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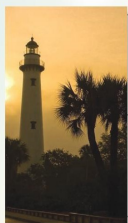
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# CONTENTS

5	The Coastal Symphony of Georgia History
6	Michelle Merrill, Music Director and Conductor
7	President and Board of Directors
11	October 3, 2022 <i>CELEBRATION</i>
13	Program
14	Concert Notes
15	The Orchestra
16	Meet the Composers - Antonin Dvořák, Walter Piston, Amy Beach
23	November 7, 2022 <i>MILESTONES</i>
25	Program
26	Concert Notes
27	The Orchestra
28	Meet the Composers - Carlos Simon, Richard Wagner, Ludwig von Beethoven
32	SOUNDBITES
33	CHRISTMAS CONCERT
35	February 6, 2023 <i>BRILLIANCE</i>
36	Soloist
37	Program
38	Concert Notes
39	The Orchestra
40	Meet the Composers - Benjamin Britten, Johan Hugosson, Arvo Pärt, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
45	May 8, 2003 <i>ENDURANCE</i>
46	Soloist
47	Program
48	Concert Notes
49	The Orchestra
50	Meet the Composers - Sarah Kirkland Snider, Carl Reinecke, Dimitri Shostakovich
57	Join the <i>CRESCENDO CIRCLE</i>
60	Performance Partners
62	Corporate Sponsors and Named Chairs



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# COASTAL SYMPHONY HISTORY

The Coastal Symphony of Georgia began in 1982 with the vision of two public school music teachers, Michelle Lazarus and Michael Smith. Their leadership helped establish the Brunswick Community Orchestra, and in 1994 the organization was renamed The Coastal Symphony of Georgia, Inc. (CSG.) Professional conductors have included Nicholas Palmer, Roger Born, Richard Suggs, Kermit Breen, Richard Larson, and Vernon Humbert who added a number of professional musicians to the community-based orchestra.

With an organizational vision of providing the best in musical excellence, Maestro Luis Haza was named Music Director/Conductor in 2013, and our first professional General Manager, Jorge Peña was hired. Under Maestro Haza's baton, the orchestra became entirely comprised of professional musicians from throughout the Southeast.

With Maestro Haza's retirement following the 2017-2018 season, we welcomed Michelle Merrill to the podium. As Music Director/Conductor, she is committed to our high quality of excellence and is designing symphony programs of superlative quality for our audiences. She enjoys planning music from both the old masters and newer works alike.

The Symphony Board of Directors has grown to a membership of over 20 community leaders who give us high visibility in the community and provide critically needed financial and volunteer resources for continuing growth. This year, the board is excited to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season.

We are grateful to the community for its loyal support, which makes our growth in musical excellence and fiscal health possible. The Coastal Symphony of Georgia is dedicated to providing the very best in symphonic music to the Golden Isles.

# MICHELLE MERRILL

## *Music Director and Conductor*

In her fifth season with The Coastal Symphony of Georgia, our dynamic Music Director and Conductor, Michelle Merrill continues her vibrant leadership of our symphony. Michelle is taking us on another exciting musical journey with classical programs drawing on her love of old masters and new composers alike. “A great program has music that stretches your mind, heart, and spirit,” she says. “It takes you somewhere you do not expect and remains with you as you leave the performance.”



Michelle has conducted numerous symphonic and philharmonic orchestras nationally and internationally including the Detroit Symphony where she worked with Leonard Slatkin, the National Symphony Orchestra's Annual Labor Day Concert at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., a performance of the San Francisco Opera's production of *Carmen* while serving as assistant conductor there, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and the Iceland Symphony Orchestra.

Born in Dallas, Texas, Michelle earned a Master of Music Degree in Conducting and a Bachelor of Music in Performance at Southern Methodist University's Meadows School of the Arts. She is the proud recipient of a 2016 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award, as well as the prestigious 2013 Ansbacher Conducting Fellowship which enabled her to be in residence at the world-renowned Salzburg Festival. Michelle lives in Jacksonville with her husband, Steve Merrill, principal percussionist of both the Jacksonville Symphony and the CSG. The couple have a young son, Davis, and his little brother Emmett, born October 23, 2021.



# FROM THE PRESIDENT



*Kern Baker, President CSG*

Welcome to the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season of the Coastal Symphony of Georgia! 40 Years! Over that time, we have grown from a volunteer community orchestra to the fully professional premier musical organization in the Golden Isles. We are grateful to those who have gone before, and you can count on our unwavering commitment to excellence in symphonic music as we move forward.

Our 40<sup>th</sup> Season promises to inspire, enchant, and engage us as Music Director and Conductor, Michelle Merrell will take us on another journey of musical discovery in our classical concert series. There will also be a Christmas Concert in December,

and we are planning a return to our popular *SoundBites* and Salons. This promises to be a true season of celebration!

We could not have accomplished any of this without the support and enthusiasm of our patrons, donors, advertisers, and sponsors. Please remember them when you are in need of the various goods and services they represent in our community.

Finally, please take your Season Program home – it is full of interesting information and is our gift to you. Whether you are a longtime patron or joining us for the first time, thank you for your support of The Coastal Symphony of Georgia!

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MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR**

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# PROGRAM

Michelle Merrill, Conductor

Antonin Dvořák

*Carnival Overture*

Walter Piston

Ballet Suite from *The Incredible Flutist*

- I. Introduction
- II. Siesta Hour in the Marketplace and  
Entrance of the Vendors
- III. Dance of the Vendors
- IV. Entrance of the Customers
- V. Tango of the Four Daughters
- VI. Arrival of Circus and Circus March
- VII. Solo of the Flutist
- VIII. Minuet: "Dance of the Flutist and  
The Merchant's Daughter"
- IX. Polka
- X. Finale

## *Intermission*

Amy Beach

Symphony in E minor "Gaelic"

- I. Allegro con fuoco
- II. Alla siciliana-allegro vivace
- III. Lento con molto espressione
- IV. Allegro di molto

## *Music Dedications*

Ballet Suite from *The Incredible Flutist*

To my dear lifelong friend Kay Tacha Brown,  
a truly gifted musician/pianist/flutist/intellectual...  
who continues to brighten the world with her amazing gifts.  
Creta Carter Nichols

# CONCERT NOTES

*Opening Night begins our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration with an evening of festive music.*

The vivacious, colorful and somewhat mysterious *Carnival Overture* (1891) opens the concert in a cheerful setting that Brahms called “merry.” Dvořák’s music was written for the second piece of a trilogy of overtures titled *Nature, Life, Love*. The Bohemian composer gave special notice to a single tambourine which plays a large role at the end of the piece.

