

fmmc

Classical Music for All

140TH SEASON

MAY 2026

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From the President

Albert Hunt, FMMC President

“What makes the Friday Morning Music Club so special is not just what we do—it’s who we are together.”

Week after week, I’ve had the privilege of watching our community in motion. Concerts, competitions, auditions, educational programs—there is always something happening, always music being shared. But what stays with me most is not just the activity itself; it’s the people behind it. *So much of what we enjoy comes from members quietly giving their time, energy, and care to make things happen.*

That spirit of generosity deserves to be recognized. In that spirit, I would like to recognize one of our many gifted contributors, Yooni Lee, our outgoing Program Director, whose leadership of the chamber music program has been outstanding. She not only nurtured its artistic growth but also expanded its reach through collaborations with the MLK, Jr. Library and Washington Performing Arts. Her work has opened doors and created meaningful connections beyond our walls, and we are all the richer for it. At the same time, I’m delighted to welcome Andy Tangborn, who will carry this work forward. I know he will bring his own energy and vision to the role, and I look forward to working with Andy to see the program continue to evolve.

In my most recent column, I shared some thoughts about our rebranding effort. It’s not just about a new look—it’s

about expressing more clearly who we are today. This feels like a meaningful step for us. It reflects a desire to honor our history while also making sure we remain relevant, visible, and connected to the wider community we serve.

Over these past months, I’ve also tried to speak honestly about what it takes to sustain all of this. Offering high quality free programming is something we can be enormously proud of. It depends on thoughtful stewardship and support. The generosity of our members, especially through unrestricted giving, makes a real and immediate difference.

There’s no single way to be involved—every contribution matters.

As we look ahead, I hope we simply keep doing what we do best: showing up for one another, participating, listening, and staying engaged. Whether you volunteer, perform, attend, or give, you are part of what keeps this community alive and meaningful.

These past months have reminded me that FMMC is, at its core, something we share. It belongs to all of us. And as long as we continue forward together—with generosity and our love of music—I truly believe our best work is still ahead.

Thank you for being part of it. 🎵

Albert



Albert Hunt

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Avanti Celebrates Classical Gems and AAPI Heritage with Double Concert

Phoebe Benich

Avanti is excited to announce its first-ever double concert May 15th and 17th, celebrating enduring classical gems and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month. Music Director and Conductor Chi-Yuan Lin has crafted a program featuring Brahms' First Symphony, the Sibelius Violin Concerto with soloist Ming-Feng Hsin, and a new orchestral arrangement of the beloved Taiwanese folk tune "Flowers in the Rainy Night" by composer An-Ni Wei. In collaboration with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States (TECRO), Avanti is proud to showcase Taiwanese artists at the heart of this program.

A national hero in Taiwan from a young age, Ming-Feng Hsin won first prize at the Glasgow International Violin Competition at 15, studied at the Curtis Institute and Juilliard, and went on to a 24-year tenure at the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra before turning his focus to teaching at Mannes School of Music at The New School. He has performed for luminaries such as President Ford and Queen Elizabeth, soloed



Ming-Feng Hsin

with orchestras including the Scottish National Orchestra and BBC Orchestra, and brings a rare depth of experience as soloist, chamber musician, and conductor.

An-Ni Wei is a Taiwanese composer whose work spans classical music, electroacoustic music, film, and musical theater, with a focus on contemporary Taiwanese social issues and history. She holds a master's degree from the New England Conservatory and was a finalist in the 2023 National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra Composition Competition.

Avanti is particularly thrilled that Professor Hsin has graciously offered to coach two masterclass sessions: one with the Avanti



An-Ni Wei

strings on May 11th at the Church of the Epiphany from 6:15-7:15pm and one with individual Avanti violinists on May 13th at the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church from 5:30-7:15pm. These masterclasses are open to the public, so feel free to come listen to our musicians perform in these exciting masterclasses.

The concerts will be at 8pm on Friday, May 15th at the Church of the Epiphany and at 4pm on Sunday, May 17th at the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church. Avanti is grateful to both venues, and is especially honored to be featured in the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church Concert Series. 🎶

These concerts are supported in part by the Ministry of Culture of Taiwan (Republic of China) and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States.



