

# The Friday Morning MUSIC CLUB



138TH SEASON

NOVEMBER 2023

VOL. 58, NO. 3

## From the President

Leslie Luxemburg

September ended with a flurry of activity for the FMMC. Our first concert of the season at the Woman's Club of Chevy Chase (WCCC) took place on Friday, September 29th, at noon, and the first in our series of exploratory outings for our conductorial candidates for the Avanti Orchestra position took place on Saturday, September 30th, at 7:30 pm, at the Montgomery College Cultural Arts Center. Both performances showcased our membership at its best!

Our FMMC Steinway seemed quite at home on the stage at the WCCC. Their layout displays the piano to great advantage, and the atmosphere was welcoming. An audience of over 80 people clearly appreciated the excellent program crafted by Venue Chair Lois Jones. Pianists Steve Schwarz, Vicki Bragin, and Andrew Kraus, as well as soprano Polly Baldrige and violinist Christine Kharazian delighted the audience with their well-chosen and entertaining selections. The WCCC provided treats after the performance.

They are clearly happy to have us there, and I feel quite positive about how this association will work. I encourage you to attend the next concert in this series which will take place on Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, when we present our special composers' concert. It will be followed by our traditional holiday reception. There are many reasons to join us then!

The Avanti Orchestra season got off to an exciting start the following day. I have been so gratified by the extremely high level of concern and preparation on the part of the entire orchestra committee. This attention to detail extended to the

well-crafted performance evaluation questionnaires for both orchestra and audience members, which were created by Melissa Lindon. Hopefully you will be there as we move towards the final decision next May.

The concert featured the most impressive voice of soprano Adia Evans, one of the winners of our 2023 Washington International Competition for Voice, who came to us after having filled a highly selective position as an apprentice artist at the Santa Fe Opera this summer.

Now that you have a taste for the excitement build up around this season's Avanti series, you will not want to miss the next performance, coming up this month on Saturday, November 18th, also at 7:30 pm, at the Montgomery College CAC. This concert will feature another WIC winner, violinist Joujin Lee, playing



Leslie Luxemburg

the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto. This rates a "must-do" status in your calendar of upcoming events! 🎻

*Leslie*



Christine Kharazian on violin and Andrew Kraus on piano

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Remembrance of Brigitta Gruenther
- 2 Membership Update
- 3 Historic Programs Resurface
- 4 Celebrating 25 Years of Johansen International Competition
- 6 FMMC Concert Calendar
- 7 From the Foundation Director
- 8 Unrestricted Donations Urgently Needed!



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## Remembrance of Brigitta Gruenther

Garrison Hull

I am thankful to the FMMC for encouraging us to share our remembrances of Brigitta Gruenther, for I believe not sharing some thoughts about Brigitta would be withholding a much-needed spark of joy from our world. I am so very, very sad that she is no longer with us, but I know there are many who have come to a place where the sadness has now transfigured into celebration for her life.

I met her in the 1980's. As an eager and naive undergrad student, I chose to approach her after a concert, score in hand, to ask questions of performance practice and cello techniques. Though I suspect that at first she just tolerated me, it was always with a smile. Later, I wrote five short studies for the solo cello. She accepted the score without hesitation, and we thus began a decades-long correspondence and conversation.

It was always I who would call after some concert where my enthusiasm, be it positive or negative or both, had been roused. Our conversations were frank and unguarded and not a little humorous. What commanding control! What shameless showmanship! Wonderful interpretation! We discussed and compared performers, conductors, and the composers.

She was an engaging letter writer. Every summer she would go abroad and send back notes filled with writing that flowed around the edges of the postcard, descriptions of her per-

formances and concerts she attended, so packed full that sometimes it could take several readings to decipher. For each I would respond with a letter and send it to her house and would get a lengthy response when she had time to write after her return. Then, after a concert, I would call and we would begin again. I cannot recall Brigitta and I ever discussing in depth anything but music. Compared to her I will always be the naive student.

