New Hampshire Music Festival

74th Season | July 7-30, 2026

A Musical Traverse

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WELCOME
from OUR MUSICIANS

Welcome to the 74th season of the New Hampshire Music Festival.

This summer's Musical Traverse will take you on a journey of Illuminations, Italian and American Summers, Romantic Horizons, and finish with Legends and Light. Our Artistic team and musicians are excited to share all of this with you.

This season we are again thrilled to partner with the Pemigewasset Choral Society. Elaine Hagenberg's *Illuminare* will start the season off with beauty and goodness and the hope of restoring a brighter and more peaceful future.

Speaking of brighter futures — next season is our 75th Anniversary! We are honored to have had the community's support over all of these years and to celebrate this special milestone next summer. We have big things planned and are looking forward to sharing more with you soon.

We could not have made it this many years without you! Thank you to our generous donors, audience members, our dedicated musicians, our Board, community volunteers, and our tireless administrative and office staff. The musicians thank each of you for your generosity, kindness, and support to keep classical music alive in New Hampshire for 74 years.

Enjoy our 74th season — it has something for everyone. We look forward to seeing you in your seats at concerts, meeting you for coffee, and talking with you on the streets of Plymouth. Let the summer begin with music, friendship, and continued connections.

Thank you for being part of NHMF!

Richard Kelly, *Artistic Lead*
and the musicians of the
New Hampshire Music Festival

WELCOME from OUR BOARD

Whether you journeyed here for the full orchestra or a chamber music concert, great music is your destination. WELCOME! You give meaning and purpose to the New Hampshire Music Festival's commitment to bring incredible classical music performances to the Lakes Region.

Many people have a stake in our success. Donors give us the wherewithal to provide artistic excellence and professional management. Josh Marshall guides the Board with legal counsel. Peter Adams is our marketing expert. Encore Society members know the value of leaving a legacy that will continue to enrich the community.

We are grateful to our musicians who programmed an excellent 74th Season for you and will share their talents in the Silver Center as well as out in the community. Special acknowledgment to Artistic Lead Richard Kelly, the Artistic Team, and the Library Team for their dedication to make our season possible.

We also extend gratitude to our hardworking staff: Executive Director Erin Brooker-Miller, Festival Administrator Melissa Vainio, Personnel Manager Joe LaPalomento, Stage Manager Jackson Lalos, and Ticketing/Marketing Assistant Brendan Sorrell.

Thank you for joining us on a musical traverse this summer. Just as our musicians love to perform for you, our Board loves working to make the music happen. It is a privilege to lead this outstanding musical organization.

Sincerely,

NHMF Board of Directors
Brenda Conklin, *President*
Chris Bierbrier, *Vice President*
Jay Buckley, *Treasurer*
Sally Jensen, *Co-Secretary*
Nicolasa Kuster, Co-Secretary
Mary E.M. Harris
Richard Kelly
Cynthia Vascak

WELCOME from WILLIAM GUNN

Week 1 Guest Conductor

I am thrilled and honored to be invited back to conduct the opening week of the New Hampshire Music Festival with the incredible NHMF/Pemi Festival Chorus. This would not be possible without the support of the Pemi Choral Society Board of Directors, particularly Susan Scrimshaw and Allan Stern for their logistical assistance in putting this choir on stage. I also want to express immense gratitude for all the singers who gave up their precious summer evenings to prepare this beautiful piece of music. It is clear that the musical community in Plymouth remains as strong as ever.

Illuminare is a modern masterwork. Commissioned in 2022, it has received praise from both singers and audiences from around the world. Hagenberg uses lesser known Latin texts to paint a picture of the human experience. Each movement weaves us through the ancient dichotomy of light and darkness, symbolizing the peace and turmoil in all of our lives. Hagenberg weaves the orchestral accompaniment beautifully to support this powerful story. From the opening flourish in *Splendor* to the pulsating rhythm in *Nox,* this piece is guaranteed to paint the dramatic shift of color and character.

Hagenberg brings us to the end of this incredible journey and leaves us with this universal prayer:

> *Illuminate those who in darkness*
> *And in the shadow of death are seated*
> *Direct our footpath in the way of peace.*

William Gunn
Guest Choral Conductor

WELCOME from CONNER GRAY COVINGTON

Week 2 Guest Conductor

Welcome to the 74th installment of this wonderful festival, and I am so excited to be a part of it this summer. As I'm sure you all know, America celebrates the 250th anniversary of its founding in 2026, and I don't know of many more pieces that are as quintessentially American as Samuel Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*. Barber's stunningly beautiful setting of James Agee's poignant poem is, for me, one of the greatest pieces of American classical music, and we're thrilled to have my good friend Ashley Marie Robillard as our soprano soloist. Ashley and I were students together at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia (where Barber also studied and taught for many years), and I can tell you from experience that it is an absolute joy making music with her; we are all in for a real treat.

Like the Barber, the first piece on our program is another example of art inspiring more art, but in this case, it was three pieces of visual art that inspired *Respighi's Trittico Botticeliano* or Botticelli Triptych. Each movement of Respighi's masterpiece was influenced by a painting of the great Italian Renaissance painter Sandro Botticelli, and Respighi's dazzling orchestration and inventive melodic lines make the music just as colorful as the paintings themselves.

To open the second half of the program, we have a piece by one of my absolute favorite living composers, Anna Clyne. Clyne's *Restless Oceans* was inspired by Audre Lorde's powerful poem "A Woman Speaks". This brief but powerful work packs a punch, and I think this line in the poem captures the tumultuous spirit of the music: "...look into the entrails of Uranus where the restless oceans pound." We'll close the program with one of the great Romantic symphonies in the repertoire, Mendelssohn's effervescent *Symphony No. 4,* his "Italian" Symphony. I once heard the opening of this symphony described as a champagne cork popping, and I can think of no better analogy to describe the bubbling energy of this masterpiece.

It takes so many people to organize a festival of this caliber from donors, board members, musicians, and staff, and of course none of it would happen without you, our audience. From all of us at the NHMF, thank you so much for joining us, and we can't wait to create musical memories together with you.

With gratitude,

Conner Gray Covington
Guest Conductor

WELCOME from SAMUEL LEE

Week 3 Guest Conductor

I am truly honored and grateful for the opportunity to join the New Hampshire Music Festival this summer as a guest conductor. It will be my first time visiting New Hampshire, and I am especially excited to experience its beautiful surroundings while making music together with all of you.

The program I will share with you brings together a rich and diverse musical journey, ranging from William Grant Still to Chopin and Brahms. Each work offers its own unique voice, yet they are all connected through a shared thread: melodies and songs that transcend borders and bring people together. In today's world, I believe we need these beautiful lines and expressive voices more than ever.

I am particularly thrilled to collaborate with Avery Gagliano, winner of the National Chopin Competition, in Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1. It promises to be a truly special and inspiring performance — one that I believe you can very much look forward to.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Festival and the entire team for the kind invitation and warm welcome. It is a privilege to be part of such a vibrant musical community.

I look forward to meeting you all very soon and to sharing a wonderful midsummer filled with great music together this July.

With warmest regards,

Samuel Lee
Guest Conductor

WELCOME from MAURICE COHN

Week 4 Guest Conductor

Dear Fellow Music Lovers,

It is an honor to be joining you this summer! This is my first time in New Hampshire, and I am thrilled to be performing with the incredible musicians of the New Hampshire Music Festival. Music has always brought people together, and to make great music in an environment like this is a true joy.

Storytelling has always been at the heart of music, from ancient troubadours to contemporary pop, and our program is all about music's power to spark the imagination. We open with Carlos Simon's *City of Light,* inspired by Romare Bearden's stained-glass window depicting an elevated subway train darting across New York City's skyline. In it, you'll hear the orchestra embody that irrepressible city energy. It was also in New York City that, a century earlier, Dvořák wrote his famous cello concerto, and soloist Nicholas Canellakis brings his powerful voice and narrative sensibility to this monumental work. Finally, our program concludes with one of the greatest celebrations of the power of stories, Rimsky-Korsakov's telling of *Scheherazade.* With extraordinary solos for just about every instrument in the orchestra, we are swept along Scheherazade's own journey (represented by the concertmaster's violin solos) and reminded of why we will always love to tell stories.

Thank you for being part of this festival and this community, and for showing us why music is so important in all our lives. It is a privilege to be here with you this summer.

Musically yours,

Maurice Cohn
Guest Conductor

2026 FESTIVAL MUSICIANS

VIOLIN

Charles Dimmick
Concertmaster
Alice Hallstrom
Acting Concertmaster Week 1
David Langr
Acting Concertmaster Week 3, Acting Principal Second Violin Weeks 1, 2, and 4
Ella Gray*
Assistant Concertmaster Dorothy & Alan Larsson Chair
Violetta Todorova*
Principal Second Violin
Kristin Van Cleve
Acting Assistant Concertmaster Week 1
Julie Fox Henson
Acting Assistant Concertmaster Week 2, Acting Principal Second Violin Week 3
Alana Carithers
Acting Assistant Concertmaster Week 3
Rebecca Willie
Acting Assistant Concertmaster Week 4
Phyllis Saunders
Kathy Langr
Kristina Handler
John Fetter
Viktoria Tchertchian
Lidija Peno-Kelly
Nicholas Pappone
Sai-Ly H. Acosta
Colin Davis
Sue Faux
Susan Jensen
Linda Johnston
Jana Kaminsky
Annegret Klaua
Emily Mullaney
Susan Shipley
Amy Sims
Brian Stuligross
Jonathan Sturm

VIOLA

Bernard Di Gregorio
Principal
Mary E.M. Harris*
Joan Ellersick
Michael Molnau
Chris Nunn
Julia Eiten
Rebecca Hallowell
Jana Kaminsky
Kimberly Lehmann
René Reder

CELLO

Walter Gray
Principal
Andrea Di Gregorio
Tido Janssen
Katie Kennedy
Andy Bryenton
Patrick Hopkins
Erica Pickhardt

BASS

Joe Higgins
Principal
Michael Lelevich
Eliot Porter
Nancy Kidd

FLUTE

Valerie Watts
Principal
Rachel Braude
Mary Kay Robinson*
Ashley Addington

OBOE

Shawn Welk
Principal
Andrea Hixon

CLARINET

Elizandro García-Montoya
Co-Principal
Bill Kalinkos
Co-Principal
Ryan Yuré
Acting Principal Week 3
Amy Advocat
Alexis Lanz

BASSOON

Nicolasa Kuster
Principal
Stephanie Busby
Stephanie Patterson

HORN

Molly Norcross
Principal
Clark Matthews
Acting Principal Week 1
Barbara Hill
Acting Principal Week 4
Scott Brubaker
Nina Miller*
Eileen Coyne
Maria D'Ambrosio
Karl Kemm
Robert Marlatt
Zach Monroe
Parker Nelson
Hanan Rahman
Sage Silé

TRUMPET

Grace O'Connell
Co-Principal
Wiff Rudd
Co-Principal

TROMBONE

David Loucky
Principal
Tanner Antonetti
Donald Robinson

TUBA

Velvet Brown*
Principal
Ryan Hayward
Acting Principal

TIMPANI

William Shaltis
Principal
Ed Murray
Acting Principal Week 2

PERCUSSION

Richard Kelly
Principal
Megan Arns
Acting Principal Week 4
Maria Finkelmier
Emily Miclon
Andy Miller
Eric Willie

HARP

Rachel Ferris
Principal
Erin Brooker-Miller
Acting Principal Week 3

PIANO

Leslie Amper
Principal
Stacy Kwak
Principal

Permanent Roster Members are in bold.