FMMC Concert Calendar May 2026

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

Friday May 1 @ 12pm at St. George's Episcopal Church

- Brahms: *Klavierstücke*, op. 118. **Luke Ratcliffe**, piano
- Schumann: Piano Trio No. 1, op. 63. **Tanya Simms**, piano; **Reed Trevelyan**, violin; **Taka Ariga** (guest), cello

Saturday May 2 @ 2pm at Westminster at Lake Ridge

- Fauré: Selected *Barcarolles*. **Stephen Schwarz**, piano
- **Leslie Bennett**: *Study in Silver*. **Topher Ruggiero**, piano
- Selected songs from poets. **Mandy Brown**, soprano; **Yejin Lee**, piano

Saturday May 2 @ 2:30pm at Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library

- Brahms: Two Songs, op. 91. **Marion Drake**, soprano; **Bonnie Cohen**, viola; **Jung-Yoon Lee**, piano
- Schubert: *Klavierstück No. 2*. **Simon Finlow**, piano
- Arvo Pärt: *Fratres*. **Christine Kharazian**, violin; piano TBA

Sunday May 3 @ 4pm at Lutheran Church of the Reformation

Arioso Chorale & Orchestra
Paul Leavitt, Artistic Director and
Conductor

- Mozart: *Missa solemnis in C Major*, K. 337
- Schubert: *Magnificat*, D. 486
- Leavitt: *Magnificat*

Sunday May 3 @ 7:30pm at Riderwood Senior Living Community

Please note this concert is not open to the public.

- Granados: *Allegro de Concierto*. **Simon Finlow**, piano
- Brahms: Sonata for Piano and Cello in E Minor, op. 38. **Simon Finlow**, piano; **Harriet Kaplan**, cello
- Brahms: Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano in A Minor, op. 114. **Karin Caifa**, clarinet; **John Kaboff**, cello; **Simon Finlow**, piano

Thursday May 7 @ 1pm at Strathmore Mansion

- Fauré: Piano Quartet No. 1. **Marion Richter**, violin; **Jeanne Rosenthal**, viola; **Deborah Chen** (guest), cello; **Chen-Li Tzeng**, piano
- Gaspar Cassadó: Suite for Solo Cello. **John Kaboff**, cello
- Weber: Clarinet Quintet in B-flat Major, op. 34. **Albert Hunt**, clarinet; **Grace Kang** (guest) and **Eunju Kwak**, violins; **Bonnie Cohen**, viola; **David Boyle**, cello

Friday May 8 @ 12pm at St. George's Episcopal Church

- Barber: Selected Songs. **Gail Collins**, mezzo-soprano; TBD, piano
- Weber: Clarinet Quintet, op. 34. **Albert Hunt**, clarinet; **Eunju Kwak**, and **Yun Kang** (guest), violins; **Bonnie Cohen**, viola; **David Boyle**, cello
- Prokofiev: Quintet in G Minor, op. 39. **Mark Simon**, clarinet; **Bryan Cooke** (guest), oboe; **Michael Casassa**, violin; **Jonathan Newmark**, viola; **Pete Ostle**, double bass

Friday May 15 @ 12pm at Live! at 10th & G

- Haydn: Sonata No. 52 in G Major, Hob XVI: 39. **Jared Yoakem**, piano
- Henry Mollicone, Ricky Ian Gordon, and Lori Laitman: Selected Songs. **Debora Madsen**, soprano; **George Peachey** (guest), piano
- Marie Jaell: Cello Sonata in A Minor. **Amelia Baisden**, cello; **Bora Lee** (guest), piano

Friday May 15 @ 8pm at Church of the Epiphany

Avanti Orchestra Concert
Chi-Yuan Lin, Conductor
Ming-Feng Hsin, Violin

- Sibelius Violin Concerto
- Brahms Symphony No. 1
- An-Ni Wei: *Flowers in the Rainy Night*

Sunday May 17 @ 4pm at Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church

Avanti Orchestra Concert
Chi-Yuan Lin, Conductor
Ming-Feng Hsin, Violin

- Sibelius Violin Concerto
- Brahms Symphony No. 1
- An-Ni Wei: *Flowers in the Rainy Night*

Sunday May 24 @ 2pm at Harris Theatre at George Mason University

*Washington International Competition
for Voice Finals*

Friday May 29 @12pm at Woman's Club of Chevy Chase

- Granados: *Allegro di concierto*, op. 46; *Quejas a la Maya*. **Simon Finlow**, piano
- Debussy: *Fêtes galantes* and *Apparition*. **Sally Freeland**, soprano; **Luke Ratcliffe**, piano
- Saint-Saëns: Introduction and Rondo. Sarasate: Introduction and Tarantella. **Hyejin Kim**, violin; **Joy Mentzel** (guest), piano

VENUES

Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church
1 Chevy Chase Circle, NW
Washington, DC

Church of the Epiphany
1317 G St. NW
Washington, DC
Metro: Metro Center

Harris Theatre at George Mason University
4471 Aquia Creek Lane
Fairfax, VA

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

Lutheran Church of the Reformation
212 East Capitol St., NE
Washington, DC
Metro: Capitol South or Union Station

