

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."

Pam Whitaker, President
Lyle Sanford, Vice-President

Don Aittama, Treasurer
Heather Welch, Secretary

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

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We're on FaceBook

<https://rapidanorchestra.wordpress.com>

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

For info on Music Room activities, opt into our email list at:

themusicroomonmain@gmail.com

The Rapidan Orchestra

Dr. Benjamin Bergey, Conductor



2:00 p.m., Saturday, November 20, 2021

The Music Room
Orange, VA

Our Program:

LA PRIMAVERA

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

- I. Allegro*
- II. Largo e pianissimo*
- III. Allegro pastorale*

ADAGIO FOR CLARINET AND STRINGS

Heinrich Baermann (1784-1847)

SIEGFRIED - IDYLL

Richard Wagner (1813-1883)

THE MOLDAU

Bedrich Smetana (1824-1884)

- Two Sources of the Moldau*
- Hunt in the Forest*
- Peasant Wedding*
- Moonlight; Dance of the Nymphs*
- The Broad and Mighty Moldau*

Our Musicians:

Flute

Don Aittama

Oboe

Charles Torian

Clarinet

Heather Welch

Don Davies

Bassoon

Summer Davis-Brockman

French Horn

Jen Clark

Lyle Sanford

Timpani & Percussion

Don Whitaker

Piano

David Sullivan

First Violin

Karl Durland, Concertmaster

Jane Getchell

Charles Winkler

Second Violin

Charles Van Der Heide

Carol Carr

Pam Whitaker

Viola

Ray Varona

Cello

Roger Carr

Cara Lundgren-Stowe

Stephen Witmer

String Bass

Karen Poehailos

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 a career 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 and son, Lydia (3) and Ezra (1).

LA PRIMAVERA

The *Spring* section of Antonio Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* is an early example of "program music" where the composer musically illustrates specific scenes, Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony (#6) being a famous example. For the *Four Seasons*, Vivaldi appended sonnets to each, laying out the specific inspirations for the music. Here is the sonnet for *La Primavera*:

Allegro

Springtime is upon us.

*The birds celebrate her return with festive song,
and murmuring streams are
softly caressed by the breezes.*

*Thunderstorms, those heralds of Spring, roar,
casting their dark mantle over heaven,
Then they die away to silence,
and the birds take up their charming songs once more.*

Largo

*On the flower-strewn meadow, with leafy branches
rustling overhead, the goat-herd sleeps,
his faithful dog beside him.*

Allegro

*Led by the festive sound of rustic bagpipes,
nymphs and shepherds lightly dance
beneath spring's beautiful canopy.*

ADAGIO FOR CLARINET AND STRINGS

The manuscript of this piece was discovered in 1922 and thought to be an early work of Wagner, but was actually written and published by Heinrich Baermann in 1821, a fact not discovered until 1964

Baermann was the premier clarinetist of his day. Felix Mendelssohn, Carl Maria von Weber and Giacomo Meyerbeer wrote music especially for him. Baermann was a proponent of the more modern instrument becoming available at the time, exploited its new possibilities, and pioneered playing it with the reed against his bottom lip rather than the top.

SIEGFRIED - IDYLL

Wagner wrote this piece on the occasion of the birth of his son Siegfried, and presented it to Siegfried's mother Cosima, (Franz Liszt's daughter) who at the time was still married to Hans von Bülow, the conductor who premiered *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Wagner organized the rehearsals for a surprise performance in great secrecy. Early in the morning of Christmas Day, 1870, the musicians were assembled on the stairs leading to Cosima's room. Wagner conducted standing at the top. The themes derive mainly from the love duet between Siegfried and Brünnhilde in the closing scene of the opera, except for a lullaby, "Sleep, my child," which is a folk song. The musical texture is lucid and transparent. Siegfried Idyll is perhaps the most truly Romantic piece written by Wagner . . . one of his few purely orchestral compositions . . . one of the most tender musical expressions in all instrumental literature.

- Nicolas Slonimsky

THE MOLDAU

Born in Prague in 1824, Smetana's was a time when the stirrings of pride in cultural heritages swept through Europe. Smetana was a champion the Czech/Bohemian culture, first making a name for himself writing operas sung in Bohemian. His *The Bartered Bride* remains in the standard repertoire of opera houses around the world.

The Moldau is part of a larger work called *Má vlast* (My Country), which brims with references to the Bohemian landscape and culture.

The Vltava is the "national river" of Czechoslovakia-Bohemia, with "Moldau" being the German name. Here is Smetana describing the piece (the Vyšehrad is a 10th century castle):

The composition describes the course of the Vltava, starting from the two small springs, the Cold and Warm Vltava, to the unification of both streams into a single current, the course of the Vltava through woods and meadows, through landscapes where a farmer's wedding is celebrated, the round dance of the mermaids in the night's moonshine: on the nearby rocks loom proud castles, palaces and ruins aloft . . . then it widens and flows toward Prague, past the Vyšehrad, and then majestically vanishes into the distance, ending at the Labe (or Elbe, in German).

Program Notes by Lyle Sanford – Sources: *The Oxford Companion to Music*; Scholes: *The Concise Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* and *The Listener's Companion, Great Composers and Their Works*, both by Nicolas Slonimsky; DuckDuckGo: Wikipedia.