Piston’s Ballet Suite from *The Incredible Flutist* (1938) follows complete with dances, the arrival of a circus, a flutist who charms snakes – and women, and a polka finale set in a marketplace teeming with activity. Pulitzer Prize winning composer, Elliott Carter noted it could be any village anywhere because Piston didn’t give it a specific geographic setting. The music is colorful, tuneful, and engaging. Be sure to listen for the dog!

Beach’s *Gaelic Symphony* (1896), influenced by the melodies of Boston’s large Irish immigrant population at the time, closes the concert. It begins with a high energy first movement which borrows from one of her art songs. The second movement is lively with a graceful theme, the third features two melancholy Irish themes in counterpoint, and the closing movement returns to the melody of the first with more dramatic expression. Beach, writing the first symphony by an American woman to gain public attention, was attracted to what she called the “simple, rugged, and unpretentious beauty” of Irish music.

*This concert will lift us up and enchant us!*





# THE ORCHESTRA

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Chi-Yin Chen

Alexandra Khaimovich

Helen Morin

Corina Donica

Kaitlin Smedley

James Chang

## **Viola**

Jorge A Peña

**The Jane Günter-McCoy**

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Cynthia Kempf

Yvonne Johnson

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## **Cello**

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Laurie Casseday

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## **Bass**

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## **Flute**

Les Roettges, Principal

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Angela Sherzer

## **Oboe**

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## **Clarinet**

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# MEET THE COMPOSERS

## **Antonin Dvořák – 1841-1904**

Antonin Dvořák was one of the first Czech composers to receive worldwide recognition. His style employs rhythms and other aspects of the folk music of Moravia and his native Bohemia in what one critic called “the fullest recreation of a national idiom with that of the symphonic tradition.”

Showing musical gifts at an early age, young Antonin began violin at age six, followed by organ, piano, and violin lessons. His talents were encouraged, and his father approved his becoming a



musician on the condition he would become an organist at age 16. Dvořák played in orchestras as well and began composing but was almost unknown outside of Prague until age 33. It was then he won the Austrian State Prize with Brahms saying the jury was “visibly overcome” by the “mastery and talent” of the young composer.

Dvořák had an attractive personality; he was a humble, deeply religious family man of simple tastes who loved nature. He and his wife, Anna Cermakova, a pianist and singer, had nine children with six surviving.

The composer’s early leanings were toward Beethoven and Schubert but he was later influenced by Wagner and Liszt. His great talent for melody and the fresh Czech characteristics of his music were a welcome contrast to some of the heavier pieces of his contemporaries. Dvořák composed in all of the genres and left works regarded as classics in all of them with the possible exception of opera.

## Walter Piston – 1894-1976

Walter Piston was a 20<sup>th</sup> Century American composer and teacher noted for his influence in the development of the neoclassical style in the United States. His music had occasional Romantic overtones and was recognized for its structural strength and rhythmic vivacity. His compositions were also known to be lyrical and he enjoyed writing program music that carried some extra musical meaning like a “program” of literary ideas, legend, scenic description, or personal drama.



Piston was born in Maine and moved with his family to Boston at age 11. His early interest was in art but quickly turned to music. He was a self-taught and self-employed musician who joined the Navy Band as a saxophonist during World War I. “It became obvious that everybody had to go into the service,” he said. “I wanted to go as a musician.” During this time, he taught himself how to play most wind instruments because “they were just laying around and no one minded if you picked them up and found out what they could do.”

Piston studied in Paris with renowned teacher, Nadia Boulanger, and he studied and taught at Harvard where Leonard Bernstein was one of his students. His textbooks on harmony, counterpoint, and orchestration are still in use. Piston’s ballet *The Incredible Flutist*, written in 1938, established him as a composer, and his Symphony No. 2, written in 1943, secured his reputation. In all, he composed eight symphonies, two violin concerti, one viola concerto, one concert for two pianos, and chamber music. The Second Symphony earned him a New York Music Critics’ Circle Award, and he won a Pulitzer for his Symphony No. 3 written in 1946-47.

Piston married fellow art student, Kathryn Nason in 1920; she died in 1976 just a few months before his own death in Belmont, Massachusetts. His library and desk are permanently exhibited in the Piston Room at the Boston Public Library.

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## Amy Cheney Beach – 1867-1944

Amy Cheney Beach was an American pianist and composer who would be one of the first American composers to succeed without benefit of European training. Despite fame and recognition in her lifetime, she was largely neglected after her death. But in the late 1990s and early 2000s, critics began to recognize her work, especially her Piano Concerto (1900) and the *Gaelic* Symphony (1894.)

Amy Cheney was born in New Hampshire in 1867 and quickly displayed precocious musical talent. She could sing at age two, began playing and composing melodies on piano at age four, and made her debut at Boston Music Hall at age 16. She continued to perform and in March 1885, at age 16, Amy played a Chopin Piano Concerto with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.



Amy married Henry Harris Aubrey Beach, an eminent surgeon and Harvard professor in 1885. From then on, she identified herself professionally and personally as Mrs. H. H. A. Beach. Dr. Beach encouraged his wife to concentrate on composition, and she underwent a rigorous course of self-instruction in musical theory and composition. Her works began to be performed, and she soon became the pre-eminent woman composer in the U.S.

In 1892, Antonin Dvořák was leading the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. He challenged American composers to explore their roots for a distinctive American sound using elements found in Native American and African American music. However, Beach, living in Boston with its large Irish immigrant population, was attracted to the simple beauty of Irish melodies. Her *Gaelic* Symphony would be the first successful symphony to be written by an American female composer.

Following her husband's death in 1910, Beach continued to write and perform to wide acclaim in Europe and America, later using her status to further the careers of young musicians. Beach left more than 150 numbered works including choral, church, chamber, and symphonic music; nearly all of them were published.