Martin Luther King Jr. 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

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

Westminster at Lake Ridge
12191 Clipper Dr.
Woodbridge VA

Woman's Club of Chevy Chase
7931 Connecticut Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD

Washington International Competition for Voice

Daryl Yoder, Director, Washington & Johansen International Competitions, FMMC Foundation

Friends, the time is here! May has come and that means that we can warmly invite you to join us for this year's Washington International Competition for Voice. On April 1, we announced our outstanding group of 16 semi-finalists on our Facebook and Instagram pages, and it has been wonderful to see their excitement and the support of their colleagues, friends, and families building. (You can follow us there too: search for Washington International Competition on Facebook or @wic_competition on Instagram.)

The public is welcome at both days of the live competition. On May 23, our distinguished jury – soprano Tony Arnold, tenor Nicholas Phan, and soprano Karen Slack – will hear the semi-final round from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in George Washington University's Phillips Hall (801 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC); and on May 24 at 2 p.m. the finals will be held in the Harris Theatre at George Mason University (4471 Aquia Creek Lane, Fairfax, VA). Along with the prizes awarded by the judges, the audience will have a chance to vote for their favorite performer, who will receive an additional \$1,000 Audience Prize. This will definitely be an afternoon of singing that you will not want to miss!

I want to especially thank this year's Competition Chair, Trudi Benford, who has not only put in many hours of hard work to make all the necessary elements come together, but has helped develop new aspects of the competition, from expanding our social media presence and helping our competitors spread the word of their accomplishment, to putting together a new social hour for them after semi-finals to allow them to unwind, network, and strengthen their professional and social connections. For the third year running, Yuri Chayama has served as Assistant Chair, providing exceptional organizational skills and an eagle eye for detail. Eunju Kwak, Lois Jones, Simon Finlow, and Grace McFarlane have also provided invaluable assistance in organizing volunteers for the weekend, finding hosts for out-of-town competitors, and generally sharing their experience, insights, and know-how. It is an impressive and highly capable team and I am very grateful for them.

Come join us on Memorial Day weekend to see and hear the fruits of their work! We will be very happy to welcome you. 🎤

WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

2026 WIC for Voice
May 23-24, 2026

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

TONY ARNOLD
SOPRANO

NICHOLAS PHAN
TENOR

KAREN SLACK
SOPRANO

\$22,000 in Total Prizes

Semifinals: May 23, 2026, 10AM- 5PM
The George Washington University in the Phillips Hall (Lower Level) at 801 22nd Street, NW

Finals: May 24, 2026, 2PM
*Harris Theatre George Mason University Center
4471 Aquia Creek Lane, Fairfax, VA*

Free and open to the public.

For more information: fimmcfoundation.org

Vote for the Audience Prize

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

The Ross-Roberts Competition

Kayondra Reid, Chair, Ross-Roberts Competition for Winds, Brass and Percussion

The Ross Roberts Competition for Winds, Brass, and Percussion was held on April 11. The level of performance this year was exceptionally high, and we commend all participants for their preparation and musicianship. We extend our sincere thanks to our judges for their time and expertise, and to all who helped make this event a success.

Congratulations to our prize winners:

- First Prize – Juniper Brinegar, Clarinet
- Second Prize – Clare Colligan, Bassoon
- Third Prize – Sam Charen, Trumpet

Honorable Mentions:

- Jayden Tom – Percussion
- Oscar José Machado Morón – Bassoon 🎤

Entertaining Members of Congress and Supreme Court Justices for Decades

Jerome Glick, Avanti Orchestra Cellist

Over the past year I've had the pleasure of befriending Ron Martinson, the former "unofficial piano player of the U.S. Congress." (Who knew that there was such a thing?). My initial encounter was in the fellowship hall ("Stone Hall") at the National Presbyterian Church in DC, where several pianists provide background music for chattering congregants after the 11 a.m. Sunday service. So drawn was I to his warm and soothing renditions of seemingly familiar tunes that I simply had to know more.

Ron started "banging on the keys" at age 3 and by age 16, he was entertaining patrons at the local bar. His habit of playing on showroom pianos got him a job with the Baldwin Piano Company while earning his Master's Degree in American History at the University of Minnesota. Upon arriving on Capitol Hill in 1969, he began playing at various social functions, including sing-alongs in both the House and the Senate, and at the Democratic and Republican Clubs at a time when everyone who worked on the Hill frequented

both places. Two noteworthy occasions included playing at the swearing-in ceremony for Vice President Gerald Ford and playing "Happy Birthday" for President Ronald Reagan. At age 82, he continues to play annually at the Supreme Court Christmas party, a role he has held every year since 1979.

