Chesapeake Music celebrates its 31st Chamber Music Festival from June 5th through June 19th in Easton and nearby locations. The Festival’s two-week run offers events in Easton, St. Michaels and Oxford. Exceptional venues include the newly-renovated Christ Church in Easton, historic Christ Church in St Michaels, and such favorites as the Avalon, Academy Art Museum, Trinity Cathedral in Easton, and the professional theatre spaces at the Oxford Community Center and St. Michaels High School.

Artistic Directors Marcy Rosen and J.Lawrie Bloom commented: “The programs we’ve created this year will once again delight and challenge our audience. We have Brahms’ alluring Piano Quartet in g minor, Opus 25, Beethoven’s incredible String Quartet in C Major, Opus 29, our Competition winners, and the world premiere of Lev Mamuya’s ‘loosely turing’. These are just highlights of the more than 30 pieces that will be performed at this exciting and invigorating Festival.”

Distinguished international artists will perform in versatile ensembles that showcase their talents. Six concerts, four Artist Showcases, and two free rehearsals (open to the public) offer a broad range of innovative programs that feature both classical and contemporary chamber music.

We welcome our returning artists, with a special nod to Michael Kannen, cello, the Director of Chamber Music at the Peabody Conservatory, and Yura Lee, violin and viola. Our new artists include Ara Gregorian, violin and viola, Harrison Hollingsworth, bassoon, and Wei-Ping Chou, french horn.

On opening night, we will feature a special appearance by the District 5 Wind Quintet, and on Friday, June 17th, we will host the 2016 Competition winner, the exciting and extraordinary British recorder group, BLOCK4.

The following events will offer unique listening and dining experiences; savor the performance and then the best of Eastern Shore hospitality:

- Thursday, June 9th, after the Artist Showcase at the Oxford Community Center, join us for an optional dinner at the historic Robert Morris Inn (see our website for details).
- Sunday, June 12th, after the concert at Christ Church in St. Michaels, enjoy a light reception catered by Gourmet By The Bay.
- Sunday, June 19th, is our Angels Concert, the Grand Finale of the Festival, presented this year at Ingleton Manor, an early 19th century “gentleman’s farm” on the scenic Miles River, followed by a cornucopia of Eastern Shore delicacies prepared by Gourmet By The Bay.

We invite you to enjoy two weeks of virtuoso performances in unique Eastern Shore settings!

Sponsors of this year’s Festival include The Talbot County Arts Council, the Maryland State Arts Council and the Star-Democrat. Additional generous financial support from corporate, public and private benefactors enables Chesapeake Music to offer affordable tickets for Festival concerts, Artist Showcases and free open rehearsals.

For a complete list of performance programs, please visit our website at wwwchesapeakemusic.org or call 410-819-0380. For reservations at the Robert Morris Inn, please call directly at 410-226-5111.
By Amy Blades Steward  The musical life of Lev Mamuya, a nineteen-year old cellist who is currently in a dual degree program at the New England Conservatory of Music and Harvard University, is anything but typical. He started playing the cello at the very young age of three because his grandmother had taken up the cello later in life and it was available to him. He began playing chamber music at age six while attending the New England Conservatory Prep School, got interested in composing music at age ten and started taking composing lessons privately. Over the last 10 years, Lev has been composing music that has debuted at such events as Winsor Music concerts and at the Rockport Music Festival.

For this year’s Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival, Mamuya has composed the piece, “loosely turing,” which will have its world premiere on Saturday, June 11 at 4 p.m. at the Academy Art Museum. He comments, “This musical composition is loosely inspired by a seminal paper about the limits of computation devices written by famed mathematician Alan Turing.”

One of Lev’s compositions was written for the 10th anniversary of 9/11 and was inspired by the words of an Alfred Lord Tennyson poem. The piece, which was very melodic, featured French and American harmonies. His later compositions have featured oboe and strings more prevalently and most recently have included Latin American rhythms.

Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival oboist Peggy Pearson has commissioned Lev to write pieces for her group, Winsor Music, a group that Lev has played with on a number of occasions. Peggy suggested the world premiere of one of Lev’s compositions for this year’s Chamber Music Festival.

Lev adds, “Because of my background in performance, composing was a natural interest for me. I like to translate ideas into the language of music.” He adds, “Festival work is fun and provides the perfect environment for a world premiere. Since I compose on computer software, it’s exciting to have it performed by living people and heard by a live audience.”

Lev Mamuya’s “loosely turing” is a quintet for oboe, violin, viola and two cellos and will feature chamber musicians Peggy Pearson on oboe, Catherine Cho on violin, Maria Lambros on viola and Marcy Rosen and Michael Kannen on cello.

