

The Friday Morning MUSIC CLUB

140TH SEASON

JANUARY 2026



VOL. 60, NO. 5

From the President

Albert Hunt

I hope each of you enjoyed a peaceful and joyful holiday season. Mine was full of family, joy, and music, and I'm grateful for all of it.

As we start a new year, I've been thinking about our two organizations: the *Friday Morning Music Club* and the *Friday Morning Music Club Foundation*. Although their names sound similar and we share an incredible history, each organization has its own mission and role, and both play a key role in the classical music world.

I am a proud supporter of both. Clarifying these distinctions for the public is a priority for both organizations, including through the use of WIC, JIC, and FMMC as our outward-facing names, so people can more easily understand which organization does what.

The Foundation focuses on supporting emerging young artists through the Washington International Competition (WIC) and the Johansen International Competition (JIC). The Foundation board, made up of FMMC performing members, puts real care into this work, and it shows in the ongoing strength of these competitions, whose winners can be found in major concert halls and opera houses around the world.

FMMC's mission is to share live classical music with the community. I am grateful to our board for supporting wonderfully performed chamber music throughout the DMV, and inspired performances by the Avanti Orchestra and the Arioso Chorale and Orchestra. We also sponsor high school competitions in voice,

Happy New Year

piano, strings, and woodwinds. Together, our members create a musical life that is broader than I can fully describe here, and they do it with a focus that keeps everything thriving.

Understanding the differences between the two organizations can be helpful when deciding where to direct your support. Each contributes in meaningful but distinct ways, and your generosity strengthens all we do.

Looking ahead, we have an exciting lineup of January performances, including concerts at Live! at 10th and G, The Mansion at Strathmore, and a special Composers Concert at St. George's Episcopal Church. These programs showcase the creativity and energy of our musical community, and I hope you will join us.

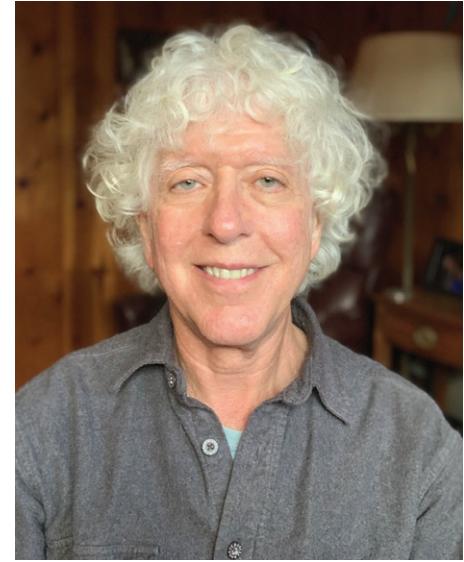
You can find the full January schedule here: <https://fmmc.org/event/?month=2026-01>

Thank you for being part of this community. Your presence and support keep the music alive. I hope to see you at the concerts. ☺

Warmest wishes for a joyful and musical New Year,

With gratitude,

Albert



Albert Hunt

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2	Building Audience, Building Community
2	"Rising Stars" Dazzle at FMMC Piano Concert
3	December 2025 FMMC Board Highlights
3	2025 High School String Competition
4	The Show Must Go On!
4	FMMC Inclement Weather Policy
4	Foundation News
5	Coming This Spring: 2026 Washington International Competition for Voice
5	WIC Winner Updates
6	Johansen International Competition News
7	FMMC Concert Calendar
7	FMMC Membership Update
8	Thank You to our Supporters and Partners



An official publication of the
Friday Morning Music Club, Inc.
Organized in 1886

ALBERT HUNT
FMMC President
fmmc@fmmc.org

LAILA LINDEN
Managing Director
manage@fmmc.org

For address changes,
please go to
www.FMMC.org
and update your
member profile.
If you do not have
access, send changes to:

JOHN SUTHERLAND EARLE
Membership Chair
membership@fmmc.org

Building Audience, Building Community

Rhoda Ritzenberg, FMMC Publicity Volunteer

In the fall of 2022, Jung-Yoon (Yoonie) Lee undertook an ambitious chamber music project scheduling two FMMC concerts a month, from October through May, at a church adjacent to a Metro stop in Arlington. Now chamber groups love to play at the venue, which attracts an appreciative audience of up to 125 active and enthusiastic listeners.