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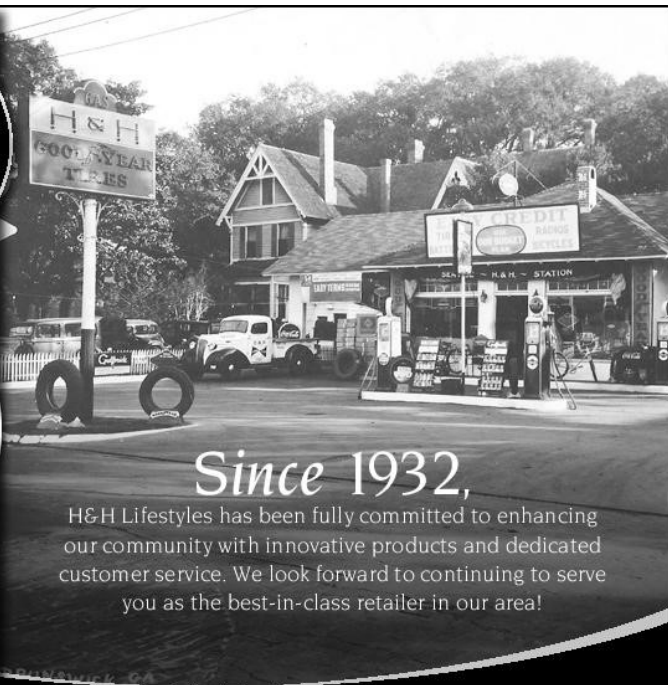
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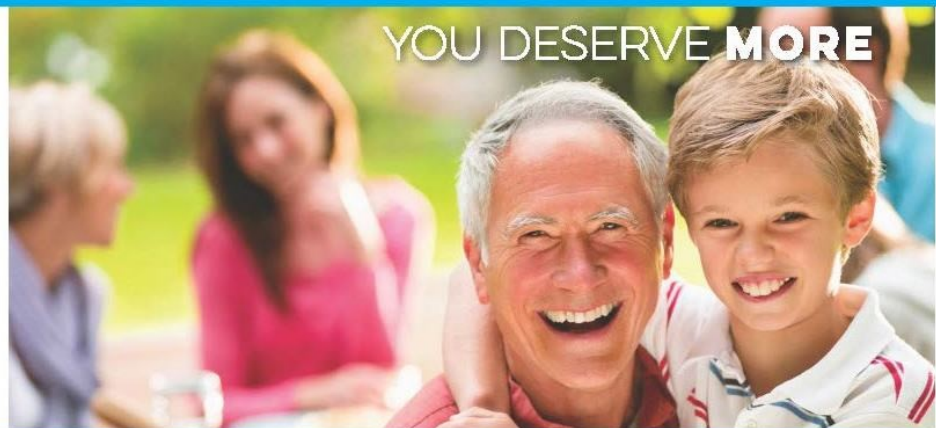


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# PROGRAM

Michelle Merrill, Conductor

Carlos Simon

*Fate Now Conquers*

Richard Wagner

*Siegfried Idyll*

## *Intermission*

Ludwig von Beethoven

Symphony No. 3, *Eroica*

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Marcia funebre. Adagio assai.
- III. Scherzo. Allegro vivace - Trio
- IV. Finale. Allegro molto

## *Music Dedications*

Ludwig von Beethoven    Symphony No. 3, *Eroica*

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# CONCERT NOTES

*Our Fall Concert is marked by milestones – a new composition, a new birth, and music marking a new period in classical music.*

Carlos Simon says he was influenced by an excerpt from Homer's Iliad he found in one of Beethoven's journals – "But fate now conquers, I am hers..." – as well as the fluid harmonic structure of the 2<sup>nd</sup> movement of Beethoven's 7<sup>th</sup> Symphony. The result is frenzied arpeggios and free flowing running passages in his *Fate Now Conquers* depicting the uncertainty of life that hovers over us. This piece, commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra in 2020, was played by the Sphinx Symphony Orchestra's final round of the 2021 Sphinx Competition.

Richard Wagner's sweet birthday gift to his second wife, Cosima, after the birth of their son Siegfried follows. The *Tribschen Idyll* was first performed on Christmas morning, 1870, by a small ensemble of 13 musicians on the stairs of the Wagners' villa at Tribschen (Lucerne), Switzerland. Cosima awoke to the opening melody of the symphonic poem which has been described as a sumptuous piece of music expressing Wagner's paternal and romantic love. Wagner later changed the title to *Siegfried Idyll*, expanded the orchestration to 35 players, and took public what he had intended as a private piece in order to relieve financial pressures.

Beethoven's brilliant Symphony No. 3, *Eroica*, closes the program. It is considered a milestone work of classical-style composition and marks the beginning of the Romantic period in classical music. Gigantic in scope, this symphony covers a wealth of emotional ground thematically and launches Beethoven's creative middle period, one unrivaled for its astonishing output. Beethoven originally dedicated the symphony to Napoleon Bonaparte but replaced his name with that of a wealthy patron when Napoleon named himself Emperor in 1804. *Eroica* (Heroic) is considered a revolutionary departure heralding the age of symphonic Romanticism but also the culmination of 18<sup>th</sup> Century classicism.

*This concert will inspire us!*

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# THE ORCHESTRA

Michelle Merrill, Music Director and Conductor

## **1st VIOLIN**

Aurica Duca

**Southeast Georgia**

**Health System**

**Concertmaster's Chair**

Anastasia Petrunina

Ingang Han

Siyu Zhang

Andy Bruck

Annie Hertler

Igor Khukhua

Hannah Barrow

Simon Shiao

## **2nd Violin**

Piotr Szewczyk, Principal

Jessica Hung

Chi-Yin Chen

Alexandra Khaimovich

Kristin Pfeifer Yu

Corina Donica

James Chang

Kaitlin Smedley

## **Viola**

Jorge A Peña

**The Jane Günter-McCoy**

**Principal Viola Chair**

Romona Merritt

Cynthia Kempf

Yvonne Johnson

Laurel Yu

Angelo Goderre

## **Cello**

Jin Kim

**The Elizabeth and John H.**

**Starr Principal Cello Chair**

Brian Magnus

Laurie Casseday

Ben Fryxell

Linda Minke

Brittany Maroney

## **Bass**

John Wieland, Principal

Kevin Casseday

Paul Strasshofer

Marc Chesanow

## **Flute**

Les Roettges, Principal

Jeana Melilli

## **Oboe**

Daniel Rios, Principal

Casey Knowlton

## **Clarinet**

Kristen Spiridon, Principal

Patrick Graham

## **Bassoon**

Anthony Anurca

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## **Horn**

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# MEET THE COMPOSERS

## Carlos Simon



Carlos Simon is an African-American musician, composer, and singer whose music is commissioned and performed by large orchestras and smaller ensembles across the country. He has performed as pianist with symphonies internationally and is currently Composer-in-Residence at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. The Atlanta native also teaches at Georgetown University and is the recipient of the 2021 Sphinx Medal of Excellence recognizing extraordinary Black and Hispanic classical musicians.

