

OPENING NIGHT

Coastal Symphony of Georgia 2025-2026 Concert Season

**Monday, October 6, 2025, 7:30 p.m.
Brunswick High School Auditorium**

EXPRESSIONS

Michelle Merrill, Conductor

Program

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor
Edvard Grieg

Ballade
Lyric Suite

Intermission

Sir Edward William Elgar

Enigma Variations

Opening Night brings us lyrical music expressing emotion in imaginative and descriptive ways.

Ballade has been called a clever young man's piece, a wild orchestra ride brimming with invention and energy. 19th Century English composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, known in his time as "The Black Mahler," offers soulful melodies, dramatic story telling, and lots of energy.

Edvard Grieg's *Lyric Suite* is rooted in the national folk tradition of Norway and is noted for a refined lyrical sense, music that catches your ear in a unique way that might be called singable. The 19th Century Norwegian composer identifies himself with the poet's imagery, expressing its musical equivalent in his songs. In the Suite, Grieg's spirited rhythms offer musical poems of a Shepherd Boy, a Norwegian march, a Notturmo (dreamy nighttime reflection) and a March of the Trolls.

Enigma Variations from 19th Century English composer Sir Edward William Elgar closes the performance. It is a musical sketch of individuals which he said expresses his friends pictured within, "commenced in a spirit of humor continued in deep seriousness." Each variation of the main theme represents a friend or family member from his life. It is like trying to solve a puzzle – what is the enigma?

FALL CONCERT

Coastal Symphony of Georgia 2025-2026 Concert Season

**Monday, November 10, 2025, 7:30 p.m.
Brunswick High School Auditorium**

HEAVENLY JOY

Michelle Merrill, Conductor

Program

Gustav Mahler

Symphony No. 4 in G Major

Comments by Michelle Merrill, Conductor

Guest Soprano Soloist

The Fall Concert presents Gustav Mahler in a lighter style.

Although one hour in length, it is the shortest and one of the most accessible or easy to understand of the 20th Century German Composer's works. The symphony conveys a sense of purely innocent joy and heavenly enchantment, making full use of the smaller orchestra's energy and sound. Listen for horns, trumpets, winds, strings, and lots of percussion and timpani.

While the symphony gives hints of the brooding nature and vastness of those to come, this delightful work offers youthful music, filled with an uplifting vision of the afterlife. Invoking Mozart, it is playful, vigorous, and dance like, and ends with a charming song – a peasant child's view of heaven popularly called "The Heavenly Life."

Music Director, Michelle Merrill, will give an explanation of the work with the musicians demonstrating some of its melodies and more interesting aspects. The orchestra will then perform the entire symphony with a guest artist singing the child's song.

WINTER CONCERT

Coastal Symphony of Georgia 2025-2026 Concert Season

**Monday, January 26, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
Wesley Church at Frederica**

SEASONS

Michelle Merrill, Conductor

Program

Antonio Vivaldi *Four Seasons*

Soloist: Aurica Duca, CSG Concertmaster

Intermission

Louise Farrenc *Symphony No. 3*

The Winter Concert takes us through the seasons of a year and one woman's life.

Full of familiar melodies, Antonio Vivaldi's incomparable *Four Seasons* gives musical expression to the four seasons of the year: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. The 18th Century Italian composer presents a revolution in musical conception with musical use of flowing creeks, singing birds, storms, drunken dancers, hunting parties and warm winter fires. Listen for the shepherd's barking dog in the viola section.

The four seasons are revealed in four concertos performed by CSG Concertmaster and Violinist, Aurica Duca. Aurica performs solo engagements internationally and is a member of the esteemed Lawson Ensemble recognized for its level of excellence and commitment. Her ability to engage with the audience is enchanting.

The seasons of 19th Century French composer Louise Farrenc's life represent one woman's journey for recognition in a male-dominated world of Western concert music. She contributed three remarkable symphonies to the canon of French instrumental music, was admired by Schuman and Berlioz, and made her mark in the center of Parisian musical life as teacher, composer, scholar. However, following her death Farrenc's music fell out of favor probably because of her gender and that she did not compose opera. Lucky for us, her symphonies are being rediscovered giving us intricate and enjoyable music in this posthumous season of her life.

FINALE!

Coastal Symphony of Georgia 2025-2026 Concert Season

**Tuesday, May 12, 7:30 p.m.
The Center for the Arts
College of Coastal Georgia Campus**

BEGINNINGS

Michelle Merrill, Conductor

Program

Piotr Szewczyk	<i>Fanfare</i>
George Bizet	Excerpts from <i>Carmen</i>
George Gershwin	<i>Rhapsody in Blue</i>

Guest Artist, Ray Ushikubo, Piano

Intermission

Richard Strauss	<i>Der Rosenkavalier Suite</i>
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Our Season Finale will take place as part of the exciting Grand Opening of the Center for the Arts on the College of Coastal Georgia campus.

We expect this to be the beginning of many CSG performances at the Center and are honored to be the first to give an orchestral performance in its concert hall. A newly commissioned *Fanfare* composed for this concert by our own Principal Second Violin, Piotr Szewczyk will open the evening. Some of the most beloved music in the classical repertoire will follow. With George Gershwin's iconic *Rhapsody in Blue* as its centerpiece, the concert will also feature Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier Suite* and lively excerpts from George Bizet's *Carmen*. Japanese-American pianist and rising star, Ray Ushikubo will play the Rhapsody.

CSG is thrilled to be part of this exciting evening. The Center will be a transformative asset for our community, enhancing economic growth, intellectual enrichment, and cultural vibrancy for years to come.