Section positions are listed by seniority except horn, which is listed in part order.

Substitute section musicians are listed alphabetically.

* On leave

NHMF/PEMI FESTIVAL CHORUS

SOPRANO

Suzanne Adams, *Laconia*
Kathy Andrle, *Nashua*
Marie Anne Baldwin, *Gilford*
Virginia Barunas, *Belmont*
Pansy Bloomfield, *Hollis*
Frances Chevalier-Smith, *Thornton*
Caty Cooper, *Cherry Hill, NJ*
Deborah Corr, *New Hampton*
Eileen Curran-Kondrad, *New Hampton*
Diane Dogherty, *Plymouth**
Kimberly DuLaurence, *Thornton*
Nancy Frost, *Gilford*
Dana Goldman, *Plymouth*
Kendra Goodwin, *Exeter*
Cindy Hess, *Waterville Valley*
Jenny Highland, *Bridgewater*
Sally Jensen, *Campton*
Sasha Kuftinec, *Bedford*
Barbara Kunz, *Campton*
Susan Laite, *Gilford*
Carrie Larrabee, *Tilton*
Sally Linfield, *Bridgewater*
Ava Markey, *Holderness*
Harmony Markey, *Holderness*
Krystal Morin, *Boston, MA*
Tiffany Newell, *Pittsfield*
Colleen O'Loughlin, *Campton*
Bette Ruyffelaert, *Center Harbor*
Susan Scrimshaw, *Thornton*
Carol Stewart, *Thornton*
Ericka Superchi, *Thornton*
Lois Wagner, *Campton**

ALTO

Robbin Adams, *Campton*
Kathy Archibald, *Warren*
Linda Ashford, *Bow*
Heather Baldwin, *Thornton*
Janis Bass, *Holderness*
Barbara Carpenter, *Bridgewater*
Melanie Cometa, *Ledyard, CT*
Becca Crivello, *Hudson*
Betty Dunn, *Windham*
Lin Everett, *Hebron*
Maria Gallagher, *Tuftonboro*
Kim Hamel, *Wolfeboro*
Mary Hazelton, *Hebron*
Mary Lloyd-Evans, *New London*
Sophia Markey, *Holderness*
Elizabeth McCormack, *Orford*
Tamara McGonagle, *Gilford*
Bev Newton, *Plymouth*
Ann Nichols, *Gilford**
Anita Ross, *Thornton**
Janet Sawin, *Center Sandwich*
Sara Willingham, *Concord*
Jonelle Wilson, *Laconia*
Hazel Zimmer, *Laconia*
Carol Zink, *Holderness*

TENOR

Graeme Burtis, *Plymouth*
AJ Coppola, *Thornton*
Gabrielle Crandall, *Center Harbor*
Ginny Gassman, *Moultonborough*
Gabriel Goldman, *Plymouth*
Ann Haralambie, *Silver Lake*
Christine Haswell, *Derry*
Richard Hochsprung, *Laconia*

Maureen Horgan, *Wentworth*
Mary Edith Kovach-Heise, *Campton*
Kyle Masterson, *New Hampton*
Gary McCool, *Rumney*
Virginia Seng, *Manchester*
Christopher Soule, *Bow*
Allan Stern, *Thornton**
Lauren Stuligross, *Meredith*

BASS

Steven Anglea, *Rumney*
Peter Bloomfield, *Hollis*
Burjis Cooper, *Cherry Hill, NJ*
Brad Dumont, *Boston, MA*
Derek Fletcher, *Ossipee*
Mike Gallagan, *Hudson*
Bill Gassman, *Moultonborough*
Dan Hale, *Plymouth**
Joe Heise, *Campton*
Matt McGonagle, *Gilford*
Ryan Picard, *Hollis*
Chris Schubert, *Campton*
Deene Stephenson, *Penacook*
Justin Stratton, *Hollis*
Ken Wells, *Andover*
Henry Wilson, *Laconia*
Bill York, *Hebron*
Kirk Young, *Tilton*

*Section Leader

Thank you to the Pemigewasset Choral Society for their partnership in making the July 9 performance of Elaine Hagenberg's* Illuminare *possible!

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Walter Gray
Orchestra Team
Katie Kennedy
Orchestra Team
David Langr
Orchestra Team
Molly Norcross
Orchestra Team
Shawn Welk
Chamber Music Team

LIBRARY TEAM

Phyllis Saunders
Michael Molnau
Kristin Van Cleve

INSIDE THE MUSIC

WORDS ON MUSIC

Thursdays | July 2026 | 6:00 PM

Silver Center for the Arts • Smith Recital Hall • Plymouth

Join us prior to the Classics Orchestra concerts to gain insights on the repertoire featured in that evening's concert.

July 9 — Tido Janssen
July 16 — John Fetter
July 23 — John Fetter
July 30 — Tido Janssen

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

NHMF's 2026 Words on Music Series is sponsored by the Roitman Family in memory of their parents, Betty and Harold, and brother Peter Roitman. Betty, Harold and Peter loved music. Attending the Festival was a highlight of summers spent at their family cottage on Stinson Lake.

30 Years
GREAT WATERS
SUMMER CONCERTS

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CONCERTS on the CLOUDS
at Castle in the Clouds

ARRIVAL FROM SWEDEN:
The Music of ABBA
SATURDAY, JULY 11 • 7:30 PM

NEIL BERG The 60's: Peace, Love, Rock & Roll
FRIDAY, JULY 17 • 7:30 PM

BLANK SPACE: Unofficial Taylor Swift Tribute
SATURDAY, AUGUST 1 • 7:30 PM

RHINESTONE COWGIRLS:
Legendary Ladies of Country Music
SATURDAY, AUGUST 15 • 7:30 PM

ONE NIGHT OF QUEEN
with Gary Mullen & the Works
SATURDAY, AUGUST 29 • 7:30 PM

CONCERTS in the TOWN
Downtown Wolfeboro

CHANTICLEER:
Our American Journey
FRIDAY, JULY 24 • 7:30 PM

MANDY GONZALEZ:
Sings Broadway
SATURDAY, AUGUST 8 • 7:30 PM

GENTLEMEN'S QUARTET
with guest vocalist
Erin Shields
THURSDAY, AUGUST 20 • 7:30 PM

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Est. 1969

Jenny Cooper,
music director

2025-2026
Our 58th Season

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FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERS

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Amy Berrier
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George Blaisdell
Jeremie Boomer
Kelly Bryer
Kenda Corcoran
Sally Coughlin
Andrea DiGregorio
Erin Duggan
Tyler Durham
Rodney Ekstrom
Jen Fairchild
Debbi Gibson
Danee Gosselin
Sally Gove
Chris Gowen
Devin Guild
Susan Hatem
Cindy Hess
Sally Jensen
Sondra Jones
Ann Kater
Lois Kessin
Julia LaFleur
Babs & Frank LaJeunesse
Tracy Lewis
Josh Marshall
Barbara McCahan
Claire McCahan
Molly McCahan
Alan Metevia
Jeannine Robbins Murphy
Bob Nadeau
Darlene Nadeau
Blair Newcomb
Holly Oliver
Kat Patchen
Leigh Ann Reynolds
Susan Scrimshaw
Laura Smith
Al Stewart
Toni Stewart
Brooke Wakefield
Deborah Wenger
Ken Wenger
Barbara Widger
Susan Williams
Shelly Zelbow
Monica Zulauf

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Katharina and Fred Kelsey
Ed LaPlante
Matty Leighton
Lois Kessin
Cynthia Vascak
Melissa and
Jukka-Pekka Vainio
Kim Winders

Special thanks to all of our weekly volunteer ushers and will-call volunteers for orchestra and chamber music concerts.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Across the Centuries

Tuesday | July 7, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Silver Center for the Arts • Smith Recital Hall • Plymouth

Giovanni Gabrieli (1557–1612)
arr. Robert King
Canzona per sonare No. 2 — 3'

William Byrd (1540–1623)
arr. Leonard Cecil
A Byrd Collection — 12'
I. Fantasia
II. This Sweet and Merry Month of May
III. Come Jolly Swains
IV. Retire My Soul

Grace O'Connell, trumpet | Wiff Rudd, trumpet
David Loucky, trombone | Donald Robinson, trombone

Johann Christian Bach (1735–1782)
Quartet in C major, Op. 19, No. 1 — 15'
I. Allegro
II. Andante
III. Rondo: Allegretto
IV. Allegro

Valerie Watts, flute | Shawn Welk, oboe
Bernard Di Gregorio, viola | Tido Janssen, cello

INTERMISSION — **20'**

Oskar Böhme (1870–1938)
Soirée de St. Petersbourg, Op. 23 — 5'

Wiff Rudd, trumpet | Erin Brooker-Miller, harp

Robert Schumann (1810–1856)
Adagio and Allegro, Op. 70 — 10'
I. Langsam, mit innigem Ausdruck
II. Rasch und feurig

Tido Janssen, cello | Stacy Kwak, piano

Alexandre Tansman (1897–1986)
Septet (1932) — 14'
I. Allegro molto
II. Lento
III. Presto

Valerie Watts, flute | Shawn Welk, oboe
Elizandro García-Montoya, clarinet | Nicolasa Kuster, bassoon
Wiff Rudd, trumpet | Bernard Di Gregorio, viola | Walter Gray, cello

WEEK 1
CLASSICS

Illuminations

Thursday | July 9, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Silver Center for the Arts • Hanaway Theater • Plymouth

Alice Hallstrom, *guest concertmaster*
William Gunn, *guest choral conductor*
NHMF/Pemi Festival Chorus

David Diamond (1915–2005)	**Rounds for String Orchestra** I. Allegro, molto vivace II. Adagio III. Allegro vigoroso	13'
Aaron Copland (1900-1990)	**Appalachian Spring Suite**	23'
	INTERMISSION	**20'**
Max Richter (b. 1966)	**On the Nature of Daylight**	5.5'
Elaine Hagenberg (b. 1979)	**Illuminare** I. Splendor II. Caritas III. Nox IV. Munera Pacis *Kyle Masterson, tenor* V. Illuminare His	24'

This concert is made possible through a partnership with the Pemigewasset Choral Society and support from Heart & Hands Thrift Shop.

LYRICS
ILLUMINARE

I. SPLENDOR

Saint Ambrose
(340–397)

Splendor paternae gloriae,
de luce lucem proferens,
lux lucis et fons luminis,
diem dies illuminans.

Splendor of God's glory,
brings forth light from light,
light of light, light's living spring,
Day, all days illuminates.

II. CARITAS

Hildegard von Bingen
(1098–1179)

Caritas abundat in omnia,
de imis excellentissima
super sidera,
atque amantissima in omnia,
Quia summo regi
osculum pacis dedit.

Love abounds in all,
from the depths most excellent
to beyond the stars,
and loving toward all,
she has given the highest king
the kiss of peace.

III. NOX

Traditional Greek
Aurelius Prudentius Clemens
(348–413)

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
Nox et tenebrae et nubila,
confusa mundi et turbida
Caligo terrae scinditur
percussa solis spiculo

Night and darkness and fog,
Confused world and turmoil.
Earth's gloom torn apart,
struck by the sun's piercing ray.

IV. MUNERA PACIS

Pope Gregory (540-604)
John 14:27

Ecce jam noctis tenuatur umbra,
Lux et auroae rutilans coruscat:
Supplices rerum Dominumcanora
Voce precemur:

Ut reos culpae miseratus, omnem
Pellat angorem, tribuat salutem,
Donet et nobis bona sempiternae
Munera pacis.

