



## Wednesday Music Club

### *Season's Greetings*

**December 2019**



Worthy of a hearing on the stage of any of New York's major recital halls, WMC was treated to a stunning recital this month by JMU faculty members Wanchi, violinist, and Lori Piitz, pianist. We are indeed blessed to have artists such as these sharing their talents with us. Please see David McCormick's excellent report on the program.

And speaking of universities, WMC is once again supporting Charlottesville Symphony student players with lesson scholarships, which mean a great deal to these musicians who struggle to pay the extra cost of lessons with UVA faculty members in addition to their tuition. Here are some heartfelt comments from thank-you notes which the Club received: "I am truly honored and grateful for this opportunity to continue my musical studies at UVA, and I hope to expand my musical knowledge and experience as I take private lessons and play in the Charlottesville Symphony" (Melody Su, violinist, studying with concertmaster Daniel Sender). "Trombone has been an important part of my life for many years...I hope that I'll be able to repay your contributions by spreading my love for music to others, whether it be through performance or even simple word of mouth" (Boris Topalov, trombonist, studying with principal Nathaniel Lee). "I did not expect this honor in my first year, and I am extremely grateful for this kind contribution towards my music education. Thank you so much" (Ryan Lee, violist, studying with principal Ayn Baliya). "Thank you so much for your generous support. Taking private lessons at UVA to further pursue this enthusiasm [for music] would not have been possible without your consideration in funding this scholarship" (Yena Lee, flutist, studying with principal Kelly Sulick).

You will have an opportunity to hear three different university students - music majors at UVA, JMU, and VCU - when they perform for us at "Musical Interlude 2020" on January 11. Each has received a WMC \$2000 scholarship in a program initiated by WMC a few years ago. See the link to tickets elsewhere in the Newsletter, and please come!

In the meantime, whatever you might be celebrating over the next few

weeks, I hope it is full of joy, happiness, and - of course - MUSIC

---Corky Sablinsky, President



**UVA Lessons Scholarship Winners Ryan Lee, Boris Topalov, and Melody Su (not pictured: Yena Lee)**



## December Program Report "Europe Meets America"

I'm pleased to fill in for Laurie Shulman this month in providing a recap of our wonderful program on Wednesday morning, December 4. As a fellow violinist and member of the Harrisonburg "musical family," it's a treat to give my impression of the fantastic performance by violinist Wanchi and pianist Lori Piitz, both faculty members at James Madison University.



Wanchi's virtuosity was on full display from the first unaccompanied notes of the *Chaconne* from *Partita No. 2* by J.S. Bach. While most classical music aficionados have heard Bach's iconic *Chaconne*, Robert Schumann's arrangement is rarely heard. The piano's entrance just a few bars in is seamless, filling in the harmonies we are only left to imagine in the solo version. Though the piano takes a backseat in this arrangement, the filling out of the sound in the climactic moments is exhilarating!

Next up was the *Tambourin Chinois* of Fritz Kreisler, one of the greatest violinists of the 20th century. The idea for *Tambourin Chinois* came to Kreisler after a visit to the Chinese theater in San Francisco, but other than its use of the pentatonic scale or occasional parallel fifths, *Tambourin Chinois* has little to do with actual Chinese music. Rather, it is primarily a charming vehicle for violin virtuosity. Audible gasps of delight were heard at the suddenly charming conclusion of the fiery opening section!

Wanchi next launched into the *Méditation from Thaïs* by Jules Massenet. Though Massenet is perhaps best known for his contributions to French opera, *Thaïs* is rarely performed, except for the iconic instrumental interlude between the two scenes of the second act. This *Méditation* rivals Kreisler's contributions as one of the most iconic violin gems of all time. The music is meant to illustrate the conflict within courtesan Thaïs (represented by the solo violin) as she struggles to choose between a carefree life and one of repentance and salvation. Wanchi's lush, romantic sound filled the large sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church.

The composer closing this program was Robert Livingston Aldridge, a name most of us probably don't recognize, but it's worth noting that a recording of his opera *Elmer Gantry* won two Grammy awards in 2012. He received a Doctorate in Composition from the Yale School of Music, a Master's Degree in Composition from the New England Conservatory of Music, and a Bachelor's Degree in English Literature from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He is currently Professor and Director of Music at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University.

Wanchi informed us that *Carolinian Dances* was written for violinist Boris Kucharsky and is meant to be the North Carolina equivalent of Brahms' *Hungarian Dances*. The theme is essentially a "barn dance" fiddle tune; the variations take the form of a wide array of American popular idioms, including the jig, march, ballad, and bossa nova. The final variation was full of lightning-speed fiddling, eliciting an immediate standing ovation from Wednesday Music Club members and guests.

Aren't we lucky to have so many extraordinarily talented musicians in our area so eager to share their talents with us?

---David McCormick



## **Musical Interlude 2020**

***Saturday, January 11***

***3:00-5:00 pm***

***Rotunda Room***

***Westminster Canterbury***



**Tina Hashemi, jazz vocals - University of Virginia  
Stacey Sharpe, violin - Virginia Commonwealth University  
Bobby Carlson, piano - James Madison University**

**\$50 per person/\$90 Couple**

Click [HERE](#) for tickets and complete information

***All proceeds to benefit WMC's Educational Outreach and Scholarships***



## **WMC 2020 Competition** **Save the Dates**

### **Competition Date & Time**

**January 25, 2020**

**(snow date: February 8) 9am - 5pm**

### **Winner's Recital**

**March 1, 2020**

**Click Here for complete information**

***Volunteers are needed for a variety of roles including greeting and registering students, escorting students to the competition room, and assisting the judges. If you are available to help for a morning or afternoon shift, [please click here](#) to email Rosalyn Preston.***



## WMC February Meeting

Wednesday, February 4, 2020

10 - 11:30am

First Presbyterian Church Sanctuary

### Program

*Un Matin à Paris: Music by Vierre, Franck,  
Durufé and Hakim*

Jonathan Schakel, organ

Megan Sharp, soprano

## Announcements of Upcoming Area Events

### *The Paramount Presents*

#### **In Search of Beethoven in HD**

The first in a series of broadcasts celebrating four of the greatest composers - Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin, Haydn

December 17, 2019 - 7:00pm

[Click here](#) for tickets and information about the series



### *Oratorio Society of Virginia presents*

#### **Christmas at the Paramount**

*Michael Slon, Music Director*

*Saturday, December 21st*

*Performances at 2:30 pm and 7:30 pm*

[Click Here for Tickets and Information](#)



## *In Memoriam*

The Wednesday Music Club mourns the loss of one of our members, Ken Hindman, who passed away surrounded by family on Friday, November 29, 2019. Upon retiring from the practice of law, Ken and his wife, Anne, moved to Charlottesville, where Ken enjoyed filling his retirement years with song and music; he was an active member of the WMC's *Fermata*. Our thoughts go out to Ken's family, and the WMC is honored to be included as a recommended recipient of memorial contributions. Read the lovely tribute to his life [here](#). Contributions in Ken's memory can be sent to WMC at P.O. Box 7642 or [donated online](#).



### **MISSION**

**The Wednesday Music Club promotes and expands quality musical and educational opportunities for its members, for teachers, for music lovers, and for the youth of Central Virginia through regular performances, competitions, shared group experiences, and financial support.**

### **VISION**

**The Wednesday Music Club will foster and sustain a vibrant music climate throughout Central Virginia, especially among young people.**



Visit the [Wednesday Music Club Website](#) to read more about membership, events, and programs

[\*Click here to make a donation to the WMC\*](#)

