

## Our Mission:

The Rapidan Orchestra was formally organized in January 2015 as a volunteer chamber ensemble in the Central Virginia Piedmont area to provide an opportunity for local musicians to serve the community through musical entertainment, appreciation, and education with free performances.

Thanks to all our generous donors who make this venture possible, and to everyone coming out to hear us. As Benjamin Britten said:

*"A musical experience needs three human beings at least. It requires a composer, a performer, and a listener; and unless these three take part together there is no musical experience."*

Madelyn LaPrade, President    Lyle Sanford, Vice-President  
Heather Welch, Secretary    Don Aittama, Treasurer

The Rapidan Orchestra is a non-profit 501(c)(3) public charity incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia. All donations are tax deductible.

**[rapidanorch@gmail.com](mailto:rapidanorch@gmail.com)**

**We're on FaceBook**

**<https://rapidanorchestra.wordpress.com>**

**The Rapidan Orchestra  
PO Box 160  
Rapidan, VA 22733**

We're starting to have thank you reception/chamber concerts for our donors around the beginning of September each year.

If you have made a cash donation and would like an invitation, please give us an address via email, USPS, or the signup sheets at our concerts.

# The Rapidan Orchestra

*Dr. Benjamin Bergey, Conductor*



*Friday, November 15, 2019 @ 7:30 p.m.*

*St. Stephen's Parish Hall*

*115 N. East Street, Culpeper, VA*

*Saturday, November 16, 2019 @ 7:30 p.m.*

*The Music Room*

*135 E. Main Street, Orange, VA*

*Admission Free*

## Our Program:

### EGMONT OVERTURE

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

*Sostenuto, ma non troppo; Allegro; Allegro con Brio*

### CARMEN SUITE

Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

*Prélude* (Prelude to Act I)

*Aragonaise* (Prelude to Act IV)

*Intermezzo* (Prelude to Act III)

*Seguedille* (Act I)

*Les dragons d'Alcala* (Prelude to Act II)

*Habañera* (Act I)

*Les Toréadors* (Introduction to Act I)

### INTERMISSION

### SYMPHONY No. 40, K. 550

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

I *Allegro molto*

II *Andante*

III *Menuetto*

IV *Allegro assai*

## Our Musicians:

### Flute

Don Aittama

Lynne Stockton

### Oboe

Charles Torian

### Clarinet

Heather Welch

Don Davies

### Bassoon

Madeline LaPrade

### Trumpet

John Harding

Don Brubaker

### French Horn

Lyle Sanford

### Trombone & Cello

Stephen Witmer

### Timpani & Percussion

Don Whitaker

### First Violin

Charles Winkler, Concertmaster

Jane Getchell

Michael Hanz

Ray Van Ausdal

Charles Van Der Heide

### Second Violin

Carol Carr

Isaiah Greenwood

Jenny Taylor

Pam Whitaker

### Viola

Darlene Dawson

Kelly Harding

### Cello

Caroline Baldwin

Joe Bailey

Roger Carr

Brian Smith

### String Bass

Karen Poehailos



## CARMEN SUITE

Georges Bizet, a Parisian all his life, was born into a musical family and showed his gifts early, sight reading at age four and beginning to compose by age twelve. Due to his talents and family connections he easily entered the musical milieu of the city, attending the conservatory, being an assistant and orchestrator for the composer Gounod, and being known as a masterful pianist who was capable of playing orchestral scores at sight.

*Carmen* was his last major work, as he died suddenly of a heart attack after the 33<sup>rd</sup> performance of its opening run. The reviews were not kind, as many of the opera-goers felt it was vulgar. The characters were of the lower classes, the action tawdry, and the music was deemed unrefined.

*It is set in southern Spain and tells the story of the downfall of Don José, a naïve soldier who is seduced by the wiles of the fiery gypsy Carmen. José abandons his childhood sweetheart and deserts from his military duties, yet loses Carmen's love to the glamorous torero Escamillo, after which José kills her in a jealous rage.*

*Carmen* has come to be one of the most performed operas of all time. Bizet's melodic gift and wonderful sense of orchestration broke new ground in conveying the personalities and emotions of the characters.

