our Savior’s Luthern Church

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4
LA REVUE DE CUISINE
9 AM | St. Mary’s Activity Center

SCHUBERT OCTET
12 PM | First United Methodist Church

VAMP VOCALS
7:30 PM | Trinity Episcopal Church

THURSDAY, JUNE 5
BACH DECONSTRUCTED
9 AM | St. Mary’s Activity Center

EMERGING ARTISTS
12 PM | First United Methodist Church

ANTON NELL, PIANIST
7:30 PM | Trinity Episcopal Church

FRIDAY, JUNE 6
MONUMENT UNVEILING
1 PM | University of Houston - Victoria

THUS BLEW THE SHEPHERD’S HORN
7:30 PM | Victoria Fine Arts Center

Support the VBF by joining the party at these two fun filled gatherings.



Enjoy a rare opportunity for a champagne tour of the historic George Edwin Jordan home which has been beautifully restored by Tammy & David Murphy.

After the tour, the celebration continues across the street at **Power Avenue Warehouse** with Live Music, Mimosas & Bloody Marys and a Delightful Brunch!

A Champagne Tour of the Immaculately Restored G. E. Jordan Home

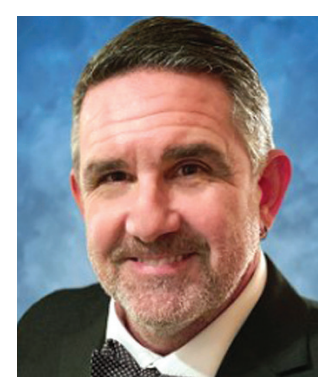
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 | 10:30AM | \$100 per person



Limited spots available.
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE



As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Victoria Bach Festival, I am filled with gratitude, admiration, and awe for what this Festival has become—and for the incredible people who have brought it to life year after year.

From its inception in 1976 under the vision of Dr. David Urness, the Festival has grown through many iterations. Each season has built upon the last, shaped by the creativity of our artists, the leadership of our board members, and, most importantly, the unwavering support of this generous community. What began as a modest gathering of musicians and music lovers has flourished into a nationally recognized festival that now presents 15 concerts and events, featuring nearly 100 musicians from across the country.

This 50th season is not just a celebration of music—it is a celebration of the people who have sustained and enriched this Festival for five decades. We honor the hundreds of board members who have served with dedication and vision over the years. Their stewardship has guided us through times of growth and challenge, always keeping the Festival’s mission at heart.

We are equally grateful to the Victoria community, whose passion for music and commitment to the arts has made it possible for us to thrive. Whether through attending concerts, volunteering, contributing financially, or simply spreading the word, your support has made every note possible.

As we look ahead, we remain inspired by the past and excited for the future. Thank you for being part of this remarkable journey.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Wm. Buck Moore

Wm. Buck Moore
Executive Director, Victoria Bach Festival

VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL
50TH ANNIVERSARY MONUMENT

In honor of five decades of music, community, and visionary leadership, the Victoria Bach Festival is proud to unveil a commemorative monument on the University of Houston–Victoria campus. This sculpture stands as a tribute to the countless individuals—musicians, board members, patrons, volunteers, and supporters—whose dedication and passion have shaped the festival’s remarkable journey.

We warmly invite you to join us for this special moment of reflection and celebration at **1:00pm on Friday, June 6**, outside UHV’s Center Building. This permanent installation is not only a marker of where we’ve been, but a symbol of the harmony and inspiration that will carry us into the next 50 years.

VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL 50TH ANNIVERSARY
MONUMENT COMMITTEE:

Bill Blanchard – Chair

Amber Countis | Sandra DeLaGarza | David Faskas
John Griffin | Dr. Michael Hummel | Dr. Suzanne LaBrecque
John Quitta | Eileen Stewart | Ron Walker



HISTORY OF THE VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL

The Victoria Bach Festival aims to inspire and educate musicians and audiences of all ages and backgrounds through high-quality and diverse orchestral, choral, and chamber music performances. The first Festival was presented in 1976 in Victoria, Texas, under the direction of Dr. David Urness with the sponsorship of the University of Houston-Victoria. Artistic Director Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez programs orchestral, choral, and chamber music performances by local and nationally acclaimed artists in various venues in Victoria and South Texas. Recent seasons included performances of some of the greatest orchestral works by Mexican composers, Mahler's Symphony No. 1, "Titan," with a 100-piece orchestra, and the US premiere of Pépin's The Sound of Trees. Free concerts and children's programming are an integral part of Festival events and reflect a commitment to outreach and the development of new audiences for the arts.

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

1976-1988
David Urness
<i>Founder</i>
1989-1991
Blanton Alsbaugh
1992-2015
Craig Hella Johnson
2016
Michelle Schumann
2017-Present
Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez

PRESIDENTS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1977: Neldene Matusevich	1997: Janet S. Miller
1978-1980: Jim Miller	1998-2000: John W. Griffin, Jr.
1981: Ross Stevens	2001-2002: Donald H. Eastham
1982: Phil North	2003-2004: Dorothy L. Welton
1983: Jim Miller	2005-2006: James W. DeBolt
1984: Sally Olsen	2007-2008: John Quitta
1985-1986: Don Welton	2009-2010: John W. Griffin, Jr.
1987: Ed Reiff, Jr.	2011-2013: Dr. Michael Hummel
1988-1989: Lynn Knaupp	2014-2015: Paula Cobler
1990: Shirley Williamson	2016-2017: Mary Ann Sawyers
1991-1992: Dorothy L. Welton	2018-2019: Ron Walker
1993: Ann V. Herbst	2020-2021: Tim Hornback
1994: Dennis Passmore	2022-2023: Bill Blanchard
1995-1996: John W. Griffin, Jr.	Present: David Faskas

SUCCESS STORIES OF THE VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL

For half a century, the Victoria Bach Festival has been a beacon of musical excellence. What began as a small gathering of passionate musicians and members has grown into a nationally recognized festival, bringing world-class performances to Victoria while nurturing the next generation of artists.

As we celebrate this milestone, we take a moment to reflect on the incredible impact the festival has had. From emerging artists who have gone on to GRAMMY®-winning careers, to unforgettable moments of resilience and triumph, these stories highlight what makes the Victoria Bach Festival so special.

The Show Must Go On

The Victoria Bach Festival has faced its share of challenges over the decades, but each time, its community has come together to persevere. In 2019, just 30 minutes before the Festival Finale, the Victoria Fine Arts Center lost power due to a city-wide outage. Many still remember hearing the musician's impromptu quoting of passages from the funeral march from Mahler's Symphony No. 1 onstage in the dark in a playful display of humor and camaraderie, or navigating the facility with flashlights. Instead of canceling, musicians, stage crew, and audience members moved the concert to Our Saviour's Lutheran Church at the last minute—proving that the music would go on, no matter the circumstances.



Virtual Virtuosity

The festival's adaptability and innovation were particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rather than canceling the event, VBF transitioned swiftly to a virtual format, presenting sixteen online programs over eight days, which were all preserved online to serve as a continual beacon of hope and light. These digital performances ranged from intimate solo recitals to engaging artist interviews, offering audiences comfort and connection during challenging times.

VBF Board Member Margaret Rice recounted these virtual concerts: "I watched every performance, and was delighted, inspired and filled with hope at a time when we are all dismayed by the events we are experiencing in our nation and world." For those interested, you view and listen to the entire 2020 festival program, including recorded performances, history, quizzes, commentary and more here: <https://2020.victoriabachfestival.org>.



A Texas Treasure

VBF has reached remarkable milestones, including national recognition by NPR as "a Texas Treasure" and significant collaborative performances broadcast nationwide. In January 2025, the monthly newsletter of the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA), an arts organization serving the entire state of Texas, featured the Victoria Bach Festival, saying "TCA is proud to be able to support the Victoria Bach Festival"—their grants have allowed us to continue to thrive and to keep the music alive for a half-century.

A World United

The Victoria Bach Festival's story extends beyond its exceptional musical performances; it is a testament to community spirit, resilience, and the far-reaching connections music fosters. Remarkably, the festival's reputation transcends local boundaries, reaching audiences nationwide and even internationally.

VBF Board Member Ron Walker shared an extraordinary encounter during a symphony concert in New York City. Upon mentioning Victoria to a fellow concertgoer, Ron was surprised to learn that this patron had heard of the Victoria Bach Festival, a testament to the Festival's significant reach and recognition!

Phyllis and Lane Keller had graciously hosted many artists in their home for the Victoria Bach Festival. Among these singers was the talented soprano Sonja Tengblad. Years later, in 2018, the Kellers' daughter, Victoria, moved from Denver to Boston with her husband, Zeke. After considering several neighborhoods, Victoria settled on an apartment in East Boston. As they moved into their new apartment, the downstairs neighbor warmly came out to greet them. In casual conversation, Victoria mentioned she was originally from Victoria, Texas. Her neighbor, astonished, revealed that she had performed at the Victoria Bach Festival many times and knew the town quite well. Curious, she asked Victoria's last name. Upon hearing "Keller," the neighbor's eyes lit up—this was none other than Sonja Tengblad, the very singer whom Phyllis and Lane had hosted in their home years before. In an extraordinary twist of fate, Sonja realized she had even stayed in the same room that once belonged to Victoria herself!

These stories illustrate the profound and far-reaching impact of the Victoria Bach Festival, and the enduring connections it fosters, as it continues its enduring mission of creating a world united by music!



Fifty Years of the Victoria Bach Festival

10th season celebration features commissioned work by David Ott and artwork by Nancy Bandy.

Craig Hella Johnson appointed as Artistic Director. Johnson establishes the "New Young Artists" series, the VBF Chamber Choir, and the Bach Cantata Series. Performance of Telemann's Triple Concerto in E \flat major is broadcast on National Public Radio's "Performance Today." NPR calls the Festival "a Texas Treasure."

Bach's Mass in B minor performed in Austin and Victoria with the New Texas Festival.

Recital by world-renowned harpsichordist Igor Kipnis and performances of two landmark works, Mahler's Symphony no. 4. and the Brahms' German Requiem.

Wilbur Collins records performances for broadcast on 90.3 KEDT in Corpus Christi and 90.7 KVRT in Victoria.

Expanded 3-week festival culminates in critically-acclaimed performance of Beethoven's Missa Solemnis.

Nina Di Leo joins the Festival as Executive Director. VBF collaborates with Conspirare and the Texas State University Chorale to perform Robert Levin's completion of Mozart's Mass in C minor.

VBF's first period instrument concert (Handel's "Messiah" featuring concertmaster Stephen Redfield). Thirty-minute excerpt broadcast nationwide on American Public Media's "Performance Today." VBF artists program a memorial concert honoring former board president Dorothy Welton.

Guest conductor Jerry Junkin leads the VBF Orchestra in George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" with Michelle Schumann at the piano.

1976 Members of the Victoria community and Dr. David Urness found the Victoria Bach Festival, sponsored by the University of Houston-Victoria. The non-profit organization Victoria Bach Festival Association is formed, the guiding force behind the Victoria Bach Festival.

1985

1992 20th season celebration features a tour of the "Cities of Bach" in Germany and performances of Haydn's Creation in San Antonio and Victoria in collaboration with the University of Texas Chamber Singers.

1995

1996 Performances of Haydn's Creation in Victoria and San Antonio, funded by ¡Arts! San Antonio.

1997 Acquisition of the Rutkowski & Robinette concert grand harpsichord. Inaugural season of MusiCamp in partnership with Victoria College.

1998

1999 25th season celebration features performance of Bach's St. Matthew Passion.

2000

2001 Performance of Ralph Vaughan Williams' A Sea Symphony featuring the VBF Orchestra and 120 voices of the combined Conspirare Symphonic Choir and VBF Chorus. Daily broadcasts on KEDT-KVRT.

2002

2004 30th season is celebrated with the debut of a live concert broadcast on KEDT-KVRT Public Radio.

2005

2006 VBF Collaborates with Conspirare to perform Mendelssohn's Elijah in Austin and Victoria.

2007 First VBF Rockport Chamber Music Series concert in collaboration with the Rockport Center for the Arts featuring the Austin String Trio (Richard Kilmer, violin, Bruce Williams, viola, and Douglas Harvey, cello).

2009

2010 VBF Chorus, Conspirare Symphonic Choir, and Organist Gerre Hancock perform Maurice Duruflé's Requiem and James MacMillan's Cantos Sagrados at Corpus Christi Cathedral.

2012

Harmonia Mundi releases recording of VBF's collaboration with Conspirare: Robert Kyr's Songs of the Soul and The Cloud of Unknowing, which is chosen for National Public Radio's list of best albums of 2014. VBF collaborates with the Victoria TX Independent Film Festival for a live score of F.W. Murnau's 1922 silent film Nosferatu performed by Jill Tracy and the Malcontent Orchestra. GRAMMY®-winning clarinetist Richard Stoltzman performs with Michelle Schumann and VBF chamber music artists.

Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez named Artistic Director. Craig Hella Johnson scholarships awarded. Michelle Schumann introduces BachFest Breakfast concert series. Faith DeBow and New Young Artists Katya Gruzglina and Chloë Schaaf perform VBF's first concert at the Presidio La Bahía in Goliad. Dr. Hernandez-Valdez conducts his first VBF performance, featuring Aaron Copland's Appalachian Spring.

Festival finale concert features pianist Anton Nel and the VBF Orchestra in Saint-Saëns' Piano Concerto No. 2 and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 conducted by Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez. Because of a power failure at the Victoria Fine Arts Center 30 minutes before the concert, players, stage crew, and audience abruptly move to a different venue. Season features "Magnificent Bach," a concert highlighting some of Bach's most beloved compositions, including his Magnificat and an introduction to the Credo of the B Minor Mass by C.P.E. Bach.

100-piece VBF Orchestra performs Mahler's Symphony No. 1, "Titan," conducted by Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez.

Festival finale features the VBF Orchestra performing Liszt's Les Preludes, the US premiere of Pépin's The Sound of Trees featuring Vanguel Tangarov on clarinet and Gregory Sauer on cello, and Saint-Saëns' symphony No. 3, "Organ" featuring Renée Anne Louprette on the organ conducted by Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez.

2013 Artistic Director Craig Hella Johnson named 2013 Texas State Musician.

2014 VBF's first outdoor concert on DeLeon Plaza, featuring indie orchestral band Mother Falcon. Premiere of commissioned fanfare "So Long As Days Shall Be" by Donald Grantham, featuring the VBF Orchestra, VBF Chorus, and Conspirare Symphonic Choir, conducted by Craig Hella Johnson. Johnson transitions to Conductor Emeritus and is awarded the key to the City of Victoria. Michelle Schumann assumes role of interim Artistic Director.

2015

2016 U.S. premiere of "Mariachitlán" by GRAMMY®-nominated composer Juan Pablo Contreras performed by the VBF Orchestra conducted by Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez. Festival finale "Mexico Bello" features some of the greatest orchestral works by Mexican composers. Season also features clarinetist Vanguel Tangarov in Copland's Clarinet Concerto and Bernstein's Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs, and a performance of Fanfares for the Uncommon Woman by Joan Tower.

2017

2019 Festival concerts persevere and succeed during the pandemic with live-streamed online performances in artists' homes. Online performances include a piano recital by Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez featuring Beethoven's Sonata Op. 110 and Schubert's Sonata in B-flat, D. 960.

2020

2022 VBF welcomes Buck Moore as Executive Director. Premiere of commissioned work for organ "Introduction, Passacaglia, and Fugue on Windham" by David Hurd Jr, performed by Renée Anne Louprette. Festival finale features pianist Alexandre Dossin and the VBF Orchestra in Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1, and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 conducted by Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez.



EMERGING ARTIST SUCCESS STORIES



The Victoria Bach Festival has been committed to nurturing new musical talent since 1992, when Artistic Director Emeritus Craig Hella Johnson introduced the Emerging Artists Program (formerly called the New Young Artists Program) to the festival. In the years since, over 70 musicians who are just starting brilliant professional careers (ages 16-30) have been featured. Joey Martin guided the program from 1992-2010, and Faith DeBow has led it since 2010.

