



Discoveries

Featuring the 54th

Young Musicians Concerto Competition Winners:

Mia Gribbon, Clarinet

Ian Li, Violin

Doris Lu, Violin

James Stuber, Cello

Sunday, April 28th, 2024

3:00 PM

Hamden Memorial Town Hall

Sponsored by Paul & Elizabeth Mathey



www.hamdensymphony.org

About HSO

Today's performance marks the conclusion of Hamden Symphony Orchestra's 62nd season! An all-volunteer orchestra of more than 80 musicians from the Greater New Haven area and beyond, Hamden Symphony members share a passion for rehearsing and performing great music together.

Founded in 1962 by Ruth T. Brooks, the Orchestra provides cultural enrichment to the community of Hamden, Connecticut through its series of concerts, its annual Young Musicians Concerto Competition (YMCC), the Ruth T. Brooks Scholarship Award, and the rewarding experience offered to its members and guest artists.

The Orchestra's commitment to the musical development of local students is a source of great pride. For the last 53 years the Hamden Symphony Orchestra's YMCC has provided an invaluable educational experience to gifted high school musicians in the area: the chance to perform as a soloist with a full symphony orchestra. The competition is held annually each winter, and the winners are featured at the Orchestra's spring concert. In addition, for over 40 years the Orchestra has honored a graduating Hamden High School senior who has demonstrated excellence in their musical studies with the Ruth T. Brooks Scholarship Award. The 2023 winner of this award was Jeffrey Ahn (Clarinet).

From 1969-2007, Hamden Symphony Orchestra was under the baton of Maestro Paul Gacek. To honor his distinguished leadership, continuing support and several return appearances to the podium in recent years, Maestro Gacek was officially designated Hamden Symphony Orchestra's "Conductor Laureate" in 2017.

In 2008, Vesna Mehinovic became the Music Director of Hamden Symphony Orchestra. Under Vesna's baton, the Orchestra has continued to expand, and has presented compelling and innovative concert programs, that have featured new compositions, talented instrumental and vocal soloists, and even dance and multimedia components. In 2016, 2018 and 2023, Hamden Symphony Orchestra was honored to be invited by the Town of Hamden to perform at its Independence Day Fireworks Celebration.

Hamden Symphony Orchestra

Vesna Mehinovic, Music Director

Sunday, April 28th, 2024
3:00 PM
Hamden Memorial Town Hall

Concert Program

Academic Festival Overture Johannes Brahms

Cello Concerto in E minor Edward Elgar
4. Allegro - Moderato - Allegro, ma non-troppo - Poco più lento - Adagio

James Stuber, Cello

Zigeunerweisen Pablo de Sarasate

Doris Lu, Violin

Intermission

Violin Concerto in A minor Alexander Glazunov
1. Moderato - 2. Andante sostenuto

Ian Li, Violin

Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F minor Carl Maria von Weber
3. Rondo: Allegretto

Mia Gribbon, Clarinet

An American in Paris George Gershwin

Please join us for a reception in the lobby following the performance!

Musicians of the Orchestra

Violin I

Stacy Shafer '09
Concertmaster,
The Ruth T. Brooks Chair

Kimberlee Arnett '23
Kayla Becknuss '23
Elizabeth Braddon '16
Ann Clemmons '10
Sabrina Ghadaouia '23
Max Hershkwitz '24
Gabrielle Liberatoscioli '22
Andrea Osburne '17
Anna Schnee '91
Frank Schnee '91
Xiangyu Shi '23
Tim Shizume '23
Amanda Zubek '22

Violin II

Jennifer Kroeger '24
Nancy Mangino '14
Joanna Novak '20
Micah Siegel '24
Robert Tavolieri '22
Avinash Veeraraghav '23
Eleanor Zagoren '22

Viola

Monica Ehrenfels '22
Bayliss Hall '24
Karen Kriner '13
Joy Snyder '05
Rolland Strasser '17
Anand Veeraraghav '23

Cello

Elizabeth Baldwin '17
Davi Bendavid '22
Dorthy Fang '19
Joe Harrison '23
Benjamin Kellenberger '23
Ryan Mitten '22
Tanya Townsend '17
Raffaella Zanetti '23