Behold, already night and shadows
taper off
Light and dawn sparkle and quiver
We humbly beg the Lord through song
Our voices pray:

Though we are guilty, view us with
compassion
Banish anguish, bestow health
Grant us everlasting goodness
Give us peace.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give
unto you: not
as the world giveth, give I unto you.
Let not your heart
be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

V. ILLUMINARE HIS

Canticle of Zechariah
(Luke 1:68-79)

Illuminare his qui in tenebris
et in umbra mortis sedent:
ad dirigendos pedes nostros in
viam pacis.

Illuminate those who in darkness
and in the shadow of death are seated
direct our footpath in the way of peace.

CLASSICS

Illuminations

Rounds for String Orchestra
David Diamond

David Diamond (1915–2005) composed *Rounds for String Orchestra* in 1944. Frequently performed, it is considered his most famous work. Diamond studied at the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Eastman School of Music, and the New Music School before continuing his studies with the renowned French teacher, conductor, and composer Nadia Boulanger. Following a 1966 performance of his *Piano Concerto* by the New York Philharmonic, he received numerous residencies, lecture opportunities, and teaching appointments, including positions at the Manhattan School of Music, Harvard University, the University of Colorado, the American Academy in Rome, and the Juilliard School.

A prolific composer, Diamond wrote eleven symphonies, several concertos, ten string quartets, and many other chamber works. He was also well known for his vocal music, including songs and choral compositions. *Rounds for String Orchestra* was composed primarily in June and July of 1944 and premiered on November 24, 1944, with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting the Minneapolis Symphony.

True to its name, the work follows the form of a round, in which each musical voice enters at different times with the same musical material, creating a sense of joyful imitation. Although written in three movements, the piece is performed without pause between movements. The string orchestra is arranged as separate and distinct choirs that engage with each other in a strict canonic fashion. Beginning with the violas who introduce the main musical subject, the cellos then basses follow in imitation.

The first movement, Allegro molto vivace, opens with energy and exuberance, while the middle Adagio provides a reflective contrast between the outer movements. The final movement, Allegro vigoroso, brings the work to a dramatic conclusion by unifying its themes. Critics have praised the piece for its "musical symmetry," balancing the energetic first and third movements with the more relaxed second movement. Diamond won the New York Music Critics Circle Award in 1946, and *Rounds for String Orchestra* became his most popular work.

CLASSICS

Appalachian Spring Suite
Aaron Copland

Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring Suite* (13-player version) is the intimate, original scoring of his Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece. Commissioned by famed choreographer Martha Graham, this work perfectly captures the optimism and vastness of the American pioneer spirit through the use of folk-inspired melodies and open harmonies.

The suite follows a young pioneer couple on their wedding day in a 19th century Pennsylvania settlement. It is composed into eight distinct sections and has four primary characters: the Bride, the Husband, a Pioneer woman, and the Revivalist. Musical themes of joy, celebration, war, and anxiety can be heard throughout. Even during the joyful celebration of the wedding day, worries of the new husband having to leave for war can be felt.

Copland spent most of his time promoting American composers and American music. He believed in the idea that music could be simple and accessible to the general public. In keeping with the idea of "music for all to enjoy," Copland incorporated a popular Shaker theme into *Appalachian Spring.* The theme *Simple Gifts,* and its variations, was written in 1884 and is generally attributed to be written by Elder Joseph Brackett from the Alfred Shaker Village in Alfred, Maine. *Simple Gifts* has become one of the most recognizable melodies in American classical music.

On the Nature of Daylight
Max Richter

On the Nature of Daylight is a contemporary classical composition by the German-British composer Max Richter (b. March 22, 1966). The composition was first released on February 26, 2004, on the album *The Blue Notebooks* and was recorded as a protest against the political, social, and personal brutality of the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The composition is often regarded as a "quiet" protest.

Richter evokes deeply beautiful, emotional, melancholy, and reflective feelings throughout the piece. This is achieved through the use of minimalist musical structure and hauntingly slow tempi. Unsurprisingly,

the composition has been used in numerous television and film scenes, the most famous of which is the movie *Arrival.*

Richter constructs the piece by building a "ground bass." The recurring bass line provides the foundation from which the melody evolves. Combined with a simple harmonic structure, a cyclical chord progression, and layered melodic ideas, the composition gradually builds before eventually dissolving back into its original beginnings. This form creates a palindromic structure.

On the Nature of Daylight is frequently cited as one of the most licensed pieces of modern classical music.

Illuminare
Elaine Hagenberg

IIluminare is Elaine Hagenberg's (b. 1979) first extended work, consisting of five-movements for SATB chorus and chamber orchestra. Using lesser-known sacred Latin texts, the piece takes us through a season of beauty and goodness that has been disrupted by darkness and confusion. But as Light gradually returns, hope is restored, illuminating our future and guiding us in peace.

With a majestic and bright opening in D major, *Iluminare* begins with a radiant flurry of 16th notes representing the entrance of Light. Then the voices enter in powerful unison, and the Ambrosian hymn text bursts into a punctuated and joyful "Gloriae" section.

The second movement features the women's voices and portrays a tender season of beauty. The elegant words of Hildegard von Bingen hearken back to an image of Eden—a time of goodness and purity. After a slow and gradual ascent to the word "pacis" (peace), a brief moment of the peace theme gracefully reappears in the cello, concluding with serene sustained tones.

Movement three takes a dramatic shift. Sensing an ominous shadow on the horizon, the choir sings the traditional Kyrie text (Lord have mercy). Then, a percussive B minor blast of fury disrupts the world as the text turns to "Nox et tenebrae" (night and darkness). Accented rhythms and mixed meter further create chaos, confusion, and despair.

In movement four, the darkness begins to fade and the peace theme emerges once again, yet this time lingering in a minor mode. The shadows of the night clear away

WEEK 1 NOTES — JULY 9

and the choir ascends to the word "Lux" (light). Yearning for the peace they once knew, the singers plead a heartfelt prayer, culminating in a dramatic crescendo to "munera pacis" (grant us peace). Then, suddenly, the music becomes still and calm. The peace theme that has been whispered throughout the work is finally revealed to be the voice of Christ gently assuring us: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you." The orchestra swells to affirm these comforting words, then concludes by echoing the beauty of movement two—now with a new hope of an even greater peace.

At the arrival of the final movement, joy is restored as the orchestra gradually returns to full force. Energetic rhythms support the soaring vocal lines as the choir sings from the prophecy in the Canticle of Zechariah: "Illuminare his qui in tenebris" (I luminate those in darkness). Then a return to brilliant D major and rhythmic material from movement one blaze forth to declare: Light has triumphed to guide us toward a brighter future.

2027 Marks 75 Years of the New Hampshire Music Festival!

We look forward to celebrating this milestone with you next summer. If you have memories and stories you would like to share about NHMF over the last 75 years or are interested in joining a planning committee to help make our anniversary year extra special, please send an email to:

festival75@nhmf.org

BEHIND THE BOW

Alice Hallstrom

Guest Concertmaster

Violinist Alice Hallstrom serves as concertmaster of the Vista Philharmonic Orchestra and Atlantic Symphony. She is also a section violinist with Bach, Beethoven and Brahms Society, and Boston Landmarks Orchestra. She has previously held the position of Assistant Concertmaster of the Portland Symphony and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic.

An active and versatile performer, Alice has appeared extensively with the Boston Ballet Orchestra, Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra, A Far Cry, Atlanta Symphony, Utah Symphony, and Rhode Island Philharmonic, as well as many other ensembles. A frequent soloist with the Vista Philharmonic, she has also performed concerti with orchestras across the United States.

In addition to her performances on the orchestral stage, Alice maintains an active presence in the chamber music and recording sectors. She has played with Camerata New England, the Semiosis Quartet, Vista Philharmonic Chamber Players, and performed and recorded extensively with Chamber Music Atlanta. Her recording credits include collaborations with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square, Cartoon Network, and artists such as Josh Groban and Natalie Cole.

Alice earned degrees from The Juilliard School, where she studied with Robert Mann, and from SUNY Purchase, where she was a student of Laurie Smukler. She resides in Bedford, MA with her husband Michael and their three children.

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BEHIND THE BATON

William Gunn

Guest Choral Conductor — Week 1

William Gunn is the director of music at Plymouth Regional High School where he conducts both instrumental and choral ensembles. Mr. Gunn is also the music director of the Pemigewasset Choral Society. He received his Bachelor of Music in music education from Ithaca College and his Masters of Music in conducting from Colorado State University. Mr. Gunn has studied conducting with Wes Kenney, Dwight Bigler, Steve Peterson, and Eric Hammer. Mr. Gunn serves as the High School Repertoire and Resources chair for American Choral Directors' Association Eastern Region.

Mr. Gunn's choirs have consistently received high ratings at local and regional festivals. Mr. Gunn finished his Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) at Plymouth State University in 2026. His research focused on choral improvisation and vocal self-efficacy in amateur singers. Mr. Gunn regularly guest conducts and adjudicates at local and regional festivals. In 2018, he was a Conducting Scholar at the Delaware Choral Academy in Aix en Provence, France. Mr. Gunn was the 2023 recipient of the NH ACDA Choral Director of the Year.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Paris in the Air

Tuesday | July 14, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Silver Center for the Arts • Smith Recital Hall • Plymouth

Bohuslav Martinů (1890–1959)
La Revue de Cuisine, H161 — 15'
I. Prologue
II. Tango
III. Charleston
IV. Final

Elizandro García-Montoya, clarinet | Nicolasa Kuster, bassoon
Wiff Rudd, trumpet | Alana Carithers, violin
Tido Janssen, cello | Leslie Amper, piano

Marie Clemence de Grandval (1828–1907)
Grand Trio for Piano, Oboe, and Bassoon — 19'
I. Andantino
II. Andante
III. Allegro vivace
IV. Allegro

Shawn Welk, oboe | Nicolasa Kuster, bassoon
Stacy Kwak, piano

INTERMISSION — 20'

Bill Marx (b. 1937)
Friends — 8'

Walter Gray, cello | Rachel Ferris, harp

W.A. Mozart (1756–1791)
Quintet in E flat for Piano and Winds, K. 452 — 26'
I. Largo – Allegro moderato
II. Larghetto
III. Allegretto

Andrea Hixon, oboe | Elizandro García-Montoya, clarinet
Stephanie Patterson, bassoon | Scott Brubaker, horn
Leslie Amper, piano

WEEK 2
CLASSICS

Italian & American Summers

Thursday | July 16, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Silver Center for the Arts • Hanaway Theater • Plymouth

Conner Gray Covington, *guest conductor*
Ashley Marie Robillard, *soprano*

Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936)	**Trittico botticelliano, P. 151** I. La Primavera II. L'adorazione dei Magi III. La nascita di Venere	18'
Samuel Barber (1910–1981)	**Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op. 24**	16'
	INTERMISSION	**20'**
Anna Clyne (b. 1980)	**Restless Oceans**	4'
Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)	**Symphony No. 4, Op. 90, "Italian"** I. Allegro vivace II. Andante con moto III. Con moto moderato IV. Presto — Saltarello	27'

LYRICS

KNOXVILLE: Summer 1915, Op. 24

It has become that time of
evening
When people sit on their porches,
Rocking gently and talking gently
And watching the street
And the standing up into their
sphere
Of possession of the trees,
Of birds' hung havens, hangars.
People go by; things go by.
A horse, drawing a buggy,
Breaking his hollow iron music
on the asphalt;
A loud auto: a quiet auto;
People in pairs, not in a hurry,
Scuffling, switching their weight
of aestival body,
Talking casually,
The taste hovering over them of
vanilla,
Strawberry, pasteboard, and
starched milk,
The image upon them of lovers
and horsemen,
Squared with clowns in hueless
amber.