Who comes to these concerts? Since they're at noon, you have the usual gray heads, repeat customers, and regulars who wouldn't miss a concert. They talk to each other and to the musicians after the concerts. They're involved.

But you also have some surprises. One woman came with five children, none of whom was older than 7. They sat quietly, listening to the one-hour concert and barely budged. Another brought 2 children, one 5-year old and the other, 2½. Again, not a peep out of them. After the concert, I asked the children

whether they were musicians. "No", they answered. Then the woman prompted the younger child, "Tell her who's your favorite composer?" Ravel.

At a recent concert, four women sat together chatting, one with a suitcase. They had gathered in Arlington — from NYC, Atlanta and Minnesota — and were starting a weekend reunion. The organizer, a local woman, had seen an announcement for a free chamber concert. Our Friday concert kicked off their weekend.

At another concert, six very polite teen boys sat together waiting for the performance to begin. They are public school students who are part of a specialized, technical curriculum. They're required to take an arts class and chose music. They and their teacher got on an ART bus (Arlington's bus system) and came.

How "local" are the performances in Arlington and do they bring people together?

I was a poll greeter at a recent election and started talking to another greeter. Her adult son, who was taking a violin class from a National Symphony Orchestra musician, was a perfect candidate for the FMMC chamber program. I told her about our concerts. About 6 months later, she was an audience member. Her son had auditioned and was playing a solo piece.

Music brings people together. FMMC musicians bring joy to a neighborhood and make us more of a community.

On behalf of the local audience at St. George's Episcopal Church (adjacent to the Virginia Square Metro) and on behalf of those who just drop in, thank you to the musicians who play for us. And thanks for making Arlington your home base on the first and second Friday of the month. ♫

"Rising Stars" Dazzle at FMMC Piano Concert

The FMMC 2025 High School Piano Competition winners, the "Rising Stars," wowed an audience at Ingleside at King Farm with their exceptional performances. Following enthusiastic applause, they took time to answer audience questions and share insights about their music. About 150 guests enjoyed this memorable afternoon on December 11 in the Cultural Arts Center of the Rockville venue. ♫



(left to right) Clark Hu, Derek Yang, Zack Lam.

December 2025 FMMC Board Highlights

Mary Alice Davidson

With half of this season in the past, FMMC now rolls into 2026 to celebrate its 140th Anniversary and look into the future. Your Board of Governors, all volunteers, has been working individually and at board meetings to facilitate the goals for our future. FMMC's programs are off to solid starts in this landmark year. Here are some highlights from a recent board meeting:

President's Report: Albert Hunt is interested in holding "mini fundraisers" in the new year and is investigating how to proceed with that initiative. Board members volunteered to join him by looking at what other arts organizations are focusing on in 2026 to avoid overlap. Meanwhile, Albert looks forward to the board's January 18th retreat. His goal is to have the group exchange ideas and give support to each other as they jump into programming and spread the word about FMMC's future.

Membership: John Sutherland Earle retrieved samples of the last 20 years of Yearbooks from the Bethesda Archives. He will use them to review how FMMC has evolved through the years. John will also use the history of FMMC's first 100 years written by Charlotte Shear, which is on the FMMC website. John intends to use both histories as a template for FMMC's next chapter.

Arioso: Chorale Manager Peter Baum reported that 180 people attended the two November concerts by the Chorale and Orchestra. The audience was generous with its appreciation of the program and the exceptional soloists. In addition to applause, they also contributed \$900 at the concerts and another \$2,500 was received. The concerts were live streamed on the Arioso home site using equipment from the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, which was the venue for both concerts.

Program Director: Yooni Lee reviewed the first 2025 Chamber Concert at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library. The performers - a string quartet and a soprano soloist - were excellent. Yooni added that Karen McCool, the music librarian at MLK, ensured that the concert would take place in the 4th Floor Auditorium.

Yooni hopes MLK will help publicize future concerts to add to the audiences.

Auditions: Marta Howard reported that a flutist and a pianist auditioned virtually and were accepted as performance members. She is looking forward to the live auditions on January 30th and has recruited experienced judges ready to listen to the candidates and support their inclusion in FMMC's performance member circle. Audition specifics are on the FMMC website.