The selected Emerging Artists are required to not only be outstanding performers, but versatile at connecting with a wide range of audiences, all across the city of Victoria. They take the festival to creative venues and audiences who might not otherwise have a VBF experience. This year, you might find them performing at the patrons’ reception one night, and giving

GRAMMY® AWARD WINNERS

Dashon Burton, Bass-Baritone

2011 VBF Emerging Artist

- Three-time GRAMMY® Award Winner with Roomful of Teeth, Conspirare, and The Experiential Orchestra
- Soloist with the Cleveland Orchestra & New York Philharmonic
- Assistant Professor of Voice, Vanderbilt University

Nicole Greenidge Joseph, Soprano

2011 VBF Emerging Artist

- Winner of the National Bel Canto Vocal Foundation Competition (2013)
- GRAMMY® Award Winner with Conspirare (2015)
- Associate Director of Music, Kirk in the Hills

Estelí Gomez, Soprano

2012 VBF Emerging Artist

- Four-time GRAMMY® Award Winner with vocal octet Roomful of Teeth, Conspirare, and Silk Road Ensemble
- Tenured Assistant Professor of Voice at Lawrence University Conservatory of Music

OPERA & ORCHESTRAL STARS

Reese Farnell, Horn

2015 VBF Emerging Artist

- MM from Yale University
- Principal Horn, Sichuan Symphony Orchestra (China)
- Freelance musician in Dallas/Ft. Worth area

Brian Giebler, Tenor

2015 VBF Emerging Artist

- GRAMMY®-nominated solo album, A Lad’s Love (2020)
- Billboard-charting artist
- Former Trinity Wall Street Choir member
- Soloist with major orchestras across NYC, Boston, and D.C.

a recital for Rotary Club business professionals at the country club the next day; then entertaining young children in their early years of music education at the Discovery Museum and Victoria Public Library; and wrapping up their week with a nuanced recital at First United Methodist Church!

I love the abundant enthusiasm and astounding musicianship that the Emerging Artists bring us, and really enjoy introducing new musical friends and curating programs that highlight their unique talents! It is also a joy to follow their careers after their VBF appearances—we have been graced with so many beautiful creative spirits, who go on to do amazing things in their musical communities worldwide. I hope you enjoy this look back at some of our past VBF Emerging Artists, and their career highlights in the years since.

Faith DeBow

Faith DeBow

Victoria Bach Festival Emerging Artists Coordinator

Anita Graef, Cello

2022 VBF Emerging Artist

- Artistic Director for Tallgrass Chamber Music Festival, and The Juliani Ensemble
- 2023 Duncanson Artist-in-Residence for the Taft Museum of Art
- Launched an outreach program providing free music instruction, lessons and resources to students of all ages in Chicago’s South Side neighborhoods

Douglas Harvey, Cello

2001 VBF Emerging Artist

- Austin Symphony Orchestra Principal Cello
- Founding member of the Artisan String Quartet

Sam Higgins, Countertenor

2024 VBF Emerging Artist

- 2025 Curtis Institute of Music graduate, Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance
- Boston Lyric Opera - understudy for Anthony Roth Costanzo in “The Seasons”
- 2025 Schmidt Vocal Arts Award, Upper Undergraduate Division winner

Patrick Kilbride, Tenor

2014 VBF Emerging Artist

- Winner of the International Opera Competition in France (2014)
- Performed at the Kennedy Center in the world premiere of a rediscovered 1743 opera (2023)

Emily Klein, Harp

2017 VBF Emerging Artist

- Artist-in-Residence at Houston Methodist Hospital - over 400 yearly one-on-one patient visits in the cardiovascular and acute long term care units
- Principal Harpist with Opera in the Heights; substitute harpist with Houston Symphony

EMERGING ARTIST SUCCESS STORIES

Jane Leggiero, Baroque Cello & Viola da Gamba

2013 VBF Emerging Artist

- DMA from Case Western Reserve University
- Member of City Music: Cleveland Chamber Orchestra
- Presenter at the 2023 Early Music America Summit
- Former member of Governor’s Musick, ensemble-in-residence at Colonial Williamsburg

Jennifer Berg Matthews, Oboe & English Horn

2013 VBF Emerging Artist

- Performs with San Antonio Philharmonic & Mid-Texas Symphony
- Former Director of Development, Blue Skies of Texas

Laura Miller, Bassoon

2012 VBF Emerging Artist

- Member of the Fischhoff-winning City of Tomorrow woodwind quintet
- Studied at Juilliard’s Historical Performance Program
- Freelance performer in Italy & across Europe

Nina Revering, Soprano

1996 VBF Emerging Artist

- Founder and Artistic Director of Illumine Children’s Choirs - Austin, which has been invited to perform at ACDA, TMEA, Austin Opera, Austin Symphony, and Austin City Limits
- Grammy-nominated soprano with Conspirare

Lauren Snouffer, Soprano

2006 VBF Emerging Artist

- GRAMMY®-nominated operatic soprano
- Acclaimed singer on leading international stages - including New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Houston Grand Opera, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Glyndebourne Festival, Teatro Municipal de Santiago, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester, and Royal Swedish Opera

PROFESSORS & EDUCATORS

Kathlene Ritch Brown, Soprano

2004 VBF Emerging Artist

- Educator at New Mexico School for the Arts
- On-Air Announcer at Classical 95.5 KHFM
- GRAMMY®-winning soprano with Conspirare
- Soloist and Youth Choir Director at Church of the Holy Faith, Santa Fe

J.D. Burnett, Tenor

2003 VBF Emerging Artist

- Director of Choral Activities, The University of Texas at Austin
- Founding Artistic Director of Kinnara, the premier professional chamber choir in Atlanta
- Artistic Director of Orpheus Chamber Singers in Dallas

Erin Cameron, Clarinet

2020 VBF Emerging Artist

- DMA from University of North Texas
- Assistant Professor of Clarinet, Arkansas State University - Jonesboro
- Founder of Bantam Winds, an innovative chamber music ensemble
- 2025 American Prize finalist, Instrumental Soloist

PROFESSIONAL DIVISION

Ivy Cantu, Soprano

2022 VBF Emerging Artist

- Assistant Choral Director at South Austin Academy of Vocal Arts, which won first prize and Best Choir Overall at a 2025 national competition
- Private Voice Teacher at Ivy Cantu Voice Studios

Katya Gruzglina, Soprano

2016 VBF Emerging Artist

- Voice faculty at Lone Star College
- Director of Educational Content at Creatives Care, a nonprofit connecting artists to affordable mental health care
- Master’s degree in psychotherapy from UH-Clear Lake

Hilary Janysek, Flute

2011 VBF Emerging Artist

- DMA from Ball State University - graduate concerto competition winner
- Assistant Professor of Flute & Music History, Texas Lutheran University
- Instructor of Flute, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

Ivan Treviño, Percussion

2005 VBF Emerging Artist

- Professor of Practice in Percussion, The University of Texas at Austin
- Composer whose music has been performed across 5 continents and 25 countries
- Commissioned works include for The Juilliard School, The San Diego Symphony Orchestra, and Grammy-winning quartet, Third Coast Percussion

Oliver Worthington, Baritone

1993 VBF Emerging Artist

- Vocal Area Coordinator and Director of Opera Theater at Butler University
- President of The Fritz and Lavinia Jensen Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to supporting the arts through cash prizes to young opera singers

Chloë Schaaf Zimmerman, Mezzo-Soprano

2016 VBF Emerging Artist

- Member of the Houston Grand Opera Chorus
- Voice faculty at Lone Star College - University Park

A VISUAL LEGACY: NANCY BANDY AND THE FESTIVAL'S ART

For decades, the Victoria Bach Festival has not only filled the air with extraordinary music, but also iconic art in our printed programs—thanks in large part to the creativity of local artist Nancy Bandy.

Nancy holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Kansas, and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Iowa. Over the course of her 31-year teaching career, she served on the faculties of Lamar University, San Jacinto College, and Victoria College, inspiring generations of students through her passion for the arts.

Her distinctive posters for the Victoria Bach Festival have become beloved keepsakes, treasured for the way they capture both the spirit of the festival and the character of the region. Nancy's poster designs have featured everything from musical symbols and Bach's portrait to evocative South Texas landscapes—palm trees, cloud-filled skies, and

Victorian architecture. Each piece reflects her thoughtful eye for detail and deep connection to the community.

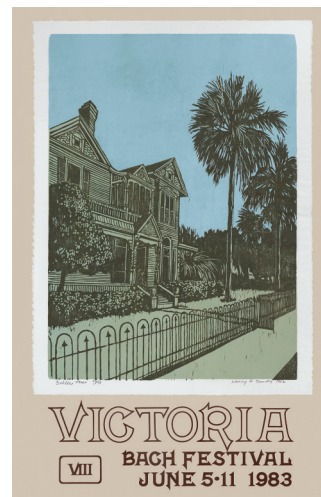
Nancy's designs span a wide range of media and techniques—including hand-printed silk screens, woodcut blocks, original drawings, and collages. Her 50th anniversary design is a vibrant collage meant to evoke the rich textures of a woven tapestry—symbolizing the many threads that have come together to create the festival's legacy.

In addition to her work for VBF, Nancy has exhibited in numerous solo and group shows, and her work is held in collections. With each design, Nancy brings a thoughtful eye for color, shape, and storytelling—creating more than just posters, but lasting pieces of the festival's history.

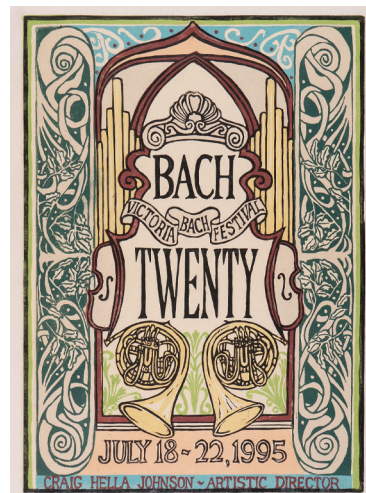


For the 50th Season, Nancy created a rich, tapestry-like collage using layered paper and vibrant shapes, evoking both celebration and tradition. We are honored to include this work in our golden season—just as we are grateful to Nancy for helping visually define the legacy of the Victoria Bach Festival.

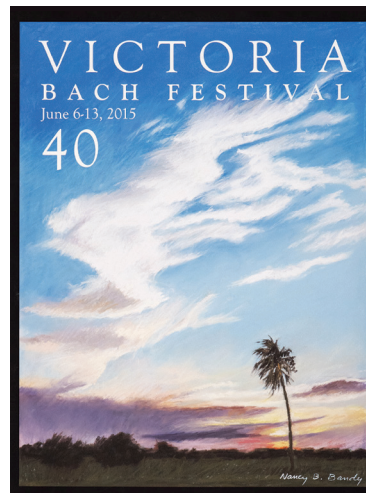
VICTORIA
Bach
FESTIVAL



Victoria Bach Festival's
8th Season Artwork
By Nancy Bandy



Victoria Bach Festival's 20th Season
Artwork By Nancy Bandy



Victoria Bach Festival's 40th Season
Artwork By Nancy Bandy



Victoria Bach Festival's 11th Season Artwork By Nancy Bandy

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR ALEJANDRO HERNANDEZ-VALDEZ



Dr. Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez is an acclaimed conductor and pianist whose dynamic artistry and visionary leadership have earned national and international recognition. He serves as the Artistic Director of Musica Viva NY and Director of Music at Manhattan's historic Unitarian Church of All Souls. He is also the co-founder and Artistic Director of the New Orchestra of Washington (NOW) and Artistic Director of the Victoria Bach Festival in Texas.

Hernandez-Valdez has received consistent praise from leading publications. *The Washington Post* hailed him as a conductor "with the incisive clarity of someone born to the idiom," while *The New York Times* lauded his direction of Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* as "a stirring performance." Reflecting on his 2018 program commemorating the WWI Armistice centenary—which featured the world premiere of Joseph Turrin's *And Crimson Roses Once Again Be Fair—Oberon's Grove* noted, "Maestro Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez drew rich, warm sounds from the musicians" in "a beautiful and deeply moving program."

Recognized widely, Hernandez-Valdez is featured in *El Mundo en las Manos/Creadores Mexicanos en el Extranjero* (The World in Their Hands/Creative Mexicans Abroad), a publication by the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs celebrating influential Mexican artists. He was also honored with the 2016 Shenandoah Conservatory Alumni of Excellence Award, in recognition of his national prominence, professional distinction, and artistic integrity.

In 2016, during its 40th anniversary season, Hernandez-Valdez was appointed the third Artistic Director of the Victoria Bach Festival. As *Classical Voice America's* Mike Greenberg remarked, "Hernandez-Valdez replaced the question mark with an exclamation point—perhaps more appropriately, given his Spanish name and Mexican provenance, two exclamation points: ¡Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez! The results were astonishing."

Since assuming leadership of Musica Viva NY in 2015, Hernandez-Valdez has expanded the ensemble's artistic reach. Described by *The New York Times* as "an excellent chorus," the group has deepened its commitment to innovation, commissioning new works while honoring its tradition of excellence. Notable alumni include Renée Fleming, Samuel Ramey, and Michael Maliakel. Under his direction, Musica Viva NY continues to explore bold, resonant repertoire that engages modern audiences.

As co-founder and Artistic Director of NOW, Hernandez-Valdez has reimaged the chamber orchestra model. Celebrated by *The Washington Post* as a leader in the "smaller-is-better" movement, NOW presents cutting-edge programs and culturally enriching performances across the National Capital Region, including appearances at the Kennedy Center.

A passionate advocate for contemporary music, Hernandez-Valdez has commissioned and premiered works by a distinguished range of composers, including Joan Tower, Arturo Márquez, Joseph Turrin, Gilda Lyons, Richard Einhorn, Seymour Bernstein, Viet Cuong, Juan Pablo Contreras, Trevor Weston, and Elena Ruehr. His dedication to amplifying new voices and diverse perspectives is shaping the evolving landscape of classical music.

As a pianist, he was invited to perform at the Britten 100 Festival in New York City, commemorating the centenary of Benjamin Britten. As a composer, he premiered *The Imaginary City*, a cantata inspired by the life of Ramzi Aburedwan, a violist and educator working in Palestinian refugee camps. He also created and premiered a chamber arrangement of Seymour Bernstein's *A Song of Nature*. Bernstein, the subject of Ethan Hawke's acclaimed 2014 documentary *Seymour: An Introduction*, remains one of Hernandez-Valdez's most influential mentors.

Most recently, Hernandez-Valdez led Musica Viva NY in the recording of three commissioned works by American composers for the Naxos label. Featuring legendary mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade, the album continues to receive critical acclaim from publications such as *BBC Music Magazine*, *Gramophone*, *Choir & Organ*, *Fanfare*, among others.

Upcoming highlights include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the New Orchestra of Washington; Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (with internationally renowned pianist Anton Nel), and Brahms' Symphony No. 1 at the Victoria Bach Festival; and the world premiere of *Symphony No. 1* by Grammy-nominated composer Juan Pablo Contreras in celebration of the Festival's 50th anniversary. In March, he will lead Musica Viva NY on a tour of Spain under the auspices of Teatro Real. Dr. Hernandez-Valdez resides in New York City, where his work continues to inspire, innovate, and elevate the world of classical music.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Festival is made possible through the generosity of the individuals, businesses, foundations and government agencies who donated to the annual fund and supported events throughout the year. The following list includes cash and in-kind gifts received between June 2024 and May 2025. *To all of you, our heartfelt thanks!*

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IN MEMORY OF RICHARD LOGAN

Suzanne LaBrecque

A STANDING OVATION FOR OUR ENDOWMENT TRUST

The Victoria Bach Festival Endowment Trust, officially established in 2017, has been a vital part of the festival's long-term sustainability. In times of financial hardship, the Endowment Trust provided a \$15,000 interest-free loan to the festival—proving that this community is committed to ensuring the music never stops. Now, in 2025, the Bach Festival's Endowment Trust has provided The Victoria Bach Festival with a grant to fully support the commission of a new symphony by Juan Pablo Contreras which will be premiered at the Victoria Bach Festival's 50th season finale on June 6th, 2025.

ENDOWMENT TRUSTEES

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Donations in memory or honor of special people can be made to: Victoria Bach Festival Endowment Trust • PO Box 1086, Victoria, Texas 77902
More information on named endowments at: victoriabachfestival.org/endowment-trust or call 361-570-5788

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50th Anniversary

All wine for the Titans of Tinseltown tables donated by:

ANDUSTORIA WINES

VBF'S LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP: THE HEART BEHIND THE HARMONY

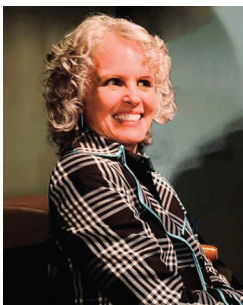


BILL BLANCHARD
Victoria Bach Festival
Immediate Past President

I owe my appreciation for classical music to my mother, Alice Lynette Blanchard, who founded the Bach Festival and played flute in the symphony orchestra in my hometown, Kalamazoo Michigan. Until she passed, at age 92, she was still performing with the Victoria Community Band. In 1990

I was recruited to Victoria to lead the DeTar Healthcare System and did so for 28 years. During this time my family and I have been involved in the Victoria Community Theatre, the Victoria Performing Arts Center, the Victoria Symphony Orchestra and the Victoria Bach Festival. My most memorable experience as President of VBF was Nina Di Leo's retirement celebration. She was our first Executive Director. The event included tributes from Artistic Directors Craig Hella Johnson and Alejandro Hernandez-Valdez. John Griffin gave an eloquent description of VBF's success under her guidance and Mike Hummel presented her with a sculpture he had created in her honor.

