

A Word From David Cummings



Welcome to the 35th concert season of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra!

Back in the late 1980's, three men had a vision of bringing symphonic music to the Valdosta State University and the Valdosta community. In 1990, thanks to the foresight of those three, President Hugh Bailey, Malcolm Rainey, and Robert Welch, and the support of Martha Gibson and anonymous donations, the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra performed its first concert. So here we are, 34 years later, beginning another amazing season of musical excellence.

Under the direction of Dr. Howard Hsu, the VSO takes resident artists, faculty, select regional musicians and students pursuing instrumental music disciplines, and blends them into a first-class, American Prizewinning professional orchestra.

It has been said that the arts help make us better human beings. The VSO positively impacts our region, not only by bringing excellent orchestral music to the Valdosta community, but also by working hand in hand with the Valdosta State University to serve its academic mission by bringing a high standard of performance to the stage.

Additionally, we host Youth Concerts, which are free educational concerts, introducing hundreds of local and area high school students to symphonic music. Your support of the VSO also helps provide musical instruments for the South Georgia String Project, allowing children and young people, who cannot afford to purchase their own instruments, the opportunity to learn and play. The Tunes for Tots, Wisenbaker, and LARC, concerts bring joyful musical experiences to children and people with special needs. These and other Music Education Programs are part of the VSO's efforts to help enrich the cultural life of South Georgia and beyond.

Without the sale of season tickets and the financial backing of our patrons and sponsors, none of this would be possible. We invite you to take part in this ongoing musical endeavor by becoming a subscriber, patron, or corporate sponsor. Please

consider joining us at some level of support. A gift of just \$250 (or any amount) will help us reach more and more lives with classical music performance and education.

If you are already supporting the symphony, why not increase that patronage to the next level? Below in this brochure is the explanation of how you may become involved financially with the continued success of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. I encourage you to support the VSO and its various outreach programs.

Finally, help spread the word! Not everyone knows about the VSO. This coming season promises to be another in a long line of exciting concert series. There will be something for any classical music lover, from Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Stravinsky to a special Halloween concert in October, and much more. The 2024-2025 season of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra begins September 21st, so tell your friends and make plans to be in your seat!

We, the VSO Board, thank the Valdosta Symphony Guild, our sponsors, patrons, donors and the VSU Administration, Foundation, College of the Arts, faculty and students for their strong commitment to the excellence of our community symphony orchestra and its music education programs. Thank you for supporting the arts and classical music!

David Commings

Chairman, Valdosta Symphony Orchestra Board

Reasons to support the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra

- "Where words fail, music speaks"
 -Hans Christian Andersen
- 2. Brings the musical adventure of symphonic music to the children of South Georgia and North Florida early in their development. The "Tunes for Tots" and "South Georgia String Project" (SGSP) are all part of the teaching, development and performance for young people that are a result of the Symphony outreach programs.
- 3. Patrons can endow a chair for one of our Principals in the Orchestra. A wall plaque will recognize donors at \$100,000 or more. The Plaque will be displayed outside Whitehead Auditorium in the lobby.
- Your name, chosen names or anonymous donation will receive digital and print recognition on a regular season basis.
- 5. The big picture of substantial community donations by individuals and/or corporations demonstrates to the world that classical symphonic music and the arts are one of the foundations of a humane society that receives and shares the spirit of caring. It is a gift that keeps on giving.



Dear Friends,

How many times have you heard "orchestra concerts are boring," or "that crowd is too fancy," or "I don't understand that kind of music," or similar reasons why people don't go to the symphony? We want to make the VSO concert evening one that dispels these beliefs, makes people feel welcome, gives them unique experiences that live music provides, and gets the audience to come back for more.

Exactly what is the VSO concert experience? It can be different for each audience member, but here are some examples of what many feel when attending our concerts.

A sense of community

On a VSO night, there's electricity in the air from the moment you approach the Fine Arts Building. The lobby buzzes with excitement as your fellow concertgoers mingle and catch up with each other. Our audience is made up of an exceptional group of people who are the most enthusiastic supporters the arts, and they make Valdosta a special place to live.

Being part of a special event

Orchestral music-making is a momentous event in which highly trained musicians come together to recreate a composer's most personal expression in real time. This recreation allows geniuses such as Beethoven or Mozart to communicate with audiences again, even though they left this world centuries ago. For a brief moment that evening, we all experience this communication from the composer to the orchestra to the audience.