Outreach: Elizabeth Whitman said all 44 outreach performance slots were filled by individual and group performers through the end of December. She has sent a Google form to venue chairs asking for dates through May. While recruiting a new venue in Maryland, the contact asked if FMMC would accept donations, which of course is true. As a result, Elizabeth will make sure brochures describing the breadth of FMMC's performances and donation options are available to the audiences. The board encouraged providing

the Newsletter at the concerts as another way to advertise what's happening and solicit donations.

Avanti: Orchestra Manager Cherie Davis noted that Avanti's third concert will be held on Friday, March 27th, at 8 pm at Parilla Performing Arts Center in Rockville, MD. The tentative selections for that concert include the Barber Violin Concerto performed by the 2025 WIC First Prize Violin winner, Coco Mi; the 1919 version of Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite*; and works by American and Taiwanese composers. Avanti Orchestra's YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@AvanitOrchestraDC>, is administered by Avanti cellist Jerome Glick, who has volunteered to record the concerts for years.

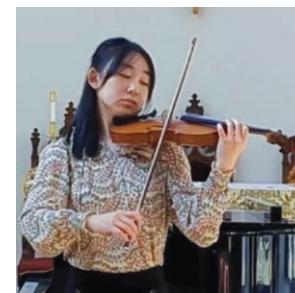
Laila Linden, FMMC's Managing Director, reported that she is working on the final reports for grants and is preparing corporate ad rates for the Newsletter and concert programs. Her hope is that additional volunteers will become involved in finetuning PR initiatives. ♫

2025 High School String Competition

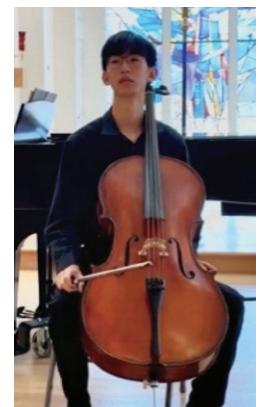
We are pleased to announce the winners of FMMC's 2025 High School String Competition winners. Many thanks to our judges who had a hard time deciding due to high quality of performances: Rhea Chung, violin (Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra); Karin Brown, viola (Baltimore Symphony Orchestra); Bo Li, cello (Baltimore Symphony Orchestra).



Amelia Baisden



Jacqi Fan



Caleb Fan

The results were:

First place: Amelia Baisden, cello

Second place: Jacqi Fan, violin

Third place: Caleb Fan, cello

Honorable Mention: Elain Zhang, cello

Congratulations to the winners!

We're looking forward to hosting the winners at the student recitals. ♫

The Show Must Go On!

Yooni Lee, FMMC Program Director

Two warmly received FMMC concerts took place on a snowy Friday, December 5th! Both performers and audiences braved the weather to ensure “the show must go on.” The events featured:

- **A new FMMC member:** TaraLee Mecham (soprano) at St. George’s Episcopal Church.
- **An FMMC composers showcase** at the Woman’s Club of Chevy Chase, including:
 - ◊ Li-Ly Chang performing her own piano composition.
 - ◊ The Charm City Winds (Dennis Karp, Heidi Dewally, Lori Fowser, Nancy Switkes, and Michael Holmes) traveling from Baltimore to perform John Hiltgen’s *Two Variations for Woodwind Quintet*.

Thanks to all for a successful pair of musical events despite the weather! ♫



REMINDER: FMMC Inclement Weather Policy

Any weather-related concert cancellation will be announced on our website calendar. Please check FMMC.org/event for the latest update.

Foundation News

Daryl Yoder, Director

As musicians and music lovers, I expect that there are two experiences that we have all had, probably multiple times. One is the joy of making music with others, of bringing it to people who are eager to hear it, or of feeling a part of that warm circle of audience and performers when music and community seem wrapped up together. The other is the glimpse of otherworldly transcendence we sometimes get as we hear a major artist, either live or on recording, that suddenly makes time stop and leaves us breathless, amazed at what another human has done and how they have made us feel.

Both of these experiences were key in my early development as a musician, as I’m sure was true for many of you.

Joining the community chorus that my parents sang in when I was 10 or 11 and there falling in love with Haydn’s *Creation* first gave me the bug and showed me that music could bring me joy in a way my piano lessons never had. (Apologies to all my wonderful pianist colleagues!). But it was first beginning to hear truly great singers on recordings a few years later that really cemented my path: José van Dam’s unbroken flood of gorgeous bronze tone or Nicolai Gedda’s high notes that seemed to float and gleam like gold at the same time. I had no idea how people could make such beautiful sounds, but I knew I had to try. (Spoiler alert: I’m still trying!)