I want to thank Ron Walker for recruiting me to the Victoria Bach Festival board and I am grateful to the people who have made it possible for VBF to bring world-class music to Victoria for the past 50 years! We will be erecting a monument honoring past supporters. The unveiling will be at UHV, our founding organization, on June 6. I hope you will attend.



NINA DI LEO
Advisory Board Member
Executive Director, 2006-2021

There is a deep sense of connection in the VBF community that keeps artists and listeners returning year after year. I've shared laughter and tears and many inspiring moments with VBF friends.

I remember: the resonance of voices and instruments in harmony; Dottie Welton's satisfied smile; Wilbur Collins making one final mic adjustment just before the first downbeat; wriggling, dancing young bodies joyfully engaging the Emerging Artists at the Victoria Public Library; the hushed energy at the end of the concert before Craig Hella Johnson lowers his baton; dedicated board members committed to pursuing "a world united by music;" so many fabulous afterparties (with or without cheese wheels).

I'm grateful for the artists, staff, board members, donors, volunteers, and listeners who have worked to sustain this special space where we can share the beauty, the vulnerability, and the power of music. So many people have offered so much of themselves to create the Victoria Bach Festival experience together. Congratulations to VBF for fifty years of wonderful Festival memories—I'm looking forward to many more!



DR. MICHAEL HUMMEL
Victoria Bach Festival
Founding Board Member

Victoria Bach Festival President 2011-2013

I have fifty years of wonderful musical and organizational memories about Victoria Bach Festival. But for this piece I will concentrate on behind-the-scenes, nuts and bolts memories.

When Dr. David Urness came to Victoria as one of the first faculty members of the University of Houston-Victoria, he immediately set about working with local music organizations and music lovers to create a Bach Festival. Urness's initial vision was a June Festival in Riverside Park or DeLeon Square featuring concerts, food, and other activities—i.e. a "festival". Why June? Because June would be the best time of the year to secure musicians for a full week of rehearsals and performances. However, the realities of unpredictable rain showers, predictable heat, and the absence of a satisfactory stage led him to refocus on indoor concerts, preferably in churches where the glorious music of Bach could be best performed.

Urness selected First Presbyterian Church for the first major concert because the beautiful sanctuary had a choir loft and a fine organ up front, rather than in the back. But it was not perfect. There was not sufficient space to accommodate both a chorus and a chamber orchestra. So, after securing permission from the church we constructed a temporary stage extending from the altar to the rail in front of the first row of seats. It was not elegant, but the music was!

All agreed, this had to become an annual event! So, we organized the Victoria Bach Festival Association, a nonprofit corporation, to assure continuous funding and organizational support. It has performed exceptionally well. Several years later, we took another big step by establishing the Victoria Bach Festival Endowment Trust, which is successfully providing long-term financial strength. It has been rewarding and fulfilling to work with so many talented individuals who are dedicated to the Bach Festival's success.



RON WALKER
Victoria Bach Festival Member-at-Large

Victoria Bach Festival President 2018-2019

The Victoria Bach Festival is an extremely moving musical experience. As an example, at Victoria Bach Festival's first concert at La Bahia, a man in shorts and a Hawaiian shirt

sat right in front of me. After a very moving performance, he turned in my direction with tears in his eyes. He said, "I was on my way to the coast. I saw that the Presidio was open. Then, I noticed that a concert was about to begin. I bought a ticket and sat down. Soon, I was completely mesmerized." I smiled and nodded. He then said, I guess to convince me, "You do not fully understand. I know music. I am on

VBF'S LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP: THE HEART BEHIND THE HARMONY

the Board of the Austin Symphony, and I've taught music at various institutions. I have been genuinely moved." Today, I am still moved by the experience of that night, ten or so years later. That was not the only night I and others have been as overwhelmed by the festival's music as that stranger was.



EILEEN STEWART
Victoria Bach Festival Fundraiser,
Marketing, and 50th Anniversary
Co-chair

When I moved back to Victoria 14 years ago, my soon-to-be husband introduced me to Mike Hummel and John Griffin who were on the board of the Victoria Bach Festival. I let them know that I was very interested in joining. Fourteen years later, I still love being a part of this organization. Over time, after working on various committees sets from party planning & fundraising to marketing—there's always something new. It's been a joy collaborating with this fun group of people who think we're all happy to work hard to bring to Victoria these incredible musicians who play the most beautiful music. Every year the VBF ups its game with the variety of repertoire and the ever more beautiful artistry from our musicians. It's been exciting to see how much we've grown over the years, adding morning concerts during Festival & additional concerts throughout the year. This 50th anniversary Festival is going to be incredible! Thanks so much for attending and being a part of it.



JOHN GRIFFIN
Victoria Bach Festival
Development Co-chair
Victoria Bach Festival President 1995-1996, 1998-2000, 2009-2010

As a 20 year old student, I asked my mother if she'd like to check out the first Victoria Bach Festival. Although she was shocked, she enthusiastically agreed. It was in a church, and the concert was magical. Little did I know about how many people from Victoria dreamed about having a music festival named for Bach. The years of hard word resulted in that precious moment, the first time I'd heard this kind of live music.

Years later, in 1983, my wife Lynn Knaupp and I moved here to work and start a family. It turned out that we experienced two families: our children and our Victoria Bach Festival family. The musicians, the volunteers and board members became friends and colleagues, and those kinds of friendships are precious. And the Bach parties and hospitality were legendary. Musicians stay in private homes, where they make friendships of a lifetime.

Every year when June rolls around, there is this excitement of renewing friendships and participating in the most superb of music making. People have come and gone over the years, but for those who love music and musicians, the experience here is unique and priceless. For Lynn and me, to celebrate the 50th Victoria Bach Festival is something we will treasure forever.



DR. SUZANNE LABRECQUE
Victoria Bach Festival
House Management Chair

In March 2011, my UHV colleague Paula Cobler invited me to join the Victoria Bach Festival Board. While I did not really understand board members' responsibilities, I said "yes."

In my experience when you say "yes" to service, blessings abound. And serving on this board has been amazing and full of blessings. My world expanded and continues to grow via the musicians, staff, other board members, special events, performances and audiences.

In the past 14 years, I have had the privilege of serving on most committees including the Executive Committee, Social Committee, Membership Committee, Search Committees, Finance Committee, Educational Committee, Housing and House Management (arranging for ushers and ticket takers at each concert). I served as Board Secretary for two years. Also I help get silent auctions items for annual Spring Gala fund raisers

My favorite part of serving on the Victoria Bach Festival Board is the MUSIC! I love the variety of concerts and exposure to talented musicians. Every year a core of musicians return while new musicians join. Their performances are awesome. The music they deliver exceeds my expectations and lifts my soul.

One of my special memories happened during the 2020 Pandemic. Musicians described their instruments and played solos while being filmed in their homes. These films helped us know the musicians as individuals and to appreciate their unique talents. Special thanks to Nina Di Leo who choreographed this arduous undertaking!
BRAVO TO THE VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL!



JOHN QUITTA
Victoria Bach Festival
Development Co-chair

Victoria Bach Festival President 2007-2008

As a longtime board member of the Victoria Bach Festival, I'm often asked why I'm so passionate about this organization. The answer is simple: it's the perfect blend of music, community, and purpose. Bach's music is a universal language, transcending borders and generations. Our festival brings people together, creating a shared experience that's both uplifting and inspiring. Witnessing the impact on people's lives is truly rewarding. The festival relies on the dedication of volunteers, musicians, and staff. Collaborating with like-minded individuals who share a passion for music and community is a joy. Together, we create something special. By celebrating Bach's legacy, we inspire future generations of musicians and music lovers.



FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, MAY 31 | 7:30 PM | Presidio La Bahia | 217 Loop 71, Goliad, TX
SUNDAY, JUNE 1 | 3 PM | Rockport Center for the Arts | 204 S Austin Street | Rockport, TX

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Goldberg Variations, BWV 988
Arr. Dmitri Sitkovetsky
Composed c. 1741

Aria
A graceful, contemplative sarabande in G major. All 30 variations are based not on its melody, but on its bass line and harmonic structure.

Variation 1
A bright and rhythmically buoyant two-part invention full of joyful motion.

Variation 2
Three-part contrapuntal texture, full of conversational interplay between voices.

Variation 3 – Canon at the Unison
The first of nine canons, each spaced a third apart. Voices imitate each other precisely at the same pitch.

Variation 4
Lively dance rhythms and brilliant hand-crossings add flair to this cheerful variation.

Variation 5
A virtuosic showpiece requiring rapid hand alternations and remarkable agility.

Variation 6 – Canon at the Second
Another canon, now at the interval of a second. A smooth, intricate intertwining of lines.

Variation 7
A dotted-rhythm gigue in G minor, with a French flair. Elegant and melancholic.

Variation 8
Brilliant and animated; cascading hand-crossings create vivid motion.

Variation 9 – Canon at the Third
A lyrical and expressive canon, rich with ornamentation and harmonic color.

Variation 10 – Fughetta
A short fugue in four voices with a light-hearted character and precise structure.

Variation 11
Delicate and intimate, this variation has the feel of a chamber duet.

Variation 12 – Canon at the Fourth (inverted)
This canon introduces inversion—where one voice mirrors the other’s contour.

Variation 13
A tender, ornamental sarabande filled with expressive depth and vocal lyricism.

Variation 14
Virtuosic with energetic arpeggios and vigorous hand-crossings.

Variation 15 – Canon at the Fifth (in G minor)
A dark, expressive canon with inversion. A somber centerpiece before the midpoint.

Variation 16 – Overture
A grand French overture with dotted rhythms and a fugal section—marks the halfway point.

Variation 17
Lively and playful with sparkling scalar motion.

Variation 18 – Canon at the Sixth
Now in compound meter; the canon dances with lilting rhythms and graceful interplay.

Variation 19
A gentle trio with three independent voices in close conversation.

Variation 20
Fast, leaping intervals and brilliance in both hands. Full of drive and clarity.

Variation 21 – Canon at the Seventh (in G minor)
The final minor-mode canon. Rich in chromaticism and deeply expressive.

Variation 22 – Alla breve
Majestic and stately. A study in counterpoint with grandeur.

Variation 23
A sprightly toccata with cascading triplet figures.

Variation 24 – Canon at the Eighth
A warm and lyrical canon, calm and reassuring in tone.

Variation 25 – Adagio (in G minor)
Known as the “Black Pearl” for its profound emotion and chromatic intensity. The emotional heart of the work.

Variation 26
A jubilant release of energy with rolling scales and brilliant figuration.

Variation 27 – Canon at the Ninth
The final canon. Joyful, light, and elegant, like a pair of dancers in close step.

Variation 28
A cheerful, energetic invention in triplets and counterpoint.

Variation 29
Bold and athletic. Chords thunder through in dazzling rhythmic display.

Variation 30 – Quodlibet
A witty combination of folk tunes. A moment of humor and humanity before the close.

Aria da Capo
The Aria returns, unchanged. After the journey through variation and invention, its serenity is all the more profound.

PROGRAM NOTES



THE GOLDBERG VARIATIONS

Johann Sebastian Bach’s “Goldberg Variations,” BWV 988, stands as a pinnacle of keyboard composition, revered for its complexity, beauty, and profound musicality. Composed in 1741, this masterpiece comprises an aria and a set of 30 variations. The work is named after Johann Gottlieb Goldberg, a young harpsichordist who, according to legend, played the variations to help alleviate the sleepless nights of Count Keyserlingk, a Russian ambassador.

ARIA: ANDANTE GRAZIOSO

The work begins with a simple, yet emotive aria, characterized by its serene melody and graceful rhythms. This aria serves as the foundation upon which Bach builds an intricate tapestry of variations, showcasing his exceptional skill in counterpoint and harmonic invention.

VARIATIONS

The variations that follow the aria explore a wide range of styles, techniques, and emotions. From lively dances to intricate canons, each variation presents a unique musical challenge and beauty. Bach’s mastery is evident in his ability to transform a single theme into a kaleidoscope of musical expression, seamlessly blending technical brilliance with profound emotional depth.

KEY VARIATIONS:

- **Variation 5 (Alla breve):** A brisk, dance-like variation featuring rapid scales and dynamic contrasts.
- **Variation 15 (Canon at the fifth):** A canon in which the second voice enters at the interval of a fifth, demonstrating Bach’s contrapuntal ingenuity.
- **Variation 25 (Adagio):** A poignant, introspective variation characterized by its expressive use of chromaticism and melancholic beauty.
- **Variation 30 (Quodlibet):** The final variation, incorporating popular tunes of Bach’s time in a playful and festive manner, concluding with a restatement of the aria.

LEGACY AND INFLUENCE

“The Goldberg Variations” stands not only as a monumental achievement in Baroque keyboard music but also as a testament to Bach’s genius as a composer. Its influence extends far beyond the Baroque era, inspiring generations of musicians and composers with its technical challenges and profound musical expression.

PROGRAM SPONSOR: Darrell & Carol Rangnow

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



GREG SAUER
Cello

Gregory Sauer, professor of cello at Florida State University, enjoys a vital and varied career as a teacher and performer. He has appeared in recital at prominent venues across the U.S. and at universities such as Vanderbilt and Rice University.

Mr. Sauer has performed concertos with the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, the Houston Symphony, the Quad City Symphony, Oklahoma City Philharmonic, the Columbus (GA) Symphony, and the Missoula Symphony, among others. His most recent recording on the Albany label is titled *Conversa*, and features 20th and 21st century Brazilian and North American duos with pianist Heidi Louise Williams.

As a member of the Carpe Diem String Quartet, Greg played concerts in Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, Siena, Italy, and in the group's first China tour. Other chamber music appearances have been at the Austin Chamber Music Center, the Victoria Bach Festival, and the Colorado Music Festival.

In addition to the Florida State position, Sauer has taught at the Texas Music Festival, Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, and the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute.



LEE TAYLOR
Viola

A native of Atlanta, Georgia, Lee Taylor enjoys a varied musical career involving performance, education, and administration. Lee is currently a member of the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra and is a founding member of Amati Chamber Music. She was a long-time member of the Atlanta Opera and Ballet Orchestras and has played with the Alabama Symphony, Columbus Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Chamber Music Quad Cities, and Colorado Music Festival.

As a private teacher, Lee maintains an active home studio. Along with her husband, Greg Sauer, Lee directs the LAMP Chamber Players, an afterschool chamber music program in Tallahassee. Former students have gone on to study violin and viola performance at Oberlin Conservatory, Lawrence University, FSU, and Boston University. Lee has taught at Ursus String Camp at the University of Tennessee, Oklahoma Arts Summer Institute, and the Atlanta Chamber Music Festival. As an administrator, Lee has been on staff at the Cincinnati Young Artists Chamber Music Festival and Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival.

In 2020, Lee joined forces with Dr. Shannon Thomas to establish MusicBridges Tallahassee. As Co-Artistic Directors, they introduce pre-K students in Title I schools to the violin with a curriculum that strengthens literacy skills and promotes early music education: www.musicbridgestallahassee.org/

Lee received her Bachelor's in Violin Performance at the University of Michigan as a student of Paul Kantor.



CORRINE BOWMAN
Violin

A four-time graduate of The Juilliard School, violinist Corinne Stillwell has been Associate Professor at Florida State University and Concertmaster of the Tallahassee Symphony since 2007. She has enjoyed an active career as a solo performer, chamber collaborator, concertmaster, pedagogue, and arts advocate. With performances across the U.S. and

abroad, she is passionate about community engagement, and is the Artistic Director of Music For Food Tallahassee. Currently on the faculty at Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, she taught at the Brevard Music Center from 2009-2022. She has performed with the Victoria Bach Festival since 2008.



"Early detection gave us time to adapt together, as a family."

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[ALZ.org/TimeToTalk](https://alz.org/TimeToTalk)





BACH TO BASICS

Led by Christopher Haritatos

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Cantata BWV 79 – *Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild* (God the Lord is Sun and Shield)

- I. Chorus
- II. Aria (Alto)
- III. Chorale
- IV. Recitative (Bass)
- V. Duet (Soprano & Bass)
- VI. Chorale

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788)

Concerto in D minor for Flute and Orchestra, Wq. 22 / H. 425

- I. Allegro
- II. Un poco andante
- III. Allegro di molto

Colin St. Martin, *Baroque Flute*

INTERMISSION

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Concerto in D minor for Two Violins and Orchestra, BWV 1043

- I. Vivace
- II. Largo ma non tanto
- III. Allegro

Boel Gidholm, *Violin* | Mary Riccardi, *Violin*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Cantata BWV 192 – *Nun danket alle Gott*

- i. Chorus
- ii. Duet (Soprano & Bass)
- iii. Chorus

PROGRAM SPONSOR: The Texas Commission on the Arts | HEB

PROGRAM NOTES



In Celebration of the Festival's Inaugural Program

As we mark 50 years of musical excellence, we look back to the concert that started it all in 1976. This evening's program lovingly recreates the very first Victoria Bach Festival performance—a tribute to our roots and to the enduring spirit of music that has brought us together across generations.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

CANTATA BWV 79 – *Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild* (God the Lord is Sun and Shield)

Composed for Reformation Day in 1725, this festive cantata begins with a triumphant chorus, rich in trumpets and timpani, expressing confidence in God's protection and light. The alto aria that follows is contemplative, exploring the soul's response to divine love, while the duet for soprano and bass provides a lyrical moment of unity and joy. The cantata concludes with a robust chorale, grounding the work in the Lutheran tradition.

CARL PHILIPP EMANUEL BACH (1714–1788)

CONCERTO IN D MINOR FOR FLUTE AND ORCHESTRA, WQ. 22 / H. 425

Colin St. Martin, *Baroque Flute*

The second son of J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach was a pioneer of the empfindsamer Stil (“sensitive style”) that bridged the Baroque and Classical eras. This concerto, composed in Berlin in the early 1740s, is one of his finest for flute. The outer movements are full of drama and intensity, while the middle movement offers tender lyricism and elegance. Performing on Baroque flute, Colin St. Martin brings authentic color and expressivity to this evocative work.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

CONCERTO IN D MINOR FOR TWO VIOLINS AND ORCHESTRA, BWV 1043

Boel Gidholm and Mary Riccardi, *Violins*

Affectionately known as the “Double Violin Concerto,” this beloved work showcases the interplay of two soloists in perfect balance and conversation. The first movement bursts with rhythmic vitality, while the second, a Largo ma non tanto, is a transcendent dialogue of expressive lines. The joyful final movement brings the piece to a spirited close. It remains one of Bach's most popular and emotionally resonant instrumental works.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)

CANTATA BWV 192 – *Nun danket alle Gott* (Now Thank We All Our God)

This short but powerful cantata was likely composed for a wedding or harvest celebration. Based on the well-known hymn, it opens and closes with grand choruses of gratitude, with a lyrical duet at its center. BWV 192 radiates joy and unity, making it a fitting conclusion to a program that celebrates both the sacred and communal power of music

Thank You for Celebrating 50 Years with Us Tonight's concert is more than a reflection of the past—it is a reminder of why we gather, year after year, to experience the richness of music together. We are deeply grateful for your presence and support as we continue this extraordinary journey.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



CHRISTOPHER HARITATOS
Leader

Cellist Christopher Haritatos has over 20 years of experience as a baroque cellist with period-instrument ensembles on three continents. He has collaborated in chamber music with artists such as Marc Destrubé, Kristian Bezuidenhout, and Sergiu Luca, and has played in ensembles such as the Handel and Hayden Society, Ars Lyrica Houston, and Tafelmusik, as well as acting as the continuo cellist of Fiori Musicali-Barockorchester Bremen and Apollo's Fire. Chris is equally

accomplished as a modern cellist and is a member of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Also sought after as a teacher, he has been on the faculty of Texas State University-San Marcos and has given numerous workshops and master classes. His major teachers were Alan Harris, Steven Doane, Pieter Wispelwey, and Jaap ter Linden, with whom he studied as a Fulbright Scholar at the Akademie für Alte Musik Bremen. Together with his wife, violinist Boel Gidholm, he is co-director, since 2011, of Publick Musick.



BACHFEST BREAKFAST CONCERT: Bach 2.0

Faith DeBow, *Piano*

Prelude in C# major, Well-Tempered Clavier Book I
Prelude in D-flat major, op. 102 no. 3
Prelude in E minor, WTC Book I
Prelude in E minor, op. 102 no. 10
Prelude in C minor, WTC Book II
Prelude in C minor, op. 102 no. 2
Prelude in B-flat major, WTC Book II
Prelude in B-flat major, op. 102 no. 21
Prelude in A minor, WTC Book I
Prelude in A minor, op. 102 no. 20

Praeludium VIII: St. Francis

After Bach: Rondo

Selections from The Short-Tempered Clavier

Prelude in C major
Prelude in C# minor
Fugue in D major
Prelude in G major
Prelude and Fugue in E-flat major

Bourrée from Lute Suite in E minor, BWV 996
Blackbird

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
York Bowen (1884-1961)

Bach
Bowen
Bach
Bowen
Bach
Bowen
Bach
Bowen

Michael Schelle (b. 1950)

Brad Mehldau (b. 1970)

Peter Schickele,
aka PDQ Bach (1935-2024)

Bach
Paul McCartney (b. 1942),
arr. Mehldau

PROGRAM SPONSOR: **City of Victoria**

ABOUT THE ARTIST



FAITH DeBOW
Piano

Pianist and Emerging Artists Coordinator Faith DeBow enjoys a vibrant performance and teaching career based in the Central Texas region. She serves as a Professor of Instruction at the Texas State University School of Music, where she teaches class piano and accompanying, and works with the choral program. She has a long-standing relationship

with the choral ensemble Conspire, and has been honored with several Grammy nominations from those collaborations. Faith often plays orchestral keyboard with such groups as the Austin Symphony Orchestra, San Antonio Philharmonic, and Mid-Texas Symphony.

Faith has had the privilege of performing in fifteen states and eight countries, including Iceland, France, and Denmark. She has recorded for Harmonia Mundi and PBS with Conspire, and for Albany Records with tuba player Tim Buzbee. Faith enjoys bringing new music to life, and has worked with many composers. She holds a master's degree in accompanying and chamber music from the Eastman School of Music, and a bachelor's degree in piano performance from Butler University.

VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL BAROQUE ENSEMBLE

VIOLINS

Alan Austin
Joan Carlson
Bruce Colson
Boel Gidholm
Maria Lin
Mary Riccardi

VIOLAS

Joann Cosart
Ethan Rouse

CELLO

Christopher Haritatos, *Leader*
Eric Mun

BASS

Deborah Dunham

FLUTE

Rachel Woolf

HORN

Patrick Hughes

BAROQUE TIMPANI

Andrew Furhman

HARPSICHORD

Keith Womer

BAROQUE OBOE

Curtis Foster

Billy Traylor

BAROQUE HORN

Sarah Au

BAROQUE FLUTE

Colin St. Martin

SOPRANO

Gitanjali Mathur

ALTO

Nick Garza

TENOR

Stephen Brenfleck

BASS

David Grogan



BEACH & ARENSKY

Amy Beach (1867–1944)

Theme and Variations for Flute and String Quartet, Op. 80

Composed in 1916

Theme

The work opens with a graceful and heartfelt theme introduced by the flute and gently supported by the strings. Romantic in tone and clear in structure, the theme sets the emotional and melodic foundation for the set of six variations to follow.

Variation I

A gentle elaboration of the theme. Ornamentation and flowing lines add warmth and lyrical charm.

Variation II

Increased rhythmic energy and interplay between flute and strings create a brighter, more animated atmosphere.

Variation III

A more introspective character emerges. Minor harmonies and subtle textures deepen the emotional expression.

Variation IV

This variation is lighter and playful, with dance-like rhythms and nimble articulation from the flute.

Variation V

A more dramatic and intense mood develops, with rich harmonies and dynamic contrasts driving the variation forward.

Variation VI

The final variation is expansive and radiant, bringing the work to a lyrical and satisfying conclusion. The original theme subtly returns, transformed through the journey of variation.

Anton Arensky (1861–1906)

Piano Quintet in D Major, Op. 51

Composed in 1900

This late-Romantic quintet showcases Arensky’s lyrical gifts and his skill in balancing the piano with a string ensemble. Written for piano, two violins, viola, and cello, the work is rich in melody, expressive depth, and virtuosic ensemble writing.

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Variations - Andante
- III. Scherzo - Allegro Vonage
- IV. Finale - Fuga - Allegro moderato

PROGRAM SPONSORS: Building Brands Marketing | Victoria Fine Arts Center

PROGRAM NOTES



AMY BEACH (1867–1944)

THEME AND VARIATIONS FOR FLUTE AND STRING QUARTET, OP. 80 (1916)

Amy Beach was one of America’s earliest and most celebrated female composers, rising to prominence in a time when women in composition faced significant barriers. A piano prodigy and self-taught composer, Beach became known for her lyrical style, expressive harmony, and integration of European Romanticism with American idioms.

Her *Theme and Variations for Flute and String Quartet*, composed in 1916, is one of her most delicate and refined chamber works. The theme is lyrical and flowing, led by the flute’s gentle line, and is followed by a series of seven variations that explore a wide range of character and color. Beach uses the ensemble with sensitivity and creativity, allowing each instrument to shine while maintaining a rich, blended texture. The work moves through moods of melancholy, playfulness, and serene beauty before concluding with a quietly expressive final variation.

This piece not only demonstrates Beach’s melodic gift but also her command of structure and variation form—hallmarks of her mature style.

ANTON ARENSKY (1861–1906)

PIANO QUINTET IN D MAJOR, OP. 51 (1900)

Russian composer Anton Arensky, a student of Rimsky-Korsakov and teacher of Scriabin and Rachmaninoff, is often remembered for his lyrical chamber music. While his life was brief, his works reflect the rich romanticism of late 19th-century Russia, with a touch of elegance and clarity that set him apart from some of his more dramatic contemporaries.

The *Piano Quintet in D Major*, Op. 51, composed in 1900, is one of Arensky’s final and most ambitious chamber works. Scored for piano and string quartet, the quintet is lush, emotional, and virtuosic. The first movement is bold and sweeping, showcasing Arensky’s gift for melodic invention and rich harmonic textures. The slow movement is deeply expressive, full of lyrical warmth and introspective beauty. A sparkling scherzo follows, alternating playful charm with rhythmic drive. The finale brings the work to a stirring conclusion, revisiting earlier themes in a spirit of dramatic unity.

This quintet reveals Arensky’s distinctive voice—romantic yet refined—and his deep understanding of chamber music form. It stands as a testament to his skill and sensitivity as a composer.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



MARIA LIN
Violin

Maria Lin has degrees from the New England Conservatory and Eastman School of Music. She has performed at the Tanglewood, Spoleto, Sarasota and Grand Teton festivals.

She lives in Houston where has played both modern and historical violin with a variety of organizations: Houston Grand Opera, Houston Symphony, Houston

Ballet, Ars Lyrica, Harmonia Stellarum, Mercury, La Speranza, and Bach Society.



LEE TAYLOR
Violin

A native of Atlanta, Georgia, Lee Taylor enjoys a varied musical career involving performance, education, and administration. Lee is currently a member of the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra and is a founding member of Amati Chamber Music. She was a long-time member of the Atlanta Opera and Ballet Orchestras and has played with the Alabama Symphony,

Columbus Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Chamber Music Quad Cities, and Colorado Music Festival.

As a private teacher, Lee maintains an active home studio. Along with her husband, Greg Sauer, Lee directs the LAMP Chamber Players, an afterschool chamber music program in Tallahassee. Former students have gone on to study violin and viola performance at Oberlin Conservatory, Lawrence University, FSU, and Boston University.

Lee has taught at Ursus String Camp at the University of Tennessee, Oklahoma Arts Summer Institute, and the Atlanta Chamber Music Festival. As an administrator, Lee has been on staff at the Cincinnati Young Artists Chamber Music Festival and Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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Lee received her Bachelor's in Violin Performance at the University of Michigan as a student of Paul Kantor.



VINCENT MARKS
Viola

Vincent Marks received his Bachelor of Music degree in Performance from Indiana University with Stephen Wyczynski and a Masters degree in Performance at the Butler School of Music (University of Texas at Austin) with Roger Myers.

Vincent plays with the Austin Symphony and Austin Lyric Opera as well as teaching

through Austin Soundwaves.

Summer performacnes have included the Aspen Music Festival Fellowship program, the Young Artist Program in Ottawa, and the Academy of the Pacific.



GREG SAUER
Cello

Gregory Sauer, professor of cello at Florida State University, enjoys a vital and varied career as a teacher and performer. He has appeared in recital at prominent venues across the U.S. and at universities such as Vanderbilt and Rice University.

Mr. Sauer has performed concertos with the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, the Houston Symphony, the Quad City Symphony,

Oklahoma City Philharmonic, the Columbus (GA) Symphony, and the Missoula Symphony, among others. His most recent recording on the Albany label is titled

Conversa, and features 20th and 21st century Brazilian and North American duos with pianist Heidi Louise Williams. As a member of the Carpe Diem String Quartet, Greg played concerts in Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, Siena, Italy, and in the group's first China tour.

Other chamber music appearances have been at the Austin Chamber Music Center, the Victoria Bach Festival, and the Colorado Music Festival. In addition to the Florida State position, Sauer has taught at the Texas Music Festival, Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, and the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute.



MICHELLE SCHUMANN
Piano

Hailed for her "...sensitive, flexible, and tempestuous dexterity," (*Fanfare Magazine*) pianist Michelle Schumann has built a reputation for evocative and moving performances that are infused with unique energy and zeal.

Michelle's most irresistible qualities as a performer include her unabashed musical expression and her ability to connect with

audiences. Her performance of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* conducted by Peter Bay of the Austin Symphony was named the #1 Classical Arts Event of 2008 by the *Austin Chronicle*.

Praised for her versatility, Schumann has helped to lead an eclectic array of projects demonstrating her commitment to unexpected creativity in collaboration. Project highlights include designing and performing the music for Ballet Austin's "*Truth and Beauty: The Bach Project*" which featured solo piano music by J.S. Bach and Philip Glass and was later aired on the lauded PBS-KLRU program, "IN CONTEXT."

From 2006-2024, Michelle served as Artistic Director of the Austin Chamber Music Center where she was responsible for "... fearlessly expanding our definition of chamber music." (*Austin-American Statesman*) Following her ground-breaking first season with the Austin Chamber Music Center, she won multiple awards from the *Austin Critics Table* including the coveted award for "Body of Work/Season." Praised for "...her whip-smart sense of programming," (*Austin-American Statesman*) Schumann's specialty is developing unexpectedly integrated and thought-provoking programs.

She received a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The University of Texas at Austin Butler School of Music and additionally holds a Young Artist Diploma from the Cleveland Institute of Music and a Performance Diploma from the Vienna Conservatory.



RACHAEL WOOLF
Flute

- Assistant Professor of Instruction of Flute, University of Texas at San Antonio

- Principal flute, Symphony of the Hills

- Member, Dallas-based symphonic pop rock band The Polyphonic Spree

- Member, Middle Eastern fusion group Viatorum



THE GREAT MASS

Alejandro Hernandez Valdez,
Artistic Director

The Victoria Bach Festival Orchestra and Festival Chorus

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Mass in B Minor, BWV 232

Composed: 1724–1749

I. Kyrie

1. Kyrie eleison (chorus)
2. Christe eleison (duet – Soprano I & II)
3. Kyrie eleison (chorus)

II. Gloria

4. Gloria in excelsis Deo (chorus)
5. Et in terra pax (chorus)
6. Laudamus te (aria – Soprano II)
7. Gratias agimus tibi (chorus)
8. Domine Deus (duet – Soprano I & Tenor)
9. Qui tollis peccata mundi (chorus)
10. Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris (aria – Alto)
11. Quoniam tu solus sanctus (aria – Bass)
12. Cum Sancto Spiritu (chorus)

III. Credo (Symbolum Nicenum)

13. Credo in unum Deum (chorus)
14. Patrem omnipotentem (chorus)
15. Et in unum Dominum (duet – Soprano I & Alto)
16. Et incarnatus est (chorus)
17. Crucifixus (chorus)
18. Et resurrexit (chorus)
19. Et in Spiritum Sanctum (aria – Bass)
20. Confiteor (chorus)
21. Et expecto (chorus)

IV. Sanctus

22. Sanctus (double chorus)

V. Benedictus

23. Osanna in excelsis (double chorus)
24. Benedictus (aria – Tenor)
25. Osanna in excelsis (repeat – double chorus)

VI. Agnus Dei

26. Agnus Dei (aria – Alto)
27. Dona nobis pacem (chorus)

In Memory of Robby Burdge

PROGRAM SPONSOR: Ben & Diana Galvan, Robby & Tami Burdge

THE GREAT MASS

Johann Sebastian Bach's *Mass in B Minor* stands as one of the most monumental and profound achievements in Western music. Completed near the end of his life, the Mass is both a summation of Bach's sacred musical legacy and a towering masterpiece of the Baroque era. Though Bach was a devout Lutheran and never heard the work performed in its entirety during his lifetime, he set the full Latin Catholic Ordinary of the Mass—perhaps as an offering of his finest work for posterity.

The Mass is divided into five large sections: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. Within these are 27 individual movements, featuring a rich tapestry of solo arias, duets, choruses, and instrumental writing. Bach drew from earlier compositions, adapting and refining them into new contexts, a technique known as “parody.” Far from being a mere compilation, the result is a work of striking cohesion and expressive depth.

Stylistically, the *Mass in B Minor* blends the intricate counterpoint of German sacred tradition with the elegance of the Italian concerto and the drama of French overture. Its choral movements range from the deeply solemn (“Crucifixus”) to the exuberantly triumphant (“Et resurrexit” and “Cum Sancto Spiritu”), while the solo arias provide moments of introspection and grace. More than just a liturgical setting, the *Mass in B Minor* is often regarded as a spiritual and artistic testament—a universal expression of faith, awe, and human aspiration, transcending the divisions of denomination, era, and language. It remains one of the most beloved and frequently performed sacred works in the classical canon.

THE VICTORIA BACH FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA AND FESTIVAL CHORUS

VIOLIN

Akemi Takayama
Juan Jaramillo
Susan Doering
Jackson Guillen
William Naranjo
Caleb Polashek
Jennifer Dalmas
Abigail Bellorin
Steven McMillan

VIOLA

Desiree Elsevier
Ames Asbell
Luis Bellorin

CELLO

Dieter Wulforth
Shawn Sanders

BASS

Andrew Potter

FLUTE

Hilary Janysek Pina
Diana Sipes

OBOE

Ian Davidson
Mike Valenzuela
Korrigan Korthauer

BASSON

Kristin Jensen
Daniel Chrisman

HORN

Tom Hale

TRUMPET

Chris Carrillo
Ron Ledbetter
Lauren Eberhart

TIMPANI

Sherry Rubins

HARPSICHORD

Lenora McCroskey

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Brent Baldwin

SOPRANO

Gitanjali Mathur
Lilly Boessen
Jenny Houghton
Heidi Klein
Kori Miller
Shari Wilson

ALTO

Katrina Burggraf
Page Stephens
Erin Roth Thomas
Laura Mercado-Wright

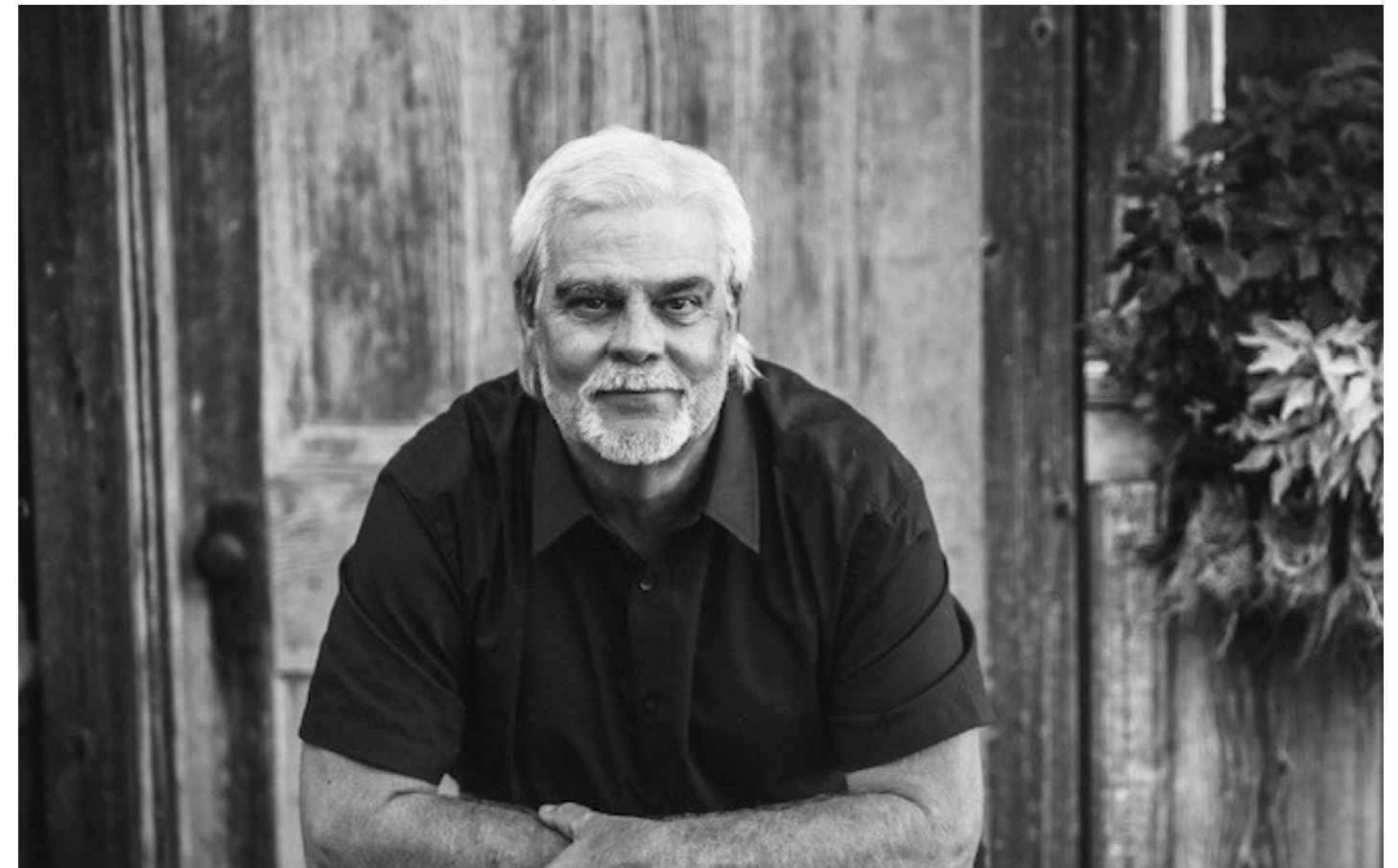
TENOR

Stephen Brenfleck
Stevie Dugdale
Barrett Radzium
Jason Vest

BASS

John Proft
David Grogan
Michael Hawes
Tim O'Brien

A TRIBUTE TO ROBBY BURDGE



Presented by Mayor Duane Crocker

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Victoria Bach Festival with a performance of Bach's *Mass in B Minor*, we are reminded not only of the timeless beauty of music but also of the profound impact that one life, lived with purpose and generosity, can have on a community. This performance is dedicated to the memory of Robby Burdge—a man whose spirit of giving and unwavering faith left an indelible mark on all who knew him.

Robby's legacy is evident throughout our community. Whether serving as Chairman of the Port of Victoria, serving on the Victoria College Board of Trustees, supporting the mission of St. Joseph High School, or his countless other unseen acts of service, his work wasn't just about progress; it was about lifting people up, empowering them, and believing in their potential. He led by example, living out his faith with humility as demonstrated by his motto of “God, Family, Team, and Me”.

Robby was a once-in-a-generation leader; a resolute beacon of kindness, strength, and integrity.

At Klean Corp International, the business he founded, Robby's guiding principles were evident in every decision he made. His generosity and servant leadership extended far beyond the walls of his company, touching non-profits, educational institutions, and civic

projects across Victoria. His involvement with Habitat for Humanity, Bluebonnet Youth Ranch, Mid-Coast Family Services, Perpetual Help Home, and so many other organizations was driven by a genuine desire to make life better for those around him.

Robby's legacy is not just one of achievement, but of love—love for his family, love for his community, and love for the people he served quietly and faithfully. His spirit of generosity was matched only by his ability to bring people together, much like the music that fills this sacred space tonight.

It is only fitting that this performance of *Mass in B Minor*, a masterwork of faith and unity, be held in his honor. As the music swells and the voices rise, may we remember Robby's own life song—a melody of compassion, service, and enduring faith. And may his spirit continue to inspire us all to lead with love and serve with grace.

On behalf of the City of Victoria, the Victoria Bach Festival, and the countless lives Robby touched, we express our deepest gratitude for his life and legacy. May tonight's music be a reflection of his impact and a tribute to the enduring difference one person can make.

Duane Crocker

Duane Crocker, Mayor of Victoria

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



AKEMI TAKAYAMA
Concertmaster/Violin

- Praised by the legendary violinist Isaac Stern as a true musician who will always bring credit to any group that she works with," Akemi Takayama grew up surrounded by music.
- Born to a professional violinist mother and cellist father, the melodies and harmonies of string quartets frequently echoed in her home during her parents' rehearsals and performances.

• A native of Japan and mother to four boys, Ms. Takayama embarked on her professional violin career at the young age of fifteen in Japan. She pursued her bachelor's degree in music performance at the Toho School of Music in Tokyo, under the guidance of Toshiya Eto and Ryosaku Kubota.

• Her drive to explore deeper into music led her to the University of Wyoming, achieving a professional studies degree with Brian Hanly.



JUAN JARAMILLO
Violin

- Member, Pittsburgh Opera
- Principal second for the Wheeling Symphony.
- Performs with the Sarasota Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera and the Sunriver Music Festival..



SUSAN DOERING
Violin

- Tenured professor at Missouri State University
- Performs with the "Freeway Philharmonic", Monterey, Sacramento, Stockton, Modesto Symphonies
- Co-Founder of Musica Viva Chamber Music series and Emerald Duo



JACKSON GILLEN
Violin

- Performance career spans orchestral, chamber, and solo work across the Americas
- Principal Second Violin with the Gulf Coast Symphony, Lubbock Symphony, and the Symphony of Southeast Texas.
- Served as guest concertmaster with the Shreveport Symphony.
- Collaborates regularly Mercury Chamber Orchestra and Musiqa Houston.



WILLIAM NARANJO
Violin

- Solo violinist, concertmaster, and pedagogue, trained at the Latin American Violin Academy under Maestro José Francisco Del Castillo

- Performs with Corpus Christi, Victoria, and Kingsville Symphony Orchestras

- Served as adjunct professor at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi

- Teaches at Antonio Strad Violin and consults with the Northside School District in San Antonio

- Involved in the teaching program at Victoria College



TURNER PARTAIN
Violin

- Assistant Concertmaster of the West Texas Symphony

- Performs with Austin, Tulsa, and San Antonio Symphonies

- Chamber musician featured by the Austin Chamber Music Center and Houston Public Media

- Holds music degrees from UT Austin and University of Houston

- Adjunct violin instructor at Victoria College



ABIGAIL BELLORIN
Violin

- Co-founder and performer with Austin Unconducted;

- Performer with Austin Opera and One Found Sound (San Francisco)

- Featured at Kronos Quartet's annual festival

- Leads a vibrant studio at Suzuki Strings of Austin and co-directs Chamber Academy Austin, nurturing young chamber musicians



DESIREE ELSEVIER
Viola

- Former member of Metropolitan Opera in NY

- Performs with Dallas Opera, Fort Worth Symphony, and in chamber concerts

- Plays at the Classical Tahoe festival at Lake Tahoe

- Coaches at the Verbier Festival in Switzerland

- Member of the World Orchestra for Peace

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



AMES ASBELL
Viola

- Performed worldwide, from Carnegie Hall to international stages

- Founding member of the Tosca String Quartet

- Performs with Austin Opera (Principal), Austin Symphony, Arizona Musicfest, and Philharmonie Austin

- Toured with David Byrne and GRAMMY®-winning Conspirare in Considering

Matthew Shepard

- Associate Professor of Viola at Texas State University, Director of the Texas State String Project, and President of the American Viola Society



LUIS EDUARDO BELLORIN
Viola

- Performed at concert halls around the globe, including the Kennedy Center, the Britten Studio at Snape Maltings (UK), Studio 1, Flagey (Belgium) and Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall.

- Performed with artists Caroline Shaw and the Emerson Quartet.

- Co-founder of Austin Unconducted

- Violist with the Austin Symphony

- Recipient of the 2023 Sphinx Organization's MPower Artist Grant.



DIETER WULFORST
Cello

- Performs with the "Freeway Philharmonic", Monterey, Sacramento, Stockton, Modesto Symphonies

- Tours and teaches in Europe every summer

- Taught at universities in Colorado, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, and California

- Studied with David Soyer, Evelyn Elsing, the Guarneri Quartet, Friedrich-Jürgen Sellheim

SHAWN SANDERS
Cello

- Studied at Interlochen, DePauw, Eastman, and UT Austin

- Performed internationally in Sweden, Japan, England, and Thailand

- Has backed artists from Pavarotti to Pearl Jam across diverse genres



ANDREW POTTER
Bass

- Andrew Potter has been performing with the Victoria Bach Festival since 2012.

- Based in Austin, he spent 11 years as an orchestra director before transitioning to life as a freelance musician.

- Whether in concert halls or classrooms, Andrew brings energy and enthusiasm to every performance.



HILARY JANYSEK PINA
Flute

- Victoria Bach Festival Emerging Artist (2011) and active central Texas performer

- Flutist with HiRyze Duo, Temple Symphony, Austin Flute Choir

- Instructor of Flute at UMHB and Southwestern University, with a thriving private studio in Austin



DIANA SIPES
Flute

- Director of the School of Arts, Media & Communication and Professor of Music at Texas A&M–Corpus Christi

- Principal flute with Corpus Christi and Victoria Symphony Orchestras

- National Flute Association performer and Past-President of the Texas Association of Music Schools



IAN DAVIDSON
Oboe

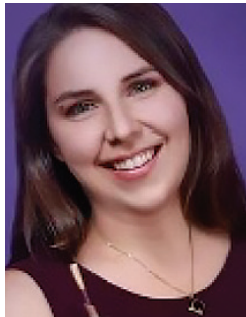
- Principal Oboe, Austin Opera Orchestra

- English Horn and Associate Principal Oboe, Austin Symphony

- Orchestra Regents' and University Distinguished Professor, Texas State University

- Sponsored Artist, F. Loree Oboes, Paris, France

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



MIKA VALENZUELA
Oboe

- Performs with Austin Symphony, San Antonio Philharmonic
- Founding member of 5th Wave Collective and former Adelante Winds oboist



KRISTIN JENSEN
Bassoon

- Professor of Bassoon at UT Austin and Principal Bassoonist with ROCO
- Author of The Breathing Book for Bassoon and Music and the Bassoon
- Founder of the Meg Quigley Vivaldi Competition and Round Top faculty member
- Acclaimed soloist and chamber musician with numerous recordings



TOM HALE
Horn

- Principal horn of the Austin Symphony and Austin Opera
- Longtime member of the Victoria Bach Festival and Spoleto (Italy) Festival Orchestra
- Former faculty at UT, Texas State, and Southwestern University
- Founding member of Pinnacle Brass and Wild Basin Winds

- Holds degrees from Texas Tech and UT Austin



CHRIS CARRILLO
Trumpet

- Principal trumpet with Madison Brass and the New Orchestra of Washington
- Faculty member at James Madison University
- Performer on modern and baroque trumpet across the U.S., Europe, and Australia
- GRAMMY®-nominated recording artist with the Dallas Winds



RON LEDBETTER
Trumpet

- Studied at Victoria College, selected for Texas Junior College All-State Honor Band
- Continued at Southwest Texas State University, serving as principal trumpet in both orchestra and wind ensemble



SHERRY RUBINS
Timpani

- Professor of Practice and percussion coordinator at UT San Antonio
- Directs percussion and steel drum ensembles and teaches percussion majors
- Principal Timpanist with the Mid-Texas Symphony and Victoria Bach Festival
- Artist/clinician for Zildjian, Vic Firth, Remo, and Yamaha



LENORA MCCROSKEY
Harpsichord

- Professor Emeritus of Music at the University of North Texas
- Recipient of the Paul Riedo Award for contributions to early music in DFW
- Music director, Trinity Presbyterian in Denton (2010–2023)
- Active in local choirs and music ministry at Denton Village Retirement Community



BRENT BALDWIN
Assistant Conductor

- Austin-based conductor, composer, and multi-instrumentalist known for genre-defying collaborations with artists like Roky Erickson, Alejandro Escovedo, and Roomful of Teeth
- Featured at SXSW, Fusebox, Levitation, and the Victoria Bach Festival
- Premiered works by Pulitzer and GRAMMY®-winning composers; mentor to emerging Austin artists

emerging Austin artists

- Recipient of Austin Critics Table Awards and named one of The Austin Chronicle's Top 5 Artistic Directors
- Artistic Director of Unwound Sound, co-Artistic Director of Convergence New Music, and Assistant Conductor of the Victoria Bach Festival

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

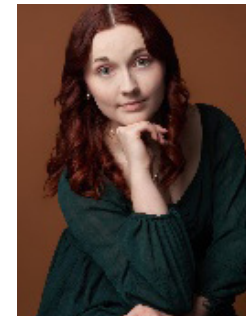


GITANJALI MATHUR
Soprano

- GRAMMY®-nominated and winning soprano praised for her “skyrocketing coloratura” and “piercingly clear voice”
- Trained in North and South Indian classical music before earning multiple vocal performance degrees from Indiana University
- Featured soloist at the Victoria Bach Festival and Oregon Bach Festival under