But even more astonishing is the fact that Ron does not know how to read music. He plays by ear and claims to know a thousand songs. People approach him to ask if he had studied at Juilliard, but he has never taken a piano lesson! Given all this, I asked if he had ever recorded an album. When the answer was "no," I immediately spotted a void needing to be filled. As an audio engineer it was natural for me to start recording his live performances. This resulted in the release of the CD "Live at Stone Hall" and a YouTube channel that features him playing 400 songs (and counting). Ron's repertoire typically showcases the Great American Songbook

RON MARTINSON LIVE AT STONE HALL



and Tin Pan Alley songs of the early 20th century, but also includes hymns, spirituals, patriotic songs, and the light pop fare of later decades.

What began as a musical collaboration grew into a friendship. The power of music to bring people together across differences, made evident through Ron's lived experience, inspires me to think of ways in which music can continue to heal a divided world, whether in the halls of power or in our own local communities. 🎵

Outreach Concert

Connie Schulz

A wonderful outreach concert was held on Sunday, April 12, at the Collington Continuing Care Retirement Community in Mitchellville/Bowie, MD. Solo violinist Makiko Taguchi has been the outreach committee liaison with Collington, a Kendal community, for the last three years. She and her guest accompanist Jung Yeon Joo played selections from Bach, Mozart, Mendelssohn, and Amy Beach. Luke Ratcliffe, solo piano, played a program of seven Chopin pieces. The audience of more than fifty people attending in person, as well as those watching in their homes via a closed circuit broadcast system, were enthusiastic about both parts of the performance. Collington, a life care



Makiko Taguchi



Luke Ratcliffe

community completed in October 1988, has hosted FMMC concerts regularly since the first one held there on April 23, 1989, with pianist Richard Brickman and violinist Fred Shoup performing sonatas by Mozart and Fauré.

Dr. Constance B. Schulz has been a chamber violinist with FMMC since the late 1970s and resides in the Collington Community where she is one of 3 FMMC members, as well as the location's liaison for the club's outreach concerts. 🎵

The Arioso Chorale and Orchestra Completes Its Season

Peter Baum

Depending on when this edition of the FMMC Newsletter arrives in your inbox, the Arioso Chorale and its Orchestra will just be finishing up or will have finished the 2025–26 season with a concert on April 28 and May 3. Hopefully you will still have time to attend the May 3 performance that starts at 4:00 PM in the Sanctuary of the Lutheran Church of the Reformation. The program, com-

prised of works by Schubert (*Magnificat*, D 486) Mozart (*Missa solemnis in C Major*, KV 337, and Leavitt (*Magnificat*), will feature soloists Soprano Erin Hannon, Mezzo Melissa Cregger, Tenor Allan Palacios Chan, and Baritone Elliot Matheny.

With the season complete, the Chorale and its orchestra will turn their attention to the 2026–27 season starting in the fall. The rehearsals will be starting a bit earlier than normal as the Chorale is busily planning for a return trip to the Amalfi Coast in October. The plan is to premiere Paul Leavitt's *Stabat Mater* with concerts in both Salerno and Naples. Additional music for the program will come from major choral works by Verdi and Puccini. The

Chorale and orchestra will present the program in a "bon voyage" concert in early October about a week before the trip commences. Musicians interested in joining the tour should contact Peter Baum at chorale@fmmc.org as soon as possible as the tour arrangers are already involved in discussions with the hotel in Salerno that will be the center of operations.

The remainder of the Chorale's 2026–2027 program remains under discussion but, as usual, the plan is to have three concerts (two performances each) with the second and third concerts scheduled early in the new year and in the early spring. 🎶

Tempo Giusto

Please join us for an enchanting afternoon of beautiful music with the **Tempo Giusto**

Ensemble and tenor soloist Matthew Hill, as they perform in a concert to benefit **Bethesda Help.** Matt is the winner of the 2023 Washington International Competition, and many of our FMMC friends play in the ensemble.

When: Saturday, May 2, 2026, at 3 PM

Where: Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church in Bethesda
6601 Bradley Boulevard
Bethesda, MD 20817

Admission is free, but donations are encouraged.

Please donate at whatever level you can afford to support your neighbors in need. You can donate by scanning the QR code:



The Tempo Giusto Ensemble musicians will match 100% of all donations raised in connection with the concert. Visit www.tempogiustoensemble.weebly.com for information about the ensemble and Music for Food.