In his column this month, Albert Hunt writes about the differing roles of the

FMMC and the FMMC Foundation, and I’m struck by the complementary focus of the two organizations, one centered on music and community, the other on nurturing the next generation of performers. We need both kinds of experiences to have rich musical lives, the communal and the inspirational — or, when we’re extra lucky, a bit of both together — and, like Albert, I’m happy to be part of these sister organizations that seek to feed both needs.

I hope that you find both connection and inspiration in your musical life in 2026, with FMMC and beyond! ♫

Happy New Year!

Daryl

Coming this Spring: 2026 Washington International Competition for Voice

Applications are now open for the 2026 Washington International Competition (WIC) for Voice, and we hope you'll help us spread the word and mark your calendars now. The competition will take place May 23–24, 2026, with semifinal rounds at The George Washington University and finals at the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater.

We are thrilled to welcome an extraordinary jury for this year's competition: Stephanie Blythe (mezzo-soprano), Nicholas Phan (tenor), and Karen Slack (soprano). Their artistry, experience, and deep commitment to early career singers make them ideal mentors and evaluators for this important moment in each competitor's development.

In celebration of the 25th Voice Competition, and thanks to the generosity of the Foundation's Board, there is no application fee this year. Submissions are due on February 15, 2026, and complete details on eligibility, repertoire requirements, and the application process are available at fmmc-foundation.org and through the Acceptd portal at app.getacceptd.com/wic.

As always, the WIC depends on the engagement of our community. We hope you'll consider supporting the competition by spreading the word to promising young singers you may know, hosting a semi-finalist in your home, attending the live rounds in May, or contributing financially at fmmc-foundation.org/support/donate/. These competitions play a vital role in launching careers and sustaining the art form we all care about so deeply.

We look forward to sharing more as the season unfolds and to welcoming you in person this spring. Please reach out to wicvoice@fmmc.org with any questions. ☺

Trudi Benford
WIC Voice 2026 Chair



WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

2026 WIC for Voice

May 23-24, 2026
Washington, D.C.

Founded in 1948, the WIC provides renowned jurors, offering individual advice and feedback to all semifinalists. This year's judges:



STEPHANIE BLYTHE
MEZZO-SOPRANO



NICHOLAS PHAN
TENOR



KAREN SLACK
SOPRANO

\$22,000 in Total Prizes

IMPORTANT DATES

Application Open: September 15, 2025	Semifinals: May 23, 2026
app.getacceptd.com/wic	The George Washington University
Application Deadline:	Finals: May 24, 2026
February 15, 2026	Terrace Theater
Semifinalists Announced:	The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Mid-March 2026	<small>This event is an external rental presented in coordination with the Kennedy Center Campus Rentals Office and is not produced by the Kennedy Center.</small>

Open to Vocalists, ages 18 to 32 (as of May 23, 2026)

Thanks to the generosity of the Board of the FMMC Foundation and in celebration of the 25th competition for voice, the 2026 WIC is offered with **NO APPLICATION FEE**.

For regulations and repertoire, visit fmmc-foundation.org or scan the QR code to the right.



Housing and collaborative pianist offered to all semifinalists.

The Washington International Competition (WIC) is sponsored by the Friday Morning Music Club Foundation.

WIC Winner Updates

2024 piano finalist Seth Schultheis was awarded both the 50,000 Euro 1st prize and the chamber music prize at the 2025 Telekom Beethoven Competition in Bonn, Germany, in December. The prize also includes debuts with several European orchestras. Congratulations, Seth! ☺

Johansen International Competition News

Danielle Stoebe, JIC Administrative Director

The JIC Winners' Recital will be on the Roth Concert Series at Annunciation Catholic Church on Sunday, February 1, 2026 at 5:00pm. The church is located at 3810 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. Performers will be 2025 prize winners with Frank Conlon, collaborating on piano.