A streetcar raising its iron moan;
Stopping;
Belling and starting, stertorous;
Rousing and raising again
Its iron increasing moan
And swimming its gold windows
and straw seats
On past and past and past,
The bleak spark crackling and
cursing above it
Like a small malignant spirit
Set to dog its tracks;
The iron whine rises on rising
speed;
Still risen, faints; halts;
The faint stinging bell;
Rises again, still fainter;
Fainting, lifting lifts,
Faints foregone;
Forgotten.
Now is the night one blue dew

My father has drained,
He has coiled the hose

Low on the length of lawns,
A frailing of fire who breathes...
Parents on porches:
Rock and rock.
From damp strings morning
glories hang their ancient faces.

The dry and exalted noise of the
locusts from all the air
At once enchants my eardrums.

On the rough wet grass
Of the backyard
My father and mother have spread
quilts

KNOXVILLE: Summer 1915, Op. 24

We all lie there, my mother, my
father, my uncle, my aunt,
And I too am lying there.
They are not talking much, and the
talk is quiet,
Of nothing in particular,
Of nothing at all.
The stars are wide and alive,
They seem each like a smile
Of great sweetness,
And they seem very near.
All my people are larger bodies than
mine,
With voices gentle and meaningless
Like the voices of sleeping birds.
One is an artist, he is living at home.
One is a musician, she is living at
home.
One is my mother who is good to me.
One is my father who is good to me.
By some chance, here they are,
All on this earth;
And who shall ever tell the sorrow
Of being on this earth, lying, on
quilts,
On the grass,
In a summer evening,
Among the sounds of the night.
May God bless my people,
My uncle, my aunt, my mother, my
good father,
Oh, remember them kindly in their
time of trouble;
And in the hour of their taking away.

After a little
I am taken in
And put to bed.
Sleep, soft smiling,
Draws me unto her:
And those receive me,
Who quietly treat me,
As one familiar and well-beloved in
that home:
But will not, oh, will not,
Not now, not ever;
But will not ever tell me who I am.

CLASSICS

Italian and American Summers

Trittico Botticelliano

Ottorino Respighi

Trittico Botticelliano (Botticelli Triptych) is a three-movement orchestral suite composed by Ottorino Respighi in 1927. The piece draws its inspiration from three famous paintings by Sandro Botticelli housed in Florence's Uffizi Gallery. The work is renowned for its Renaissance-inspired melodies, which are both delicate and atmospheric. The triptych comprises three movements, each corresponding to a specific Botticelli painting.

The first movement, *La Primavera* (Spring), depicts a painting containing nine figures from classical mythology occupying a flowery lawn in a grove filled with orange and laurel trees. Venus, the goddess of love and beauty, occupies the center of the painting. A blindfolded Cupid sits nearby, firing his arrow of love. Three minor goddesses dance in a circle, while Mercury, the messenger of the gods, is recognizable by his helmet and winged sandals as he touches a cloud with his staff. Pastoral dance rhythms, bird calls, and rustling naturalistic sounds signal the arrival of spring.

The second movement, *L'Adorazione dei Magi* (The Adoration of the Magi), depicts the Biblical story of the Three Magi following a star to find the newborn Jesus. The painting focuses on an altar with the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus, while Saint Joseph stands behind them. The Three Kings of the New Testament worship the Christ Child and present him with gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Respighi evokes a medieval aura by incorporating Gregorian chant and the ancient hymn *Veni Emmanuel* to bring this Renaissance nativity scene to life.

The painting inspiring the final movement, *La Nascita di Venere* (The Birth of Venus), features Venus at the center, standing behind an oversized scallop shell. To her left stands Zephyrus, the god of the wind, blowing gusts in radiating lines from his mouth. The wind sweeps Venus's hair and clothing to the right. On the opposite side, a female figure floats slightly above the ground, holding a rich red cloak as an offering to clothe Venus. She is one of the three minor Greek goddesses known as the Horae, or Hours, and appears joyful at Venus's arrival. Respighi musically depicts this scene by mimicking the gentle undulations of ocean currents with sweeping strings that gradually carry the goddess of love to shore upon her shell.

WEEK 2 NOTES — JULY 16

Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op. 24
Samuel Barber

From the time of his student days until his death in 1981, Samuel Barber has stood in the first echelon of outstanding American composers. While not exactly a household word, his reputation as a composer of elegant, finely-crafted art is stellar. His musical style is founded in the romantic traditions of the nineteenth century, whose harmonic language and formal structures were his point of departure. Unlike so many of his peers, he was not powerfully swayed by the modernism emanating from Europe after World War I, but pursued his own path.

Consistently lyrical throughout his career, it is telling that his songs constitute about two-thirds of his compositions in number. His vocal works include two major operas, *Vanessa* (1956), and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1966), the latter composed for the opening of the Metropolitan Opera House in Lincoln Center. He composed at least one work for almost every musical genre, and unlike most composers, he was a recognized and published composer from his student days.

Knoxville: Summer of 1915 was composed in 1947, and given its première by the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Like the best of vocal music, its success and reputation rests equally with the quality of the corresponding text. In this case, Barber chose selections from the prose poem by James Agee of that title that was first published in The Partisan Review in 1939. His poem has been called "arguably the most beautiful prose poem in English." Agee's heart-tugging evocation of simple childhood memories in the South, directly expressed through the gauzy mists of time, is irresistible to almost any reflective adult. It must be said that in this case, as in a great Schubert song, text and music here have met perfect artistic partners. Barber's sensitive, lush music aptly matches the equally lyrical words of Agee in a rhapsodic melding of imagery and sound.

The overall shape and form of the music is not so important as the palpable nuances of mood, tone, and imagery of the text. The light orchestration gives full opportunities to the colors of the woodwinds, horn, and harp in partnership with the discreet string section. When Agee wrote the poem, he was remembering the time just before his father was killed in an accident. When Barber set it, his own father was dying. There is a clear congruence in the context of both men's frame of mind. While there are some obvious examples of Barber's word painting in the music to reflect the exact text of the moment—as in the section setting the streetcar

reference—the overall tone and atmosphere is the key. There's no cartoonish "Mickey Mousing" of every word/music coincidence. Barber wisely varied the tempos and moods to suit Agee's text, and that generates the form and the agreeable variety of the work. And of course, he built it around unifying ideas and motives, but that's not the point of it all. Rather, it is the continuing weft of expressive, lightly-scored musical reflections of the implications in this magical, haunting memoir of childhood—and our universal resonance with it.

— Wm. E. Runyan

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Restless Oceans

Anna Clyne

Anna Clyne (b. 1980), a British-born composer, wrote *Restless Oceans* in 2018 for conductor Marin Alsop and the Taki Concordia Orchestra. The composition celebrates the resilience and strength of women. It was performed at the 2025 Nobel Prize Award Ceremony, where it gained homage and international recognition.

The inspiration for the piece comes from the poem "A Woman Speaks" by the American poet Audre Lorde. Lorde described herself as a "black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet, and activist." The full poem can be found in the score, although Clyne suggests that it was not specifically used to shape the structure of the composition. Instead, the poem is intended for the audience to read in order to help listeners experience and engage in a psychological connection to the music.

The piece opens with an energetic drive created by forceful all-downbow attacks in the upper strings. After this fiery opening, a more tender, though still forward-moving, section follows. Waves of arpeggios in the woodwinds are set against the expressive melodies of the violins and violas. Gradually, these individual lines expand into a larger musical chorus that eventually returns to the original fire and drive of the opening.

A calmer moment then emerges as the clarinets and bassoons recite a lyrical melody that slowly accelerates to mimic the ocean's restless pounding. The upper strings, woodwinds, and lower strings once again guide the music back to softer ocean swells. These gradually intensify

through ascending chromatic scales and increasing dynamic surges, ultimately driving the piece toward its "wild" conclusion.

Read "A Woman Speaks" by Audre Lorde

Symphony No. 4 in A Major, Op. 90 "Italian"
Felix Mendelssohn

Mendelssohn was a prodigy, born into a distinguished family of Jewish bankers and philosophers. He and his sister Fanny–also a talented composer, conductor, and pianist—were raised in a warm, intellectual, highly supportive artistic family. Mendelssohn was one of the most important German composers of his time, and infused the expressiveness of early romantic music with the clarity and intellectuality of Mozart and Haydn's classicism. This exquisite balance found expression in a wide variety of musical genres; Mendelssohn was as at home writing Protestant oratorios as he was composing chamber music and symphonies. He created a significant body of work in his relatively short life, including major works for orchestra that constitute an important part of today's repertoire.

Symphony No. 4, like *No. 3,* "Scottish," was composed in direct response to the sights and sounds of his well-known travels. As a superbly talented, and highly intellectual scion of a distinguished and wealthy family, Mendelssohn was encouraged by Goethe (and funded by his doting father) to take an extended tour of various European countries in the years 1829–31. Early in the tour he visited Scotland, the experience of which resulted in the afore-mentioned "Scottish" symphony, and the overture, The Hebrides (Fingal's Cave).

Moving on to Italy in May of 1830, he toured the major cities, including Rome, Naples, Venice, and Florence. In a letter to his sister, Fanny, he spoke enthusiastically of his "Italian" symphony, and characterized it as the "happiest piece I have ever written." Few would argue with that description, but it took a little while for its full realization. Upon his return to his native Germany, other affairs took precedence, but a commission from the Philharmonic Society in London for several works ensured the symphony's rapid completion by early 1833. The première was a great success, and a major contributor to the composer's popularity in Great Britain.

The first movement instantaneously sets the mood: if any music may be said to be joyous, this is it! The vigorous repeated notes of the woodwinds propel the leaping

WEEK 2 NOTES — JULY 16

theme in the strings—and Mendelssohn's reaction to the excitement and warmth of the Italian experience is palpable. Rhythmic drive pervades the whole movement, not lessened in the development section, where the composer's familiarity with J.S. Bach's contrapuntal wizardry comes to the fore. A few long held notes in the oboe heralds the recapitulation of a marvelously spirited and happy movement—no wonder it has almost become a cliché for those in the media who have appropriated it.

The second movement takes the guise of an Italian procession of some kind, walking along leisurely. It trudges along, borne above the pizzicato strings, with a middle section in a contrasting, somewhat lighter, mood, before returning to the tranquil, melancholy main tune, ending quietly. The third movement in the "old days" of late musical classicism would have been a minuet and trio, and Mendelssohn, ever the traditionalist, cheerfully supplies one. This tender movement comes from an untroubled land of gentility; the important part for the horns in the middle section stem from the newly-developing sound of German romanticism, so clearly heard in the works of the composer's countryman, Carl Maria von Weber.

The last movement takes us back to the vivacity and élan of Italy in its driving evocation of the scintillating native dance, the saltarello. Others have posited the presence of the tarantella, as well. Driving breathlessly along, never relenting, Mendelssohn's interpretation of these old, medieval frenetic dances is an exhilarating ride. Catapulting along to the climactic end, we sense dancers gradually reaching exhaustion, despite the constant rhythmic drive, only to reach down and pull out just enough energy to sizzle at the dynamic ending.

