



## *The American Community*

The 2023 Town of Hamden  
Independence Day Fireworks Concert



Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup> 2023

7:30 PM

Hamden Town Center Park at Meadowbrook



[WWW.HAMDENSYPHONY.ORG](http://WWW.HAMDENSYPHONY.ORG)

## About HSO

This Fall will mark the beginning of Hamden Symphony Orchestra's 62<sup>nd</sup> season! An all-volunteer orchestra of more than 70 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 for a vast audience.

**Hamden Symphony Orchestra**  
Vesna Mehinovic, Music Director

**Opening Festivities**

*Remarks by Mayor Lauren Garrett*

The Star Spangled Banner      John Stafford Smith & Francis Scott Key  
*Ariana Simo, Voice*

Lift Every Voice and Sing      J. Rosamand Johnson &  
James Weldon Johnson  
*Imani Okech, Voice*

**Concert Program**

**Featured Vocalists**

Giovanni Edwards  
Ariana Simo  
Chloe Rachler

*Charlie Shafer, Announcer*

God Bless America      Irving Berlin  
*arr. Keith Christopher*

Seventy-Six Trombones (*from The Music Man*)      Meredith Wilson  
*arr. Leroy Anderson*

Journey's Greatest Hits      Jonathan Cain, Steve Perry & Neal Schon  
*arr. Victor Lopez*

A Tribute to Henry Mancini      Henry Mancini  
*arr. Calvin Custer*

God Bless the U.S.A.      Lee Greenwood  
*arr. Keith Christopher*

Musical Highlights from Rocky

Bill Conti  
*arr. Bob Lowden*

Battle Hymn of the Republic

William Steffe & Julia Ward Howe  
*arr. Peter Wilhousky*

Raiders March (*from Indiana Jones*)

John Williams

*Intermission*

Star Wars Episode V: *The Empire Strikes Back*

John Williams  
*arr. John C. Whitney*

Armed Forces Salute

Various Artists  
*arr. Bob Lowden*

The Lord of The Dance

Ronan Hardiman  
*arr. Larry Moore*

Firework

Katy Perry  
*arr. Todd Parish*

The Stars & Stripes Forever

John Phillips Sousa

America The Beautiful

Samuel A. Ward & Katharine L. Bates  
*arr. Carmen Dragon*



The Philadelphia Museum of Art - site of the "Rocky" stairs

## **Musicians of the Orchestra**

### **Violin I**

Stacy Shafer '09  
Concertmaster  
The Ruth T. Brooks Chair

Elizabeth Braddon '16  
Maya Burd '23  
Kaila Collins '23  
Ann Clemmons '10  
Sabrina Ghadaouia '23  
Tim Shizume '23  
Amanda Zubek '22

### **Violin II**

Joanna Novak '20  
Thomas Rockwood '23  
Anat Shiloach '15  
Oakley Strasser '23  
Robert Tavolieri '22  
Eleanor Zagoren '22

### **Viola**

Karen Kriner '13  
Mandy Sepe '13  
Rolland Strasser '17

### **Cello**

Elizabeth Baldwin '17  
Joe Harrison '23  
Benjamin Kellenberger '23  
Ryan Mitten '22  
Jill Polisson '84  
Marney Walker '19

### **Bass**

Amy Baker '15

### **Flute**

Gianna Gassira '21  
Judith Kramer Koret '08  
Mamie Wang '22

### **Piccolo**

Judith Kramer Koret '08

### **Oboe**

Terri Bennett '16  
Clara Wang '22

### **Clarinet**

Chantal Koinzack '23  
Kathy Muench '15  
Kimberly Vish '20

### **Bassoon**

Hannah Fraser '22

### **Alto Saxophone**

Evann D'Adamo '18  
Alex Horvath '21

### **Tenor Saxophone**

Brendan Cassidy '23  
Douglas Watkins '21

### **French Horn**

Elizabeth Meller '21  
Max Scalf '22  
Michelle Scalzo '19  
Jean Webb '19

### **Trumpet**

Olivia Enny '22  
Jameson Forsythe '20  
Christian Venturella '22

### **Trombone**

Colby Buehler '18  
Bill Gambardella '92  
Jillian Plante '19  
Erik Salvati '16

### **Tuba**

Tristan Knight '23

### **Keyboard**

Betsy Goldberg '15

### **Electric Guitar**

Douglas Watkins '21

### **Drums & Percussion**

Betsy Goldberg '15  
David Liskov '10  
Mitchell Rogers '22  
Braeden Shizume '23  
Douglas Watkins '21  
Adam Weber '21