Bass

Andre Cardenas '24
Charles Gendrich '22

Flute

Ann Katis '23
Judith Kramer Koret '08
Linda Latimer '24
Mamie Wang '22

Piccolo

Judith Kramer Koret '08
Linda Latimer '24

Oboe

Terri Bennett '16
Misha Kummel '24
Allison Moskowitz Duggan
'23
Clara Wang '22

English Horn

Terri Bennett '16

Clarinet

Elizabeth Black '20
Anne Cory '14
Shire Feingold '17
Kathy Muench '15
Kimberly Vish Vock '20

Bass Clarinet

Elizabeth Black '20

Bassoon

Sam Bergstrom '23
Hannah Fraser '22

Soprano Saxophone

Brendan Cassidy '23

Alto Saxophone

Evann D'Adamo '18

Tenor Saxophone

Alex Horvath '21

Baritone Saxophone

Colin McTernan '23

French Horn

Mitch Dvoracek '23
Grace Kenney '16
Colin McTernan '23
Max Scalf '23
Michelle Scalzo '19

Trumpet

Jennifer Carlson '24
Olivia Enny '22
Jameson Forsythe '20
Kei Kohmoto '23
Steve Moskowitz '23
Christian Venturella '22

Trombone

Anna Franz '14
Benjamin Fraser '23
Bill Gambardella '92
Molly Gambardella '11
Ethan Romano '23
Alan Weide '22

Tuba

James Neely '14

Keyboard

Betsy Goldberg '15

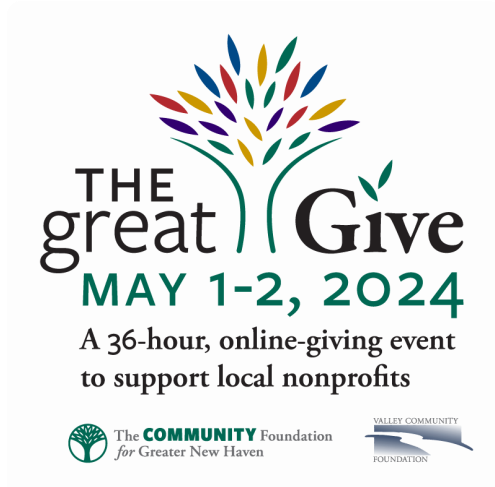
Timpani

David Liskov '10

Percussion

Christopher Bradley '24
Grace Brunner '23
Betsy Goldberg '15
Mitchell Rogers '22
Braeden Shizume '23
Adam Weber '21

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All donations received during the Great Give this Wednesday and Thursday earn us additional matching dollars and make us eligible for bonus prizes! To donate, visit:



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Play An Instrument or Sing?

Hamden Symphony seeks musicians interested in joining the group for their special summer concert and 2024-2025 season. Vocalists are also needed for the summer performance by audition.

Rehearsals will be Thursday evenings starting in late May (summer) and early September (fall). For more information and for the most up-to-date list of openings, visit:

www.hamdensymphony.org/join

Hamden Symphony Orchestra

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About the Performers



Mia Gribbon is a junior at Hamden High School, where she is president of the school's Tri-M National Music Honors Society chapter. She started playing clarinet seven years ago and currently studies with Julie Levene. Mia is the principal clarinetist of the Norwalk Youth Symphony and the 2024 winner of their concerto competition. Last year, she was first chair in the NAFME All National Symphony Orchestra and has been the principal clarinet in the CT All-State Orchestra for the last two years. She also placed second in the 2024 Marianne Liberatore Instrumental Competition. Mia attended the Tanglewood clarinet intensive last summer and will be returning there this year. In her free time, she enjoys playing lacrosse and volunteering at her local therapeutic riding center.