— Wm. E. Runyan

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BEHIND THE BATON

Conner Gray Covington

Guest Conductor — Week 2

Described by Yannick Nézet-Séguin as "a musician who lives the music", American conductor Conner Gray Covington performs an unusually broad repertory of symphonic, opera, and film repertoire ranging from Classical to the present day. In the 2025-2026 season, Covington debuts with the Boston Pops, Chicago Symphony, Houston Symphony, Las Vegas Philharmonic, New Jersey Symphony, and Phoenix Symphony. He also makes return visits to the North Carolina Symphony, Portland Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Sarasota Orchestra, and Tucson Symphony. Additionally, Covington returns to the Utah Symphony where he maintains a close relationship after completing a successful four-year tenure as Associate Conductor and Principal Conductor of the Deer Valley Music Festival.

During his tenure with the Utah Symphony, Conner conducted nearly 300 performances of classical subscription, education, film, pops, and family concerts as well as tours throughout the state and has returned several times each season as a guest conductor since 2021. Other recent guest conducting includes appearances with the Hawai'i Symphony, Knoxville Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Tallahassee Symphony, and Vancouver Symphony as well as the Bellingham Festival of Music and the Grand Teton Music Festival. Conner is a five-time recipient of a Career Assistance Award from the Solti Foundation US and was a featured conductor in the Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview presented by the League of American Orchestras.

Conner's recent concert engagements include Tchaikovsky *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture;* Mozart *Symphony No. 36, "Linz";* Elgar *Serenade for Strings;* Britten *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* and Mason Bates *Philharmonia Fantastique* with the San Diego Symphony; Rimsky Korsakov *Scheherazade* with the Knoxville Symphony; Dvorak *Symphony No. 8* and Mozart *Exsultate Jubilate* with the Tallahassee Symphony; Richard Strauss *Suite from Der Rosenkavalier* and Brahms *Symphony No. 2* with the Amarillo Symphony; and Ravel *Mother Goose* (complete ballet) and Mendelssohn *Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Bellingham Festival of Music.

CONNER GRAY COVINGTON

With the Utah Symphony Conner has conducted the world premiere of Quinn Mason *Trombone Concerto,* Richard Strauss *Don Juan,* Barber *Symphony No. 1,* Debussy *La Mer,* Haydn *Symphonies No. 49 and 88,* Dvorak *Symphonies No. 6* and *No. 8,* Beethoven *Symphony No. 1* and *Symphony No. 7,* Mozart *Symphonies No. 36, 39, and 40,* Mendelssohn *Symphony No. 3 and 4,* Handel *Messiah,* Ravel *Mother Goose Suite,* Stravinsky *The Firebird (1919 Suite),* Schumann *Symphony No. 3, 'Rhenish',* and Brahms *Symphony No. 2.*

Conner's operatic engagements include Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* for the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston; *The Rape of Lucretia* and the world premiere of Rene Orth's *Empty the House* at the Curtis Opera Theatre; and *Le Nozze de Figaro* for his debut with Utah Opera. He has also conducted more than twenty feature films with orchestra including *Frozen, Singing in the Rain, Casablanca, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Star Wars* and *Jurassic Park.*

Born in Louisiana, Covington studied conducting at the Curtis Institute of Music, Eastman School of Music, and the Aspen Music Festival where his primary teachers included Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Neil Varon, and Robert Spano. He graduated from the renowned High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Houston, Texas, and went on to study violin with Dr. Martha Walvoord and conducting with Dr. Clifton Evans at the University of Texas at Arlington where he graduated *summa cum laude* with a degree in violin performance.

Conner currently lives in Boston with his two cats, Razel and Oreo.

"…a musician who lives the music."

– Yannick Nézet-Séguin

MEET THE ARTIST

Ashley Marie Robillard

Soprano — Week 2

Ashley Marie Robillard is a dynamic artist celebrated for her compelling performances and versatility across opera, concert, chamber music, and cabaret. She has performed at prestigious venues such as the War Memorial Opera House, Jordan Hall, Verizon Hall, and the National Portrait Gallery, collaborating with esteemed organizations including Opera Philadelphia, Washington Concert Opera, Opera Lafayette, Opera San Jose, Opera Grand Rapids, Early Music Now, and the Amarillo Symphony. Her repertoire spans from the Seikilos Epitaph to the traditional operatic canon to contemporary premieres, earning her a reputation as a passionate interpreter and captivating storyteller across the ages. This year, she looks forward to debuts with the New Hampshire Music Festival, the Berkshire Opera Festival, and the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, a return engagement with the East Passyunk Opera Project.

Chamber music and recital work are central to Ashley's artistry. She has collaborated with ensembles including Dolce Suono Ensemble and Seraph Brass, toured with Curtis on Tour, and appeared in celebrated series such as Music From Angel Fire, Classical Movements, the La Jolla Athenaeum, and Music for Montauk. Her staged rendition of Italienisches Liederbuch toured to critical acclaim, and her extended collaborative work with composers and instrumentalists has brought innovative new works to life across several premieres with the likes of Fang Man, Dai Wei, and Alistair Coleman. Ashley equally thrives on smaller, smokier cabaret stages, where she has worked with The Bearded Ladies, Martha Graham Cracker, and Stephanie Blythe's drag persona Blythely Oratonio. Known for her playful yet powerful stage presence, she brings her own flair to an eclectic repertoire spanning Gershwin and Kurt Weill to Green Day and Carole King. Favorite escapades include performing French vaudeville and American classics with Don Flemons and exploring Emily Dickinson through the bluegrass lens of Tony Trischka.

ASHLEY MARIE ROBILLARD

An alumna of the Merola Opera Program, the Opera Philadelphia Emerging Artist program, the Wolf Trap Opera Studio program, and the Curtis Institute of Music, Ashley holds awards from the Gerda Lissner Lieder/Art Song competition, Opera Index, and the Orpheus Music Competition. Ashley seeks to continuously push artistic boundaries while enchanting audiences with her vibrant performances and boundless curiosity.

"Bright, charming, and bursting with energy and a silvery, powerful sound."

— Observer

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CHAMBER MUSIC

Landscapes of the Soul

Tuesday | July 21, 2026| 7:00 PM

Silver Center for the Arts • Smith Recital Hall • Plymouth

Pierre Gabaye (1930–2019)	**Récréation**	14'

Grace O'Connell, trumpet | David Loucky, trombone
Molly Norcross, horn | Leslie Amper, piano

Charles Martin Loeffler (1861–1935)	**2 Rhapsodies (1901)** I. L'Étang, "The Pond" II. La Cornemuse, "The Bagpipe"	22'

Andrea Hixon, oboe | Michael Molnau, viola
Stacy Kwak, piano

INTERMISSION **20'**

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)	**Piano Trio No. 2, Op. 67** I. Andante—Moderato II. Allegro con brio III. Largo IV. Allegretto—Adagio	30'

Lidija Peno-Kelly, violin | Tido Janssen, cello
Stacy Kwak, piano

WEEK 3
CLASSICS

Romantic Horizons

Thursday | July 23, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Silver Center for the Arts • Hanaway Theater • Plymouth

Samuel Lee, *guest conductor*
Avery Gagliano, *piano*

William Grant Still (1895–1978)	**Serenade**	9'
Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)	**Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11** I. Allegro maestoso II. Romanze — Larghetto III. Rondo — Vivace	43'
	INTERMISSION	**20'**
Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)	**Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op.73** I. Allegro non troppo II. Adagio non troppo III. Allegretto grazioso IV. Allegro con spirito	43'

CLASSICS

Romantic Horizons

Serenade
William Grant Still

Still was a pioneer for African-Americans in "classical" music composition; he was the first American black man in practically everything having to do with conducting and composing for symphony orchestras and opera companies. The scion of a distinguished family, he was a descendent of the famous 19th century abolitionist, William Still. While more fortunate members of the family bought their freedom or escaped north, his immediate family was left behind in slavery in the southernmost isolated county in Mississippi. He was born in Woodville, Mississippi in 1895 to a remarkable woman, who took him out of agrarian obscurity to Little Rock, Arkansas, where she went on to teach high school for many decades. She and his stepfather gave him great encouragement and created an artistic home environment in what were obviously difficult times for folks with their aspirations. With encouragement and apparently great ambition, he learned the violin, cello, and oboe, and at an early age attended Wilberforce University in Ohio with the goal of becoming a composer—especially for the symphony and opera. Soon thereafter, he enrolled in Oberlin College, and after military service in WWI, he accepted a position with W.C. Handy (composer of *The Saint Louis Blues*) in New York City.

His career there blossomed—while not achieving fame as a composer right away, he nevertheless worked at the highest levels of New York musical circles as an arranger. Radio and musical theatre became his métier, and a veritable Who's Who of musical luminaries became his associates: Paul Whiteman, Artie Shaw, Sophie Tucker, Noble Sissle, Eubie Blake—the list is impressive and long. Along the way he studied musical composition, most notably with the important early twentieth-century composer, Edgar Varèse. Soon a flood of works ensued, and his music ultimately was performed by groups such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic, and the BBC Orchestra, to name just a few. He left New York in the mid-1930s for Los Angeles, where he spent the rest of his life, and began another successful career arranging and composing for the film and television industry, but focusing on "serious" composition. From then on, a torrent of works ensued: operas, ballets, symphonic poems, orchestral suites, choral music, songs, and five symphonies.

WEEK 3 NOTES — JULY 23

Serenade was composed in 1957 for the Great Falls High School in Montana. Still's lifelong immersion in the stunningly diverse styles and demands of American popular music come to the fore here. That, his remarkable gift for melody, his mastery of orchestration, and skill at creating just the right musical atmosphere all bespeak of a distinguished career in stage, radio, and television. *Serenade* is cast into a conventional tripartite form that features the cellos in the opening with woodwinds leading in the more active diversion in the middle, returning to the initial material at the end. Still's gentle work is infused with thoroughly American harmonies and tunes, and is all his own.

— Wm. E. Runyan
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Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11
Frédéric Chopin

Piano Concerto No. 1 was written by 20-year-old Polish composer Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) in 1830. Chopin himself was the soloist for its premier concert at the National Theater in Warsaw. This performance was considered one of Chopin's "farewell" appearances before leaving Poland.

Interestingly, *Piano Concerto No. 1* was actually written after *Piano Concerto No. 2* but was the first of his two piano concertos to be published, hence the title. This piece is considered a masterwork of early Romanticism that showcases brilliant piano writing paired with clever lyricism. It consists of three movements.

The first movement begins with a lengthy and massive exposition. As suspense builds in the introduction, the piano finally enters. Momentum is continued through virtuosic piano passages with tender, lush, and vocal-style melodies. The second movement is slow, nocturn-like, and considered the "heart " of the concerto. Images of tranquil landscapes on a beautiful moonlit night is how Chopin describes emotions for this movement. A flavor for Polish national spirit makes an appearance in the finale. The energetic, syncopated folk dance from the Krakow region provides the primary rhythmic structure. Rapid-fire piano scales, rustic folk rhythms, and flourishing ornamentation are exchanged between each other to create an incandescent experience for the listener.

CLASSICS

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73
Johannes Brahms

The composers of the nineteenth century after Beethoven tended to divide themselves into two groups. The progressives were true "Romantics," and were greatly influenced by the extra-musical ideas that were the subjects of contemporary literature, poetry, and painting, among others. They devised new genres, such as the tone poems of Smetana and Liszt, the music dramas of Wagner, and the characteristic piano pieces of Chopin. This music was about "something"—meaning something familiar to human existence.

Others, Brahms most significantly, still adhered strongly to the musical philosophy that great music was simply about "itself," and required no extra-musical references for complete meaning. So, he continued to write "pure" or "abstract" music, like sonatas and symphonies. The example of Beethoven's music loomed for Brahms and he waited for decades after reaching musical maturity to essay his first symphony, completing it in 1876, when he was forty-three years old. It garnered sufficient success to be deemed the "Tenth," referencing Beethoven's nine in that genre, although it bears more comparison with Beethoven's fifth symphony.