## SYMPHONY No. 40

In 1788, several years before his passing and at the peak of his powers, Mozart wrote three symphonies in a headlong rush, taking only two months to complete all three. Peter Gay writes:

*The impulsion for these masterworks remains obscure; no commission, no plans for an "academy" in Vienna have come to light. . . Whatever their reason for being, their reputation over the decades has only soared; they are indisputably his most magnificent symphonies, indeed the most magnificent symphonies in the literature . . . In the G minor Symphony #40 almost every theme is highly individual and, even when formal in phrasing, quite unexpected in its course.*

Interestingly, the first performance of the symphony was so shambolic Mozart left the room. Some of Beethoven's premieres went the same way, and a possible explanation is that what seems so right and inevitable to us - and to modern players - was quite new and difficult to comprehend for the players of the time.

At some point after the original composition, Mozart revised the score, rewriting the wind parts to add clarinets, which were just coming into use at the time.

The autograph scores for these final three symphonies were acquired in the 1860's by Johannes Brahms, who later donated them to a museum in Vienna.

Program Notes by Lyle Sanford – Sources: Gay, *Mozart*; Sadie, *The New Grove Dictionary*; Swafford, *Beethoven*; Wikipedia



## Our Conductor: Dr. Benjamin Bergey

Benjamin Bergey is currently orchestra director of the Rapidan Orchestra and Eastern Mennonite University Orchestra, and is also Instructor of Music Theory at James Madison University. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Eastern Mennonite University in 2011, with degrees in Vocal Performance and Church Music. After two years off as a general manager of a local food restaurant, he completed his Masters in Music in orchestral conducting in 2015 and Doctor of Musical Arts in 2018 at James Madison University.

Benjamin has been involved with music and music leading for many years, having started on piano and violin at age six. He has performed in and conducted musicals and operas, orchestras and choirs, and is passionate about music. He particularly enjoys conducting operas as it combines his love of orchestras, singing, and the theatre.

Benjamin is Music Director at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, where he and his wife, Kate, attend. Kate is an academic advisor at JMU in Career and Academic Planning. Hobbies they enjoy together include biking, hiking, gardening, and tennis. They are also adjusting to a new phase of life as proud parents of their daughter, Lydia.

## Chamber Music Recital

**Sunday, December 8 @ 4:00 p.m. @ The Music Room**

Friends of the Music Room will present two Beethoven works: a string trio and a trio for clarinet, piano and cello. Admission is free, with any audience donations going to the non-profit string program for youngsters Rapidan violist Darlene Dawson has begun at the Music Room. She's teaching pro bono, so the funds will be applied to materials, instruments, and scholarships.

## EGMONT OVERTURE

In his recent biography, Jan Swafford makes a point of placing Beethoven, who was nineteen the year of the French Revolution, into the cultural and political context of his era. A major influence on Beethoven was his teacher from age 10 on into his teens, Christian Neefe, who,

*... was the definition of what Germans call a Schwärmer, one swarming with rapturous enthusiasms. The breadth of his outlook on life, art, and ideas was unique in Bonn and rare among musicians anywhere. Like many of his time he was intoxicated with the hope for a humanity living in the new age of science and freedom, and he dedicated his life to the service of those ideals.*

Beethoven wrote this overture and some other incidental music for Goethe's play *Egmont* – a tale of the brave, free thinking Dutch being suppressed by the Spaniards, much like the current Hong Kongers versus the Communist Chinese.

*A stark orchestral unison begins the overture; then comes a darkly lumbering gesture in the low strings, evoking the burden of oppression. The key is F minor, for Beethoven a tragic, death-tinted tonality. The introduction gathers into an Allegro that itself gathers steadily, like the impetus of revolt . . . It arrives back at F minor for the last hammer blows of tyranny and the short rest that stands for Egmont's death – short because it is not the end of the drama. The end is the "Victory Symphony", the prophecy of freedom the overture has been searching for.*