Festival attendees will not want to miss this exciting debut of a rising young composer’s work.

Listen carefully, there’s lots of chamber music on the radio. But you have to hunt for it. We’ve been working with our local public radio stations to get more exposure for Chesapeake Music. WSCL 89.5 Salisbury, is planning to feature more selections from the Festival on a program being developed called Performance in Delmarva. The time is to be determined. WBJC 91.5 Baltimore has already been airing Chesapeake Chamber Music recordings on Music in Maryland on Saturdays at 6a.m. And we’ve been working with public radio’s Performance Today heard daily at 9a.m. over WSCL and at various times over 300 public radio stations.
By J. Lawrie Bloom  Musical artists have deep bonds with their instruments. I have been incredibly fortunate to have an association with Buffet Crampon clarinets for many, many years. I got my first Buffet clarinet at age 12 and was immediately taken with the ease with which I was able to create the sounds I wanted on that new clarinet. I entered into a “formal” relationship with Buffet in the early 1980s, after joining the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Since that time I have owned many Buffet instruments - clarinets, bass clarinets, a basset horn, a basset clarinet, an Eb clarinet and a C clarinet. All these instruments are a joy to play.

Over the years Buffet has, of course, made new models available. Not everyone wishes to play exactly the same clarinet. Being ever curious, I have tried every new model as they have come out. Many times I congratulated them and stuck with my current model. Then in the early 1990s they introduced a new model clarinet they called the “Tosca.” The very first one I tried I didn’t prefer to the instrument I was playing, but many aspects of it intrigued me, so I flew to Jacksonville, Florida, where Buffet Group USA receives all the instruments made in Mantes-les-ville, France, before sending them to dealers. This gave me a chance to try out many clarinets, and I purchased my first set of “Tosca” clarinets. I won’t say it was the easiest transition. I find that players always prefer the instrument they are playing to a new one, as there is a comfort level that comes from playing one instrument so long. It really took me quite awhile to understand the “feel” of the new clarinets, and to feel like I could do what I wanted on them. Now I feel they’ve made my musical life easier.

My most recent instrument purchase was a “Tosca” bass clarinet. I had tried a prototype of the instrument some five years before, and actually played half a concert on the prototype at Salle Pleyel in Paris, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Then I hadn’t heard anything at all for nearly five years. No one would answer my requests to know what was going on. Suddenly in the fall of 2014 I saw an email announcing the release of the new bass clarinet in Europe. Calling around for information, it seemed there were none in the U.S. yet. So I contacted Buffet in France. We were arriving in Paris on a Friday afternoon in October. Typically the factory closes at noon on Fridays, but the designer of the instrument, the head of Buffet Artists’ relations, and the Director General of Buffet kindly stayed, had me picked up at the train station as we arrived and whisked me directly to the factory, about 45 minutes outside Paris. There I was able to try numerous bass clarinets, pick out one for myself, and several others for former students. I’m now playing that instrument full time in the orchestra, and loving it. In November I took it with me back to Paris, where I had the great experience of being part of the celebration of the 190th anniversary of Buffet Crampon. While arriving less than a week after the tragic bombing in Paris, this was a fantastic celebration of a great company. Long Live Buffet!
And the Winner Is . . .

By Amy Blades Steward  There was a hush in the audience on Saturday night, April 9, as a crowd assembled in the Avalon Theatre to hear the winners of the 2016 Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition. Five world-class ensembles, selected from 41 applicants representing some of the finest young chamber music performers in the world, had competed all day for one of the world’s largest chamber music prizes. The finalists included BLOCK4 Quartet, the Cerulean Trio, the Daraja Ensemble, the East End Quartet and the Olympus Piano Trio.

It was finally time to hear the announcement. The Gold Medal prize of $10,000 was awarded to BLOCK4 (www.block4.co.uk), a London-based recorder quartet featuring Emily Bannister, Lucy Carr, Katie Cowling and Rosie Land. Former students of the Royal College of Music, BLOCK4 captivated audiences with their space-age Paetzold recorders and unusual instrument sounds and techniques. The group played both contemporary music written for them, as well as Renaissance and Baroque pieces. Rosie Land commented, “We came into this Competition knowing that there were high standards so we felt lucky to be finalists.”

The musicians shared that even though London touts a number of recorder ensembles, they often have to work hard to make people take recorders seriously. Rosie added, “People compartmentalize the recorder in early traditional music, when in fact, 60 to 70 percent of recorder music is contemporary.”

BLOCK4 used a previous competition’s winnings to purchase their set of four Paetzold recorders and hopes to use the prize from this Competition to do the same, purchasing their own Renaissance instruments since they had to be borrowed for the Competition. Emily Bannister adds, “By purchasing these instruments, we will be able to continue our ensemble work, to travel and to record.”

If you missed BLOCK4 on April 9, you won’t want to miss them when they return on June 17 to the Avalon Theatre to present their concert as winners of this year’s Competition.

The Competition’s Silver Medal prize of $5,000 and Audience Choice Award were both awarded to the Olympus Piano Trio (www.bencapps.com). An audience favorite, the New York
City-based trio combined the forces of violinist Regi Papa, cellist Ben Capps and pianist Konstantinos Valianatos. The three met at Juilliard in 2010 to celebrate a passion for chamber music, as well as their shared Hellenic heritage. Their passion was revealed in their performance of the music of Mendelssohn and Shostakovich.

Ben Capps commented, “The audience was great. The audience connection is why we do what we do.”

The trio praised the Competition organizers for a well-organized event and each musician appreciated the specific comments from the judges and the opportunity to connect with presenters for future concerts.

Regi Papa added, “As stressed as you are in a Competition, we felt relaxed here. It really felt like a community to us.”

A Word of Gratitude

We have many to thank for making the 7th Biennial Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition possible: our private sponsors, without whose financial support there would be no Competition; Janet Pfeffer and her cadre of dedicated volunteers, who make sure everything happens as planned; and those of you in the community who have opened your homes and hearts to the wonderful young musicians we celebrate. Those of us on the Competition Committee also want to thank the Board and staff of Chesapeake Music, who have helped to enrich our community with their strong support of our musical life on the Eastern Shore.

The Competition Committee

We often discuss the fact that Chesapeake Music makes an indispensable and irreplaceable contribution to the quality of life in our community. We don’t often speak, however, about our contribution to the community’s economic vitality. That contribution is not as obvious but equally real. In addition to the $100,000 or so we spend for artist compensation, which mostly leaves the community, we spend about $200,000 a year for production and support, nearly all of which stays here. Our indirect contribution is important as well; all you have to do is to see the crowds in the nearby restaurants when we present concerts in local venues.

We’ve just completed our 7th Chesapeake Chamber Music Competition and it was a spectacular success—an all-day event before a full house at the Avalon. Over the years the Competition has supported our goal of recognizing and encouraging the best of young chamber musicians, many of whom have gone on to great success in other competitions and performed in some of the world’s most prestigious venues. The Competition Committee puts all the pieces together. The committee began preparations more than a year ago: publicizing the event, sending out applications, making arrangements for housing the finalists and for follow-on performances. Our panel of judges conducted a two-stage, blind audition process to winnow the list of contestants to five finalists.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will see an article about Eleanor Shriver Magee, who has joined our part-time staff as Development Director reporting to Don Buxton. We created this position to help meet our continuing need to seek contributions to pay for those activities that are not covered by ticket sales. Ticket sales cover only about one-third of our costs, a common fact-of-life in the arts community. Please support us in Eleanor’s efforts.

The survey I referred to in the last issue will be arriving at your inbox soon after you receive this issue. We would be grateful if you would complete it; it is very short but will be extremely helpful to us.

Finally, our two extraordinary festivals are near. I encourage you to mark your calendars and take advantage of as many events as possible.

Michael Bracy, President

We would like to keep you informed of the latest events in our growing series of year round programs. To help us reach you, please sign up on the website at www.ChesapeakeMusic.org.
Chesapeake Music Appoints
Eleanor Shriver Magee Director of Development

By Amy Blades Steward

Eleanor Shriver Magee, Chesapeake Chamber Music’s new Director of Development, has had a varied career path that has given her an interesting perspective for her new job. She hit the ground running on her first day and hasn’t stopped in cultivating new donors, writing grants and creating new development strategies. Don Buxton, Executive Director of Chesapeake Music, comments, “We are so lucky to have found such a qualified candidate for this position. Her passion for her work is evident in everything she does. She will be assisting Chesapeake Music in reaching our goals as we move the organization to the next level in presenting outstanding musical events for the benefit of our region.”

Eleanor has operated ESM Good Works, LLC of Easton for several years consulting with individuals, small and large businesses, non-profits, and community-based organizations. “I have a unique 360-degree perspective having served in a variety of positions throughout my career – as a volunteer, a board member, a staff member, an executive director and as a donor. These experiences have given me the skills in my toolbox that can help me with the creative problem-solving required in the nonprofit arena.”