The Philadelphia Enquirer describes his music as “perfectly engaging and propulsive.”

Simon’s dad was a preacher, and he says “Gospel music was, and is, part of my musical DNA. Even when I try to embrace other styles and idioms, it creeps back in.” His play list includes composers who blend gospel, pop, and jazz with Western classical traditions. Simon’s 2018 album, *My Ancestor’s Gift* incorporates spoken word and historic recordings to create a multifaceted program of musical works that are inspired as much by the past as the present. At the same time, his string quartet, *Elegy*, honors the lives of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, and Eric Garner.

Simon had no formal musical training until college, but hailing from a musical family, he learned by ear. He holds a doctorate from the University of Michigan and degrees from Georgia State University and Morehouse College. Simon has performed in the United States, Africa, Asia, and Europe. In 2018, he traveled with the Asia America New Music Institute on a tour of Japan performing concerts in some of the most sacred temples and concert spaces in that country including Suntory Hall in Tokyo.

*The Washington Post* described Simon recently as “A modern major composer: an artist whose windows are thrown wide open to the world, and whose musical scope of late lands like a grand panorama of American life.” For Simon himself, “it is all story telling.”



## Richard Wagner – 1813-1883



Wilhelm Richard Wagner was a German composer and theorist whose dramatic operas and expressive musical works had a revolutionary influence on the course of Western music. His opera, *Tristan and Isolde* is sometimes described as marking the start of modern music.

Born in Leipzig, Germany, young Richard was precocious, intellectually gifted, and largely self-taught in composition. He received his early schooling in Dresden and finished his education in Leipzig at the Thomasschule and at the University of Leipzig. He displayed a love of

literature, theater, and music, along with powerful creative drive.

Wagner's turbulent life was characterized by political exile, several scandalous love affairs, poverty, and repeated flight from his creditors. His controversial writings for music, drama, and politics attracted extensive comment, particularly since the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century when they expressed antisemitic sentiments.

From 1868 to 1872 Wagner and his second wife, Cosima lived in a lakeside house called Tribschen, just outside Lucerne, Switzerland. Those years would be the closest to an idyllic existence the composer would enjoy. The peace he found there was evoked in the calm, pensive music of his *Siegfried Idyll*. He also pressed on toward the main goal of his life; completion of his four opera cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*The Ring of the Nibelung*) and creation of the summer festival where it would be presented. The Ring cycle was premiered in Bayreuth August of 1876 with Liszt, Bruckner, Grief, and Tchaikovsky attending.

Wagner was known mostly for his operas, his major works being *The Flying Dutchman* (1843), *Tannhauser* (1845), *Lohengrin* (1850), *Tristan and Isolde* (1865), and *Parsifal* (1881.) He never worked with a librettist, writing the texts for his works himself. As an artist, he was

known to be a perfectionist with a visionary insight into character and emotions and an instinct for what could be achieved on stage and in sound. Wagner was not only interested in entertaining people, but in giving them transformative experiences as well.

In 1882, a second Bayreuth Festival was held. By then Wagner was seriously ill and while on vacation in Venice the following year, he suffered a heart attack and died in the arms of his wife.

## **Ludwig van Beethoven -1770-1827**

The man widely considered the greatest composer of all time completed some of his most important work when he was quite deaf. Yet he became an innovator, widening the scope of sonata, symphony, concerto, and quartet, and combining vocals and instruments in a new way.



Beethoven was born in Bonn, Germany where his father, Johann van Beethoven, an alcoholic mediocre court singer, taught his son music with a brutality that affected him all his life. The father would flog the son for mistakes, lock him in the cellar, and deprive him of sleep for extra hours of practice. Through it all, he became a prodigiously talented musician from his earliest days and displayed flashes of the creative imagination that would eventually reach farther than any composer's before or since.

A poor student in a Latin grade school, Beethoven withdrew at the age of ten and went on to study music with a newly appointed court organist. He was introduced to Bach, published his first composition at the age of 12, and at 14 became the family breadwinner when his father could no longer support the family. He worked as a court organist and was later sent to Vienna where he made his long-awaited public debut on March 29, 1795.

As the new century progressed, Beethoven composed piece after piece, marking him as a masterful composer reaching his musical maturity. Between 1803-1812, he composed six symphonies, four

solo concerti, five string quartets, six strong sonatas, seven piano sonatas, five sets of piano variations, four overtures, four trios, two sextets and 72 songs. Known as his “middle” period, this time of his life is unrivaled by any other composer in history in terms of the astonishing output of superlatively complex, original, and beautiful music.

Beethoven was a lonely and frequently miserable man throughout his adult life. Short-tempered, absent-minded, greedy and suspicious to the point of paranoia, he feuded with his two brothers, his publishers, his housekeepers, his pupils, and his patrons. He never married or had children but was desperately in love with a married woman.

Beethoven’s hearing loss progressed along with his success, but some of his greatest music came near the end of his life when he was completely deaf. These included his monumental Ninth Symphony, and it is said the audience gave him five standing ovations with raised hats and hands waving handkerchiefs so he could see if not hear their thunderous applause.



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**Patrick Graham    Clarinet  
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**Kate Caliendo    French Horn**

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# CHRISTMAS CONCERT

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**MICHELLE MERRILL  
MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR**

# SOLOIST

Our soloist for this concert is internationally renowned violist **Brett Deubner**.

Born in Berkeley, California, he studied at both Juilliard (violin) and Eastman School of Music (violin and viola.) Currently, Brett is on the string faculty at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, New York and the faculty of the Round Top Festival in Texas.

Brett has had over fifty concertos written for him to perform, has twenty albums to his credit, and has performed with over 70 orchestras on five continents. A review in *Gramophone* noted how “the warmth and body of texture he draws from his instrument makes compelling listening to whatever he is playing.” In addition to performing with The Coastal Symphony of Georgia, Brett will perform with orchestras in North and South America and Europe during his 2022-2023 season. He will also release his debut *Solo* album featuring works composed for him.

Brett lives in the New York Metropolitan area, and he is considered one of the leading solo artists of his generation. He says music needs two things: someone or some group to make sounds or tell a story, and an audience to listen. “Without the listener, it is just practicing.”



# PROGRAM

Michelle Merrill, Conductor

Benjamin Britten

*Simple Symphony*

- I. Boisterous Bourree
- II. Playful Pizzicato
- III. Sentimental Sarabande
- IV. Frolicsome Finale

Johan Hugosson

*Samarthana for Viola and Orchestra*

Arvo Pärt

*Fratres for Viola, Percussion and Strings*

Guest Artist: Brett Deubner, Viola

## *Intermission*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Symphony No. 40

- I. Molto Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Minuet and Trio
- IV. Finale: Allegro assai

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# CONCERT NOTES

*Our Winter concert brings us music from a youthful Britten, a melancholy Mozart, and a renowned viola soloist.*

The concert begins with the youthful exuberance of Benjamin Britten's *Simple Symphony*, written in 1933 while borrowing from bits of scores he had written as a teenager. The work is scored for string orchestra with each movement boasting two themes from his earlier days - eight themes in all. The first two movements are marked by light, exuberant music, but we move into a more contemplative, almost dreamlike section with the third movement, and finally finish with a finale that carries a sense of urgency. Prepare to be delighted!

Two brilliant pieces for viola and orchestra follow with internationally renowned violist Brett Deubner performing as viola soloist. Deubner first performed Johan Hugosson's *Samarthana* (2021) for its world premiere with the Portland Columbia Symphony in November, 2022. Hugosson is a young Swedish composer whose music is known for memorable melodies, both moving and joyful.

Deubner will return for a performance of Arvo Pärt's *Fratres for Viola, Percussion and Strings*. *Fratres* was originally composed in 1977 for various combinations of instruments." It uses the "tintinnabula principle": not one but two melody voices are heard a tenth apart, plus a third fill-in voice in the middle resulting in a rather meditative effect.

One of Mozart's most frequently performed and greatly admired works closes the concert. Writing during an especially dark period in his life, Mozart called it an "anxious symphony." However, while there are plaintive sighs, there are also graceful melodies and occasional jubilation. There is tension, but not fury. Listen for the recognizable melody in the first movement and the resounding, swiftly ascending passage known as the Mannheim Rocket in the fourth. This is Mozart in a more serious mood. It is only one of two symphonies he wrote in the minor key, the 40<sup>th</sup> called the "big" G minor, and the 25<sup>th</sup>, the "little" G minor.

*This concert will thoroughly engage us!*

# THE ORCHESTRA

Michelle Merrill, Music Director and Conductor

## **1st Violin**

Aurica Duca

## **Southeast Georgia**

## **Health System**

## **Concertmaster's Chair**

Anastasia Petrunina

Siyu Zhang

Andy Bruck

Ingang Han

Annie Hertler

## **2nd Violin**

Piort Szewczyk, Principal

Chi-Yin Chen

Igor Khukhua

Simon Shiao

Alexandra Khaimovich

## **Viola**

Jorge A Peña

## **The Jane Günter-McCoy**

## **Principal Viola Chair**

Romona Merritt

Cynthia Kempf

Yvonne Johnson

## **Cello**

Jin Kim

## **The Elizabeth and John H.**

## **Starr Principal Cello Chair**

Betsy Federman

Laurie Casseday

## **Bass**

John Wieland, Principal

Kevin Casseday

## **Flute**

Les Roettges, Principal

Jeana Melilli

## **Oboe**

Xiaodi Liu, Principal

Daniel Rios

## **Clarinet**

Kristen Spiridon, Principal

Patrick Graham

## **Bassoon**

Anthony Anurca

## **The Leo E. Ruckle**

## **Principal Bassoon Chair**

Stephanie Magnus

## **Horn**

Aaron Brask, Principal

Katharine Caliendo

## **Timpani**

Ken Every, Principal

## **Percussion**

Steve Merrill

## **The H. William Emde**

## **Principal Percussion**

## **Chair**

Jorge Peña,

General Manager

Jin Kim-Peña,

Librarian

# MEET THE COMPOSERS

## Benjamin Britten – 1913-1976



Benjamin Britten was an English composer, conductor and pianist who was considered one of the preeminent opera composers of his time. Among his best-known works are his opera *Peter Grimes* (1945) and his massive *War Requiem* (1962.) Young people are often introduced to orchestral music through his *Young Persons Guide to the Orchestra* (1945.)

Known as a “compleat” musician – composer, pianist, accompanist, conductor, arranger, and editor, Britten left his own lyric stamp on everything

he wrote. While many of his contemporaries were embracing atonalism - music lacking a tonal center or key – Britten sought something more aesthetically pleasing. He was willing to experiment with modern musical styles, but his influences were eclectic including English composers of the Elizabethan era, Purcell, Verdi, Mahler, Debussy and Stravinsky.

Britten was born in Lowestoft, England, the youngest of four children. He nearly died at 3 months from pneumonia and struggled with his health all of his life. His early education was in Lowestoft and Gresham, before winning a scholarship to the Royal College of Music in London. There, he studied with John Ireland and Ralph Vaughan Williams. Britten had a lifelong romantic and professional relationship with the English tenor, Peter Pears, and together they created a remarkable musical legacy. They made their home in the Red House in Aldeburg and lived there until Britten’s death in 1976.

Britten’s *War Requiem* was informed by his passionately held pacifist views, and reflected his skills as a composer of large forces and his gift for the most intimate vocal expression. A newfound friendship with Soviet cellist Mstislav Rostropovich in the 1960s resulted in the magnificent *Cello Symphony* (1963) which was written for Rostropovich.



Britten was the first composer to be honored with a life peerage, and became Baron Britten, of Aldeburg in the County of Suffolk in 1976. Britten died of heart failure and is buried in the Aldeburg Parish churchyard; Pears was buried by his side when he died ten years later. Britten's operas continue to be among the most frequently performed. Few 20<sup>th</sup> century composers have placed as many works in the active repertoire.