John Butt

- Creator and performer of Night Music!, a global lullaby-inspired online mini-series



LILLY BOESSEN
Soprano

- Masters in Choral Conducting from Texas State University
- Served as Assistant Director for Texas State Chorale and University Singers, and Director of the Texas State Treble Choir
- Performs regularly with Conspirare and Austin Cantorum
- Assistant Conductor of Chorus Austin

- Joining Austin College as Visiting Professor in Spring 2026



HEIDI KLEIN
Soprano

- Master of Music in Vocal Performance from Indiana University
- Performs with Dallas Bach Society, Orpheus Chamber Singers, Orchestra of New Spain, Denton Bach Society, and Lafayette Musicians
- Adjunct voice instructor at Texas Woman's University
- Featured on numerous recordings, including works with Voices of Change and the Dallas Bach Society's Messiah (1741 Original Version)

including works with Voices of Change and the Dallas Bach Society's Messiah (1741 Original Version)



KORI MILLER
Soprano

- Toured globally with GRAMMY®-winning ensemble Voces8 in Europe, Asia, and at the Sydney Opera House
- Operatic roles include Apolo in Apolo y Dafne and Blanche Dubois in A Streetcar Named Desire
- Pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in opera performance and vocal pedagogy at the University of North Texas

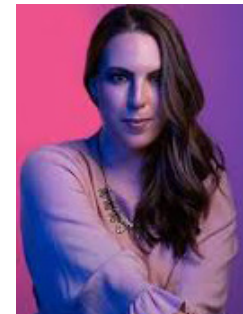


KATRINA BURGGRAF
Alto

- Performs with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Bach Society, Orpheus Chamber Singers
- Featured soloist on recordings such as Verdigris Ensemble's Betty's Notebook and the soundtrack for the video game That Dragon, Cancer
- Performed in residencies at Westminster Abbey and toured internationally with Vox Peregrini through Ireland, Scotland, and Spain

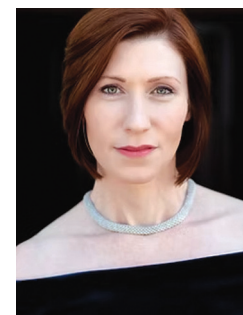
Peregrini through Ireland, Scotland, and Spain

- Leads “yoga for musicians” classes and currently serves as a staff singer at Christ Church Plano



PAGE STEPHENS
Alto

- Performed with Copland House, River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, Austin Symphony, Voices of Change, Texas Early Music Project, and Sō Percussion
- Founding member of VAMP
- Voice faculty at Austin Community College
- Assistant Director for Operations at UT's Butler School of Music



ERIN ROTH THOMAS
Alto

- Soloist in Mahler's Resurrection, Bach's Mass in B Minor, Mozart's Requiem, and Vivaldi's Juditha Triumphans
- Operatic roles in Hansel (Hansel and Gretel), Prince Orlofsky (Die Fledermaus), and The Mother (Amahl and the Night Visitors)
- Recent performances with Portland Opera, Santa Fe Desert Chorale, American Baroque Opera Company

Baroque Opera Company

- Graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University

ABOUT THE ARTIST



LAURA MERCADO-WRIGHT
Alto

- Two-time GRAMMY® nominee and multi-genre vocalist
- Founding member of VAMP
- Executive Director of vocal jazz company Tinsel
- Associate Professor of Voice at Austin Community College
- Frequent performer with Conspirare's

Company of Voices



STEPHEN BREFLECK
Tenor

- Praised by Opera News for his “sensitive” voice and the New York Times as a “standout” performer
- Performed with Glimmerglass Opera, Portland Opera, Ópera Nacional de Chile, Spoleto Festival USA, and Tanglewood Festival
- Voice faculty at the University of Texas at Austin

- Certified Alexander Technique teacher, presenting masterclasses nationwide and internationally



STEVIE DUGDALE
Tenor

- DMA student in choral conducting at the University of Texas at Austin
- Director of the UT Tenor/Bass Chorus and vocal technique instructor for instrumental music education majors
- Section leader and tenor soloist with Conspirare Symphony Chorus
- Former Oregon Bach Festival singer

- Founding member of Utah-based early music group Sound of Ages Choir



BARRETT RADZIUM
Tenor

- Praised by Cleveland Classical, Boston Musical Intelligencer, and The Dallas Morning News for his expressive and polished performances
- Meyerson Symphony Center debut in 2017
- Performed as tenor soloist in Messiah with the Dallas Bach Society



JASON VEST
Tenor

- GRAMMY®-nominated tenor celebrated for his versatility in opera, concert, and choral work
- Performed with Cincinnati Opera (Ariadne auf Naxos), Amarillo Opera, and internationally in Bulgaria
- Featured recitalist at Mexico Liederfest and Vocal Artistry Art Song Festival
- Professor of Voice and Dean of the College

of Arts and Media at Sam Houston State University



JOHN PROFT
Bass

- Performed with top professional choirs across the U.S.
- Soloist with Harvard Collegium Musicum and Boston Early Music Festival's Dido and Aeneas
- Performed under renowned conductors including Harry Christophers, Ton Koopman, and Craig Hella Johnson
- Masters in Choral Conducting from SMU

- Integrates yoga into vocal training at Austin Community College, Concordia University, and Westlake High School



DAVID GROGAN
Bass

- Professor at the University of Texas at Arlington
- Hailed as the “perfect Christus” by The Dallas Morning News for his role in St. Matthew Passion
- Regular soloist throughout the Southwest with a reputation for rich tone and compelling interpretations



MICHAEL HAWES
Bass

- GRAMMY®-nominated singer, trumpeter, and keyboardist
- Director of Music at St. Thomas More Parish
- Performs regularly with GRAMMY®-winning ensembles The Crossing and Conspirare
- Pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts at the University of Texas

- Recently released album Florence Price, Her Song



BACHFEST

BREAKFAST CONCERT

La Revue De Cuisine

Alfredo Casella (1883–1947)

Serenata, Op. 46

Composed: 1927 | For violin, cello, clarinet, bassoon, and trumpet

Alfredo Casella's *Serenata* is one of the Italian composer's most engaging and eclectic chamber works. Written during the vibrant interwar period, it blends neoclassical clarity with a sharp-edged modernist sensibility, showcasing Casella's rhythmic vitality, instrumental color, and occasional sarcasm. Scored for an unusual quintet of violin, cello, clarinet, bassoon, and trumpet, the piece reflects Casella's interest in wit, pastiche, and theatrical character.

1. Marcia

A bold and satirical march opens the work, setting a tone of energetic mischief. Sharp accents, sudden shifts, and vibrant interplay among the instruments establish the eccentric, neoclassical character that defines the *Serenata*.

2. Minuetto

A graceful and off-kilter dance with echoes of the 18th-century minuet. While outwardly refined, it carries Casella's signature wit and modern dissonance, giving the familiar dance form a fresh, angular twist.

3. Notturmo

This “night music” section is a reflective interlude, characterized by muted colors and introspective lines. Expressive, quieter textures emerge, showcasing the ensemble's lyricism.

4. Gavotte

A rustic and rhythmically charged dance that plays with the traditional gavotte's structure, infusing it with offbeat humor and lively syncopation. The trumpet leads with swagger and irony.

5. Cavatina

A lyrical and song-like movement that evokes the intimacy of a short aria. Gentle lines and warm instrumental colors provide a moment of repose and expressive depth.

6. Finale

The closing movement is a sly, jazz-inflected fox-trot marked “*a little lascivious*.” It's witty, urbane, and rhythmically infectious—an irreverent and stylish conclusion that nods to both classical form and the cosmopolitan jazz age.

Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959)



BACHFEST

BREAKFAST CONCERT

La Revue De Cuisine

La Revue de Cuisine (The Kitchen Revue), H.161

Composed: 1927 | Chamber ballet for six instruments

Originally written as a jazz-infused ballet for a small ensemble, La Revue de Cuisine playfully imagines a love triangle among kitchen utensils. While the complete ballet includes spoken dialogue and stage action, Martinů extracted a six-movement suite for concert performance that retains the wit, color, and rhythmic vitality of the original.

Prologue

A whimsical and flirtatious introduction, setting the stage for the story with jazzy rhythms and syncopation.

Tango

A sultry and slightly ironic dance featuring stylized tango rhythms. The music evokes the seductive tension between characters.

Charleston

An energetic and virtuosic number inspired by the popular 1920s dance. Full of syncopation, instrumental color, and bold humor.

Blues

A moody and expressive slow movement. The clarinet and muted trumpet trade soulful lines in this jazz-inspired interlude.

March

Playful and pompous, this brief march is full of angular rhythms and character, bringing a bit of circus-like flair.

Finale

A fast-paced and dazzling conclusion. The musical themes return with high spirits and wit, ending the suite on a celebratory note.

VIOLIN

Juan Jaramillo

CLARINET

Nick Councilor

TRUMPET

Chris Carrillo

CELLO

Christopher Haritatos

BASSOON

Daniel Chrisman

PIANO

Ekaterina Tangarov

PROGRAM SPONSORS: Don & Allison Whitaker | Erich & Vanessa Heinold

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



JUAN JARAMILLO
Violin

I am a violinist from Venezuela that won a scholarship in 1996 to study in Pittsburgh. I learned to play through the “El Sistema” program growing up, and now I am a full time member of the Pittsburgh Opera, Pittsburgh Ballet and also the principal second for the Wheeling Symphony.

When I am not in Pittsburgh, I perform with the Sarasota Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera and the Sunriver Music Festival.

Besides music, I love cooking, enjoy the outdoors, connecting with people, and watching movies.



CHRISTOPHER HARITATOS
Cello

Cellist Christopher Haritatos has over 20 years of experience as a baroque cellist with period-instrument ensembles on three continents.

He has collaborated in chamber music with artists such as Marc Destrubé, Kristian Bezuidenhout, and Sergiu Luca, and has played in ensembles

such as the Handel and Hayden Society, Ars Lyrica Houston, and Tafelmusik, as well as acting as the continuo cellist of Fiori Musicali-Barockorchester Bremen and Apollo's Fire.

Chris is equally accomplished as a modern cellist and is a member of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Also sought after as a teacher, he has been on the faculty of Texas State University-San Marcos and has given numerous workshops and master classes.

His major teachers were Alan Harris, Steven Doane, Pieter Wispelwey, and Jaap ter Linden, with whom he studied as a Fulbright Scholar at the Akademie für Alte Musik Bremen.

Together with his wife, violinist Boel Gidholm, he is co-director, since 2011, of Publick Musick.



NICK COUNCILOR
Clarinet

Dr. Nicholas Councilor is Associate Professor of Instruction at The University of Texas at San Antonio

He also maintains a large private studio in Austin and San Antonio, where his students frequently make the TMEA All-State ensembles and earn top accolades in solo competitions.

As a clinician for the D'Addario Woodwind Method Program, Dr. Councilor has taught nearly 100 clinics to students of all ages throughout Central Texas.

Nicholas is a member of the San Antonio Philharmonic, the Central Texas Philharmonic, and the Mid-Texas Symphony, and performs regularly with the Austin Symphony Orchestra and other regional orchestras across the state. He has also appeared as guest principal clarinetist with the San Antonio Symphony and the Dallas Winds



DANIEL CHRISMAN
Bassoon

2010 marked Daniel Chrisman's first appearance with the Victoria Bach Festival and he has enjoyed performing in various roles with the organization in many seasons thereafter.

Daniel attained the contrabassoon position for the Austin Symphony in 2007 and he has delighted in making

music with fabulous orchestras and chamber music ensembles in Texas ever since. He's held the positions of Assistant Principal in the Austin Opera orchestra since 2017 and 2nd bassoon in the ROCO Chamber Orchestra since 2008.

Professor Chrisman has been on the music faculty of Southwestern University since 2014 and he's also been a private lesson instructor on staff for several school districts in the area since 2008.

In He received his Bachelor's degree in Music Performance from the University of Kentucky (Lexington, KY) in 2003 and his Master's degree in Performance from Temple University (Philadelphia, PA) in 2007.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



CHRIS CARRILLO
Trumpet

Chris Carrillo is an active performer on both modern and period instrument mediums having appeared throughout the United States, Australia, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

He is currently principal trumpet with the Madison Brass, the New Orchestra of Washington, a member of

Philharmonie Austin, and he is the studio trumpet professor at James Madison University where he has served on faculty since 2009.

Recent highlights include a guest appearance with the “President’s Own” United States Marine Band Brass Quintet, a Grammy-nominated recording with the Dallas Winds, and performances with the Austin, Charlotte, Charlottesville, Harrisburg, Jacksonville, and Roanoke Symphony Orchestras. Chris has also performed with the Austin Lyric Opera, Charlottesville Opera, Opera Memphis, and Opera on the James.

Additionally, he is a regular performer on baroque trumpet at the Victoria Bach Festival, the Staunton Music Festival, the Redeemer Artes Early Music Festival, and as a guest artist with Chatham Baroque in Pittsburgh, Tempesta di Mare-The Philadelphia Baroque Orchestra, the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, North Carolina Baroque, and Spire Baroque in Kansas City.

For more information, please visit www.chriscarrillotrust.com.



EKATERINA TANGAROV
Piano

Ekaterina Tangarova holds master’s degree in piano performance from the National Academy of Music “Prof. Pancho Vladigerov”, Sofia, Bulgaria, studied under the direction of Prof. Anton Dikov.

Tangarova is the 1st Prize Winner of the 1991 National Piano Duet Competition in Bulgaria. She also holds a Diploma and a 4th Prize Award from the “Liszt-Bartok” Piano Competition in Bulgaria,

Ekaterina Tangarova’s piano collaborative artist positions include the Superior School of Music and Dance in Monterrey, the University of Monterrey, and *Liceo de Monterrey* in Mexico, the University of Texas at Austin, and the Texas State University.

Since 2016, Ekaterina Tangarova has been a resident pianist for the International Clarinet Association (ICA).



SCHUBERT OCTET

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

Octet in F major, D. 803

Composed: 1824 | For clarinet, bassoon, horn, two violins, viola, cello, and double bass

Movements:

- 1. Adagio – Allegro**
A noble and expansive opening, beginning with a slow introduction before launching into a joyful and lyrical Allegro. Schubert’s gift for melodic invention is immediately evident.
- 2. Adagio**
A serene and expressive movement, featuring a tender clarinet melody and warm harmonic support from the ensemble.
- 3. Allegro vivace (Scherzo)**
A spirited scherzo with lively rhythms and contrasts. The trio section offers a charming lyrical contrast.
- 4. Andante – variations I–V**
A graceful theme followed by five imaginative variations. Each showcases different instrumental colors and textures, including a virtuosic horn variation.
- 5. Menuetto – Allegretto**
A courtly minuet, more elegant than rustic, with a gentle lilt and poised phrasing.
- 6. Andante molto – Allegro**
A dramatic slow introduction leads to a vigorous and joyful finale. Schubert brings the work to a rousing and optimistic close.

The *Octet* was commissioned by clarinetist Ferdinand Troyer and modeled loosely after Beethoven’s Septet. It’s one of Schubert’s most ambitious chamber works, both in scale and depth, and displays his mastery of instrumental writing, lyricism, and dramatic contrast.

Akemi Takayama, Concertmaster | **Jackson Guillen, Violin** | **Désirée Elsevier, Viola** | **Dieter Wulforst, Cello** **Andrew Potter, Bass** | **Vanguel Tangarov, Clarinet** | **Kristin Jensen, Bassoon** | **Peter Rubins, Horn**

PROGRAM SPONSORS: Cloyde & Ethel Lee Tracy Foundation | Ron Walker

PROGRAM NOTES

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828)
OCTET IN F MAJOR, D. 803
Composed in 1824

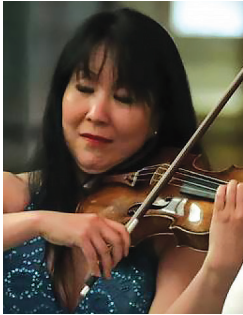
Schubert’s *Octet in F major* is one of the grandest and most ambitious chamber works of the early 19th century. Scored for a rich ensemble of **clarinet, bassoon, horn, two violins, viola, cello, and double bass**, the piece was composed in 1824 at the request of Count Ferdinand Troyer, a clarinetist who admired Beethoven’s *Septet, Op. 20*. Schubert expanded on Beethoven’s model, adding a second violin and extending the scale and expressive range of the piece.

The Octet unfolds over six movements and spans nearly an hour, more symphonic than salon-like in scope. It begins with a **graceful Allegro**, full of elegant lyricism and vibrant dialogue between winds and strings. The second movement is a **poignant Adagio**, showcasing Schubert’s unmatched gift for song-like melody. A lively **Scherzo** follows, sparkling with rhythmic energy and rustic charm.