Expression of humanity

Music must find a way to speak to us. What does beauty, joy, sorrow, or longing sound like? Yet great music is capable somehow of communicating these to us and moving us deeply. Anyone who has attended a live performance of Beethoven's 9th Symphony probably felt a wave of elation when the glorious "Ode to Joy" melody appeared. My skin still craws every time I hear the slashing, shrieking string chords from *Psycho*!

Connection and renewal

Music allows audiences to connect and feel through the music being performed. Music reminds us that we are human, and that occasionally we need to reconnect with feelings that we push away during everyday life. Although each audience member might connect with music differently, experiencing music is a life necessity rather than a luxury. Who wouldn't want an experience that connects and

renews us, sends us back into the world refreshed, and reminds us what it is to be alive?

At the VSO we provide a wide range of these experiences. We help guide the audience listening experience so whether you want to examine the small details or want to sit back and let the sound wash over you, we are happy to offer the opportunity.

We thank you for your continued support, which allows us to bring these experiences through live classical music.

Cordially,

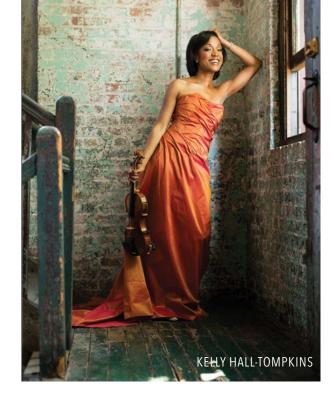
Howard Hsu Music Director



Who wouldn't want an experience that connects and renews us, sends us back into the world refreshed, and reminds us what it is to be alive?

- Howard Hsu, *Music Director*





- * Emmy award winner Jeff Beal is known for composing music for "House of Cards," "Monk," and "Rome"
- * Kelly Hall-Tompkins was the "Fiddler" violin soloist for the Broadway revival of "Fiddler on the Roof"
- * Tchaikovsky considered his final symphony to be the best and most sincere of his works, but kept its meaning a secret
- * The title "Pathétique" is closer in meaning to "emotional," "passionate," and "suffering" than "pathetic"

...a tonal mastery, a technical command, and a strength of personality...opulent intensity...

- Robert Maxham, Fanfare Magazine

Concert Sponsor



Whitehead Auditorium | **Reservations Required**Tickets \$35/\$32/\$25 each | www.valdostasymphony.org or call (229) 333-2150

CASUAL

October 26, 2024 · 7:30 pm

Join us for an eerie evening of your frightful favorites! Music from Jaws, Psycho, Night on Bald Mountain, Sorcerer's Apprentice, and more will thrill and enchant!

After a rousing success last season, the VSO Cosplay Competition returns in time for Halloween. Whether or not you compete for prizes in the competition, we invite everyone attend in costume. At this family-friendly concert there will also be trick-or-treating for concertgoers of all ages!

PRECONCERT CHAT: 6:45 p.m.





- * Music from Jaws, Psycho, Night on Bald Mountain, Sorcerer's Apprentice and more will provide spine-tingling thrills
- * Compete for prizes in the VSO's Halloween Cosplay Competition during the concert
- * Trick-or-treating for concertgoers of all ages at this family-friendly concert

The VSO Cosplay Competition returns for Halloween!

Concert Sponsor





subscription concert

February 15, 2025 · 7:30 pm

Beethoven *Creatures of Prometheus* Overture, Op. 43 | **5 mins**

Beethoven Symphony No. 1 in C Major, Op. 21 | **26 mins**

Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-flat Major, Op. 73 "Emperor" | **38 mins** Jon Nakamatsu, piano

PRECONCERT CHAT: 6:45 p.m.



- * Back by popular demand! Break out your blue jeans!
 - Jon Nakamatsu was the last American to
- * win the prestigious Van Cliburn International Piano Competition
- * Nakamatsu was working as a high school German teacher when he won the competition
- * Beethoven was in Vienna while it was under attack from Napoleon's troops when he composed his majestic final piano concerto

[Nakamatsu] revels in its fantastic imaginings with rapier-like precision and effortless command. 99

- BBC Music Magazine

Concert Sponsor

Houston and Tittle Family Whitehead Auditorium | **Reservations Required**Tickets \$35/\$32/\$25 each | www.valdostasymphony.org or call (229) 333-2150

subscription concert

March 29, 2025 · 7:30 pm

L. Boulanger *D'un matin de printemps* | **5 mins**

Coleman Seven O'Clock Shout 6 mins

Wagner Die Walküre: Ride of the Valkyries | **5 mins**

Wagner Götterdämmerung: Siegfried's Death and Funeral March | 8 mins

Stravinsky Rite of Spring | 33 mins

PRECONCERT CHAT: 6:45 p.m.