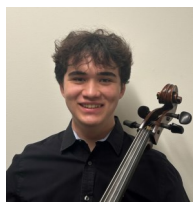


Ian Li lives in Waterford, CT and is a junior at Waterford High School. He has been playing violin for 12 years and studies with Kyung Yu of the Yale School of Music. He had previously studied with Jesse Holstein of Brown University. Ian has claimed first prizes in the 2021 Connecticut MTNA Junior Performance String Competition and the 2023 AACS National Fine Arts Competition small instrumental ensemble category. His other awards include second prize in the 2024 Wallingford Symphony Orchestra Mitchell Family Fund String Concerto Competition and third prize in the

2020 Bellagrande International Music Competition. He recently served as Concertmaster at the 2024 CMEA All-State Orchestra. Ian is enthusiastic in serving his community with his musical talent by performing at senior centers, weddings, and churches, as well as teaching violin at the Southern Connecticut Chinese School. He will study at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute this summer. Aside from violin, Ian captains his school's Science Bowl team and enjoys activities like birdwatching and cross-country.



Doris Lu is a 13-year-old 8th grader at Renbrook School. This Fall, she will be attending Phillips Academy Andover. She has been playing Violin since the age of 5, starting her journey at the Hartt School. Doris has been studying with Lu Sun Friedman for the past 2 years. She is currently a member of the Boston Philharmonic Youth Symphony. Recent awards and competitions she has won include the first prize at the Hong Kong International Violin Competition and the Italian International Violin Competition “Citta de Massa.” Additionally, she has achieved first place in the MTNA Junior Strings State Competition.



James Stuber is an 18-year-old American cellist from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. His love for the Cello began at a young age as he has been studying it at age six. He has been privately taught by Jonathan Kramer, Nancy Green, and Julia Lichten. During the summers, the Cello has taken him to many different destinations such as Boston University Tanglewood Institute, International Cello Institute, and Eastman Cello Institute. He has taken masterclasses from world-renowned cellists including Johannes Moser, Blaise Desjardins, Alan Harris, and Amir Eldan. James hopes to continue pursuing music in college and beyond.



Vesna Mehinovic has been the Music Director and Conductor of Hamden Symphony Orchestra since 2008. She began her formal education in music by receiving a diploma in Music Theory and Piano Teaching and Performing from the High School for Music in Sarajevo. She continued her Bachelor of Arts degree in Conducting and Music Theory at the Sarajevo Music Academy, and a Master of Arts in Conducting and Music Theory at Wesleyan University in Middletown.

Vesna has been the recipient of many honors in her native country, and is the first professional woman to conduct an orchestra in Bosnia and

Herzegovina. She specialized in Conducting at the Academy for Music and Stage Arts in Graz, Austria in the class of Milan Horvat. Ms. Mehinovic has also served as guest conductor for orchestras in Austria, Serbia, and Croatia.

While in the United States, she has worked with several church and non-religious choirs both in Connecticut and Arizona. As a music teacher Vesna has taught in many elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as having worked with college students at Yale and Wesleyan Universities. Currently, she teaches music and directs the Orchestra and Choirs at Sacred Heart Academy in Hamden. She is also the Conductor of the Quinnipiac University Orchestra, and Organist & Choir Master at St. Michael's Church in Naugatuck.

About the Artist

Van L. Nguyen received his art training at Southern Connecticut State University. He had a long and successful career in the financial industry prior to his retirement as a Vice President of Citigroup in 2010. He holds an MBA from the University of Connecticut, where he was elected to the honor society Beta Gamma Sigma. His art has been exhibited at the Ely House Gallery (Of Yale University) and at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven, Connecticut. His most recent exhibits have been at the Blackstone Library in Branford (2017) and at concerts in the Hamden Memorial Town Hall in Connecticut (since 2018). His artist's statement follows:

“We are living in a world of widespread human suffering from wars, Covid-19 pandemic, huge floods, and wild fires as well as daily economic anxiety. Whether this suffering is caused by man-made actions or natural events, it is easy to feel that darkness is rising and about to overwhelm us. We want desperately to see a brighter future. My painting of blooming flowers on a completely black background symbolizes my own hope that we will survive this period of darkness, and that love and kindness will triumph over anger and malice.”

