



**COSMIC SYMPHONY PRESENTS**

# REBIRTH



*Directed by William F. Esterling III*

*Featuring Young Artist Competition Winners*

*Steven Toth & Esther Bonney*

*and the music of Ludwig van Beethoven*



*Saturday, March 02, 2024 - 3:00 PM*

*Nancy R. & Norton T. Dodge PAC*

*St. Mary's College of Maryland*



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We are thrilled to present our family concert, Rebirth, and our incredibly talented 2024 Young Artist Competition Junior and Senior Division Winners. It was a difficult decision to choose just two winners as the judges had to narrow their choice down from 12 fantastic entrants.

The application, details, and rules for the 2025 Young Artist Competition will be available on our website beginning April 1, 2024, and can be found at <https://cosmicsymphony.org/young-artists/>. If you know someone that would like to audition, please tell them about this wonderful opportunity!

Our family concert provides the opportunity to reach out to the younger members of our community and to help children and young adults become lifelong music lovers. Our youth deserve the opportunity to hear quality classical music in their own community, without spending an arm and a leg to attend. Thank you for your continued monetary support that allows us to offer our concerts free of charge!

As always, we are thankful to our many volunteers from our stage crew and other volunteers that arrive early to set up our practice and concert spaces and our front and back of-the-house support. Many thanks to the COSMIC Symphony Board of Directors for fundraising support and managing the day-to-day operations. Mindy Striep, as always, has blown us away with her fabulous graphics and program design!

Enjoy the performance and be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram. Please help us spread the word about COSMIC Symphony, YOUR Southern Maryland community orchestra!

Musically yours,

Karen Roberts,  
President, COSMIC Symphony



Welcome to an evening of musical rejuvenation with the COSMIC Symphony! As we gather to celebrate the theme of "rebirth," we invite you to embark on a journey of renewal and discovery through the language of music.

Our concert begins with Aaron Copland's invigorating *An Outdoor Overture*, a tribute to the awakening of nature and the adventures that await us in the great outdoors.

Highlighting our evening are the performances of our talented Young Artist Competition winners. While one showcases their exceptional talent in the emotive strains of Bloch's *Nigun*, the other brings to life the enchanting melodies of Carl Maria von Weber's Clarinet Concertino. Through their interpretations, we witness the beauty of diversity and the universality of music's language.

We continue our journey with Beethoven's timeless *Pastoral Symphony*, a vivid portrayal of the beauty and vitality of the natural world. Together, let us revel in the transformative power of music and embrace the spirit of renewal that surrounds us.

Thank you for joining us on this musical odyssey. Let's make tonight a celebration of life, growth, and the enduring power of artistic expression.

Warm regards,

Will Esterling  
Music Director, COSMIC Symphony

# PROGRAM

## COSMIC Flute Choir

*Morning Mood from Peer Gynt, Suite No. 1*

Edvard Grieg (1843 - 1907)

arr. Shaul Ben-Meir

*Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks  
from Pictures at an Exhibition*

Modest Mussorgsky (1839 - 1881)

arr. Matt Johnston

*Borealis*

Alexandra Molnar-Suhajda (b. 1975)

## COSMIC Symphony

*Outdoor Overture*

Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990)

*Nigun  
from Baal Shem*

Ernest Bloch (1880 - 1959)

*Concertino in E Flat Major, Op. 26*

Carl Maria von Weber (1786 - 1826)

## INTERMISSION

*Symphony No. 6, Pastoral*

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827)

*This program is approximately two hours in length.*





# PROGRAM NOTES

## FLUTE CHOIR SELECTIONS

*Morning Mood* from *Peer Gynt, Suite No. 1* was composed by Edvard Grieg, a Norwegian composer. It was originally part of *Peer Gynt, Op. 23*, which is incidental music to Henrik Ibsen's 1867 play *Peer Gynt*. It premiered along with the play on February 24, 1876 in Christiania which is now Oslo. Eight pieces were selected by Grieg from *Peer Gynt, Op. 23*, and made into two suites each consisting of four of these pieces. *Morning Mood* was originally the prelude to Act IV of the play.

*Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks* from *Pictures at an Exhibition* was composed by Modest Mussorgsky, a Russian composer, in 1874. *Pictures at an Exhibition* was originally a cycle of piano pieces which used sound to describe different paintings. *Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks* was inspired by a painting of the same name by Mussorgsky's talented friend Viktor Hartmann. This piece represents the determination of baby chicks to peck their way out of their shells. In 1922, Maurice Ravel orchestrated the entire piano cycle.