The performers will be:

Valery Breshears (first prize violin):

Valery, age 16, began her violin studies at the age of two and was accepted into the San Francisco Conservatory of Music at the age of five, where she studied with Zhao Wei. She is currently a Thibaudet Scholar at the Colburn Academy in Los Angeles, studying with Margaret Batjer. She serves as Concertmaster and Principal Second of the Colburn Virtuosi Ensemble. Valery has appeared as a soloist with the Fremont Symphony Orchestra, Nova Vista Symphony, Palo Alto Symphony, and California Youth Symphony. She has earned numerous competition honors, including First Prize at the 2025 Johansen International String Competition, prizes at the Chicago International Violin Competition and the Pacific Musical Foundation and Society Competition, and in 2025, she was named a laureate of the Stulberg International String Competition.



Samuel Tatsuki (third prize viola):

Samuel was born in Los Angeles and began studying the violin at the age of four before discovering his passion for the viola at seven. He currently studies with Roberto Díaz and Edward Gazeouleas at the Curtis Institute of Music. Samuel has been recognized with numerous top prizes, including awards from the Johansen International Competition, the Southern California Viola Society Youth Competition, the Bach Festival, and the Pasadena Showcase. As a chamber musician, he has performed with the Evie Quartet, earning top distinctions at the Colman Chamber Music Competition, the Enkor International Competition, and the Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition. He has also appeared as part of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Young Artists Concert.

For the past three summers, he has participated in the Perlman Music Program.



Joshua Kováč (first prize cello):

Born in 2007, Joshua Kováč is a Czech-American cellist studying at the Colburn School who recently gained recognition after winning First Prize at both the Johansen International Competition and Mahler International Competition in 2025. He was also a top prize winner at the renowned 2025 Irving M. Klein and 2024 Stulberg International String Competitions. Kováč has appeared in solo performances at Carnegie Hall, Ravinia Festival, Schermerhorn Symphony Center, and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (Boston). Twice a soloist with the Nashville Symphony, he has also collaborated with Orchestra SEEN Chicago, Washington's Avanti Orchestra, the Western Michigan Orchestra, and the Kinnor Philharmonic. Previously featured on The Violin Channel and NPR's From the Top, he has also played at numerous music festivals, including Kronberg, Music@Menlo, and Chamber Music Northwest.



Eiline Tai (second prize cello and best performance of commissioned work):

Cellist Eiline Tai has performed internationally, making her solo debut at the age of 10 with the Southern California Philharmonic. At just 16, Eiline had the privilege of studying Beethoven's complete five cello sonatas with the late Maestro Alfred Brendel. In 2020, she was invited to perform in the Mass Cello Ensemble at Walt Disney Concert Hall as part of the Piatigorsky International Cello Festival. She gained further recognition in January 2023 with her appearance on NPR's From the Top, a nationwide radio show spotlighting young classical musicians. Demonstrating outstanding artistry and dedication, she was awarded the 2025 YoungArts Award Winner with Distinction, the highest honor from the National Foundation, and was selected to participate in YoungArts Week in Miami. Eiline's exceptional talent has also earned her top prizes in distinguished competitions. Recently, she received 2nd Prize at the 2025 Johansen International Competition, along with the award for Best Performance of Commissioned Work. ♫



FMMC Concert Calendar January and Early February 2026

Please check the FMMC website calendar for the most current information.

Sunday January 4 @ 7:30pm at Riderwood

Please note this concert is not open to the public.

- Beethoven: String Quartet No. 13 in B-flat Major, op. 130. **Reed Trevelyan**, violin; **Nathan Giguere** (guest), violin; **Victor Lin**, viola; **Paul Marshall** (guest), cello

Thursday, January 8 @ 1pm at The Strathmore Mansion

- Ambroise Thomas: From Hamlet: *A vos jeux, mes amis...* (Ophelia's Mad Scene). **Sally Freeland**, soprano; **Topher Ruggiero**, piano
- Debussy: Four Preludes. **Charles Timbrell**, piano
- Mozart: Trio in E-flat Major, K. 498 ("Kegelstatt"). **Olga Yanovich** (guest), violin; **Victor Olmsted** (guest), viola; **Irina Koulikova**, piano

Friday January 9 @ 12pm at St. George's Episcopal Church

The FMMC Composers Group will present works by member composers:

- **Leslie Bennett**, **Jonathan Newmark**, and **Sharon Guertin Shafer**

Sunday January 11 @ 3pm at Collington Retirement Community

- J. S. Bach: Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, BWV 1001. Carlos Guastavino: *Sonata No. 1 para guitarra*. **Benjamin Gascon**, guitar
- Music by Black composers: Florence Price: *Adoration*, *Elfentanz*. William Grant Still: *Summerland, Mother and Child*. **Lydia Leong**, violin, pianist TBD