## Johan Hugosson – 1973 –

Johan Hugosson is a Swedish pianist and composer of memorable melodies, both moving and joyful, who composes for large ensembles such as symphony orchestras and choirs, as well as for smaller ensembles. He also composes for individual instruments, a favorite being the piano. Swedish Ambassador, Nicole Clase has described him as “a national treasure.”

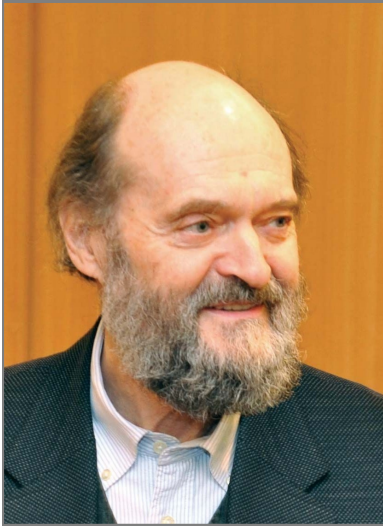


Hugosson was born into a musical family in Lund, Sweden in 1973, and had his first piano solo debut at age 17. He studied at the Royal College of Music in London where he won both the Beethoven and Chopin prizes and graduated from an advanced post graduate course with distinction. He also studied at the Royal Danish Conservatoire in Copenhagen.

Hugosson holds a master's degree in composition for screen from the London College of Music. Nick Peros with *Phoenix Classical*, a promoter of classical music, says the composer and arranger “displays a real artistic sensitivity to this repertoire – he has remarkable technique and a poetic understanding of these works, offering fresh, new insights that are stirring and engaging for the listeners.”

Hugosson enjoys acoustic music and chooses to merge his different musical and life experiences to form his own musical journey. His personal concert piano repertoire includes Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Mozart and Rachmaninov, as well as his own works. He continues to perform throughout Europe, the United States, and Singapore. Hugosson has also formed a small ensemble called *Made in Sweden* consisting of himself on piano, a string quartet, and percussion.

## Arvo Pärt – 1935 –



Arvo Pärt, who was born in Paide, Estonia, began experimenting with the top and bottom notes of his family's piano because the middle section was damaged. He went on to play oboe and percussion while in the army to complete his requisite military service. He then was accepted at the Tallinn Conservatory in 1958 where he graduated in 1963. The works of his early years leaned toward neoclassicism but soon turned to serialism as he struggled to find his personal style.

After a period of silence in the 1970s, Pärt, found his voice in a simplified, austere, and essentially tonal style sometimes referred to as “holy minimalism.” Pärt, employed a tonal technique he called “tintinnabuli” referring to bell-like resonances – sometimes involving actual bells but more commonly conveyed in his music by orchestral, chamber, or choral groupings. The tintinnabulation parts are sounded while the melody part moves slowly in simple patterns gravitating around the home pitch. To add interest, he introduces a third middle sound. Considered one of the most important and successful practitioners of holy minimalism, Pärt, was the performance leading composer of the style in the world from 2011-2018.

In 1980, Pärt, was allowed to emigrate with his wife and two sons first to Vienna where he took citizenship, then relocating to Berlin in 1981. Since 1980, most of his music has utilized vocal forces, and nearly all of it has been liturgical in nature. “The highest virtue of music, for me, lies outside of its mere sound. The particular timbre of an instrument is part of the music, but it is not the most important element,” Pärt, said. “Music must exist of itself ... two, three notes ... the essence must be there independent of the instruments.”

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – 1756-1791

Mozart learned to play the piano at age 3 by watching his father, Leopold teach his older sister, Maria Anna. Mimicking her playing, Mozart began to show a strong understanding of chords, tonality, and tempo. Soon he too would be tutored by his father and go on to create a string of operas, concertos, symphonies, and sonatas that profoundly shaped classical music.



The brother and sister were taken on several European “tours” by their father, performing as child prodigies. Wolfgang would compose five violin concertos and several piano concertos all before age 21. However, travel was arduous and payment not always quickly forthcoming, so in between tours, he worked as a court organist in Salzburg.

Mozart would go on to success as a teacher, composer, and performer in Vienna. With substantial returns from concerts and publishing, he and his wife Constanze enjoyed a lavish lifestyle. That lifestyle began to take a toll, and despite his success as a pianist and composer, Mozart was falling into serious financial difficulties – even with the success of two operas considered to be among his most important works: *Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*.

In the midst of financial stress and deep depression, Mozart would go through a period of great music productivity and personal healing. *The Magic Flute* and his unfinished *Requiem* were written during 1790-91, and he attracted wealthy patrons to help pay some debts.

Mozart died in Vienna at the age of 35, a genius whose star burned out too soon. He had experienced a meteoric rise to fame at a very early age and given us over 600 musical pieces in half a lifetime. His music requires high technical mastery from those who perform it, and he has influenced many composers that followed. Mozart is considered one of the greatest composers of all time.

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# ***ENDURANCE***



**MAY 8, 2023 - 8:00 p.m.**

**BRUNSWICK HIGH SCHOOL  
AUDITORIUM**

**MICHELLE MERRILL  
MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR**

# SOLOIST



Our soloist for this concert is **Les Roettges**. Les is principal flute for the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, the Coastal Symphony of Georgia, and the Eastern Festival. This is his first experience performing the concerto, and he says the score has been on his music stand since summer of 2022. “It is more than just practicing the notes,” he says, “but rather living with a piece of music like this to really develop a clear idea of how I would like it to go.”

Les is married to Lorraine, also a flutist, and they have three grown children. Les has a Bachelors in Music from the New England Conservatory, and a Master of Music from Juilliard. He enjoys fishing and kayaking and is proud to share that he is a cancer survivor. Les says he is mainly an orchestra player but enjoys stepping out front occasionally. His favorite thing about being a musician is “the never-ending mission to improve my abilities to perform.”