Contact: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100008622541626>

Hamden Symphony Discoveries

When asked about their "discoveries" this year, HSO members responded:

This past year was my first one as an educator and I discovered that the day does not end at 2:30! Thank you to all my music teachers for helping me get here. *Christopher Bradley, Percussion*

I've discovered how much I want to keep exploring within the United States. I went on a trip to Missouri and Kansas last year. With that, I'd seen 22 states. I'd never thought of myself as a "see-all-50-states" person, but it just became my goal. I'm going to be seeing five more -- Tennessee, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana -- in June! *Anand Veeraraghav, Viola*

In the last year I've discovered the absolute joy of playing in an orchestra with my son! *Tim Shizume, Violin*

Cello is a shortened form of the Italian word violoncello which means small large violin. *Joy Snyder, Viola*

I've discovered the beauty of Mitski. *Anonymous Cellist*

The racing card game Nerts is super fun and competitive. It's also a great way to practice multi-tasking, an important skill for percussion. *David Liskov, Timpani*

I discovered how much I enjoy going to museums. There's a lot to learn, and it's an awesome opportunity to travel to places to see them. Of course, gift shops become the cherries on top! *Avi Veeraraghav, Violin*

Yoga is good for 65-year-old muscles, bones, and balance. Playing clarinet is good for a 65-year-old brain and maintenance of some sanity in our current world. *Kathy Muench, Clarinet*

The famous Nokia tune is from "Gran Vals" (Grand Waltz), a guitar solo piece composed by Francisco Tárrega in 1902. "He is considered to have laid the foundations for 20th-century classical guitar and for increasing interest in the guitar as a recital instrument." (Wikipedia). *Anonymous Violinist*

The relationships that we have developed with our sections and those around us. *Judith Kramer Koret, Flute & Piccolo*

We discovered that being first time grandparents is absolutely amazing. When your children have children of their own, well, what could be better than that? Love is it's own reward!! *Frank and Anna Schneer, Violin*

Program Notes

Composer, conductor and pianist **Johannes Brahms** (1833-1897) is considered one of the central figures of the Romantic era. He was born in Heide in the Holstein region of northern Germany to Johann Jakob Brahms, a musician, and Johanna Nissen, a seamstress. His family eventually settled in Hamburg after Johann was appointed a bassist in two orchestras there. His earliest music lessons on violin and cello were taught by Johann. At the age of 7, Brahms started piano lessons with Otto Cosell, who saw great musical potential but quickly noticed his proclivities toward composing. Both Cosell and his parents feared this would undermine a more stable career as a performer.

In 1845, Brahms began studies with Cosell's teacher Eduard Marxsen, an acquaintance of many notable German composers, including Beethoven and Schubert, and a scholar of the music of J.S. Bach. Marxsen sought to ground Brahms in the traditions of this lineage. Under the pseudonym G. W. Marks, works for piano, chamber ensembles and male choirs were published. Due to self-doubt, Brahms later destroyed many of these compositions.

Brahms was first employed as a piano accompanist to Eduard Reményi, a Hungarian violinist, who popularized the czardas folk dance style and later influenced Brahms' two sets of *Hungarian Dances*. While on a tour, Reményi introduced him to Joseph Joachim, a violinist and composer, and the two became friends. Joachim sensed a brewing conflict between Brahms, the traditionalist, and Reményi, who was a devotee of contemporary Franz Liszt and the "New School" movement, which Brahms detested. After a parting of ways with Reményi, he soon accepted Joachim's invitation to join him in Göttingen, Germany in the summer of 1853. Joachim would take courses in philosophy and history at the university there. Though Brahms never formally attended, he immersed himself in the university's camaraderie for those few months: spirited debates, reading, beer-drinking, and song-fests.

Akademische Festouvertüre (*Academic Festival Overture*) was one of two contrasting concert overtures he composed in 1880 (the other his *Tragic Overture*) in appreciation to the University of Breslau in Wrocław, Poland, who conferred upon him an honorary doctorate in philosophy. Bernhard Scholz, the Director of Music who nominated him for the



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award, desired a grand symphony to fit the solemnity of the event, but Brahms instead composed, in his words, “a very boisterous potpourri of student songs.” The piece embraces festivity more than solemnity as four popular student songs are quoted: “*Wir hatten gebauet ein stattliches Haus*” (“*We have built a stately house*”), “*Der Landesvater*” (“*Father of our Country*”), “*Was kommt dort von der Höh?*” (“*What comes from afar?*”) and the Latin hymn “*Gaudeamus igitur*” (“*Let us rejoice, therefore*”).