Friday January 16 @ 12pm @ Live! at 10th & G

- Mozart: Sonata No. 16 in C Major, K. 545. **Simon Finlow**, piano
- Gaubert: *Sonatine*. **Laura Benning**, flute; **Natasha Dukan** (guest), piano
- Debussy: String Quartet. **Reed Trevelyan**, violin; **Sarah Calderon** (guest), violin; **Nathan Giguere** (guest), viola; **Kurt Osowski** (guest), cello

Friday February 6 @ 12pm at St. George's Episcopal Church

- Beethoven: String Quartet No. 10 in E-flat Major, op. 74. **Robyn Tessin**, violin; **Manuel Possolo**, violin; **Andrew Crane** (guest), viola; **Taka Ariga** (guest), cello
- Ravel: Piano Trio in A Minor. **John Sutherland Earle**, piano; **Erin Ryan**, violin; **Irina Desmond** (guest), cello

Friday February 6 @ 1pm at the Strathmore Mansion

- Fauré: *Claire de Lune*. **TaraLee Mecham**, soprano; piano TBA
- Althea Talbot-Howard: *Deep River Sonata*. **Kayondra Reid**, clarinet; **Bora Lee** (guest), piano
- Mauro Giuliani: *Six variations sur un thème original*. **Benjamin Gascon**, guitar

Friday February 7 @ 3pm at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library

- Schubert: Selected Waltzes. **Yuri Chayama**, piano
- Mozart: Trio in E-flat Major, K. 498 ("Kegelstatt"). **Albert Hunt**, clarinet; **Bonnie Cohen**, viola; **Immanuel Gruenberg**, piano
- TBA

Tuesday February 10 @ 7:30pm at Goodwin House

Student Recital. **Amelia Baisden**, cello, and **Justin Kijun Lee**, cello

Thursday February 12 @ 3pm at Ingleside at King Farm

Benjamin Gascon, guitar, will present the following works:

- J.S. Bach. Sonata No. 1 in G Minor
- Mauro Giuliani. *Six variations sur un thème original*
- Johann Kaspar Mertz. *Fantaisie Hongroise*
- Carlos Guastavino. *Sonata no. 1 para guitarra*

VENUES

Collington Retirement Community
10450 Lottsford Rd.
Mitchellville, MD

Goodwin House
4800 Fillmore Ave.
Alexandria, VA

Ingleside Retirement Community
701 King Farm Blvd.
Rockville, MD

Live! at 10th & G
945 G St., NW
Washington, DC
Metro: Gallery Place or Metro Center

Martin Luther King Memorial Library
901 G St. NW
Washington, DC
Metro: Gallery Place

St. George's Episcopal Church
915 N. Oakland St.
Arlington, VA
Metro: Virginia Square GMU

Sherwood Community Center
3740 Blenheim Boulevard
Fairfax, VA

Strathmore Mansion
10701 Rockville Pike
N. Bethesda, MD
Metro: Grosvenor

FMMC Membership Update

The following members joined or renewed during the past month.

John Caparusso, Associate Violin, Associate Piano, Potomac, MD

Jameson Dickman, Avanti Orchestra Double Bass, Fort Washington, MD

Alicia Kim, Chamber Flute, Bethesda, MD

Christen Sparago, Avanti Orchestra Flute/Piccolo, Rockville, MD

Georgia Yuan, Associate Flute, Washington, DC ♪



Friday Morning Music Club
755 8th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Thank You to our Supporters and Partners!



 City of Fairfax
Commission on the Arts

 CENTER FOR THE ARTS
George Mason University

 POTTER VIOLINS

 WASHINGTON
PERFORMING ARTS



 DUMBARTON
HOUSE

 Brobst
VIOLIN SHOP

 CHIARINA
CHAMBER PLAYERS

 PIANO
TECHNICIANS
GUILD



 HOWARD
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Nancy Peery
Marriott Foundation

 THE
MANHATTAN
STRING
QUARTET



Martin Luther King Jr.
Memorial Library

 DC Public Library

Musical Arts International

James Colwell Piano Restoration


DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES

This project is supported in part by the DC Commission on the Arts and
Humanities, which receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts.