

FORBES CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®

School of Music

presents the

JMU Concerto/Aria Competition Finals

Sunday, November 9, 2025

2pm

Concert Hall



Program

Piano Concerto in F-sharp Minor, Op. 20

Alexander Scriabin
(1872-1915)

III. Allegro Moderato

Denzel Abarquez, piano
Ryan Walker, piano (orchestra)

Clarinet Concerto No. 2 in E-flat Major, Op. 74 Carl Maria von Weber
(1786-1826)

II. Romanze: Andante con moto

III. Alla Polacca

Geneva Maldonado, clarinet
Steven Brancalone, piano

Trumpet Concerto in E-flat Major

Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

I. Allegro

II. Andante

III. Allegro

Taylor Lowry, trumpet
Amy Robertson, piano

Viola Concerto in C Minor, Op. 25

York Bowen
(1884-1961)

I. Allegro assai

Sunny Robertello, viola
Gavin Ma, piano

Intermission (10 Minutes)

Program (continued)

Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major, S. 124

Franz Liszt

(1811-1886)

I. Allegro maestoso

II. Quasi adagio

III. Allegretto vivace – Allegro animato

IV. Allegro marziale animato

Gustavo Ballesteros, piano

Denzel Abarquez, piano (orchestra)

“Caro nome” from *Rigoletto*

Giuseppe Verdi

(1813-1901)

“Vaghe perle” from *Agrippina*

George Frideric Handel

(1685-1759)

Augusta Nafziger, soprano

Ryan Walker, piano

Trumpet Concerto in F Minor, Op. 18

Oskar Böhme

(1870-1938)

I. Allegro moderato

II. Adagio religioso

III. Rondo – Allegro scherzando

Micah Wingfield, trumpet

Amy Robertson, piano

Intermission (10 Minutes)

Cello Concerto in B Minor, Op. 104

Antonín Dvořák

(1841-1904)

I. Allegro

John Meshreky, cello

Ting-Ting Yen, piano

Program (continued)

“Smanie implacabili” from *Così fan tutte* Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

“Ah! spiegarti, oh Dio” Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Sydney Murrell, mezzo-soprano
Denzel Abarquez, piano

Flute Concerto Jacques Ibert
(1890-1962)

Daniel Esperante, flute
Steven Brancalone, piano

Adjudicators

Dr. Leanne Clement

General Director, Charlottesville Opera

Dr. I-Jen Fang

Professor of Percussion, University of Virginia

Principal Timpanist and Percussionist, Charlottesville Symphony

Dr. Kent McWilliams

Professor (Retired) of Piano, St. Olaf College & Kent State University

Mr. Isaac Melamed

Cellist, Garth Newel Piano Quartet

Co-Artistic Director, Garth Newel Music Center

Dr. Max Wharton

Associate Principal Bassoon (Retired),

The United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own”

The United States Army Orchestra

Biographies

Dr. Leanne Clement is the General Director of Charlottesville Opera, a professional opera company formerly known as Ash Lawn Opera. Now Charlottesville Opera, the company presents a summer season of two main stage productions, six concerts, and ten free educational events. It is also home to the Ader Emerging Artist training program. Charlottesville Opera, under Leanne's leadership, has expanded its programming to incorporate year-round events including free educational performances for school children, a concert series, and a new works program. Prior to taking this position in January of 2022, Dr. Clement was the General Director of Opera Louisiane, a position she held since 2011. During her time at Opera Louisiane, over 37,000 students saw a fully staged opera performance free of charge and the company's budget quintupled. Dr. Clement is a graduate of The School of Music at Louisiana State University, where she received her Doctor of Musical Arts as well as her Master of Music degrees in vocal performance. As a mezzo-soprano Leanne focuses on the dramatic roles of Verdi and Wagner. Always interested in education, while at LSU she co-founded LOOP, LSU Opera Outreach Program, directing and producing shows for collegiate singers to perform at local elementary schools. Leanne grew up in Louisa County and graduated from Louisa County High School in 1996. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in English from The College of William and Mary in Virginia with a minor in Music. She currently lives on her family's farm in Louisa with her husband Chris and daughter, Lorelei.

Described as an "intrepid percussionist" by Fanfare Magazine, **I-Jen Fang** has a career as a solo performer, chamber musician, orchestral player, and teacher. She joined the faculty of the Music Department at The University of Virginia in 2005 and serves as the Principal Timpanist and Percussionist of the Charlottesville Symphony. She received her B.F.A. from Carnegie Mellon university, M.M. from Northwestern University, and D.M.A. from the University of North Texas. I-Jen has performed or recorded with Keiko Abe, William Cahn, Christopher Deane, Mark Ford, Mike Mainieri, Ed Smith, Michael Spiro, Nanik Wenton, Nyoman Wenton, Attacca Percussion Group, EcoSono Ensemble, Cantata Profana, Da Capo Chamber players, Victory Hall Opera, and Charlottesville Opera. She is also a founding member, with Ayn Baliya, of the Piedmont Duo, which explores the sonic possibilities of the viola and percussion. In 2024, the duo was invited to perform in Hungary and Brazil and in 2026, the duo will travel to France.