Brahms conducted the premiere at Scholz’s university on January 4th, 1881 as he was commended as “the leader in the art of serious music in Germany today.” This overture endures as one of his most-often performed compositions and is even referenced by film-composer Elmer Bernstein in his score to the 1978 cult-classic film, “*Animal House*.”

Edward Elgar (1857-1934) is viewed as one of England’s most important composers. Yet, influenced more by musical trends and styles from continental Europe than Britain, he saw himself as an outsider. The fourth of seven children, he was born in Lower Broadheath to William Henry Elgar, an organist, piano tuner and instrument seller, and Ann Greening. Like his siblings, who were all musically trained, he started violin and piano studies at the age of 8. A few years later, he composed music for a play that he put on with his siblings; years later he would reuse this music for his orchestral suites, *The Wand of Youth*. Except for brief studies in London with violinist Adolf Pollitzer, he never undertook formal training in music and composition; his parents were unable to afford him tuition to the Leipzig Conservatory.

Upon completing his general education, Elgar began clerking for a local solicitor, but left the position to attempt a career in music as a violinist, accompanist and teacher. Soon after, he was hired to conduct and arrange for the staff band at a local psychiatric hospital, which would accompany dances (polkas and quadrilles) for its patients. The varying combinations of instruments available gave him invaluable experience in orchestration. He also took up bassoon and honed his skills writing and arranging for wind quintets. His appointment in 1882 as a professional violinist in William Stockley's Orchestra in Birmingham provided him a great foundation to learn orchestral music over the next seven years, and the opportunity to premiere his *Sérénade mauresque*. In 1889 he married Caroline Alice Roberts, a former pupil who was a literary author. Upon

their marriage, she would become his business manager and promoter as well as an internal sounding board and critic for his compositions. With her encouragement, they moved to London, where Elgar devoted himself fully to composition, but it wasn't until 1899 that he achieved wide acclaim with the success of his *Enigma Variations*.

The Cello Concerto in E minor is one of Elgar's final completed works and dates to 1919, after the end of World War One. That year Carl Fuchs, cellist of the Brodsky Quartet, reminded Elgar about an offer made to him 20 years prior to compose for the cello at some point. The deeply melancholy concerto was premiered by the London Symphony Orchestra that October under conductor Albert Coates. A lack of adequate rehearsal time given by Coates made for a sloppy performance and proved disastrous to the critics. Elgar was impressed though by the soloist Felix Salmond, who performed well in spite of Coates' lack of preparation. The work gained much more appreciation in the mid-twentieth century and is now one of the most-performed cello concertos in the repertoire.

Considered one of the most talented violinists of the Romantic-era, **Pablo de Sarasate** (1844-1908), frequently composed for his instrument. He was born in Pamplona and began learning violin from his father Don Miguel, a local bandmaster. By 8 years old, Sarasate was giving recitals, and with a patron's support, he began formal lessons under Manuel Rodríguez Saez in Madrid. A few years later, Sarasate transferred to the Paris Conservatory, where at the age of 17 he won their highest award. Upon completion, he toured Europe, North America and South America and attracted the attention of many notable composers who dedicated pieces to him, including Édouard Lalo and Camille Saint-Saëns.

Zigeunerweisen (*Gypsy Airs*) is a showpiece he composed in 1878. It is in a one-movement form, but has four sections with distinct tempos. Each melody is inspired from folk songs, though some of are misattributed to Romani origin and draw from Hungarian popular songs.

Alexander Glazunov (1865-1936) is regarded as one of the most influential composers, teachers and conductors in the late-Romantic era

in Russia. Born in Saint Petersburg, he began studies in piano at 9 years old and composition soon after. Mily Balakirev, who was in the group of nationalist composers, “The Five,” recognized Glazunov’s skills early on, and brought his music to fellow-composer, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. As his teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov would be so impressed with Glazunov’s progress that he soon considered him to be his junior colleague.

Composer Anatoly Lyadov introduced Glazunov to Mitrofan Belyayev, a philanthropist, who organized concerts to perform Glazunov’s music and eventually created a publishing house. Belyayev selected Glazunov along with his mentors Rimsky-Korsakov and Lyadov to form a council that would select other rising composers to publish, a group known as the Belyayev Circle. Glazunov rose quickly in fame across Europe and was appointed the director of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory in 1905.