The fourth movement, **Andante with variations**, offers a masterful series of characterful transformations on a single theme. A playful **Menuetto** gives way to a dramatic **Finale**, which begins with a slow, brooding introduction before launching into a buoyant conclusion that balances classical clarity with emotional depth.

Schubert’s *Octet* is a work of remarkable richness, blending Viennese charm, expansive form, and deeply personal expression. Written just four years before his untimely death at age 31, it stands as a testament to his genius in chamber music and his ability to turn intimate settings into profound artistic statements.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



AKEMI TAKAYAMA
Concertmaster

Praised by the legendary violinist Isaac Stern as a true musician who will always bring credit to any group that she works with,” Akemi Takayama grew up surrounded by music.• Born to a professional violinist mother and cellist father, the melodies and harmonies of string quartets frequently echoed in her home during her parents’ rehearsals and performances.

A native of Japan and mother to four boys, Ms. Takayama embarked on her professional violin career at the young age of fifteen in Japan. She pursued her bachelor’s degree in music performance at the Toho School of Music in Tokyo, under the guidance of Toshiya Eto and Ryosaku Kubota.

Her drive to explore deeper into music led her to the University of Wyoming, achieving a professional studies degree with Brian Hanly.



JACKSON GULLEN
Violin

Dr. Jackson Guillén is a Honduran-born violinist and violist whose dynamic performance career spans orchestral, chamber, and solo work across the Americas

A sought-after orchestral player, Dr. Guillén has held positions including Principal Second Violin with the Gulf Coast Symphony, Lubbock Symphony, and the Symphony of Southeast Texas.He has also

served as guest concertmaster with the Shreveport Symphony, regular guest artists for the Victoria Bach Festival and collaborates regularly with leading ensembles such as Mercury Chamber Orchestra and Musiqua Houston.



DÉSIRÉE ELSEVIER
Viola

Former member of Metropolitan Opera in NY

Can be heard in the DFW area - Dallas Opera, Fort Worth Symphony, and in chamber concerts

Plays at the Classical Tahoe festival at Lake Tahoe

Coaches at the Verbier Festival in Switzerland

Is a member of the World Orchestra for Peace

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



DIETER WULFHORST
Cello

Performs with the “Freeway Philharmonic”: symphony orchestras of Santa Rosa, Monterey, Sacramento, Bakersfield, Stockton, Modesto and others

Tours and teaches in Europe every summer

Taught at universities in Colorado, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, and California

Studied with David Soyer, Evelyn Elsing, the Guarneri Quartet, Friedrich-Jürgen Sellheim

<https://wulfhorst.tripod.com>



ANDREW POTTER
Bass

Andrew Potter has been performing with the Victoria Bach Festival since 2012.

Based in Austin, he spent 11 years as an orchestra director before transitioning to life as a freelance musician.

Whether in concert halls or classrooms, Andrew brings energy and enthusiasm to every performance.



VANGUEL TANGAROV
Clarinet

Dr. Vanguel Tangarov is an Associate Professor of Clarinet at Texas State University and an Artistic Director and founder of the annual international clarinet event Texas State

Clarinet Fiesta. Vanguel Tangarov performs as a Principal Clarinetist for the Austin Opera, Mid-Texas Symphony, and Victoria Symphony Orchestras.

Vanguel Tangarov previously served as Principal Clarinet of the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra, Bulgaria, Academia Chigiana Symphony Orchestra, Italy, Jeunesses Musicales World Symphony Orchestra, Germany and the Monterrey Symphony Orchestra (OSUANL) in Mexico.

Vanguel Tangarov has performed in more than 20 countries on 4 continents, winning a positive critical acclaim. Equally popular as a soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician, he has performed in important venues worldwide.

Tangarov received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The University of Texas at Austin under the direction of Richard MacDowell.



KRISTEN JENSEN
Bassoon

Kristin Wolfe Jensen is Professor of Bassoon at The University of Texas at Austin Butler School of Music, a licensed Body Mapping Educator and Author, The Breathing Book for Bassoon.

She is Principal Bassoonist with ROCO, a faculty member at the International Festival Institute at Round Top, Founding Director of the Meg Quigley Vivaldi Competition and Symposium, Author and Composer of Music and the Bassoon and producer of The Herzberg/Kamins Reed Making Method video series.

She has released several critically acclaimed solo and chamber music recordings including Shadings, ...and Kristin Wolfe Jensen, Parables and Reflections, and Handel: The “Halle” Sonatas, and Marie de Grandval’s Grand Trio.



PETER RUBINS
Horn

Member, San Antonio Philharmonic

Horn Instructor, University of Texas at San Antonio

Recordings on Sony Classical, Telarc, Exton, and New World Records



VAMP VOCALS

O virtus Sapientiae
Hildegard von Bingen

Savage Daughter
Karen Kahan, arr. Burrell

Suscepit Israel from *Magnificat*
J.S. Bach, arr. Pedrotti Bingamon

Gute Nacht, O Wesen from *Jesu, meine Freude*
J.S. Bach, arr. Pedrotti Bingamon

Lux Polis
Worcester Fragments, Anon. 13th-14th c. English

Dolce Cantavi
Caroline Shaw

Fumeaux fume par fumée
Solage

Daytime Atheist from *A Point on a Slow Curve*
Dana Lyn

Northern Lights
Ola Gjeilo

INTERMISSION

Ad superni regis decus
Magister Albericus from Codex Calixtinus, arr. Johnson

Baci soavi, e cari
Claudio Monteverdi

Margot labourez les vignes
Jacques Arcadelt, arr. Johnson

Laudi alla Vergine Maria from *Quattro pezzi sacri*
Giuseppe Verdi

The Blue Bird
Charles Villiers Stanford, arr. Nottingham

The Smell of Rain
Peter Stopschinski

Silver Dagger
Appalachian trad., arr. Kachelmeier

Conceived pre-pandemic and born in March 2020, VAMP is a vocal quintet of formidable female artists touting a motley songbook and a bold red lip. Versatile in style and genre, they are committed to programming and commissioning new work and making classical vocal music relatable for audiences.

VAMP Vocals seeks to create unconventional musical experiences that embrace vulnerability and emotional intensity and provide audiences with a unique women-led perspective and a renewed sense of connection to their community, themselves, and the world.

VAMP's debut album will be released in the fall of 2025.

vampvocals.com | Insta/FB: vampvocals

For program notes and translations, please scan



ABOUT THE ARTISTS



LAURA MERCADO-WRIGHT

Multi-genre vocalist, composer, and two-time GRAMMY® nominee Laura Mercado-Wright makes her home in Austin, TX, where she is a founding member of the treble vocal quintet VAMP.

Owner and Executive Director of the vocal jazz company Tinsel, Associate Professor of Voice at Austin Community College, and an active performer with a variety of ensembles including Conspire's Company of Voices.

Upcoming engagements include opera performances in Pittsburgh and NYC with Kamratōn and a composer's retreat at The Walden School in New Hampshire.



KATRINA SAPORSANTOS

Katrina Saporsantos is a Filipino soprano, conductor, composer, and arts administrator based in Austin, TX.

She is the Interim Artistic Director of Inversion Ensemble, a section leader for Conspire Symphonic Choir and Panoramic Voices, a freelance opera singer and recitalist, one-fifth of the all-female vocal quintet VAMP, one-third of the voice-trumpet-piano trio Tatsulok, and half of the voice-piano duo Kapwa.

She maintains a private voice studio where she teaches students of varying musical levels.



ADRIENNE PEDROTTI BINGAMON

Adrienne Pedrotti Bingamon is a singer and conductor based out of Austin, Texas, with a passion for choral music.

In addition to VAMP, she has appeared with Conspire, Verdigris Ensemble, Texas Early Music Project, San Antonio Chamber Choir, and the Texas Bach Festival chorus, among others.

She also sang backup vocals for the 2023 motion picture *The Bikeriders*. As a conductor, Adrienne serves as Artistic Director of Austin Cantorum, an auditioned chamber choir specializing in meditative and transformative choral performances.

After choral music, Adrienne's second favorite thing to do is Jazzercise. She has a Masters Degree in Vocal Chamber Music from the University of Redlands and she loves cookies, her husband Brant, and her two cats, Biter and Orange Boy.



MARY ELIZABETH ASHTON

Mary Elizabeth Ashton is a versatile soprano who has been performing in Central Texas since 2010.

She has performed with groups such as the San Antonio Chamber Choir, Texas Early Music Project, and Austin Baroque Orchestra. Occasionally, she dabbles in musical theater having performed with Zilker Theater Productions and Austin Shakespeare.

When not VAMPing, Mary enjoys spending time in Bastrop, TX, where she resides with her family.



PAGE STEPHENS

Dr. Page Stephens is a mezzo soprano, voice teacher and arts administrator based in Austin, TX with a soft spot for new music. Stephens has premiered works by Reena Esmail, Matthew Lyons, Donald Grantham, Thomas B. Yee, Katherine Pukinskis, Dana Lyn, Russell Podgorsek, Mark Kilstofte, and many other composers.

Stephens has performed as a soloist and sung roles with a wide range of ensembles, including Copland House in NYC, River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, Voices of Change, Austin Symphony Orchestra, line upon line percussion, Sō Percussion, Texas Early Music Project, and with many other ensembles in the Austin area.

She is a founding member of VAMP, an all-female vocal quintet which champions music about women and written by women.

Stephens is on the voice faculty at Austin Community College and maintains a busy private studio. She is the Assistant Director for Operations at the Butler School of Music at The University of Texas at Austin.



BACHFEST BREAKFAST CONCERT:
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DE/RECONSTRUCTED

Have you ever wondered what happens when musical worlds converge—when echoes of the past reshape the sound of the future? What becomes of a familiar melody when its structure is deconstructed, reimaged, and set loose in an unfamiliar landscape?

So have we.

In this adventurous-yet-accessible program, award-winning composer and multi-instrumentalist Brent Baldwin leads us

through a series of unexpected intersections—where Heitor Villa-Lobos meets Pauline Oliveros, Leo Brouwer converses with Paul Simon, and Brian Eno nods to, yes, Johann Sebastian Bach.

The morning concludes with the premiere of a meditative, communal work by Baldwin, written in tribute to the Victoria Bach Festival and its 50 years of bold, inspired music-making.

PROGRAM SPONSOR: **Melanie & Mark S. Klotzman**



Brent Baldwin is a remarkably versatile musician whose talents as a conductor, multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, arranger, and composer have earned him international recognition across a wide range of musical genres.

Known for his collaborative spirit, Brent has worked with iconic artists including Roky Erickson, Alejandro Escovedo, and Mobley, and with members of celebrated acts like Big Star, Roomful of Teeth, Wilco, the Guitar Orchestra of Europe,

...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead, and R.E.M. Based in Austin, Texas, he has been a featured artist at major festivals such as Fusebox, SXSW, Oblivion Access, Here Be Monsters, Levitation, and the Victoria Bach Festival.

A vital force in contemporary American music, Brent's journey began as assistant conductor of the University of Texas New Music Ensemble during graduate school. For over two decades, he has helped shape the new music landscape through work with Convergence New Music, New Music Co-op, Golden Hornet, Fast Forward Austin, Collide, the Berlin Guitar Ensemble, Robert Fripp's

Guitar Circle, Thor & Friends, and others. He has premiered major symphonic and large-scale works by acclaimed composers including Pulitzer Prize-winner Caroline Shaw and multi-GRAMMY® Award-winners Glenn Kotche and Adrian Quesada. As a mentor, Brent continues to champion emerging talent in the Austin arts scene—many of whom are now prominent figures in their own right.

Brent's visionary direction earned top honors from the Austin Critics Table Awards in 2014 and 2016 for Mozart Requiem Undead, hailed as the largest and most ambitious new music event in Austin's history. His work has also received national recognition from organizations such as New Music USA, Classical Voice North America, and The Voice magazine. In 2019, The Austin Chronicle named him one of Austin's Top 5 Artistic Directors, alongside Michelle Schumann and Austin Symphony conductor Peter Bay. He was also awarded the tongue-in-cheek but telling title of "Best Choral Wrangler."

Brent currently serves as Artistic Director of Unwound Sound, co-Artistic Director of Convergence New Music, and assistant conductor of the Victoria Bach Festival.



2025
EMERGING ARTISTS
IN CONCERT

Sonata No. 2 in D major
Presto – Adagio – Presto

Sarabande from Cello Suite in G major, BWV 1007

Prelude from Cello Suite in G major, BWV 100

Variations on a Breton Lullaby

Nocturne for Horn and Piano, Op. 35 No. 10

Song for the Lost

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5

Estrela do Mar (Seaside Song)

The Lark Ascending

Brazilian Etude No. 1

Effie the Elephant Suite
V. Effie Goes Folk Dancing
IV. Effie Joins the Carnival

Every Day an Alleluia

Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre (1665-1729)
arr. Logan Wadley
Weverton Santos, *horn*
Logan Wadley, *tuba*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Weverton Santos, *horn*

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Logan Wadley, *tuba*

Jordi Savall (b. 1941)
arr. Logan Wadley
Weverton Santos, *horn*
Logan Wadley, *tuba*

Reinhold Glière (1875-1956)
Weverton Santos, *horn*
Faith DeBow, *piano*

Gina Gillie (b. 1981)
Logan Wadley, *tuba*
Faith DeBow, *piano*

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Marlos Nobre (1939-2024)
Weverton Santos, *horn and countertenor*
Faith DeBow, *piano*

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)
arr. Logan Wadley
Logan Wadley, *tuba*
Faith DeBow, *piano*

Fernando Morais (b. 1946)
Weverton Santos, *horn*

Alec Wilder (1907-1980)
Logan Wadley, *tuba*
Faith DeBow, *piano*

Barbara York (1949-2020)
Weverton Santos, *horn*
Logan Wadley, *tuba*
Faith DeBow, *piano*

PROGRAM SPONSORS: **John Griffin & Lynn Knaupp, Dodie Griffin**

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



LOGAN WADLEY
Tuba

Logan Wadley completed his Master's Degree in Tuba Performance from the Eastman School of Music in May 2025, studying with Dr. Justin Benavidez. His professional performances include performing with the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra, Sioux City Symphony Orchestra, Touch of Brass Quintet, Dakota Ragtime Trio, Steel Groove, as well as performing the Edward Gregson Tuba Concerto with the Sioux City Municipal Band during their summer series.

He has performed as a guest artist on recitals at the University of Rhode Island, North Carolina School of the Arts, and the National Music Museum. His festival attendance includes the Curtis Summerfest in Philadelphia (2019), Nationa Music Festival in Chestertown, Maryland (2023), and Round Top Music Festival in Round Top, Texas (2023, 2024) as well as the Falcone Festival (2024).

Logan was recently a winner of the silver medal in the 2024 Falcone Tuba Artist Competition, as well as first place in the Tuba Artist division at the Northeast Regional Tuba Euphonium Conference. Logan won the Eastman School of Music concerto competition and performed the Arld Plau Tuba Concerto with the Eastman Symphony Orchestra in 2025. In addition, Logan is also a Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award recipient and performed on NPR's "From the Top" #371 in La Jolla, California.

In 2023, Logan received his Bachelor's in Tuba Performance from the Eastman School of Music with High Distinction and a Performer's Certificate. Logan's professional instructors include Roger Bobo, Don Harry, Chris Olka, Craig Knox, Todd Cranson, and Chuck Dibley. He will begin doctoral studies at Eastman in Fall 2025.



WEVERTON SANTOS *Horn*

Weverton Santos, a native of Brazil, is a doctoral student at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music, where he studies horn with Gail Williams and Jonathan Boen and voice with Patrice Michaels. He holds a Master's degree from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with Peter Kurau, and a Bachelor's degree from Minas Gerais State University, where he trained with Sarah Ramez and Sérgio Gomes.

Additionally, he was a student at the Minas Gerais Philharmonic Orchestra Academy under the guidance of Alma Maria Liebrecht. Santos has performed with major orchestras, including the

MG Philharmonic and Symphony orchestras, Youth Rochester Philharmonic, Virtuosi Orchestra, Vila-Lobos Orchestra, and more. He has participated in prestigious international festivals such as Portillo Festival in Chile, and from the Marvão Academy he studied with Radovan Vlatković in a masterclass series.

In 2019, he was one of the Brazilians selected of The Orchestra of the Americas. As a professor, he also served as a horn teacher at the Sarzedo Music Project for six years, and at Eastman and Bienen school for horn students as secondary lessons. An award-winning horn player, Santos won the Young Soloists Contest of the Minas Gerais Symphony Orchestra, the Young Musician BDMG contest in 2014 as a soloist, and in 2015 with chamber wind quintet, and was awarded the Third Prize by the International Orchestra Auditions Awards at Samnium University of Music.