# PROGRAM

Michelle Merrill, Conductor

Sarah Kirkland Snider

*Something for the Dark*

Carl Reinecke

Flute Concerto in D major

- I. Allegro molto moderato
- II. Lento e mesto
- III. Moderato in tempo animato

Soloist: Les Roettges, Principal Flute,  
Coastal Symphony of Georgia

## *Intermission*

Dimitri Shostakovich

Symphony No. 5

- I. Moderato-Allegro non troppo
- II. Allegretto
- III. Largo
- IV. Allegro non troppo

## CONCERT NOTES

*Our Spring concert brings us music of endurance and resilience.*

The concert opens with Sarah Kirkland Snider's haunting *Something for the Dark*. The piece was commissioned by The Detroit Symphony in 2016 as a result of her receiving the DSO Elaine Lebenbom Award for Female Composers in 2014. Snider says thinking about Detroit caused her to think about resilience – what it means to endure. The music opens with a bold statement of hope in the horns and trombones, then takes us through humbling passages to a delicate tune in flute, harp and celeste, and on to a testing tumult before finding a “kind of a clear-eyed serenity – maybe even the kind of hope that endures.”

Carl Reinecke's Flute Concerto was the last work he composed before his death in 1910. A contemporary of Schuman, Reinecke shared his fondness for the Romantic Period. The concerto will be performed by Les Roettges, principal flute for The Coastal Symphony of Georgia. It allows the flutist to take center stage throughout while pairing with other orchestra members in a cheerful first movement, a slow dark second movement, and finally stirring the brass and strings into dramatic swells of harmony and texture that lead to a triumphant finale.

The evening closes with Dimitri Shostakovich's powerful and controversial Fifth Symphony. It was written at the height of the Stalin era, a time of death, fear, and artistic repression. There is a constant sense of urgency, an overwhelming sadness to the music. Scholar Richard Taruskin described Shostakovich as one who “embodied the idea of the artist in society”, and the public heard the symphony as an expression of the suffering to which it had been subjected. Ironically, the authorities claimed they found everything they had demanded of Shostakovich.

*The Season Finale will showcase our musicians' virtuoso talents!*

# THE ORCHESTRA

Michelle Merrill, Music Director and Conductor

## 1st VIOLIN

Aurica Duca

### **Southeast Georgia**

### **Health System**

### **Concertmaster's Chair**

Anastasia Petrunina

Ingang Han

Micah Gangwer

Siyu Zhang

Andy Bruck

Annie Hertle

Igor Khukhua

Hannah Barrow

Arita Acton

## 2nd Violin

Piotr Szewczyk, Principal

Jessica Hung

Chi-Yin Chen

Alexandra Khaimovich

Sarah Land

Corina Donica

James Chang

Kaitlin Smedley

## Viola

Jorge A Peña

### **The Jane Günter-McCoy**

### **Principal Viola Chair**

Romona Merritt

Cynthia Kempf

Yvonne Johnson

Angelo Goderre

Jessye Russom

## Cello

Jin Kim

### **The Elizabeth and John H.**

### **Starr Principal Cello Chair**

Brian Magnus

Ben Fryxell

Laurie Casseday

Ryan Knott

Linda Minke

## Bass

John Wieland, Principal

Kevin Casseday

Paul Strasshofer

Todd Lockwood

Marc Chesanow

## Flute

Les Roettges, Principal

Jeana Melilli

Angela Sherzer

## Oboe

Daniel Rios, Principal

Casey Knowlton

## Clarinet

Kristen Spiridon, Principal

Patrick Graham

Sunshine Simmons

## Bassoon

Anthony Anurca

### **The Leo E. Ruckle**

### **Principal Bassoon Chair**

Ted Shistle

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# MEET THE COMPOSERS

## **Sarah Kirkland Snider – 1973 -**

Sarah Kirkland Snider has been deemed “a rising star on the American compositional scene” by the *Wall Street Journal*, and “an important representative of 21<sup>st</sup> Century trends in composition” by the *New York Classical Review*. She has been named by *The Washington Post* as one of the Top 35 Female Composers in Classical Music.



Born and raised in Princeton, New Jersey, despite non-musical parentage, she had a self-professed “musical itch” from a young age, even to knock on her neighbors’ doors to play their pianos by ear. Eventually, she began formal music study, beginning piano at age 7 and cello at age 10. She also composed at a young age, describing these early works as “somewhere between early Debussy and Joni Mitchell.”

Snider sang in choirs, attending five years of summer camp at the American Boychoir School. At Princeton High School, she sang in a nationally celebrated high school choir, and performed in the Princeton High School Orchestra. She cites two female PHS Orchestra conductors as early female role models.

The young composer received a BA in Psychology-Sociology from Wesleyan University, but decided not to pursue composition because she felt her music was too conservative for its experimentally-oriented program. After graduation with a Bachelor of Arts in 1995, Snider went to work at a New York law firm, considering a career in public interest law. During that time, she began writing music for experimental theater and decided to concentrate on composition full time. She pursued her studies at New York University and later Yale School of Music where she earned a Master of Music and an Artist Diploma in Composition.

Snider’s compositions have been commissioned or performed by orchestras worldwide. Her music has been described as rapturous, groundbreaking, expressive, and personal.

Snider lives in Princeton with her husband, composer Steven Mackey, son Jasper, and daughter Dylan.

## Carl Reinecke – 1824-1910

Carl Reinecke was a German pianist, composer, conductor, and teacher who was considered one of the most influential and versatile musicians of his time. While he performed and composed during the mid-Romantic era, he always sought to preserve the Classical tradition of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Reinecke was born in Altona, Hamburg, Germany, and he studied with his father who was a music teacher – first violin, then piano. Young Carl made his first public appearance at age 12, performed his first concert tour at age 19, and studied with Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Liszt. Between 1851 and 1860, Reinecke taught at Cologne Conservatory, served as Music Director at Barmen and Breslau Universities, conducted Leipzig's Gewandhaus Orchestra and taught piano and composition at Leipzig Conservatory – all while continuing concert tours. His students included Edvard Grieg, Arthur Sullivan, and Max Bruch.



Reinecke's body of compositional work included symphonies, concertos for violin, harp, flute and piano, sonatas, and operas. After his retirement from the conservatory, he devoted his time to composition, resulting in almost 300 published works. Reinecke is best known for his flute sonata *Undine*; however, his flute concerto was not well received. One reviewer called it "blissfully dated," but another, Geoffrey Norris of *Gramophone*, called it "a substantial work ... that makes amends for the fact that Brahms never wrote a concerto for flute."

Reinecke's piano playing has been described as full of grace and neatness, and he was probably unrivaled as a Mozart player in his time. In 1904, at the age of 80, the composer recorded seven of his works playing on a piano roll becoming the earliest born pianist to do so. Carl Reinecke died March 10, 1910 in Leipzig, Germany.