SOLOIST:

Matthew Hill, tenor

CONCERTMASTER:

Kathy Judd

PROGRAM:

Henry Purcell: selected incidental music

Ulrico Wilhelm Wassenauer: Concerto Armonico V

George Frideric Handel:

Where'er you walk from *Semele*

Christoph Willibald Gluck:

L'espoir renaît dans mon âme

from *Orphée et Eurydice*

Benjamin Britten: *Les Illuminations*



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Where are they now?

Jeanne Rosenthal

Violist Teng Li was a first prize winner of the JIC in 2000. In September 2023, Li was appointed to the Paul Hindemith Principal Viola Chair of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a post she assumed at the beginning of the 2024/25 season. Previously, she was principal viola of the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 2018 to 2024 and served for 14 seasons as principal viola of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

Recognized as a “dazzlingly virtuosic” soloist (Los Angeles Times), Li has appeared with premier ensembles throughout the world, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, National Chamber Orchestra, Munich Chamber Orchestra, Shanghai Opera Symphony Orchestra and Esprit Orchestra.

She is also a founding member of the Rosamunde Quartet. Li’s probing interpretations of chamber works can be heard on several critically acclaimed recordings, among them 1939, her solo album for Azica Records with violinist Benjamin Bowman and pianist Meng-Chieh Liu.

Li is a graduate of the Central Conservatory in Beijing, China, and the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, where she studied with Michael Tree, Joseph de Pasquale, and Karen Tuttle. In addition to the JIC, Li has won top prizes the Holland-America Music Society Competition, the Primrose International Viola Competition, the Klein International

String Competition, the ARD International Music Competition and the Astral Artistic Services’ 2003 National Auditions.

A committed educator, Li has taught at the Colburn School, University of Toronto, Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, Montreal’s Conservatoire de Musique and the Roosevelt University’s Chicago College of Performance Arts. In addition, she teaches at the Sarasota Music Festival and Morningside Music Bridge.

Teng graciously took some time from her very busy schedule to answer a few questions for the FMMC community.

Q. What is your practice routine?

A. I practice scales, arpeggios and double stops as a warm up and spend a lot of time playing slowly.

Q. Do you have a favorite composer for the viola?

A. Brahms, Mozart, Hindemith, Berlioz, Walton, Schnittke, Salonen, Schubert, Bartok, Dvorak, Britten, Mahler, Strauss and so many more.....

Q. What is a favorite piece you’re currently working on?

A. I am currently working on the Hindemith Sonata Op.11 No.4. I learned the piece as a student, and now going back to it I feel like I’m able to explore so many colors.

Q. Are there memories of your JIC experience that you feel helped shape your career?

A. It was a very meaningful experience to compete in JIC. It was the first competition I did when I came to the United States to study. It was an eye-opening experience to hear so many wonderful players. My host family was very warm, they treated me like family, and we stayed



in touch. I had such a great experience and felt welcome. I have followed the competition over the years and see so many incredible string players compete in the competition. JIC has built an international reputation, and it is a very special competition.

Q. What hobbies do you enjoy outside of music?

A. Reading, cooking with my daughter, and looking after plants.

Q. What advice would you give to your younger self or young aspiring musician?

A. Don’t feel bad about the things you don’t know how to do yet. Be open minded, and keep being curious, it will help you develop. Be patient, and don’t give up.

Q. Do you have a mentor who stands out in providing you with artistic inspiration?

A. I’ve had many mentors in my life. One of my biggest influences was Michael Tree. He was not only a legendary violist, but a wonderful human being that people loved and still love. I hear his voice so often. 🎻

Manos High School Piano Competition

The 2026 George S. Manos High School Piano Competition took place on March 29 at the Women’s Club of Chevy Chase. Fifteen outstanding high school pianists from the DMV participated in this year’s competition. The judges were Dr. Shirley Yoo, Dr. Teodora D. Adzharova, and our own Dr. Topher Ruggiero, and they praised the

high caliber of the performances they heard. The judges awarded the following prizes: The George Manos Piano Prize/1st Prize (\$1500) to Yuzhe Chen, 10th grade, Langley High School; 2nd Prize (\$1000) to Michelle Wang, 12th grade, Glenelg High School; 3rd Prize (\$700) to Sean Kim, 12th grade, River Hill High School, and an Honorable Mention to Brandon

Zhang, 11th grade, Churchill High School. All winners, including honorable mention, receive a five-year FMMC student membership. We look forward to hearing them in future FMMC Student Recitals. 🎻



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

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Martin Luther King Jr.
Memorial Library



Musical Arts International

James Colwell Piano Restoration



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