She changed the arch of my life's course. It was in 1997. We were talking on the phone and, as usual, she asked what I was working on. I had recently completed a full symphonic piece, five minutes in duration. I off-handedly mentioned that I could send it to a competition that was soliciting scores internationally, but expressed my doubt that it would happen due to the cost of the entry fee. Saturday morning a note from Brigitta arrived. I opened it to find just a check, nothing else. I entered the competition and won.

We continued to stay in touch, sometimes more frequently than others. Yet always, so many wonderful moments. In memory now fleeting, yet still resonate. We all wish our lives to be filled with these. I believe Brigitta Gruenther knew this and shaped her life, as well as any of us can, to make the small garden of this world that is hers a more beautiful place. 🎶

## Membership Update

The following members joined or renewed after publication of the FMMC 2023-24 *Yearbook & Membership Directory*.

### New Members

Amelia Baisden, Student Cello, Washington, DC  
Anna Bray, Student Piano, Sterling, VA  
Mea Cook, Associate Cello, Vienna, VA  
Cooper Kalan, Student Piano, Alexandria, VA  
David Maley, Arioso Chorale Tenor, Montclair, VA  
Heyni Solera, Solo Bandoneon, Silver Spring, MD  
Elena Thompson, Associate Piano, Associate Viola, Germantown, MD

### Renewing Members

Ingrid Kauffman, Arioso Chorale Alto, Arlington, VA 🎶

# Historic Programs Resurface

Mary Alice Davidson

The FMMC Archives received a surprise treasure over the summer: the programs of four FMMC concerts held in 1916, 1921, 1925, and 1927.

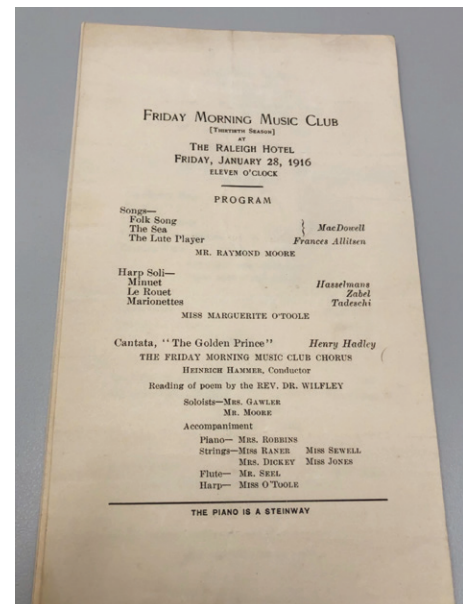
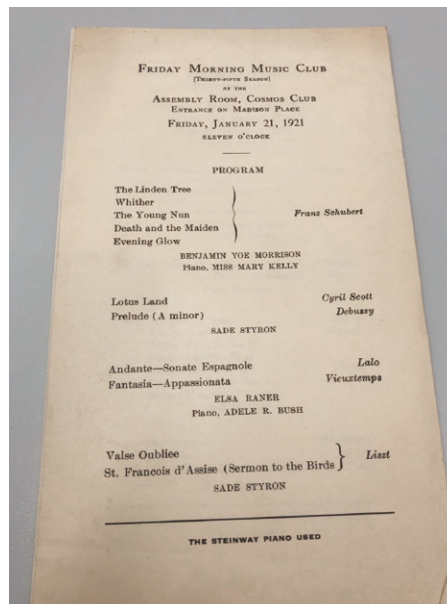
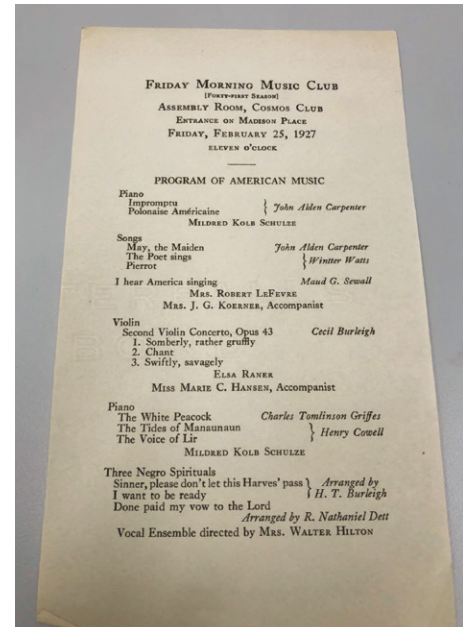
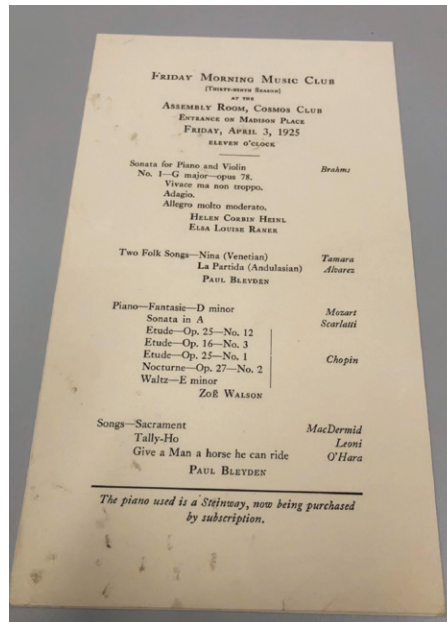
The programs were found by a collector of ephemera, or boxes of miscellaneous forgotten records stored at antique shops, for example. The collector uncovered the FMMC programs grouped with others from the same era at churches, auditoriums, and community centers in the District of Columbia. Thinking FMMC might find the programs interesting, the collector sent the entire collection to the FMMC archivists.