## Dimitri Shostakovich 1906-1975

Dimitri Shostakovich was a Russian composer renowned for his 15 symphonies, chamber works, and concerti – many of them written under the pressure of government-imposed standards of Soviet art. He experienced great success, suffered devastating rebukes from Stalin and the government authorities, and created a comeback which left him with his artistry intact.

Shostakovich was born into a comfortable family life. His father was a government scientist and amateur singer, and his mother was a conservatory trained pianist. Young Dimitri took his early



lessons with her until he entered the Petrograd Conservatory at age 13. At the conservatory, he was considered a brilliant, talented, serious yet irreverent student; while there, he developed into a top flight pianist and composer of extraordinary advanced music.

Shostakovich flourished in the permissive atmosphere of post-revolutionary iconoclasm during the 1920s. It was the early time of modernism with experimentation, celebration of the abstract and synthetic, and negation of the past as dominant trends. However, when an opera written in 1936 infuriated Stalin, the composer's work was banned and the opera pulled from the repertoire. His answer was his fifth symphony, subtitled, *A Soviet Artist's Practical and Creative Response to Just Criticism*. It was a triumph with the audience hearing recognition of their suffering, and the authorities believing he had delivered what they demanded.

The composer wrote some of his best music in the 1940s, but the prevailing seriousness and grimness in the pieces contributed to a second fall from grace. At the start of the Cold War, the government imposed firmer ideological control on artists, demanding a more accessible musical language. Leading figures of Russian music were attacked and disgraced, and their work denounced in 1945. The censure remained in place until 1956.



Shostakovich would go on to pursue a creative career. He won the Lenin Prize and the Sibelius Prize in 1958; his Symphony No. 11 was considered a paean to the revolution. Noted for his gregariousness, in spite of his brooding music, Shostakovich visited the United States in 1949 and completed an extended tour of Europe in 1958.

Dimitri Shostakovich is considered one of the greatest composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. While Stravinsky and Schoenberg had much greater influence on the development of 20<sup>th</sup> Century style, Shostakovich's music with its darkness, pain, and litany of hope crushed – above all its sense of suffering and sadness - revealed the essential truth of the time.

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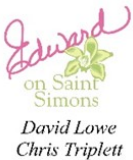
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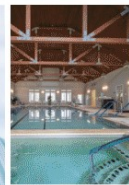
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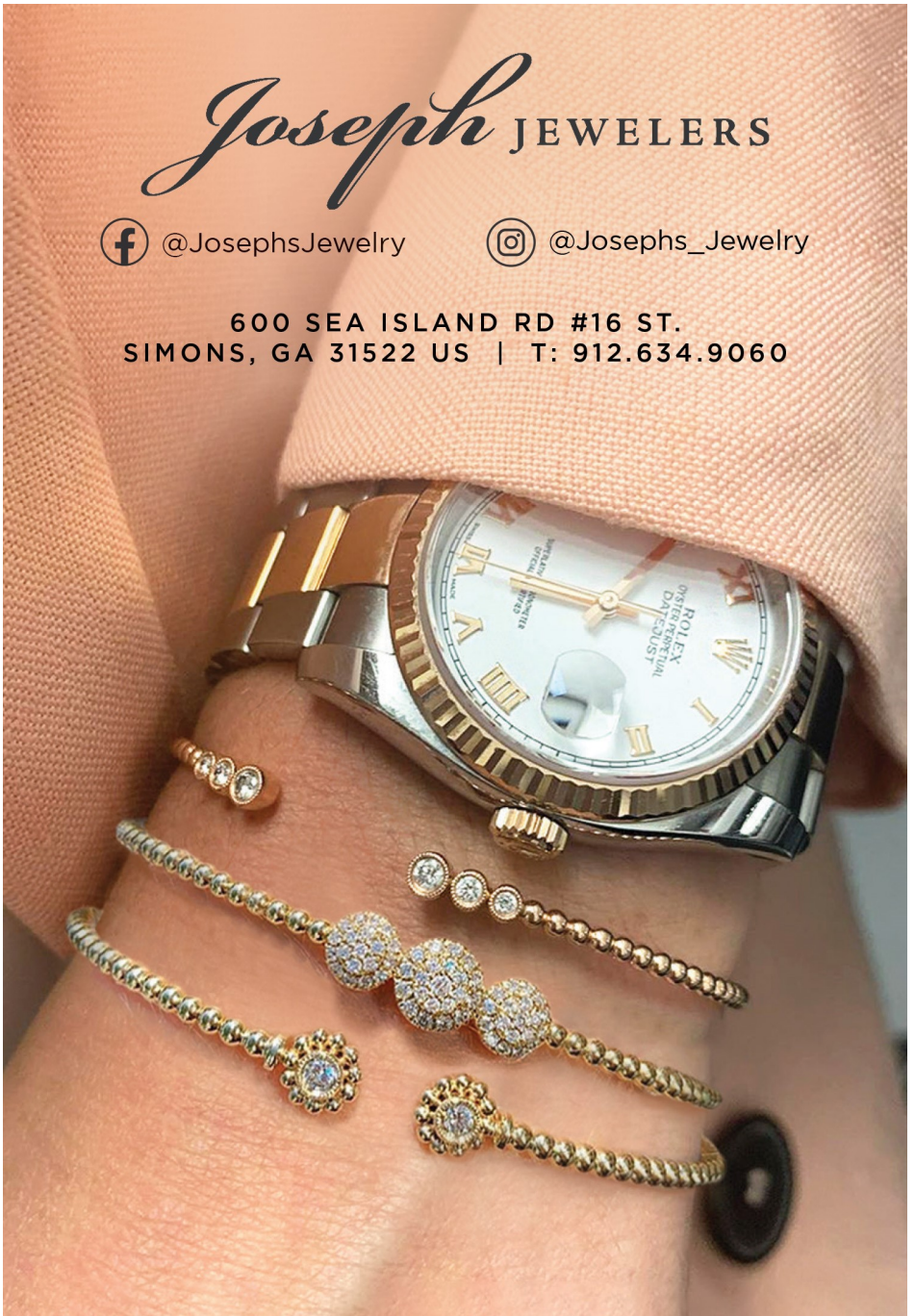


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