*Borealis* was composed in 2020 by Alexandra Molnar-Suhajda who is also a flutist and an harpist. She received her Bachelor in Music Composition degree from George Mason University. She has been commissioned to write works for groups such as the National Flute Association. *Borealis* was originally written for a flute choir performance at the Mid-Atlantic Flute Festival in 2020 and refers to the aurora borealis or northern (or southern) lights which are natural light displays that are seen in the earth's atmosphere usually in high-latitude regions (around the Arctic or Antarctic). The displays can appear as brilliant patterns of light in the nighttime sky.

# PROGRAM NOTES

## COPLAND

Aaron Copland (November 14, 1900 – December 2, 1990) was an American composer, composition teacher, writer, and later a conductor of his own and other American music. Copland was referred to by his peers and critics as the "Dean of American Composers". The open, slowly changing harmonies in much of his music are typical of what many people consider to be the sound of American music, evoking the vast American landscape and pioneer spirit.

Composing for young performers was always close to Copland's heart, so in 1938 he accepted the commission for a large orchestra piece from the High School of Music and Art in New York City. Copland wanted to play a role in introducing good contemporary American music to young players, so he composed "An Outdoor Overture" for them.



## BLOCH

Ernest Bloch (July 24, 1880 – July 15, 1959) was a Swiss-born American composer. Bloch was a preeminent artist in his day and left a lasting legacy. He is recognized as one of the greatest Swiss composers in history. As well as producing musical scores, Bloch had an academic career that culminated in his recognition as Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley in 1952.

Bloch's compositions - in particular the *Suite hébraïque* for viola and orchestra, *Baal Shem* for violin and piano (later orchestrated) and *Schelomo* for cello and orchestra - often reflect his Jewish heritage. Bloch's father had at one stage intended to become a rabbi, and the young Ernest had a strong religious upbringing; as an adult he felt that to write music that expressed his Jewish identity was "the only way in which I can produce music of vitality and significance."



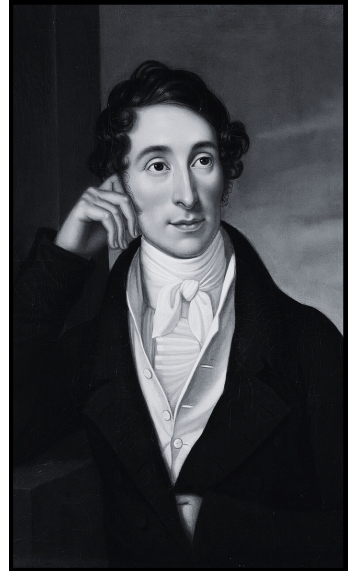
# PROGRAM NOTES

## VON WEBER

Carl Maria Friedrich Ernst von Weber (November 18, 1786 –June 5, 1826) was a German composer, conductor, virtuoso pianist, guitarist, and critic of the early Romantic period. Best known for his operas, he also wrote non-operatic music, including symphonies, concertos, and many pieces featuring the clarinet, usually written for the virtuoso clarinetist Heinrich Bärmann.

Weber wrote his Concertino for Clarinet in E-flat major, Op. 26 in 1811 in three days. The work, in one movement, is in a theme and variations form. Bärmann learned the work in three days and the command performance took place two days later.

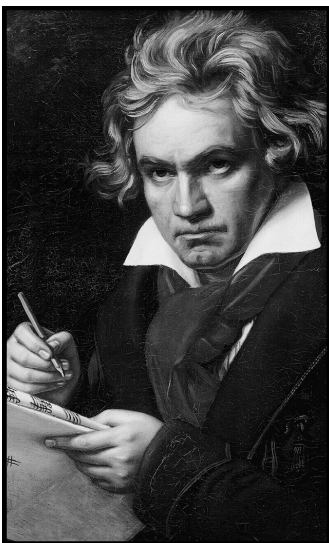
After suffering from tuberculosis, he died in his sleep during the night on June 5, 1826, at the home of his good friend and host Sir George Smart; he was 39 years old. He was buried in London but eighteen years later, in December 1844, his remains were transferred to the family burial plot in the Old Catholic Cemetery in Dresden at the side of his youngest son Alexander who had died of measles at age 19.