It didn't take Brahms nearly so long to write his second symphony, and the mood of the work is a strong contrast to that of the mighty seriousness of the first. That is not to say that the second is not without a gravitas that is an essential part of the composer's musical personality. If anything, one could characterize this important work as "sunny." That being said, it's still Brahms, and therefore infused with melancholy—not tragedy, not sadness, just deep reflection upon the human condition. It was composed during the summer of 1877, while Brahms was vacationing in a particularly beautiful part of southern Austria, surrounded by inspiring mountains and tranquil lakes.

The first movement opens with a simple four-note motive in the low strings that forms the core of the piece. Only a consummate craftsman like Brahms could do so much with such a simple idea. The motive pervades the movement, and it's a cheerful and rewarding process to spot many variants of it as the music unfolds. The warmth and optimism of the opening has no sooner started, than unexpectedly there is a menacing timpani roll and quiet, sinister passage in the

WEEK 3 NOTES — JULY 23

trombones. Soon thereafter, the alert listener will spot Brahms' famous "Cradle Song" melody appearing as a major melodic element in the movement. The middle of the movement is a vigorous working out of all that we have heard, including some startling nastiness in the trombones, that remind us that all is not happiness and light. A varied review of all the familiar wraps up the movement, and we end calmly and securely in a soft chord of affirmation.

The second movement is one of Brahms' loveliest creations, beginning with the cello section spinning out an elegant line. The lyricism continues with other equally attractive tunes, and after a short development, the movement ends as tranquilly and softly as does the first. The third movement is a graceful evocation of a lighthearted walk. There are two contrasting sections that alternate: the first a gentle stroll—but almost slowly waltzing, and the second a rough, rather Beethoven-like scurry. Yet, for all the motion, this movement, too, ends quietly.

After all of this placidity, the time has come to "let'er rip," and the last movement opens in the strings with the quiet intensity of summer lightning on the horizon. A few simple, memorable themes carry this thing along, and while it is tempting to track them as Brahms works them around and about—it's not really about that process at all. It's about his uncanny ability to build and release tension, to kick you about with unexpected accents, to cross and re-cross the meters as he builds a tight and remarkable architecture that drives in a fury to the end. The so-called second theme becomes the primary element that relentlessly carries us to the final magnificent statement in the trumpets, and a blaze of a D major chord in the now optimistic trombones brings it all to a conclusion. There are few moments in all of music so glorious.

— Wm. E. Runyan

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BEHIND THE BATON

Samuel Lee

Guest Conductor — Week 3

Samuel Lee is the winner of the Malko Competition for Young Conductors 2024. Previously, he was awarded first prize winner of the BMI International Conducting Competition in Bucharest and the International Conducting Competition in Taipei. At the end of the 2024/25 season, he completed his tenure as Associate Conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony.

Lee's 2025/26 season includes his conducting debuts with the Iceland Symphony, Tonkünstler Orchestra, Aarhus Symphony Orchestra, Copenhagen Philharmonic, Malmö Symphony Orchestra, Turku Philharmonic, Kansas City Symphony, Norwegian Radio Orchestra, Bodensee Philharmonic, Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova as well as returns to the Cincinnati Symphony and Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, as well as the Korean National Symphony Orchestra, where he leads a tour to Japan's Tokyo Opera City and NHK Hall in Osaka. He also makes his first appearances with the Orquesta Cuidad de Granada and Arctic Philharmonic as soloist and conductor.

Amongst the orchestras Lee has conducted are Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Bamberger Symphoniker, Hamburger Camerata at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg and the Leipziger Symphonieorchester at the Gewandhaus, Symphoniker Hamburg, Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra, Frankfurt State Orchestra, Brandenburg Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, Bucharest Symphony Orchestra, Arad Philharmonic Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, KBS Symphony Orchestra and the SAC Festival Orchestra.

An avid promoter of contemporary music, Lee has conducted premieres by Bryce Dessner, Giuseppe Gallo-Balma and Marc Migó. He was also a conducting fellow with the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in 2021 and 2022.

Lee is an alumnus of Hochschule für Musik 'Hanns Eisler' Berlin, where he studied viola with Tabea Zimmermann and later, orchestral

SAMUEL LEE

conducting with Christian Ehwald. Lee completed his studies in orchestral conducting at Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg with Ulrich Windfuhr.

As a violist, Lee has performed as a soloist with orchestras such as the Baden-Baden Philharmonic, Münchener Kammerorchester, Bodensee Philharmonic, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, KBS Symphony and Korean National Symphony orchestras, and at the Schleswig- Holstein Music Festival and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Music Festival.

From 2009 until 2017, Lee was the violist of the Novus String Quartet, touring all over the world to venues such as the Berliner Philharmonie, New York's Carnegie Hall, Vienna's Musikverein, Kölner Philharmonie and Tokyo's Suntory Hall. He also was the second prize winner of the 61st International Music Competition of ARD Munich, and first prize winner of the Salzburg International Mozart Competition. He served as a viola professor at Hochschule für Musik und Theater 'Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy' in Leipzig, Germany until 2022.

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MEET THE ARTIST

Avery Gagliano

Piano

Celebrated as "a distinctive young talent" *(International Piano)*, pianist Avery Gagliano is recognized for interpretations with great emotional depth and a "distinctly narrative approach" (Miami International Piano Festival). Having first risen to international acclaim as the winner of the first prize and best concerto prize at the 2020 National Chopin Piano Competition, she has established herself as an artist to watch and has performed in prominent venues including Carnegie Hall, Warsaw Philharmonic Hall, the Louis Vuitton Foundation, Salle Cortot, Luxembourg Philharmonie, Konzerthaus Berlin, Ehrbar Saal in Vienna, and La Grange au Lac in Évian.

Avery's 2025–26 season includes performances with the Kansas City, Kalamazoo, and Galveston symphony orchestras and recitals at Wigmore Hall, Warsaw University, Kronberg Academy's Casals Forum, Washington Performing Arts, and California State University, Sacramento. Recent orchestral highlights include the Buffalo Philharmonic, Louisville Orchestra, Maryland Symphony, iPomeriggi Musicali in Milan, and the Wintergreen and Peninsula music festivals, as well as the Indianapolis Symphony and the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra as a finalist in the 2025 American Piano Awards. She has appeared at leading festivals including the Verbier, Gilmore, Aspen, Bravo! Vail, Sanibel, Duszniki, and Miami International Piano festivals. She has also performed collaboratively with ensembles such as Dover Quartet, Balourdet Quartet, and New York's Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players.

Avery's debut album, *Reflections* (Steinway & Sons, 2021), features repertoire at the heart of her music making, including works by Chopin, Haydn, Schumann, and Adès. Her interpretations of works by Chopin have been hailed as "revelatory" (New York Classical Review), while recent programs have featured her passion for Schubert's late piano sonatas and highlighted lesser-known works. Her performances have been broadcast across the United States and Europe on leading radio programs such as *Deutschlandfunk* and *SWR* in Germany, Chicago's WFMT, Philadelphia's WRTI, NPR's *From The Top,* and the celebrated

AVERY GAGLIANO

American Public Media show *Performance Today,* where she was a 2024 Young Artist in Residence.

Avery is a graduate of Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Robert McDonald, Gary Graffman, and Jonathan Biss. She is an alumna of Gstaad Piano Academy, Lieven Piano Foundation, Lang Lang International Music Foundation's Young Scholars Program, and Sir András Schiff's Building Bridges mentoring program. She currently resides in Germany and studies with Schiff as part of the Performance Programme for Young Pianists at Kronberg Academy, generously supported by the Henle Foundation.

Avery Gagliano is represented by Curtis Artist Management at Curtis Institute of Music.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Wit, Wonder, & Variation

Tuesday | July 28, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Silver Center for the Arts • Smith Recital Hall • Plymouth

Dorothy Howell (1898–1982)
Air, Variations, & Finale for Violin, Oboe, and Piano — 10'

Shawn Welk, oboe | Alana Carithers, violin
Leslie Amper, piano

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)
Sonata for Viola and Piano, Op. 120, No. 2 — 24'

I. Allegro amabile
II. Appassionato, ma non troppo allegro
III. Andante con moto – Allegro

Bernard Di Gregorio, viola | Leslie Amper, piano

INTERMISSION — 20'

Phillip Bimstein (b. 1947)
Cats in the Kitchen — 13'

I. Eggs and Toast
II. O Sole Meow
III. Where's your Mouse, McGee?

Valerie Watts, flute | Shawn Welk, oboe

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
String Quartet No. 5 in A major, Op. 18, No. 5 — 26'

I. Allegro
II. Minuet – Trio
III. Andante cantabile con variazioni
IV. Allegro

Jonathan Sturm, violin | Julie Fox Henson, violin
René Reder, viola | Andrea Di Gregorio, cello

WEEK 4
CLASSICS

Legends & Light

Thursday | July 30, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Silver Center for the Arts • Hanaway Theater • Plymouth

Maurice Cohn, *guest conductor*
Nicholas Cannelakis, *cello*

Carlos Simon (b. 1986)	**Profiles** III. City of Lights	5'
Antonin Dvořák (1841–1904)	**Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104** I. Allegro II. Adagio, ma non troppo III. Finale: Allegro moderato-Andante–Allegro vivo	40'
	INTERMISSION	**20'**
Nikolai Rimsky-Korsokov (1844–1908)	**Scheherazade, Op. 35** I. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship II. The Story of Kalendar Prince III. The Young Prince and the Young Princess IV. Festival at Baghdad. The Sea. The Ship Breaks against a Cliff Surmounted by a Bronze Horseman	42'

CLASSICS

Legends and Light

"City of Lights" from *Profiles*
Carlos Simon

Profiles is a short orchestral study in three separate movements based on the late visual art of Romare Bearden. Most of Bearden's work reflects African American culture in urban cities as well as the rural American south. Although Bearden was born in Charlotte, North Carolina, he spent most of his life in the Harlem area of New York City. With its vibrant artistic community, this piece aims to highlight the rich energy and joyous sceneries that Harlem expressed, as it was the hotbed for African-American culture.

III. City of Lights
Shortly before his death in 1988, Romare Bearden completed the project design for a stained-glass window in the Westchester Square station in the Bronx, New York. The work is based on a collage depicting an elevated train weaving in and out of a cityscape in Bearden's familiar Cubist interpretation of New York City street life. The experience of riding the elevated trains is central to Bearden's imagery. As he described, "To see the changing aspects of the city... the great buildings of midtown... and the tenements abutting the elevated lines. Like Edward Hopper, I drew inspiration from these sights." Likewise, I drew inspiration from the bright colors of the stained glass by composing fast moving music that features the brass section stabbing and jabbing under a bed of perpetually driving arpeggios in the strings.

— Carlos Simon

Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104, B. 191
Antonín Dvořák

Completed in 1895, Dvořák's *Cello Concerto* was the last concerto he composed. The concerto was not one of his favorite genres, notwithstanding his own ability as a public performer. The *Violin Concerto in A Minor* and this cello concerto are concert favorites these days, but the few other concerto compositions play a minor role in his oeuvre. This is somewhat surprising, considering that Dvořák was a prolific composer, who made significant contributions to almost every musical genre.

WEEK 4 NOTES — JULY 30

It would be a mistake to consign him primarily to the category of "nationalist" composers, an important conceptual tool in understanding the nature of nineteenth-century European art music. To be sure, he clearly thought of himself as a champion of Czech music, and he incorporated significant Czech musical, literary, and historical elements into his works. These essential elements of his artistic voice are near the core of his attractiveness to audiences worldwide—not just in his homeland. Yet, to focus inordinately on these elements would miss the mark in understanding the most important aspect of the nature of his music.