The *Violin Concerto in A minor* was written a year prior and dedicated to violinist Leopold Auer, who premiered the work in 1905 with Glazunov himself conducting the Russian Music Society. The concerto carefully balances technical virtuosity with lyricism and emotional depth. With a larger orchestration, the accompaniment provides a full complement to the solo part. Also unconventional for its time, its sections flow seamlessly together without pauses.

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) was a composer, conductor, pianist and music scholar of the early Romantic era in Germany. He was born in Eutin in the Holstein region of northern Germany to Franz Anton, a violinist and conductor, and his second wife Genovefa Brenner, a singer. Franz Anton wished for his son to follow in Mozart’s path as a child prodigy and started him on piano and singing at the age of 4. In 1796, he moved to Hildburghausen and studied with oboist Johann Peter Heuschkel. The following year brought him to Salzburg, Austria where Michael Haydn (the younger brother of Franz Joseph Haydn) agreed to teach him for free. At 12 years old, he moved to Munich and focused on the operatic genre, studying both singing and composition. His first opera, *Die Macht der Liebe und des Weins* (*The Power of Love and Wine*), was completed in 1799, but like many of his early works ended up lost.

Though primarily known for operas, Weber composed a number of works for the concert-hall, which included several concerti for wind instruments. He developed a particular fondness for the Clarinet, which

only by the start of the 19th century had progressed in its technology to be widely accepted as an instrument of the orchestra. In 1811, on a concert-tour across Europe, Weber met the virtuoso clarinetist, Heinrich Bärmann, a musician in the court orchestra of Munich, and became close friends. He wrote the one-movement *Concertino for Clarinet in E-flat major* in just three days for Bärmann to perform at a concert organized by the King of the Bavarian State. Its successful premiere that April led to a commission by the King to compose two more works for Bärmann. The *Concerto No. 1 in F minor* premiered just a few months later in June 1811 to further acclaim.

George Gershwin (1898-1937) is one of the most-performed composers in American music; his work encompasses classical, opera, jazz, musical theater and popular song. Born as Jacob Gershwine, he was raised in a Brooklyn apartment, his parents having immigrated from eastern Europe. He was introduced to music at the age of 10, when he attended a friend's violin recital, and soon started dabbling on the piano his parents purchased for his brother Ira. He began lessons with Charles Hambitzer. When he was fifteen he began working for a music publisher as a "song plugger" (a pianist called upon to demonstrate new sheet music for a customer). He then worked for the Aeolian Company (a piano manufacturer) and Standard Music Rolls, where he recorded piano rolls and even began writing his own. In the early 1920's his first Broadway shows opened, *Piccadilly to Broadway* and *For Goodness' Sake*.

After the acclaimed 1924 premiere of *Rhapsody in Blue*, in 1926 Gershwin ventured to Paris hoping to study with Maurice Ravel. Ravel rejected him stating "Why be a second-rate Ravel when you can be a first-rate Gershwin?". In 1928, Ravel accepted his invitation to tour the United States. This visit reignited Gershwin's fascination with the city (another trip followed that year with Ira) and his goal to compose a follow-up piece to "Rhapsody." A short melody he drafted on his first visit, "very Parisienne," emerged as the basis for *An American in Paris*. Gershwin called it a "rhapsodic ballet" and employed a massive orchestration, including four types of saxophones, celesta and taxi horns to evoke the frenzied Parisian streets. It premiered that December at Carnegie Hall with Walter Damrosch conducting the New York Philharmonic.

Program notes by David Liskov.



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Among the many percussion instruments Gershwin calls for in *American in Paris* are four pitched taxi horns to mimic the sounds of Parisian street life. Gershwin specifically circled the letters "A", "B", "C" and "D" above each horn figure in his manuscript. Whether he intended for those letters to be the actual pitches projected or merely a code for which horn to

squeeze has become a topic of recent debate. Evidence to the latter includes a 1929 audio recording under Gershwin's supervision where the pitches are a more dissonant "A-flat", "B-flat", "A" and "D". Today's performance uses the more traditionally consonant set of "A", "B", "C" and "D" pitched horns manufactured by Kolberg Percussion of Germany and sourced by San Francisco Symphony Orchestra percussionist, James Wyatt of California Percussion.