## BEETHOVEN

Ludwig van Beethoven (December 17, 1770 –March 26, 1827) was a German composer and pianist and is one of the most revered figures in the history of Western music; his works rank among the most performed of the classical music repertoire and span the transition from the Classical period to the Romantic era in classical music.

The Symphony No. 6 in F major, Op. 68, also known as the *Pastoral* Symphony, was composed in 1808 before Beethoven had become almost completely deaf in 1814. The composer said that the Sixth Symphony is "more the expression of feeling than painting". Translated from the original German, the five movements of the symphony are titled: "*Awakening of cheerful feelings on arrival in the countryside,*" "*Scene by the brook,*" "*Merry gathering of country folk,*" "*Thunder, storm,*" and "*Shepherd's song. Cheerful and thankful feelings after the storm.*"



# MUSIC DIRECTOR:

## *William Esterling III*

Will Esterling, a native of Wilmington, Delaware, is a passionate and dedicated music director, educator, and trombonist who has spent his life immersed in the world of music. His journey from a supportive musical upbringing to becoming the Music Director of the COSMIC Symphony is a testament to his unwavering commitment to the art of music.

Born and raised in Wilmington, Delaware, Will Esterling was fortunate to grow up in a household that encouraged and celebrated music. His journey as a musician began in the fourth grade when he picked up the trombone. This early connection to music sparked a lifelong passion that would define his career.

Will's educational journey led him to pursue music at a higher level. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Music from Ithaca College, where he majored in Music Education and Trombone Performance.

His dedication to his craft didn't stop there, as he continued his studies and achieved a Master's degree in Conducting from the Catholic University of America.

Throughout his career, Will Esterling has held several key roles in the world of music. He served as the assistant conductor to the New Orchestra of Washington (NOW), contributing to the orchestra's artistic vision and musical excellence. Additionally, he brought his talents and expertise to the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestra (MCRYO) as their assistant conductor.

As the Pep Band Director at American University, Will's leadership and musical direction added an electrifying dimension to campus life. He also assumed the role of Coordinator for the Winds Department at the Levine Community Music School, where he guided and inspired young musicians to reach their full potential.

Currently, Will serves as a trombonist with the 287th Army Band of the Delaware National Guard, where he continues to share his musical talents and dedication to service. His educational journey brought him to Tyler Elementary in SE Washington, DC, where he teaches music, shaping the next generation of musicians.

Will Esterling's life is defined by his mission to serve people through music, both as an educator and performer. His commitment to music education and his passion for performing have touched the lives of many, making him a respected figure in the musical community.



Will's journey has been enriched by the guidance of notable mentors, including Marin Alsop, Murry Sidlin, James Ross, and Simeone Tartaglione. These influential figures have helped shape his understanding of music and conducting.

An advocate for modern music and progressive programming, Will Esterling is dedicated to expanding the horizons of musical exploration and ensuring that the art form continues to evolve.

Will Esterling's journey from a supportive home in Delaware to the role of Music Director of the COSMIC Symphony is a testament to his unwavering dedication, musical prowess, and passion for educating and inspiring others through music. His life's work is a harmonious fusion of artistic expression and community service, making him a dynamic force in the world of music.

# 2023 YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION WINNERS

## JUNIOR DIVISION: *Esther Bonney*



Esther Bonney, a high school junior, began playing violin at 10 and has served as the Concertmaster of the Charles County Youth Orchestra (CCYO) since 2022. She's a member of the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) Youth Fellowship Program at the Kennedy Center, studying under Angelia Cho of the NSO. Esther has performed on the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage, at the finals of the Misbin Chamber Competition at the Levine School of Music, as a soloist with CCYO, and has made numerous appearances on the Charles County Arts Alliance's Friday Night Concert Series and CCYO's Secret Garden Concert Series. Esther also teaches violin and piano to elementary students. Outside of music, Esther enjoys caring for her five goats and supporting local farmers and biodiversity through her nonprofit, Nurture Natives.

## SENIOR DIVISION: *Steven Toth*

A Maryland native, Steven Toth is a recent alumnus of Towson University, where he earned a Bachelor of Music in Clarinet Performance. During his time at TU, he studied under several Premier Band clarinetists in our Armed Forces. In addition to performing in several university ensembles, he also performed as a substitute musician with the Columbia Orchestra. Most notably, Steven became the first Hispanic concertmaster of the Wind Ensemble while graduating with academic honors.