I-Jen has performed as a soloist in Taiwan, the United States, Austria, France, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and South Africa. She has also appeared as a featured performer at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention, PAS Day of Percussion, DrumFest (Poland), International Viola Congress, The National Flute Association Convention, SEAMUS, TechnoSonics Festival, Greencastle Summer Music Festival, Staunton Music Festival, Wintergreen Music Festival, and Charlottesville Chamber Music Festival. I-Jen Fang is an Innovative Percussion, Sabian Cymbals, and Marimba One artist.

Dr. Kent McWilliams has enjoyed a successful performing career since his debut in Rachmaninov's Third Piano Concerto with the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra. He has been an award winner at competitions of Porto (Portugal), the Regina Symphony and the Canadian national Competitive Festival of Music. Kent has also performed live recitals and concertos on the CBC in Canada and the ABC in Australia.

Kent served as Professor of Piano at St. Olaf College for 18 years before accepting the position of Director of the School of Music at Kent State University. He recently moved to the Washington DC region where he teaches at the University of Mary Washington and privately at Main Street Music Studios in Fairfax, Virginia. He plays chamber music regularly with the Main Street Chamber Players. He has been profoundly dedicated to his students who have earned prizes at regional and national competitions in the US and Canada, including 15 students who won the Concerto Competition at St. Olaf College. Many of his students have gone on to successful careers as pianists and pedagogues at several universities across the US.

Dr. McWilliams has judged the national finals of the MTNA competition, the Canadian Music Competitions, and the Canadian Chopin Competition as well as numerous regional competitions and MTNA auditions in 25 states and provinces. Kent holds a Doctorate in piano Performance from the University of Montreal where he studied with Marc Durand. He studied in Poland with Andrzej Jasinski (head juror of the Chopin International Piano Competition) while researching the Polish folk elements in Chopin's Mazurkas for his doctoral dissertation. Kent also earned an Artist Diploma under Oleg Maisenberg at the Musikhochschule in Stuttgart, Germany and completed bachelor's and master's degrees with Boris Lysenko at the University of Toronto.

Cellist, **Issac Melamed**'s musical endeavors connect him to some of the greatest musicians and artists of our time. As a member of the New Century Chamber Orchestra, Isaac has toured internationally to critical acclaim under music directors Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and Daniel Hope. Since joining the Garth Newel Piano Quartet in 2014, Isaac and the Quartet have performed throughout Croatia, Scotland, Italy, at the Chautauqua Institution, and around much of the United States. The Quartet programs and performs over 50 chamber music concerts each year and directs numerous educational programs at the historic Garth Newel Music Center in Hot Springs, Virginia.

A San Francisco native, Isaac studied with Grammy Award-winning cellist Antonio Lysy in Los Angeles, where he enjoyed solo engagements with the UCLA Philharmonia and Symphony Orchestras, and the Los Angeles Youth Orchestra. Isaac received graduate degrees from Manhattan School of Music, studying with Alan Stepansky and David Geber, as well as training from Dmitri Ferschtman at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, Daniel Esser of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and Steven Isserlis and Miklos Perenyi at the Kronberg Academy in Germany. Isaac's cello was created for him in 2016 by Robert Brewer Young of Sentaraille a Berdot, France, on the model of the Marquis de Corberon Stradivari, 1726.

Dr. Max Wharton served as Associate Principal Bassoon with The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" and The United States Army Orchestra until his retirement in 2019. For 17 years he also performed with The U.S. Army Woodwind Quintet, touring throughout the U.S. and abroad. He has held positions with the American Festival Pops Orchestra, Fairfax Symphony, Arlington Symphony, Cedar Rapids Symphony and performed with numerous ensembles throughout the Washington, D.C. area. Max has taught applied bassoon at the Washington Conservatory of Music, George Mason University and Gettysburg College. He holds the Bachelor of Music in Music Education and Bassoon Performance from Cornell College (Iowa), the Master of Arts in Bassoon Performance, and the Doctor of Musical Arts in Bassoon performance and Pedagogy from The University of Iowa. Dr. Wharton performs on a bassoon made by Rudolf Walter.

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Dear Patron,

Thank you for attending this School of Music performance, we appreciate your support! The QR code below will take you to a page where you can donate to the Marlon Foster Scholarship. Marlon Foster ('82, '95) served in the United States Air Force, taught in Harrisonburg City Public Schools for 26 years, and taught percussion in the JMU School of Music. Marlon was awarded Teacher of the Year from Harrisonburg City Public Schools, and he was inducted into the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association's Hall of Fame.