The findings caught the collector's eye because of one name: violinist Elsa Louise Raner, who was featured in three of the four FMMC programs (see photos) and in most of the other programs in the group. A total of 33 performers as soloists and as a trio and a quartet played in the four FMMC programs. Elsa Raner, was a soloist and also played in the trio and quartet.

But were they FMMC members?

FMMC Yearbooks in the FMMC Archives begin in 1944. A search of that year's listings found three members who participated in the early FMMC programs and were still active: Soloists Mrs. Ethel Gawler and Mrs. Edith LeFevre, as well as violinist Maude Sewell who played in a string quartet with Elsa Raner in 1916. One can suppose that Maude encouraged Elsa to join FMMC because her name is listed in the 1948 Yearbook. Ethel Gawler and Edith LeFevre continued their membership into the 1950s, and Ethel was FMMC's treasurer for a time.

The four programs were all on Fridays at 11:00 am. The first on January 28, 1916, in FMMC's 30<sup>th</sup> season, was held at the Raleigh Hotel. It includes songs sung by Mr. Raymond Moore and harp soli by Marguerite O'Toole. A cantata, "The Golden Prince," was sung by the FMMC Chorus with soloists and instrumental accompaniment. A reference to its conductor, Heinrich Hammer, is noted in *The History of the Arioso Chorale of FMMC* by Alan T. Crane.



The other three Friday programs were all held in the Assembly Room at the Cosmos Club: January 21, 1921, April 3, 1925, and February 25, 1927. Performances were like those used in today's Chamber Program Series: male and female singers with accompaniment, piano works, violin with accompaniment, folk songs, and spirituals. It is unclear if any of the pieces were written by the participants. *The First Hundred Years of FMMC* by Char-

lotte Shear does not mention or picture the performers in these historic programs.

Ultimately, the programs will be digitized and housed in FMMC's digital collection at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Library. That library will also find homes for the other non-FMMC concerts.

The search continues, and any related memories or ideas are most welcome! 🎵

## *Celebrating 25 Years of the Johansen International Competition: Changes Along the Way: Part 3: JIC Participants' Experiences*

Judy Silverman

The Johansen International Competition for Young String Players (Ages 13–17) (JIC), funded by a trust from FMMC Life Member Anna Storch Johansen, aims to encourage young string players at the beginning of their careers. The competition, which initially emphasized the offering of significant monetary prizes, has evolved into an experience for participants that includes much more.