In short, Dvořák was a clear adherent of the artistic thinking of those composers of the nineteenth century who saw a fecund outlook for the tradition of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven in the fundamental way of composing. That is, an approach that emphasized classical forms and designs, integrated development of musical ideas, and a restrained and balanced expression that placed strong emphasis on music as an abstract art. Wagner, Lizst, and others embraced an exuberant style that emphasized exaggerated emotions, new forms, asymmetries, and motivic fragmentation. Dvořák stuck to modern reinterpretations of doing things the old-fashioned way, and in doing so, created marvelous works that stand equally the test of time with the works of the darlings of those who posit, "Change is good."

As most folks know, Dvořák spent most of the years from 1892 to 1895 in the United States, during which time several important works were composed, including his *"New World" Symphony* and the *Cello Concerto in B Minor.* Notwithstanding the conditions of its creation, there is nothing of the "new world" in this piece. It was composed for a friend, the important Czech cellist, Hanuš Wihan. One will hear the traditional three movements of a concerto, including a long orchestral exposition before the soloist enters. Of interest in the elegiac second movement is a quotation of a song by Dvořák that references his sister-in-law who was ill at the time, and soon passed away. He went on to insert the tune in the final movement, played by a solo violin. This marvelous concerto well deserves its popularity and reputation over the years, for it is a nigh perfect example of Dvořák's ability to meld virtuosic challenges to the soloist, his solid mastery of orchestral construction, and his innate melodic gifts. As one wag once said: [he seemed to just] "pull melodies out of his sleeve."

— Wm. E. Runyan

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Scheherazade, Op. 35
Nikolai Rimsky-Korsokov

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's career stood in the very center of Russian musical life in the second half of the nineteenth century. His first career was in the Russian navy, but he soon garnered success in music. Known primarily for his fifteen operas, he was instrumental in the rising importance of that genre in Russia. In addition to his fame and influence as a composer, he was also head of the conservatory in St. Petersburg. In the West, of course, we know him primarily for *Russian Easter Overture* and the tone poem, *Scheherazade.* His ability as an orchestrator and teacher of orchestration is one of his many legacies—Igor Stravinsky was one of his students. In fact, much of the marvelous musical atmosphere that audiences adore in Stravinsky's early ballets, the *Rite of Spring, Firebird,* and *Petrouchka,* lead directly back to Rimsky-Korsakov and the orchestral style of his operas. And it is of no small interest that there are sections in Debussy's *La Mer* and Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* that seem lifted right out of *Scheherazade.* A fascination with the exotic, and with non-Western subject matter was a prime characteristic of Romanticism, and Russian music of the late nineteenth century is exemplary of this predilection.

Scheherazade, completed in 1888, was inspired by the well-known story, *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights.* The eponymous heroine must entertain her bridegroom, the murderous sultan, with continuous intriguing tales in order to forestall the arrival of the executioner who had beheaded a thousand previous wives the morning after their successive marriages. The four movements—following their titles, which Rimsky-Korsakov later withdrew—allude to four stories of *Scheherazade,* the sultana. We can follow loosely the narrative, for Scheherazade is represented by the elaborate, highly figured violin solo that constantly weaves in and out of the texture as the stories unfold.

The first movement, "The Sea and Sinbad's Ship," opens with a bold stentorian motive, which one may be tempted naturally to associate with "The Sea," nevertheless Rimsky-Korsakov himself indicated that it depicts the bloodthirsty sultan. But soft woodwind chords—redolent of Mendelssohn—introduce the narrator in the form of the rhapsodic solo violin. The latter will be a guide throughout all four movements. The opening motive, the material in the "narrative" solo violin, and just a couple of other ideas, are all that the composer needs to weave out this little "tone poem" of the sea. The sultan, the sea, the ship, and Sinbad—it's all there in the rhapsody.

WEEK 4 NOTES — JULY 30

Our friend the narrative violin introduces the second movement, "The Story of the Kalendar Prince." The latter is one of three wandering mystics or dervishes, who lead a tough life. The composer shows his vaunted mastery of orchestration right in the beginning, with a solo bassoon playing a plaintive, peripatetic melody accompanied by only the basses, subdivided into four parts. The oboe and harp soon take it up, followed by a variety of imaginative treatments, interspersed by fragments of the "sultana" violin solo, given to other instruments. But, a vigorous interruption by the second trombone, and then the first, initiates the dance of the "whirling dervishes" (members of the Muslim Sufi cult with their characteristic long conical garb) that constitutes the rest of the movement. And, as before, it's all built on familiar motives, skillfully transformed.

The third movement, "The Young Prince and Princess," is built around a lyrical, warm, gently swaying tune, decorated with some swirling solo woodwind roulades. The composer's skill at orchestration keeps the simple, repeated material fresh. Clearly, it depicts an ardent romance between the youths, but their identity and place in the story is ambiguous. The more active middle section is dancelike, and cleverly based upon a rhythmic, spritely inversion of the previous "love" theme. Chattering woodwinds and light, crisp percussion carry it along. After a brief return to the opening theme, the solo oboe takes a crack at being the "narrator," before the real one, in the familiar solo violin, returns. The big peroration, replete with swirling scales for all follows quickly. A coda based upon the dance theme takes us to the gentle conclusion.

The fourth movement has a lengthy, descriptive title, "Festival at Baghdad. The Sea. The Ship Breaks against a Cliff Surmounted by a Bronze Horseman." Frankly it's hard to pick out these events in the music. This last movement ties all the tales and stories together by juxtaposing the principal themes from the preceding movements in a smashing climax. It opens with the powerful opening motive from the first movement, with the solo violin playing another brief cadenza. That leads to the spirited allegro that Rimsky-Korsakov marks "frenetic," with a deluge of notes, driven by the winds. The composer seems never to run out of ways to present the familiar themes, all spilling over each other in a riot of orchestral color as it careens along. Finally, the brass intones the stern motive that opened the suite, signaling the tale's conclusion. The last word is given to the musing of the narrating solo violin, with the cellos and the basses ominously, softly intoning the "Scheherazade" theme.

— Wm. E. Runyan

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BEHIND THE BATON

Maurice Cohn

Guest Conductor — Week 4

Acclaimed for his "depth, musicality, and expressive power" and for leading "sensational" performances with "exceptional colours", Maurice Cohn stands at the forefront of a new generation of American conductors. A three-time recipient of the Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award, he is currently the 11th Music Director of the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

Highlights of his 2025/26 season include debuts with the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra with TwoSet Violin, Würth Philharmonic with Hélène Grimaud, and Brussels Philharmonic with Alexandra Conunova. He also leads the Dallas Symphony Orchestra in a subscription week featuring Jan Vogler and Chad Hoopes.

Recent seasons have seen Cohn in debut engagements with the Filharmonie Bohuslava Martinů, Omaha Symphony, Utah Symphony, and the Syracuse Orchestra. He continues an ongoing relationship with the Colorado Music Festival and maintains a strong presence in contemporary music through collaborations with ensembleNEWSRQ and the Aspen Contemporary Ensemble.

Maurice served as the Assistant Conductor of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra under Fabio Luisi until the end of the 23/24 season, where he conducted notable performances including the world premiere of Mason Bates's *Philharmonia Fantastique* and a concert version of Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones.* He made his subscription debut in 2023, jumping in for Mo. Luisi on a program of Brahms, Antheil, and the world premiere of Jessie Montgomery's *Snapshots.* Cohn was also a two-time Assistant Conductor at the Aspen Music Festival, where he led the world premiere of Peng-Peng Gong's *Late Bells for Concertante Piano and Orchestra* with the Aspen Chamber Symphony.

Now, as Music Director of the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Cohn has quickly made his mark with artistic vision and community engagement. Appointed in June 2023, his tenure has included the orchestra's first performances of works by Duke Ellington, Louise Farrenc, and Kurt Weill;

MAURICE COHN

a return to opera after its nearly 20-year absence with a semi-staged production of *Carmen;* and genre-crossing concerts through a collaboration with NPR's *Mountain Stage.* Now in his third season, Cohn will direct a series of programs featuring soloists including Stephen Waarts, Hayoung Choi, and Barbara Nissman, among others. A significant highlight this season is a new commission by Gabriel Kahane, "If love will not swing wide the gates" to be premiered by clarinetist Anthony McGill.

Maurice is the recipient of the Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize and the Aspen Conducting Prize. He holds a Bachelor of Music in Cello Performance from Oberlin Conservatory and a Bachelor of Arts from Oberlin College, where he studied History and Mathematics. He received a Master of Music in Conducting from the Eastman School of Music.

MEET THE ARTIST

Nicholas Canellakis

Cello

Nicholas Canellakis is one of today's most sought-after and innovative cellists, whose career seamlessly blends traditional classical performance with boundary-pushing creative ventures. He performs internationally as a soloist and chamber musician and is also a composer/arranger, artistic curator, teacher, and filmmaker, with comedic digital content that has reached millions of views worldwide.

Recent highlights include concerto appearances with the Orlando, Virginia, Albany, Delaware, Stamford, Richardson, Lansing, and Bangor Symphonies, the Erie Philharmonic, The Orchestra Now, the New Haven Symphony as Artist-in-Residence, and the American Symphony Orchestra in Carnegie Hall. He tours extensively in recital throughout the US with his longtime duo collaborator, pianist-composer Michael Stephen Brown, with recent appearances in Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, the Four Arts in Palm Beach, New Orleans Friends of Chamber Music, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and Wolf Trap near Washington, DC.

A long-time artist of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, he appears regularly in Alice Tully Hall and on international tours, including at Wigmore Hall, the Louvre, the Seoul Arts Center, and the National Concert Halls of Shanghai and Taipei. He is also a frequent guest at leading festivals such as Santa Fe, Music@Menlo, Bridgehampton, La Jolla, Moab, Chamberfest Cleveland, and Rockport. As Artistic Director of Chamber Music Sedona in Arizona, he has revitalized the organization with dynamic programming, education initiatives, and community engagement.

An avid teacher, Canellakis is on the cello faculty of the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, his alma mater.

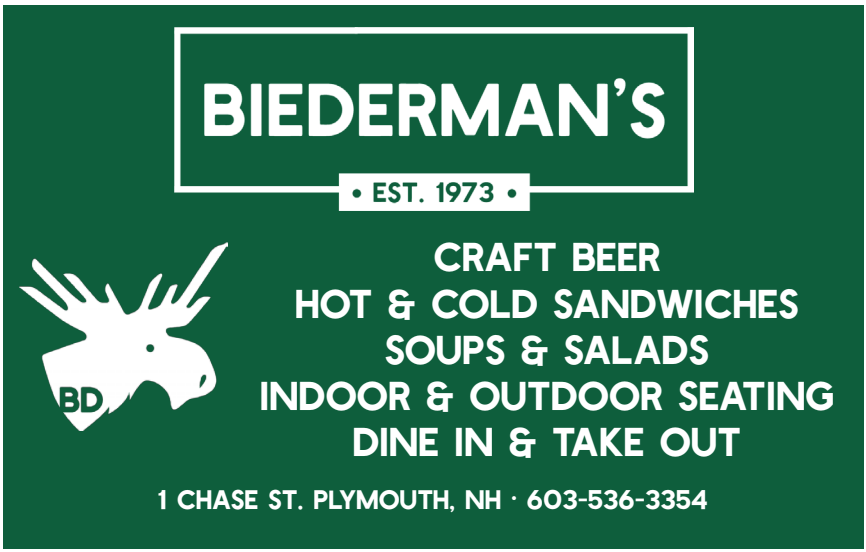
His latest album ***(b)romance***, featuring original compositions and arrangements with pianist Michael Stephen Brown, was released on First Hand Records in 2023.