Since completing his studies, Steven performs with the Towson Wind Symphony and the Londontowne Symphony Orchestra. Moreover, he continues to expand upon his pedagogical philosophy as a private clarinet teacher at Northwestern High School.







**COSMIC SYMPHONY'S**

# **YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION 2024**

COSMIC Symphony of Southern Maryland is looking for outstanding musicians ages 24 and younger interested in competing for the chance to perform a solo in concert with COSMIC Symphony and receive a cash prize!

*This opportunity is open to all instruments and voice types.*

**APPLICATIONS OPEN  
APRIL 1, 2024**

*More details to come! Follow COSMIC Symphony on Facebook and Instagram, and keep an eye on [www.cosmicsymphony.org/young-artists/](http://www.cosmicsymphony.org/young-artists/) for the latest info!*





*All experienced  
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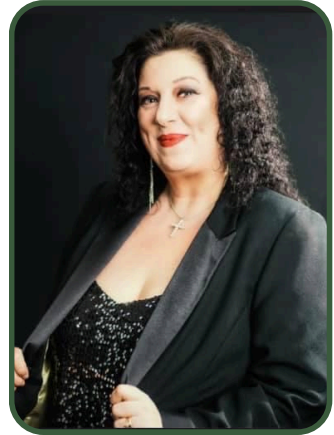
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**COSMIC FLUTE CHOIR**

**Piccolo**

Carrie Cooper

**Bass Flute**

Christa Benner

**C Flute**

Jennifer Anderson

**Alto Flute**

Linda Henry

**Contrabass Flute**

Patty Lafferty

Carrie Cooper

Sara Espinosa

Elizabeth Harvey

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Kaitlin Rose, assoc. concertmaster  
Alex Dean  
Allison Frere  
Marcia Van Gemert  
Jane Liang  
Ginny Norris  
Darren Sakai

## **Second Violins**

Carolyn Graessle, principal  
Diana Chan  
Bernard Devlin  
Jerry Mobley  
Julia Nichols  
Deborah Sauper  
Jacqueline Sickle

## **Violas**

Kori Olszewski, principal  
AnneMarie Karnbach  
Alan Newhouse  
Mindy Striep

## **Cellos**

Stephanie Gleason, principal  
Innes Borstel  
Kathleen Hiner  
Leroy Mrozowski

## **Basses**

Bill Hones, principal  
Patricia Lafferty

## **Flutes**

Linda Henry, principal  
Christa Benner  
Carrie Cooper

## **Piccolo**

Carrie Cooper, principal

## **Oboes**

Karen Roberts, principal  
Janet Gross

## **Clarinets**

Tony Avak, principal  
David Schug  
Michael Sullivan

## **Bassoons**

Benjamin Henry, principal  
Rebecca Moore

## **Horns**

Steve Woods, principal  
Stefie Bartley  
Skylar Schirtzinger  
Nicole Thompson

## **Trumpets**

Leigh DePiazza, principal  
Ross Thompson

## **Trombones**

Tyler Hutchinson, principal  
Greg Wallace

## **Tubas**

Rob Benner, principal  
Joe Price

## **Percussion**

Kevin Stevens, principal  
Michael Waby

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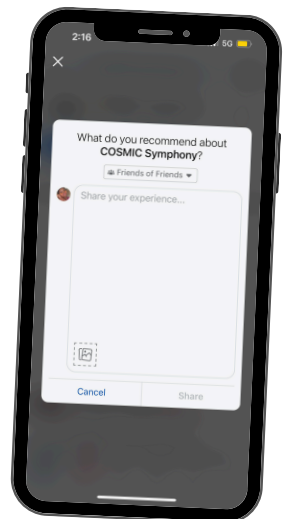
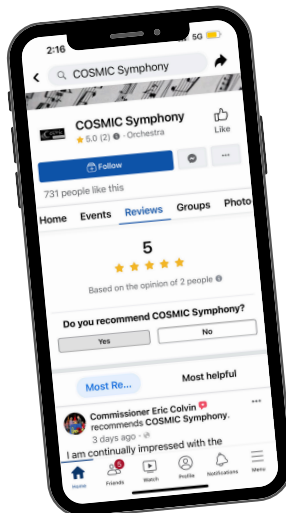
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