**Hamden Symphony Orchestra**  
**2023-2024 Concert-Season**

**Fall Concert**

Friday November 17<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 PM

**Spring Concert**

*Featuring the 2024*

*Young Musicians Concerto Competition Winners*

Sunday April 28<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 PM

Hamden Memorial Town Hall  
2372 Whitney Avenue  
Hamden, CT 06518

**More details to follow...Have a great summer!**

**Special thanks** go to the following for their help in making tonight's concert possible:

- ♪ Mayor Lauren Garrett.
- ♪ Sean Grace, Chief of Staff.
- ♪ Karen Bivens, Director of Arts, Culture, Recreation & Wellness.
- ♪ Kim Renta & Rose Lion, Legislative Council Administrators.
- ♪ Hamden facilities services staff.
- ♪ Student Musicians from Nathan Hale Ray High School, Daniel Hand High School, Sacred Heart Academy & Yale University.
- ♪ Carpool drivers: Colby Buehler & Clara Wang.
- ♪ Ann Clemmons, Shoreline Youth Symphony Orchestra (Sheet music).
- ♪ Amy Jones, Waterbury Symphony Orchestra (Sheet music).
- ♪ David Love, Notre Dame High School (Percussion equipment).
- ♪ Quinnipiac University for their generous event sponsorship.
- ♪ *Our generous supporters, audience and musicians who have kept us together in so many ways these last few years!*

## About the Performers

**Giovanni Edwards** is a singer, artist, and musician. He began singing at the age of 7 and has gained wide recognition for his vocals. He's performed as a lead singer in the nationally acclaimed show choir group 'VIBE', and has acted as Tom Collins in RENT and Percy Jackson in The Lightning Thief. Beyond music, Giovanni is an animator who works on popular YouTube shows, including "Battle For Dream Island," which has garnered millions of views. Giovanni will major in Character Animation at the California Institute of the Arts in the fall. He'd like to give a huge thanks to the Hamden Symphony for this amazing opportunity!

**Imani Okech**, while a Derby resident, is a graduate of Sacred Heart Academy's Class of 2023. During her years at Sacred Heart, she dedicated her time to the choir, usually as a soloist, as well as the musicals, which were held at the Shubert Theater each year. She will be attending Bard College in Annandale, New York, this coming fall, studying Anthropology.

**Chloe Rachler** is a Sophomore at Daniel Hand High School and is so excited to be able to perform tonight. She began singing two years ago and has been dancing ballet ever since she could walk. Along with the many singing groups she is involved in at school, she is also a part of the nationally-ranked show choir VIBE.' She has extensive experience in many different styles of dance and is beginning to expand her knowledge of music. Chloe is so grateful to be a part of this performance and thanks everyone who made tonight possible!

**Ariana Simo** is a rising Junior at Daniel Hand High School in Madison, and is thrilled to be performing tonight. She has performed extensively along the Shoreline and in NYC, and has been singing since before she could talk. Along with being a part of the nationally ranked show choir 'VIBE' some of Ariana's recent credits include Maria (West Side Story), Maureen (RENT), and Cosette (Les Miserables). Ariana has also worked with Wayne Cilento in an Off-Broadway benefit titled 'Love Cures! A

Benefit Of Healing For The Abused Child's Soul'. Ariana would like to thank her parents, and everyone who made today possible!

**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.



## **Hamden Symphony Orchestra**

### **Board of Directors (2023-2024)**

David Liskov, President  
Karen Kriner, Vice President  
Van Nguyen, Secretary  
Adam Weber, Treasurer  
Brendan Cassidy, Elective Director  
Judith Kramer Koret, Elective Director  
Ryan Mitten, Elective Director  
Andrea Osburne, Elective Director  
Stacy Shafer, Elective Director  
Tim Shizume, Elective Director  
Nic Souris, Elective Director

### **Additional Support**

Bill Gambardella, Legal Counsel  
Judith Kramer Koret, YMCC Chairperson  
Tracy Turner, Logo Design

## **Play An Instrument?**

Hamden Symphony seeks musicians interested in joining the group for its 2023-2024 concert-season!

Rehearsals are anticipated to begin Thursday evenings in early September. For more information, and for the most up-to-date list of openings, visit:

[www.hamdensymphony.org/join](http://www.hamdensymphony.org/join)