### *Goals for Participants'*

#### *Best Experiences*

Through the years, the JIC has assiduously supported Anna Johansen's original vision for the competition. Primary considerations have been that (1) the young applicants be treated kindly and respectfully; (2) the competition be fair in fact and appearance—for example, excluding students of semifinal and prescreening judges; (3) applicants remain anonymous to the audience and judges until the winners are announced; (4) pianists and judges be of the highest quality to ensure quality collaborative accompaniment and professional judging; and (5) all applicants perform with the competition's collaborative pianists to ensure a level playing field. The JIC steering committee regularly evaluates all policies to make sure they are best for the applicants.

The JIC repertoire requirements truly challenge applicants' abilities. They must prepare a full and difficult program, mostly memorized, including solo Bach, a sonata with piano, a concerto, a virtuoso piece, and a solo work newly commissioned for that year's competition and only provided to semifinalists shortly before the competition. Participants tell us that preparing this program is itself a valuable experience.

#### *Prizes*

In 1997, there were three main prizes: first, second, and third prizes of \$7,000, \$5,000, and \$3,000, respectively. Anna Johansen was so impressed with the quality of the applicants that ten additional honorable mentions and judges' commen-



Violinist Julian Rhee (1st prize, 2018) with Pablo Saelzer and the Avanti Orchestra.

dations of smaller amounts were awarded, including \$500 for best performance of the commissioned work. In subsequent competitions, first, second, and third prizes for each instrument (violin, viola, and cello) were offered at \$10,000, \$7,000, and \$5,000, as well as the prize for best performance of the commissioned work (raised to \$1,000 in 2018) for a total of ten prizes. In 2022 Judges' Commendation awards were added for finalists who did not receive another prize.

#### *Competition Venues*

The physical setting for a competition also affects the participant experience, so the JIC tries to provide the best location for the competition within its limited budget. Competitions in 1997 through 2009 were held at the Summer School in Washington, DC (except in 2000, when finals were at Lisner Auditorium), where the FMMC had its weekly recitals and office space. After 2009, the FMMC and JIC moved to Calvary Baptist Church. After 2018, Calvary became unavailable,

and the JIC moved to the First Congregational United Church of Christ, which is a prominent concert venue also known as "Live! at 10<sup>th</sup> & G" This proved to be an excellent venue for the competition, providing an improved experience for the performers in 2022. We've already reserved 10<sup>th</sup> & G for 2025.

#### *Scholarships*

In 2012, Brevard Summer Festival agreed to offer full scholarships to all winners and partial scholarships to all finalists. Likewise, in 2015, the prestigious music festival Morningside Music Bridge agreed to provide full scholarships with travel stipends, worth many thousands of dollars, for all our first-place winners (and to second-place winners if a first-place winner couldn't attend). Some of our winners have attended both these summer festivals and have had good experiences.

Through Judy Shapiro's contacts, we provided another summer experience at a workshop called London Master Classes held at the Royal College at Manchester

University in England. JIC participants attended in 2003 and 2009, but the program was discontinued after 2012. We are in contact with the workshop organizers aiming to revive the program in 2025.

### *Donations and Gifts*

Starting in 1997, JIC volunteers have solicited donations from retailers to provide gifts for all participants. As part an effort to build a donor base, in 2014, I contacted retail music establishments and luthiers locally and across the country and asked if they would like to be corporate donors or could contribute products that would also serve as advertisements. Product donations have been significant, including gifts worth hundreds of dollars from such companies as D'Addario and *Strings* magazine as well as prominent local music businesses such as Brobst Violin Shop, Foxes Music Company, Gailes' Violin Shop, Lashof Violins, Weaver Violins, and Potter Violins.

Potter Violins and the Korean Concert Society, both local patrons, also have made significant continuing financial donations for each competition cycle. The latter is run by Joung and Jungnim Cook, FMMC Honorary members, who have helped the JIC since the beginning to ensure a good experience for our South Korean participants, assisting with language challenges, local transportation, and housing.

### *Post-Competition Concerts*

Post-competition concerts are a valuable experience for JIC winners as well as an opportunity to introduce JIC winners to our musical community. Securing concerts has involved personal contacts of Steering Committee members and networking.