NICHOLAS CANELLAKIS

Equally active beyond the concert stage, Canellakis is an accomplished filmmaker, actor, and comedian. His short films ***My New Cello*** and the award-winning ***Thin Walls*** were screened at major film festivals and are now available to stream online, while his comedic shorts and creative content have amassed over 40 million views across digital platforms. His unique ability to merge humor, storytelling, and music has made him a distinctive voice in the classical world and beyond.

A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and the New England Conservatory, Canellakis studied with Orlando Cole, Peter Wiley, Paul Katz, and Madeleine Golz. He began his Chamber Music Society career in the Bowers Program (formerly CMS Two) and was in residence at Carnegie Hall with Ensemble Connect.

He performs on a distinguished 1840 Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume cello.



MUSIC IN THE MOUNTAINS

Free performances open to the public

Music in the Mountains concerts are made possible through a grant from the Frederick Smyth Institute of Music, and with additional support from Lakes Region Fence, Owl's Nest Resort, and Taylor Community.

Waterville Valley Parade & Family Carnival

Saturday | July 4, 2026 | 11 AM & 1 PM

Waterville Valley, NH

Celebrate the Fourth of July with NHMF in the beautiful valley during the annual 4th of July Parade! The fun continues after the parade as NHMF musicians take to the stage at the Family Carnival.

Bob Marlatt, horn | **Grace O'Connell,** trumpet
Wiff Rudd, trumpet | **David Loucky,** trombone
Donald Robinson, bass trombone

Sharing the Spirit of America – America 250

Wednesday | July 8, 2026

Music begins at 5:40 PM, Reading begins at 6 PM

Plymouth Town Hall Lawn • 6 Post Office Square • Plymouth, NH

100+ Communities in all 50 states and the US territories are gathering for local readings of the Declaration of Independence — at the same time, on the same day (adjusted for time zones) — in commemoration of the first public reading of the Declaration on July 8, 1775. Organized nationally by America 250 Hawaii and locally by Plymouth Historical Society, NHMF musicians will provide fife & drum performances before and after the reading. Music will begin at 5:40 PM.

Valerie Watts, fife | **Richard Kelly,** drum

Concerts in the Community

Owl's Nest Resort

Wednesday | July 8, 2026 | 7:30 PM

Outdoor Entertainment Stage
40 Clubhouse Lane, Thornton, NH 03285

A perfect summer evening featuring NHMF's brass quintet at Owl's Nest Resort's Outdoor Entertainment Stage. Bring a chair or blanket.

Bob Marlatt, horn | **Grace O'Connell,** trumpet
Wiff Rudd, trumpet | **David Loucky,** trombone
Donald Robinson, bass trombone

Local Foods Plymouth

Thursday | July 9, 2026 | 3:30 PM

14 Fairgrounds Rd, Plymouth, NH

Join NHMF and PAREI for an afternoon of music, community, and fresh local flavor to celebrate our love of music and Local Foods Plymouth's 20th anniversary. Please bring a blanket or chairs. Celebratory anniversary cake and beverages will be available.

Have an old clarinet or trumpet sitting in your closet?
At this event, NHMF will also be accepting used band or orchestral instruments (no pianos) to support our Lonely Instruments in Need of Kids (L.I.N.K.) which matches instruments with local kids who want to learn to play.

Bob Marlatt, horn | **Grace O'Connell,** trumpet
Wiff Rudd, trumpet | **David Loucky,** trombone
Donald Robinson, bass trombone

Café Monte Alto

Saturday | July 11, 2026 | 10 AM

231 Main Street • Plymouth, NH

Start your Saturday with live music and fresh coffee!

Nicolasa Kuster, bassoon | **Stephanie Patterson,** bassoon

MUSIC IN THE MOUNTAINS

Hermit Woods Winery

Sunday | July 12, 2026 | 6 PM

72 Main Street • Meredith, NH

*An evening of fine wine and music! This event is free to attend, however, seat reservation and a $10 deposit that will be credited toward a food/beverage order is required. Space is limited to 60 individuals. Please visit our website, **nhmf.org/2026-festival/** to reserve your seat.*

Lidija Peno-Kelly, violin | **Tido Janssen,** cello
Elizabeth Higgins, piano | **Stacy Kwak,** piano

W. Rattlesnake Mountain

Friday | July 17, 2026 | 7 PM

Old Bridle Path • Route 113 • Holderness, NH

Bring a picnic and enjoy the scenery while listening to an NHMF Woodwind Quintet on top of W. Rattlesnake Mountain overlooking Squam Lake.

Gather at the trailhead at 6:15 PM to hike up with us! Old Bridle Path is a two-mile roundtrip path with approximately 450 feet of elevation gain. The trailhead is located along Route 113, about 5.5 miles north of Holderness. Please tread lightly while visiting the mountain and make sure to leave no trace. Thank you to the Squam Lake Association for their partnership in presenting this concert.

Valerie Watts, flute | **Andrea Hixon,** oboe | **Alexis Lanz,** clarinet
Nicolasa Kuster, bassoon | **Molly Norcross,** horn

Photo courtesy Julie Hishan Hart

Concerts in the Community

Café Monte Alto

Saturday | July 18, 2026 | 10 AM

231 Main Street • Plymouth, NH

Start your Saturday with live music and fresh coffee!

Nicholas Pappone, violin | **Katie Kennedy,** cello

Café Monte Alto

Saturday | July 25, 2026 | 10 AM

231 Main Street • Plymouth, NH

Start your Saturday with live music and fresh coffee!

Jonathan Sturm, violin | **Julie Fox Henson,** violin

Starr King Fellowship

Sunday | July 26, 2026 | 9:30 AM

101 Fairgrounds Road • Plymouth, NH

Join us in the beautiful sanctuary at Starr King Fellowship for a morning of chamber music.

Jonathan Sturm, violin | **Julie Fox Henson,** violin
Bernard Di Gregorio, viola | **René Reder,** viola
Andrea Di Gregorio, cello | **Leslie Amper,** piano

Taylor Community, Laconia

Monday | July 27, 2026 | 3 PM

Woodside Building • 227 Ledges Drive • Laconia, NH

Gather with friends and neighbors for an afternoon of music.

Jonathan Sturm, violin | **Julie Fox Henson,** violin
Bernard Di Gregorio, viola | **René Reder,** viola
Andrea Di Gregorio, cello | **Leslie Amper,** piano

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June 15, 2025 – June 14, 2026

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IN MEMORIAM — A TRIBUTE TO SOME NHMF
PAST PRESIDENTS

Dick Hanaway (1934–2023) | NHMF President: 2012–2014

A love for the performing arts led Dick and his wife Betty to choose the Hanaway Theatre as their substantial contribution to the construction of the Silver Center in 1990. Dick was a fearless risk-taker as an entrepreneur and in competitive sports. When the Festival faced a crossroads of extreme reorganization in 2008, he jumped in to lead the committee of loyal supporters to Save Our Orchestra Now (S.O.O.N.) As president he was a passionate cheerleader, decisive problem-solver, and ever-present concert-goer.

Ron Sibley (1943–2025) | NHMF President: 2009–2012
NHMF Board Member: 1977–79, 1981–82, 1989–2003

Ron loved singing in both the Festival Chorus and the Pemigewasset Choral Society. He and wife Eleesa hosted lavish after-concert parties for the entire chorus in their spacious home. Ron's Board service to NHMF started in the 1970s as a young banker at the Plymouth Guaranty Savings Bank. In 1988 he founded the Community Guaranty Savings Bank. His authoritative command of numbers, and his calm voice of reason put everyone at ease.

John Thompson (1938–2026)
NHMF President: 2015–18 | Advisory Board: 2014, 2019

To know John was to love him. His charisma, salesmanship, and British accent opened doors and pocket books. He brought experience and strategic focus from his business and nonprofit successes which breathed life and positivity into the Festival. With wife Carol, they founded a life-changing nonprofit, MasiCorp, servicing a black township in Cape Town South Africa, for which John was honored by the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) for "service to a community in the Commonwealth with long term impact."

Connie Widger (1925–2024)
NHMF President: 1981 | NHMF Board Member: 1972–1986

Connie loved to laugh and please people with her ideas. She made the stencils for NHMF's first t-shirt using the season's poster design. In 1976 NHMF clarinetist, Jack Graham, brought his student from Iowa, Ed Bailey, to work as Stage Manager. A few years later, he married Connie's daughter, Barbara Widger!

Gifts in memory are a nice way to honor past presidents, either individually or collectively, for their dedicated leadership. Be sure to designate your wishes "In Memory of" on your check or the online form.

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New Hampshire Music Festival | ENCORE Society

The Encore Society recognizes and honors Festival lovers who have planned to leave a gift to the New Hampshire Music Festival, ensuring the music of the Festival plays long into the future. There are several ways to include the New Hampshire Music Festival in your plans including bequests, beneficiary designations, or gifts of cash and property.

"One of my first jobs as a high school student was as a chambermaid for the musicians of NHMF being housed in Center Harbor in the summers of 1963-1965. My parents were the festival house managers. It was here that I met trumpet player Keith Johnson, married and returned every summer thereafter. We raised our children in this NHMF family. Keith played more than 50 years in the orchestra. We wish to keep his legacy and memory alive with our family's continuing support of NHMF. Let's give a round of applause for yet another encore."

Cecile Johnson

Interested in becoming a member of the Encore Society?

Visit nhmf.org/encore-society for information or contact Erin Brooker-Miller, Executive Director at erin@nhmf.org, 603-238-9007.

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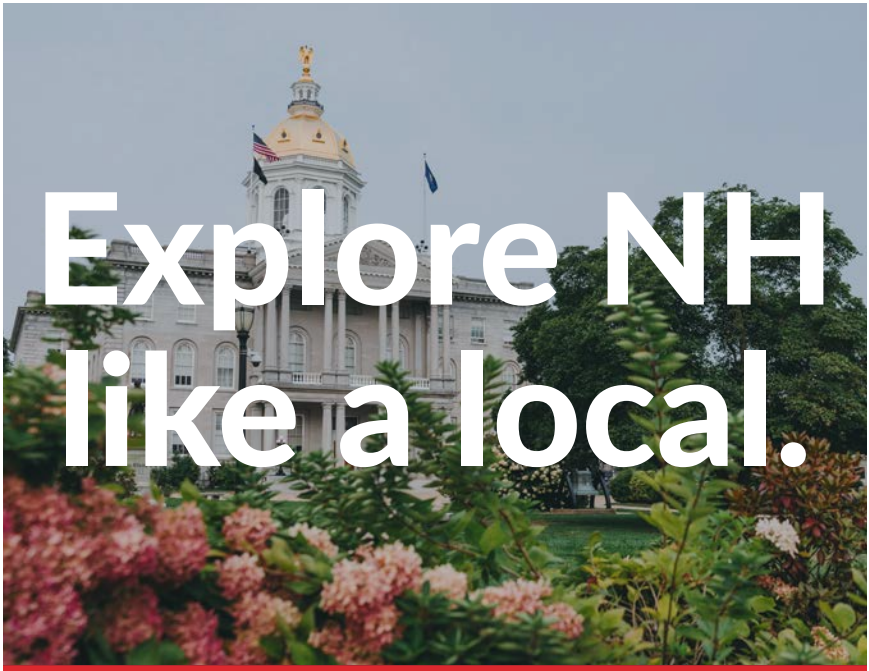

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