- * The four operas in Wagner's "Ring" last a total of 15-17 hours, and would be performed over four days if presented as a complete cycle
- * Stravinsky's intense, unpredictable Rite of Spring is regarded as a work that changed music forever
- * The *Rite's* premiere caused a riot in the audience

DANCERS FROM THE ORIGINAL BALLET PRODUCTION OF RITE OF SPRING.

Stravinsky sat down to play a piano reduction of the IRite of Spring score. Before he got very far I was convinced he was raving mad... My only comment at the end was that such music would surely cause a scandal.

- Pierre Monteux, conductor of the Rite of Spring premiere

Concert Sponsor



Whitehead Auditorium | Reservations Required

Tickets \$35/\$32/\$25 each | www.valdostasymphony.org or call (229) 333-2150

FOUR

subscription concert

May 3, 2025 · 7:30 pm

Byron Stripling, trumpet

Carmen Bradford, vocalist

The dynamic duo of Byron Stripling and Carmen Bradford will command the stage with classics made famous by legends such as Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Fats Domino, Sarah Vaughan, and Billie Holiday. You will be captivated by their virtuosity and charm.

PRECONCERT CHAT: 6:45 p.m.







- * Byron Stripling has toured and recorded with Dizzy Gillespie, Woody Herman, Dave Brubeck, Lionel Hampton, Sonny Rollins, and Paquito D'Rivera
- * At the age of 22 years old, Carmen Bradford was discovered and hired by William "Count" Basie and was the featured vocalist in the legendary Count Basie Orchestra for nine years
- Symphony Orchestra. He sings, he dances, he plays trumpet and he conducts... ??
 - Jeremy Reynolds, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
- 66 [Bradford] demonstrated clear command of the easyswinging Basie style, combining ample musicianship with an unruffled, even-keeled attitude. 99
 - Brian Zimmerman, Jazziz

Concert Sponsor



Whitehead Auditorium | **Reservations Required**Tickets \$35/\$32/\$25 each | www.valdostasymphony.org or call (229) 333-2150

Valdosta Symphony Orchestra

Education Programs

Tunes for Tots

Introduces the instruments and the orchestra to younger children.
January 25, 2025 in Whitehead
Auditorium, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

The South Georgia String Project(SGSP)

Provides exploratory experience of string instruments to children in Magnet Strings classes. Many children continue to perform and take lessons.

Youth Concerts

Provides free concerts to young students in the South Georgia region.

Concerto Competition

Provides outstanding performers at VSU with audition/competition experience and the opportunity to solo with the VSO at a Youth Concert.

VSO Honors Recital

February 9, 2025 in Powell Hall, 3 p.m.





PHOTOS COURTESY: LAUREL YU

High School Honors Program

Provides tickets for selected High School students with recommendation of Band Director.

Music Major Rush Ticket Program

Provides university music majors rush tickets for subscription concerts. The program is designed to support students' studies in music literature.

VSO Graduate Performance Assistantship

Supported by the VSO, provides for advanced studies in strings and orchestra for a select graduate student. The graduate student also serves a key staff position in the orchestra.

Music Enrichment Grant (MEG)

Grant provided by the Valdosta Symphony Guild to fund special music projects by students in the VSO.

Youth CONCERT SERIES

The mission of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra includes providing the youth of our region with significant cultural opportunities.

Teachers may reserve free seats for any program by contacting Outreach Office at (229) 333-2150. Seating is limited - please reserve early!

Dr. Chris Dillon Educational Coordinator

Whitehead Auditorium at VSU



PHOTO COURTESY: PAUL LEVY

1. CHANGE

September 20, 2024 • 10 a.m.

Featuring Kelly Hall-Tompkins, violin Selections by Rossini, Tchaikovsky, and Beal

casual classics

FRIGHTFUL 2. Favorites

October 25, 2024 • 10 a.m.

Selections by Dukas, Mussorgsky, and Williams

Beethoven & 3. BLUE JEANS

February 14, 2025 • 10 a.m.

Featuring Jon Nakamatsu, piano Selections by Beethoven

Season Tickets

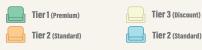
A VSO Season Ticket includes a single admission to each of the 4 subscription concerts as well as a single admission to the October Casual Classics Concert. Other subscriber benefits include the opportunity to renew your seats before tickets go on sale to the general public, invitations to pre-concert buffets, and other VSO events.

- ☑ Returning season ticket holders subscription renewal date July 8, 2024.
- ☑ New season ticket holders purchasing date August 5, 2024.
- ☑ All unsold seats will be open and sold to public August 5, 2024.