In 2000, Judy Shapiro and Dorothy Jarvinen arranged for JIC winners to perform with the Prince George's Philharmonic and the Gettysburg Chamber Orchestra, and I arranged for the National Chamber Orchestra to present JIC winners in 2000 and 2003. In those years, we paid orchestras to present JIC winners. This became untenable given JIC's limited budget, and in 2006 we notified orchestras that we would only cover transportation and housing costs for JIC winners. Nevertheless, because the JIC concerts were

favorites of their audiences and their musicians, Gettysburg continued to present winners through 2012, and PG Philharmonic has presented winners for every competition since 1997.

As the JIC became established, other orchestras signed on: Avanti, then known as the FMMC Orchestra, has presented winners since 2006. Capital City Symphony has presented winners since 2009. The Apollo Orchestra was added in 2018 after I approached FMMC member Virginia Lum, who is on the board for that orchestra. In 2018, I contacted the Polish-American Arts Association about presenting our two first-prize Polish cello winners, and subsequently arranged a recital at the Arts Club of Washington featuring those two winners with pianist Frank Conlon.

Winners' recitals were held at the Corcoran Gallery in 2000, 2003, and 2006, with FMMC member and pianist Lydia Frumkin accompanying. Since 2009, the Roth Series at the Church of the Annunciation has presented JIC winners in recital, featuring the formal world premiere of the JIC commissioned work. Many of these performances are posted on JIC's YouTube channels. We are indebted to Frank Conlon, who directs the church's music program, for organizing these recitals and accompanying JIC winners at all of them.

In 2022 we presented a concert of three of the 2022 JIC winners performing entire concertos with the National Philharmonic in the world-class hall at Strathmore. The concert was conceived as a celebration of the JIC's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and a return to in-person music following the hiatus caused by the pandemic. This project was made possible because of significant support from Strathmore, the National Philharmonic, the Music Performance Trust Fund of the local musicians' union, and contributions from friends of the JIC.



Violist Vicki Powell (1st prize, 2006) rehearsing with Lydia Frumkin.

### *Winner Accomplishments*

The JIC is a significant steppingstone for our participants in their musical lives. We regularly follow the achievements of past winners and semifinalists, many of whom stay in touch with us. Their accomplishments include principal positions in major orchestras; top prizes at international competitions; and highly successful solo, chamber music, and academic careers. Highlights are posted on the JIC Facebook page, on the FMMC Foundation website, and regularly in this newsletter.

Anna Johansen would no doubt be delighted by the success of the young musicians who tested themselves at the JIC, and with the competition's stewardship by the FMMC Foundation and the JIC Committee since 1997. The competition has certainly fulfilled her desire to help young musicians at the beginning of their careers both financially and with meaningful musical experiences. 🍷

*This is Part 3 of a three-part article.*

## FMMC Concert Calendar - November and Early December

Before attending a concert, please check the FMMC website calendar for the most current information.

### Thursday, November 2, 1pm, at Strathmore Mansion

- Adolphus Hailstork: *Yuhwa (The Goddess of the Willow Trees)*. John La Montaine: Sonata for Solo Flute. **Laura Benning**, flute
- Legeti: Sonata for Solo Cello. **Robert Park**, cello
- Jacob: *Miniature Suite*. Clarke: Introduction, Allegro and Pastorale. **Albert Hunt**, clarinet; **Bonnie Cohen**, viola

### Friday, November 3, 12pm, at St. George's Episcopal Church

- Bach: Concerto in the Italian Style, BWV 971. Bach: Concerto no. 3 in D Minor, BWV 974. **Steven Schwarz**, piano
- Clarke: Prelude, Allegro, and Pastorale. **Bonnie Cohen**, viola; **Albert Hunt**, clarinet
- Schubert: Variations on an Original Theme in A-flat Major, D813. **Felicia Weiss**, piano; **Jack Stabile**, piano

### Thursday, November 9, 7pm, at Dumbarton House

- Telemann: Fantasia no. 8 in E Minor. Marin Marais: *Les Folies d'Espagne*. **Laura Benning**, piccolo
- Bach: Selections from Cello Suites. **Albert Hunt**, bass clarinet
- TBD: **Gwyn Jones**, flute
- Haydn: Baryton Trio no. 1. **Norman Brentley** (guest), flute; **Joanne Alme** (guest), English horn; **Christine Kharazian**, violin