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Where are you from and when did you move to Connecticut? I am originally from Cliffwood Beach, New Jersey but moved to Connecticut five years ago in 2019 to attend the University of New Haven for my bachelors and masters degrees.

What do you do for school or work? I am currently finishing my Master's of Science degree in Civil Engineering and will be graduating in May of 2024.

When did you start playing your instruments? I first started playing Percussion in 5th grade. And then in High School and College I started playing Tuba, Euphonium, Trombone, Trumpet, French Horn, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, and Alto, Tenor and Baritone Saxophone.

Other than classical, what other types of music do you like to play or listen to? Besides classical music I also enjoy playing jazz music.

Favorite musical experiences with HSO or elsewhere? My favorite musical experience with HSO is playing Baritone and Soprano Saxophone for this concert in *An American in Paris*.

Favorite concerts you've attended? My favorite concert I've attended was when I got to see the New York Philharmonic perform *The Planets* suite by Gustav Holst and when they performed the score to *E.T* by John Williams.

Favorite composer(s) or composition(s)? My favorite composer of all time is Frank Ticheli and my favorite composition is his piece titled *An American Elegy*.

Any other hobbies or fun-facts? Some of my hobbies outside of music are hiking and reading. I also have two fun facts; I own an 88 year old working Tenor Saxophone. I was one of the tuba players in the marching band in the new *Mean Girls* movie.



Avi Veeraraghav, Violin

Where are you from? I was born and raised here in Connecticut, and I've spent most of my life in (and currently live in) Monroe. So, I've mostly been right here for a little more than 28 years! That said, I did live in Parma, Ohio from August of 2021 through May of 2023 – this picture was taken before one of our concerts while I was a member of the Parma Symphony Orchestra.

What do you do for work? I am the Epidemiologist with the Milford Health Department. I started there just a week after moving back to Connecticut.

When did you start playing your instrument? I started in the fall of 2005 as a fourth grader – so, I'll be coming upon 20 years next year.

Other than classical, what other types of music do you like to play or listen to? As a longtime fan of Pokémon and Downton Abbey (one of those tends to surprise people, the other not as much), I adore the music from both of those franchises and will often warm-up by practicing tunes from them. Besides those, I listened to music by Train and Queen a lot back in my undergraduate days at UConn and my Master's days at the University of Bridgeport respectively, and still do from time to time.

Favorite musical experiences playing with HSO or elsewhere? Thus far in the HSO, I enjoyed being a judge for the YMCC and am looking forward to doing that for many years to come. Outside of it, I've had experiences that range from humorous to terrifying to all sorts of other emotions – be it performing at the Stamford Palace Theater with the UConn Symphony Orchestra or meticulously getting through programs with the UConn Chamber Orchestra (shoutout to Anand, Kim, and Joeanna as fellow alumni!) – but I will go with one from December 5th, 2013. As a part of the Greater Bridgeport Youth Orchestras' Principal Orchestra, I got to perform at Carnegie Hall for a special Christmas-themed concert. Safe to say I'll remember that for the rest of my life.

Favorite concerts you've attended? One that I saw on April 28th, 2023 – exactly a year before this concert we're playing in today – stands out for a special reason. This was a concert done by the Cleveland Orchestra at the Severance Center with Franz Welser-Möst conducting. The program included Julius Eastman's *Symphony No. 2*, Wynton Marsalis's *Trumpet Concerto* (with Michael Sachs as the soloist), and it was rounded out

with Antonín Dvořák's *Symphony No. 9, 'From the New World'*. The reason why this performance stood out and felt so personal to me was that it was earlier that day when I got my job offer from the Milford Health Department. Dvořák's *New World* was, in a sense, ushering me to my own 'new world' which was in fact my old world with a new twist.

Favorite composer(s) or composition(s)? The aforementioned Dvořák, along with Tchaikovsky and Brahms are three of my favorites to the point that I display their pictures at my desk at work (plus, a bust of Tchaikovsky adorns my desk at home). My favorite compositions mostly comprise of symphonies that I've performed – so, Tchaikovsky's 5th, Schumann's 4th, Sibelius's 2nd, Brahms's 2nd, and Dvořák's 6th (his 9th soon to join). Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* is also a favorite as Anand and I played the Presto movement with our high school orchestra.