Eleanor holds a bachelor’s degree from Washington College, a M.Ed. in Athletic Administration and Coaching from Goucher College, and an A.B.D. in Education from Wilmington University in Delaware. She also holds a Certificate in Non-Profit Executive Leadership and a Certificate in Fundraising Management from Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, IN (IUPUI) Lilly School of Philanthropy and is also a Standards of Excellence Institute Licensed Consultant. She is also a member of the Class of 2015 of Shore Leadership.

In addition to serving on the boards of the Maryland Historical Society, Alumni Association of Goucher College, the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in Maryland, the Wye River Upper School, the Rotary Club of Easton and the Washington College Athletic Hall of Fame, she is a Radcliffe Creek School parent volunteer and on its Strategic Planning Committee and is a volunteer at the Waterfowl Festival, Inc. In 2016, Eleanor was inducted into the US Lacrosse Baltimore Chapter Hall of Fame.

Eleanor lives in Easton with her husband Jack and 12-year old son Timothy.

J A Z Z

by Al Sikes

In a recent 60 Minutes segment on the brilliant young Indonesian jazz pianist Joey Alexander (age 12), his father was asked why Joey turned from classical to jazz. His father recounted that he tried to improvise on a Tchaikovsky composition and was reprimanded by his piano teacher. When asked by Anderson Cooper for a reaction, Joey’s dad said Joey wanted to be free.

Joey, in his 12th year, performed alongside Wynton Marsalis at last year’s Lincoln Center Gala. His ascendance has been swift and deserved. He is both a virtuoso and, at an unbelievably early age, expresses a range of emotions.

2015 gave us a unique window into the creative lives of two geniuses, Joey Alexander and Lin Manuel Miranda, the playwright, composer and lead in the musical Hamilton. Miranda turned Ron Chernow’s biography on Alexander Hamilton into a transformative hip-hop musical. Miranda noted that hip-hop is the perfect musical style for another genius, Alexander Hamilton.

While I would love to feature both Joey Alexander and Miranda at this year’s festival, that won’t happen. What will happen however is a rich display of improvisational skills as we continue our concert series with the sensational René Marie in May and then turn the spotlight on the Labor Day Monty Alexander Jazz Festival.

While not wanting to get ahead of our showcase festival, we will open on Friday night with an exceptional salute to George Gershwin. He too was a precocious composer and performer who enriched America’s musical tradition. The talented musicians who are lining up to perform the salute will be both reverent and improvisational.

Stay tuned—the beat goes on.
By Marty Sikes. The Monty Alexander Jazz Festival producers have a habit of saying, “This will be the best festival ever.” Well, this year is no exception: this year’s festival will be the best ever!

The Festival will open on Friday evening at the Avalon Theatre with “A Salute to Gershwin” featuring pianist Ted Rosenthal and vibraphonist and drummer, Chuck Redd. Ted, as Holiday Concert goers will recall, performed a brilliant classical/jazz rendition of Rhapsody in Blue.

Our free concert Saturday morning is not to be missed. The Army Jazz Ambassadors will perform this year at the Avalon. This will be great fun for everyone. The 23-piece band will entertain us with music from Stan Kenton, Count Basie, Duke Ellington and other jazz greats.

And for those of you who attended Jazz Festivals two and three, we are excited to announce that Saturday afternoon's headliner will be the great trumpeter, Dominick Farinacci. When asked to describe Dominick’s talent, Quincy Jones (record producer, conductor, arranger, composer, musician) exclaimed, “This kid is 360 degrees!”

Monty Alexander will delight the audience Saturday evening with “50 Years of Music.” Monty, as most of the audience now knows, is not only a jazz pianist, but also sings and plays the melodica. His playing has a Caribbean influence, with a strong vocabulary of bebop and soulful blues melodies.

Sunday’s jazz/gospel concert will certainly be special. Pianist great Cyrus Chestnut will be the headliner and will bring with him some entertaining surprises.

Some of these concerts will sell out, so be sure to purchase your tickets early. This is a festival you don’t want to miss!

To purchase tickets, go to www.chesapeakejazz.org. For more information, call Lois Campbell at 410-819-0380.
Mark Your Calendars

Jazz Vocalist René Marie and her Quartet
Thursday, May 12, 2016, 8:00 p.m. - Academy Art Museum

31st Annual Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival
June 5, 2016 through June 19, 2016

Monty Alexander Jazz Festival
Labor Day Weekend
Friday, September 2 through Sunday, September 4, 2016
Avalon Theatre

David Trio
Sunday, October 30, 2016, 8:00 p.m. - Academy Art Museum

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