### Friday, November 10, 12pm, at St. George's Episcopal Church

- Carl Maria von Weber: *Grand Duo Concertant* in E-flat Major, op. 48. **Kayondra Reid**, clarinet; piano TBD
- Faure: *Elegy*. Bloch: *Suite Hebraique*. **Hyejin Kim**, viola; **Joy Mentzel** (guest), piano
- Shostakovich: Selected movements from Piano Quintet, op. 57. **John S. Earle**, piano; **Erin Ryan**, violin; **Rachel Hixson**, violin; **Corby Johnson**, viola; **Ryan Bridgland** (guest), cello

### Thursday, November 16, 12pm, at Old Town Hall

- Selected Italian songs by Giulio, Francesca, and Settimia Caccini. **Polly Baldrige**, voice; **Jeongseon Choi**, piano
- Beethoven: Cello Sonata no. 4 in C Major (op. 102, no. 1). **John Kaboff**, cello; **Jung-Yoon Lee**, piano
- Christopher Theofanidis: *All Dreams Begin with the Horizon*. **Steven Schwarz**, piano

### Friday, November 17, 12pm, at Live! at 10th & G

- Beethoven: Cello Sonata no. 4 in C Major (op. 102, no. 1). **John Kaboff**, cello; **Jung-Yoon Lee**, piano
- Chopin. *Nocturnes*—op. 9, no. 2, in E-flat Major and op. 48, no. 1, in C Minor. **Shuai Wang**, piano
- Still. Suite for Violin and Piano. **Lydia Leong**, violin; **Daniel Wasse** (guest), piano

### Saturday, November 18, 7:30 pm, at the Montgomery College Cultural Arts Center

- Avanti Orchestra, Dietrich Paredes Baralt, conductor**
- Mozart: Overture to *The Abduction from the Seraglio*
  - Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto in F Minor. **Youjin Lee**, violin
  - Beethoven, Symphony no. 7

### Sunday, November 19, 3pm, at the Lyceum

- Concert in Memory of George Chadwick featuring the Patagonia Winds with* **Melissa Lindon**, flute; **Audrey Yu**, oboe; **Emily Robinson**, clarinet; **Jay Chadwick**, horn; **Chris McFarlane**, bassoon
- Mason Bynes: *Two Stepping*
  - Ottorino Respighi: *Suite from Ancient Airs and Dances* (arr. Adam Lesnick)
  - Paquito D'Rivera: *Aires Tropicales*
  - Valerie Coleman: *Umoja*
  - Leo Delibes: *Flower Duet* from *Lakmé* (arr. Richard Price)
  - *The Roaring Twenties* (Arr. Paul Nagle)
  - Klezmer Dances (arr. Gene Kavadlo; adapted by Adam Lesnick)

### Friday, December 1, 12pm, at St. George's Episcopal Church

- Franck: Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major. **Eunju Kwak**, violin; **Jeongseon Choi**, piano
- Mendelssohn: Piano Trio no. 2 in C Minor, op. 66. **Tanya Lee**, piano; **Robyn Tessin**, violin; **Taka Ariga** (guest), cello

### Friday, December 8, 12pm, at St. George's Episcopal Church

- Stanford. Clarinet Sonata, op. 129. **Karin Caifa**, clarinet; TBD, piano
- Chopin. First movement from Cello Sonata in G Minor. **Earl Williams** (guest), cello; **Jack Stabile**, piano
- Faure: Selection of Songs. **Ben Wallis**, bass-baritone; **Janghyo Yoo** (guest), piano