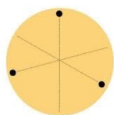
Any other hobbies or fun-facts? I enjoy cooking and baking (as the other YMCC judges may remember), and I've taken to preparing recipes with origins from all over the world and from many different cultures. South Asian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Iranian, Czech, Ghanian, Ukrainian, and even Ashkenazi cuisine...I've dabbled in many of them. It's a lot of fun and well-worth it, and there's so much to learn, too!

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Hamden Symphony Orchestra has enjoyed gathering weekly to make music together this Spring! All financial contributions, whether small or large, will help keep the music going as we move into our next season!

Donations are being accepted this afternoon at the lobby table; Cash, checks or digital payments made out to Hamden Symphony Orchestra are accepted:

Checks can also be mailed to:

Hamden Symphony Orchestra
PO Box 185412
Hamden, CT 06518

Hamden Symphony Orchestra will be participating in the 2024 Great Give®, sponsored the by the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, on May 1st & 2nd. All donations designated to Hamden Symphony Orchestra, Inc. on these dates at the website - www.thegreatgive.org - are matched, and could help us win additional prizes during the event.

Online contributions via the secure DonorBox platform are also accepted at www.hamdensymphony.org throughout the year.

Please indicate if you would like your contribution to be designated to the Ruth T. Brooks Scholarship Fund, which awards a graduating Hamden High School student for their musical accomplishments each academic year.

With any donation method, we continue to offer the following sponsorship opportunity for a **\$400 gift**:

*All donors at this level will have their name listed as a **sponsor** for one concert. This includes program-cover and all concert marketing materials - print & digital. (Placement arranged on a first-come first-served basis)*

Have an item or service you'd like to donate for a concert raffle or other purpose?

Contact us by email, info@hamdensymphony.org or call 203-691-5178. These donations are also tax deductible.

Hamden Symphony Orchestra Boosters (2023-2024)

We gratefully acknowledge the generous financial support and gifts from the following friends:

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| ♪ David Liskov (<i>In memory of Rise</i>) | ♪ Amanda Zubek |
| ♪ Richard Liskov (<i>In memory of Rise and our parents who loved classical music.</i>) | |

Additional thanks go to the following for their help with today's concert, spring rehearsals and the Young Musicians Concerto Competition:

- ♪ Mayor Lauren Garrett & Chief of Staff, Sean Grace.
- ♪ Rose Lion, Legislative Council Administrator.
- ♪ Town of Hamden facilities services staff.
- ♪ Southern Connecticut State University Music Department (Joshua Groffman, Chair), Young Musicians Concerto Competition Venue.
- ♪ YMCC Chairperson: Judith Kramer Koret.
- ♪ YMCC Judges: Kaila Collins, Davi Bendavid, Judith Kramer Koret, Karen Kriner, Tim Shizume, Avinash Veeraraghav & Eleanor Zagoren.
- ♪ YMCC Event Support Staff: David Liskov & Nic Souris.
- ♪ YMCC "blind" audition materials/setup: Jameson Forsythe & Vesna Mehinovic.
- ♪ Student musicians from Cheshire Academy, Quinnipiac University, Wesleyan University & Yale University.
- ♪ Carpool drivers: Davi Bendavid, Dorthy Fang, Olivia Enny, Yinchao Hao, Kimberly Vish Vock & Clara Wang.
- ♪ Wind/Brass sectionals coach: Jameson Forsythe.
- ♪ Cello podium construction: Charlie Shafer.
- ♪ Front-of-the-house support: Zane Carey, Lisa Romano, Nic Souris & Adam Weber.

Strike up the Orchestra Again!

Hamden Symphony Orchestra returns to the great outdoors!

Town Center Park at Meadowbrook
2761 Dixwell Avenue
Hamden, CT 06518

Performance date and more information to follow in June...

Save the Date!

Sunday, November 24th, 2024 - 3:00 PM

Fall Concert: *A special performance featuring the Organ!*

Trinity Lutheran Church
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Have a wonderful summer!