As a singer, Santos has taken on operatic roles such as Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Giulio Cesare (*Giulio Cesare in Egitto*), and Orfeo (*Orfeo ed Euridice*). He is set to perform as Valletto in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with the Northwestern Opera Theater in May. Additionally, he has appeared as a guest soloist with the Eastman Horn Choir and the Sarzedo Wind Ensemble.

FAITH BEBOW *Emerging Artists Coordinator*



Pianist and Emerging Artists Coordinator **Faith DeBow** enjoys a vibrant performance and teaching career based in the Central Texas region. She serves as a Professor of Instruction at the Texas State University School of Music, where she teaches class piano and accompanying, and works with the choral program. She has a long-standing relationship with the choral ensemble Conspirare, and

has been honored with several GRAMMY® nominations from those collaborations. Faith often plays orchestral keyboard with such groups as the Austin Symphony Orchestra, San Antonio Philharmonic, and Mid-Texas Symphony.

Faith has had the privilege of performing in fifteen states and eight countries, including Iceland, France, and Denmark. She has recorded for Harmonia Mundi and PBS with Conspirare, and for Albany Records with tuba player Tim Buzbee. Faith enjoys bringing new music to life, and has worked with many composers. She holds a master's degree in accompanying and chamber music from the Eastman School of Music, and a bachelor's degree in piano performance from Butler University.

EMERGING ARTISTS PROGRAM

The Emerging Artists program (formerly the New Young Artists program) began in 1992 and has featured some of the nation's most promising young musicians. Past performers include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1992: Jana Holzmeier, David Blackburn | 2008: Taylor Baggot, Joey Kantor |
| 1993: Melissa Marse, Oliver Worthington | 2009: Catherine Clarke, Seth Lafler |
| 1994: Stella Keidann Hastings, Richard Gabrillo | 2010: Erin English, Thales Smith |
| 1995: Jill Bates, Garrett Maddox, João Lourenço | 2011: Dashon Burton, Nicole Greenidge, Hilary Janysek |
| 1996: Nina Keidann Revering, David Dillard | 2012: Estelí Gomez, Laura Miller |
| 1997: Hanan Alattar, Todd Keister | 2013: Jennifer Berg, Jane Leggiero |
| 1998: Diane Schoff, Carr Hornbuckle | 2014: Erin Calata, Patrick Kilbride |
| 1999: Matthew Oltman, Annie Su | 2015: Reese Farnell, Brian Giebler |
| 2000: Keith Gipson, Jennifer Needham, John Markert | 2016: Katya Gruzglina, Chloë Schaaf |
| 2001: Amy Cowan, Mela (Sara Jane) Dailey, Douglas Harvey | 2017: Emily Klein, Dillon MacIntyre |
| 2002: Jenifer Thyssen, Jorge Iván Gonzalez | 2018: Matthew Gillen, Natalie Magaña |
| 2003: Stephanie Moore, J.D. Burnett | 2019: Bruno Barbosa, Natalie Howard |
| 2004: Kathleen Ritch Brown, David Farwig | 2020: Erin Cameron, Matthew Shorten |
| 2005: Paul Max Tipton, Mark Dupere, Ivan Treviño | 2021: Holden Bitner, John Uzodinma |
| 2006: Jessica Anastasio, Dann Coakwell, Lauren Snouffer | 2022: Ivy Cantu, Anita Graef |
| 2007: Kathrine Schmidt, Jonathon Subia | 2023: David Womack, Brandon Berlanga |
| | 2024: Bobby Harris, Sam Higgins |

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ANTON NEL

Pianist

Sonata in D Major, K. 311
Allegro con spirito Andante
con espressione
Rondeaux: Allegro

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: (1756 - 1795)

Estampes
Pagodes
La soiree dans Grenade
Jardins sous la pluie

Claude Debussy: (1862 - 1918)

Theme Varié in A Major, Op. 89

Cecile Chaminade: (1857 - 1944)

Sonata in C Major, Op. 53 “Waldstein”
Allegro con brio
Introduzione: Adagio molto
— Rondo: Allegretto moderato
— Prestissimo

Ludwig van Beethoven: (1770 - 1829)



Winner of the 1987 Naumburg International Piano Competition at Carnegie Hall, **Anton Nel** continues to tour internationally as recitalist, concerto soloist, chamber musician and teacher. Highlights in the U.S. include performances with the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Chicago, San Francisco, Dallas, Seattle, and Detroit Symphonies as well as recitals coast to coast. Overseas he has appeared at the Wigmore Hall in London, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, and major venues in China, Korea, Canada, and South Africa. Much sought after as a chamber musician he regularly appears with some of the world's finest instrumentalists and singers on four continents. A gifted and dedicated teacher, Anton Nel is the Head of the Division of Keyboard Studies and holder of the Joe R. and Teresa Lozano Long Endowed

Chair at the University of Texas at Austin; starting in September 2025 he will also join the faculty of the Glenn Gould School in Toronto. During the summers he is on the artist-faculty at the Aspen Music Festival and School, and regularly teaches at the Steans Institute at the Ravinia Festival and the Orford Music Academy in Quebec. He also performs as harpsichordist and fortepianist each season. His recordings include numerous solo CDs, chamber music recordings (including the complete Beethoven and Brahms cello/piano works with Bion Tsang) , and works for piano and orchestra by Franck, Fauré, Saint-Saens and Edward Burlingame Hill. The Johannesburg-born Mr. Nel is a graduate of the University of the Witwatersrand, where he studied with Adolph Hallis, and the University of Cincinnati where he worked with Bela Siki and Frank Weinstock. His website is antonnel.com. Anton Nel last appeared at the Victoria Bach Festival in 2019 as piano and harpsichord soloist.

PROGRAM NOTES



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)
SONATA IN D MAJOR, K. 311
Allegro con spirito · Andante con espressione · Rondeaux: Allegro

Composed in 1777 during Mozart’s time in Mannheim, the Sonata in D Major, K. 311 is a delightful example of his early maturity and charm. The first movement sparkles with buoyant energy and classical poise. The lyrical Andante offers elegant phrasing and expressive nuance, while the final Rondeau is full of playful wit and grace, bringing the work to a cheerful close. Though written for Mozart’s student, the sonata is anything but simple—it’s a showcase of classical balance and crystalline virtuosity.

CLAUDE DEBUSSY (1862–1918)
ESTAMPES (1903)
Pagodes · La soirée dans Grenade · Jardins sous la pluie

In *Estampes* (“Prints”), Debussy evokes faraway places and vivid scenes through his impressionistic sound world. *Pagodes* captures the rhythmic textures of Javanese gamelan music, with layered sonorities and pentatonic melodies. *La soirée dans Grenade* conjures a sultry Andalusian evening, using Spanish rhythms and guitar-like effects on the piano. *Jardins sous la pluie* (“Gardens in the Rain”) is a dazzling display of virtuosity, depicting a sudden rainstorm in a French garden with rapid textures and fleeting children’s songs woven into the downpour. Together, these pieces are atmospheric and painterly, redefining what the piano could express.

CÉCILE CHAMINADE (1857–1944)
THÈME VARIÉ IN A MAJOR, OP. 89

Cécile Chaminade was a celebrated French composer and pianist whose lyrical style and technical brilliance earned her a large following during her lifetime. The *Thème Varié*, composed in the early 20th century, presents a graceful theme followed by a set of inventive and expressive variations. Each section explores different pianistic textures and moods, from tender lyricism to spirited brilliance. While Chaminade’s work was often overshadowed by her male contemporaries, pieces like this one affirm her artistry and flair as a composer of real distinction.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)
SONATA IN C MAJOR, OP. 53 “WALDSTEIN”
Allegro con brio · Introduzione: Adagio molto — Rondo: Allegretto moderato — Prestissimo

One of Beethoven’s most exhilarating piano sonatas, the *Waldstein* was composed in 1803–04 and dedicated to his patron Count Ferdinand von Waldstein. The opening Allegro brims with rhythmic drive and bold harmonic exploration. A brief, contemplative Introduzione prepares the way for the radiant Rondo, which builds from a simple, songful theme into a virtuosic and triumphant finale. The sonata marks Beethoven’s full embrace of the heroic style, with expansive forms and a sense of boundless energy. It remains a cornerstone of the piano repertoire for its technical demands and emotional sweep.



FINALE:

Thus Blew the Shepherd’s Horn: Music by Brahms, Gershwin & Contreras

Gershwin (1898 – 1937)
Rhapsody in Blue
Composed: 1924
Featuring Guest Artist: Anton Nel

Juan Pablo Contreras (1987)
Symphony No. 1 MyGreat Dream
I. Sueño Americano
II. Heavy Heart
III. Orgullo Mexicano
IV. Dos Patrias

INTERMISSION

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68
Composed: 1855–1876

- I. Un poco sostenuto – Allegro**
A dramatic and weighty opening with a slow introduction, leading into a turbulent and heroic Allegro.
- II. Andante sostenuto**
A lyrical and tender second movement, featuring rich harmonies and a poignant violin solo.
- III. Un poco allegretto e grazioso**
A graceful intermezzo rather than a vigorous scherzo—charming and subtly rhythmic.
- IV. Adagio – Più andante – Allegro non troppo, ma con brio – Più allegro**
The majestic finale begins with a solemn introduction before launching into a triumphant main theme often compared to Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy.”

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“MYGREAT DREAM” NOTES

Nineteen years ago, I embarked on a journey to pursue “MyGreat Dream” of becoming an orchestral composer. Like so many, I left my native country in search of a life filled with music and possibility in the United States. The summer of 2025, when my recently completed Symphony No. 1 is set to premiere, will mark the moment when I will have lived half of my life in Mexico and half in the United States. This personal milestone inspired me to compose a symphony in four movements, each tracing a chapter of my path: dreaming of America, navigating the challenges of a new land, celebrating my heritage, and embracing my identity as a Mexican-American composer with two motherlands.

The first of these movements, “Sueño Americano” (“American Dream”), evokes the longing and hope of a young composer seeking a musical life in a land where dreams take flight. The harp and crotales transport us to a dream-like world, while the orchestra hums a soft drone that seems to suspend time. A trumpet melody, first composed when I was eighteen as the theme of the orchestral work that opened the door to my music studies in the U.S., emerges like a fateful call from beyond. The movement weaves together quiet nostalgia for the Mexico I leave behind and vibrant jazz music that adds to the excitement of a new beginning.

The second movement pays tribute to the first American genre I fell in love with: Heavy Metal—a fast-paced, intense music that mirrors the anxiety and displacement I felt upon arriving in the U.S. I dusted off my old Gibson Les Paul electric guitar and tuned its four lowest strings like a cello (C–G–D–A) to compose the chromatic riff that drives this movement. To transform the orchestra into a metal band, I added a drumset and had the musicians sing operatic “ha-ha”s. As the energy builds, the clarinet unleashes a wild solo, echoing the guitar wails of Metallica’s Kirk Hammett. But as the title suggests, moving to a new country carried a “Heavy Heart.” A glimpse of Mariachi music, born in my hometown of Guadalajara, expresses the homesickness I carried with me, but the Metal roars back and propels the movement to an epic close.

An uneasy brass chorale opens the third movement, embodying the uncertainty and the search for belonging, purpose, and identity in a new land. The strings respond with a nostalgic melody, and soon the bassoon begins to “sing” a Mexican bolero, lighting the path toward embracing my “Orgullo Mexicano” (“Mexican Pride”) as a way to find my authentic voice as a composer. In America, I found a place where I could be

myself and where my Mexican heritage was not only welcomed, but truly valued. The music then celebrates this newfound pride with an exuberant return of the Mariachi theme introduced in the previous movement. A feeling of doubt awakens the Metal music, but it is soon overtaken by a passionate rendition of the bolero, carrying us toward a sense of home and peace.

Every May 25, musicians from San Diego and Tijuana meet at the border to take part in a day-long celebration of music and dance, known as the Fandango Fronterizo. For one day each year, music erases the divide, and my “Dos Patrias” (“Two Homelands”) feel like one. This spirit of brotherhood inspired me to write a fandango for the final movement of my Symphony. The timpani establishes the dance, and the winds introduce the main theme. It builds as the strings take it up, then the brass, until the entire orchestra joins in, eventually vocalizing gentle “oo”s in a choral expression of unity. The main themes from the previous movements return, driving the Symphony to a triumphant finale, a celebration of two homelands brought together through music and heart.

Symphony No. 1 “MyGreat Dream” is a tribute to my two homelands, and is dedicated to all of those who bravely pursue the migrant dream.

—Juan Pablo Contreras, April 2025



JUAN PABLO CONTRERAS,
Composer

Juan Pablo Contreras is a three-time Latin GRAMMY®-nominated composer who masterfully weaves Western classical and Mexican folk music into an exhilarating soundscape. His music has been performed by 60 major orchestras across the United States, Mexico, Austria, Slovakia, Colombia, Spain, Argentina, and Venezuela, as well

as in prestigious concert halls such as Walt Disney Concert Hall, Carnegie Hall, and Hollywood Bowl. He is renowned as the first Mexican-born composer to sign a record deal with Universal Music, to serve as Sound Investment Composer for Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and to win the Vilcek Prize for Creative Promise.

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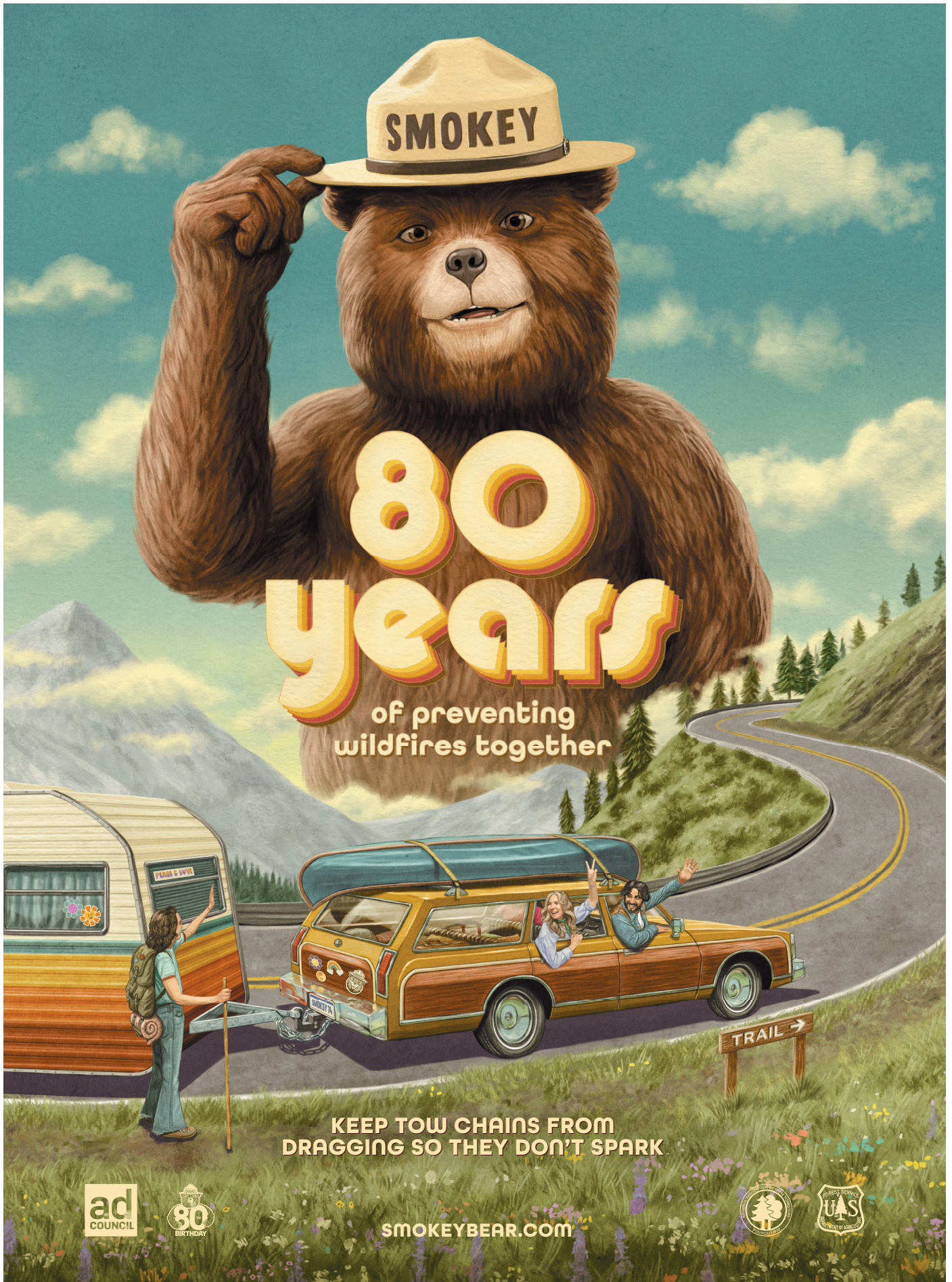
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