Outreach Office Amber Porter, (229) 333-2150

To order tickets, contact our ticket office: (229) 333-2150 or visit www.valdostasymphony.org. All online sales open August 5, 2024.

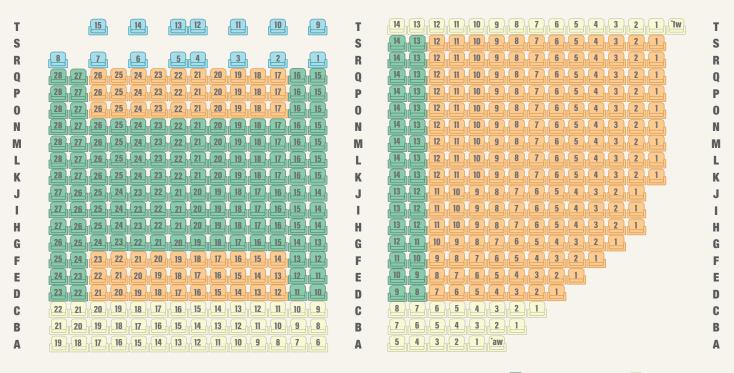




Discounted ticket(s) do not apply to Tier 1 Premium seating.

All Tier 1 Premium seating must pay full price.

Discounted ticket(s) for faculty/staff/military or seniors only applies to Tier 2 Standard seating and Tier 3 Discount seating.





Tier 1 (Premium)



Tier 3 (Discount)



Tier 2 (Standard)



Tier 2 (Standard)

Discounted ticket(s) do not apply to Tier 1 Premium seating. All Tier 1 Premium seating must pay full price.

Patron Packages

PATRON One Season Ticket

- \$170 (tax deductible gift optional) \$155 (tax deductible gift optional)
 - \$120 (tax deductible gift optional)

PATRON Two Season Tickets

\$340 (tax deductible gift optional) \$310 (tax deductible gift optional) \$240 (tax deductible gift optional)

GUILD MEMBER/BRONZE

One-Two Season Tickets

- \$370 (tax deductible gift of \$210) \$340 (tax deductible gift of \$195)
- \$285 (tax deductible gift of \$175)
- \$370 (tax deductible gift of \$50) \$340 (tax deductible gift of \$50)
 - \$285 (tax deductible gift of \$65)

BRONZE One-Two Season Tickets

- \$390 (tax deductible gift of \$220) \$360 (tax deductible aift of \$205)
- \$305 (tax deductible gift of \$185)
- \$390 (tax deductible gift of \$50) \$360 (tax deductible gift of \$50)
 - \$305 (tax deductible aift of \$65)

SILVER Two-Four Season Tickets

- \$680 (tax deductible gift of \$340) \$620 (tax deductible gift of \$310) \$480 (tax deductible gift of \$240)
- \$680 (tax deductible gift optional) \$620 (tax deductible gift optional)
 - \$480 (tax deductible gift optional)

GOLD Two-Four Season Tickets

- \$930 (tax deductible gift of \$590) \$870 (tax deductible gift of \$560) \$760 (tax deductible gift of \$520)
- \$930 (tax deductible gift of \$250)
- \$870 (tax deductible gift of \$250)
- \$760 (tax deductible gift of \$280)

Patron Packages include taxes and fees. Additional donations are welcome. Pay by cash, check, or credit card.

PLATINUM Two-Four Season Tickets

- \$1,180 (tax deductible gift of \$840) \$1,120 (tax deductible gift of \$810) \$1,010 (tax deductible gift of \$770)
- \$1,180 (tax deductible gift of \$500)
- \$1,120 (tax deductible gift of \$500)
- \$1,010 (tax deductible gift of \$530)

DIAMOND Four-Six Season Tickets

- \$1,770 (tax deductible gift of \$1,090)
- \$1,680 (tax deductible gift of \$1,060)
- \$1,500 (tax deductible gift of \$1,020)
- \$1,770 (tax deductible gift of \$750)
- \$1,680 (tax deductible gift of \$750)
- \$1.500 (tax deductible gift of \$780)

Call ticket office for more information.









Support the VSO through the endowment program.

- 1. Gifts can be spread over a five-year, equal gift amount.
- 2. Endow a Principal Chair in the orchestra for \$100,000. Seven chairs are already endowed, ten remain.
- 3. A gift to the symphony through the VSU Foundation is a 501-[C][3] charitable non-profit organization recipient.
- 4. Contact David Cummings or call Amber Porter at 229-333-2150 for more giving opportunities..

*Always check with financial advisor first.







Department of Music

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