### VENUES

#### Dumbarton House

2715 Q St., NW  
Washington, DC

#### Live! at 10th & G

945 G St., NW  
Washington, DC  
Metro: Gallery Place 9<sup>th</sup> St. exit  
or Metro Center

#### Lutheran Church of the Reformation

212 East Capitol St., NE  
Washington, DC  
Metro: Capitol South or Union  
Station

#### The Lyceum

201 S. Washington St.  
Alexandria, VA

#### The Mansion at Strathmore

10701 Rockville Pike  
N. Bethesda, MD  
Metro: Grosvenor

#### Montgomery College Cultural Arts Center

7995 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD

#### Old Town Hall, City of Fairfax

Corner of Main St. Rt. 236 &  
University Dr.  
Fairfax, VA

#### St. George's Episcopal Church

915 N. Oakland St.  
Arlington, VA  
Metro: Virginia Square GMU

## From the Foundation Director

Grace McFarlane

At this special time of year when we pause to reflect on the things for which we are thankful, I realize how blessed we are to live in a region with so many opportunities to attend excellent live performances by world-class artists, some of whom hail from our own region. Most recently, two Washington-area performances come to mind. Past winners of our Washington International Competition (WIC) and Johansen International Competition for Young String Players (JIC) brought excitement and joy to our community of music lovers. What a delight to hear, in performance, the virtuosic artistry of 2018 JIC Winner, Julian Rhee, violin, performing the Tchaikovsky concerto with the Washington Chamber Orchestra under the baton of Jun Kim last September 22 & 23, 2023! And one week



later, our DMV audience was blown away by the spectacular performance of 2023 WIC winner, Adia Evans, soprano, in the Mahler Symphony No. 4, with FMMC's own Avanti Orchestra, with Shun Yao, Conductor. These brilliant artists in performance are a wonderful reminder of the importance and significance of the Foundation's mission. We are proud of their achievements and look forward to following the development of their careers.

The 2024 WIC Piano Competition is now **LIVE** on the Getacceptd website. We look forward to welcoming our distinguished panel of piano jurors – John O'Connor, Olga Kern, and Santiago Rodriguez – who will adjudicate the semifinal and final rounds next May 25 & 26, 2024. Submissions and inquiries have already started to come in, and once again we anticipate a record number of applicants. We encourage our FMMC membership to help get the word out to anyone who might be interested in this important competition. Information regarding competition requirements and repertoire can be found on our website, [fmmcfoundation.org](http://fmmcfoundation.org), where there is a direct link to the application page on [getacceptd.com](http://getacceptd.com).

Questions regarding the application process should be directed to Simon Finlow, Competition Chair, or Yuri Chayama, Assistant Competition Chair, [wicpiano@fmmc.org](mailto:wicpiano@fmmc.org).

Stay tuned for more news and updates from the Foundation. I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events.

Happy Thanksgiving!! 🍂

*Grace*





Friday Morning Music Club  
755 8th Street, NW  
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## Unrestricted Donations Urgently Needed!

Anne Zim

The Club is in urgent need of unrestricted donations. The following will explain our budget and why we are in this situation.

### FMMC Operations Budget Approved for FY2024

The FMMC Board of Governors approved an Operations Budget of \$289,974 for FY2024 on September 15, 2023. This budget is 10% above last year's actual Expenses of \$263,113.

During FY 2023, Total Income totaled \$395,585, mostly due to an award of \$108,034 from the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities (DCCAH) and a bequest of (\$140,000) from the Estate of George S. Manos. Total FY2023 Expenses (\$263,113) vs Total Income (\$395,585) resulted in Net Income of \$192,721.

### FMMC Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2023

The FMMC Balance Sheet Total Assets for FY2023 were \$852,100 vs. \$626,814 for FY 2022 (an increase of \$226,536 or 37%). The increase can be entirely attributed to the DCCAH award and George S. Manos bequest above.

Although it appears that when Total Liabilities of \$44,628 are subtracted from Total Assets, the Club's Equity of \$807,473 ensures payment of future deficits for many years, this is not the case. Assets that are either Permanently or Temporarily Restricted for specific FMMC programs now total \$408,621 which leaves a balance of only \$143,584 in Assets without Donor Restrictions. In other words, \$143,584 is the only money that can be used to plug deficits for any budgeted line item in the future.

### Conclusion: We need your help!

The Club must build up the monies dedicated to Assets **without Donor Restrictions**. Members who wish to help must designate their contributions with the word "UNRESTRICTED." It is key that the Board can cover Operating Expenses, if necessary, with such funds. We need your help! 🙏

Thank you.