



The Paramount Chamber Players are the Tri-Cities' premier chamber music ensemble dedicated to promoting artistic excellence, sharing chamber music with local audiences, and ensuring that chamber music is a vital part of life in our communities.



THE PARAMOUNT CHAMBER PLAYERS

Chamber Music for the Mountain Empire

with guest artists

David Kovac, viola; Cameron Lugo, violin
and David Lugo, violin

Singing in the Spring

*"I'm singing in the rain. What a glorious feeling,
I'm happy again"—Arthur Freed*

Chamber music by McCoy, Holler, Heggie, Brahms

What better way to celebrate the art of singing and instrumental melody than with the voices of young people? Local composer, Beth McCoy has written a new work, *Celtic Suite*, especially for The Paramount Chamber Players and the Mountain Empire Children's Choral Academy. Following this premier, we showcase tenor Thomas O'Neill, the 2016 Paramount Chamber Players Award winner singing *Friendly Persuasions* by Jake Heggie. In addition, the ensemble will reprise Ann Holler's *Souvenirs of Faith*, an instrumental song fest of gospel songs. We top off the concert by getting our instruments singing the tunes of the great melodist Johannes Brahms in his *Piano Quartet in G minor*. Truly, "Singing in the Spring."

Thursday, April 6 • 7:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church, Kingsport, TN

\$15 adults / \$10 seniors / students free

Friday, April 7 • 7:30 p.m.

St. John's Episcopal Church, Johnson City, TN

Tickets: \$15 adults / \$12 seniors / students free

Saturday, April 8 • 7:30 p.m.

The Paramount Center for the Arts, Bristol, TN

\$15 adults / \$12 seniors / plus fees and taxes / students free
Tickets may be purchased at ParamountBristol.org

Sunday, April 9 • 3:00 p.m.

Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church, Abingdon, VA

The Spencer-Miller Memorial Concert Series

Tickets: \$10 adults / students free



Chamber Music News of the Mountain Empire

TPCP Musicians' Professional Highlights:

Craig Combs is developing a second chamber ensemble based on the model of TPCP based at the Pilgrim's Monument and Museum in Provincetown, MA.

Luis Casal played at Carnegie Hall on February 13th for "Music 4 Life International" and premiered the viola version of *Baltic Song* by Ross James Carey in recital on February 10th.

George Figueroa performed a recital in Northern California; premiered a contemporary work in Weill Recital Hall; became a NYC Subway Artist; graduated from Culinary Apprenticeship in NYC; and is currently in Florida playing with the Sarasota Opera.

Cherylonda Fitzgerald is performing on March 23rd at 7 p.m. with Anthony Rispo, organist on his recital as part of the Holy Trinity Centennial Concert Series; April 2nd at 3 p.m. as guest soloist on Milligan's Women's Chorale Concert; August 6th at 3 p.m., Virginia Highlands Festival in Abingdon as member of the Johnson City Symphony Quartet.

Eugene Jones will appear in a solo performance with the State Line Wind Symphony in Carl Maria von Weber's "Concertino".

Catherine McGlasson is coordinating the Suzuki Music School's 50th Birthday Celebration coinciding with Kingsport's Centennial Celebration. On the agenda: 50 Pop-Up Concerts in our community.

Rebecca Paluzzi —multiple concerts with ETSU Suzuki Studies Program as well as with her university students. Presented masterclasses at Dobyns-Bennett and Science Hill High Schools along with her regular Johnson City Symphony responsibilities.

Thomas Maternik-Piret performed in area concerts in December culminating in a performance of the Beethoven Cello Sonata in A Major, no. 3 on TPCP concerts last January.

Kimberly Maternik-Piret appearing August 6th at 3 p.m., Virginia Highlands Festival as a member of the Johnson City Symphony Quartet; continues her regular schedule with the Johnson City Symphony and Suzuki Talent Education of Appalachia.

The Paramount Chamber Players Award In May 2017, The Bristol Music Club will choose the tenth Paramount Chamber Players Award winner! TPCP is proud of our nine year association with TBMC and of our support of the student artists in the Mountain Empire. Many of them have continued on after their award to study music in undergraduate school and to perform with TPCP as professionals. We hope that this association with TBMC will continue for many years to come and that our award winners will

continue to return to play with us in concert. In the April concerts, we will perform with the ninth winner, Thomas Lewis O'Neill, tenor performing "Friendly Persuasions" by American composer Jake Heggie. See the program notes below for a taste of what to expect.

Program Notes: Extended notes in the concert program

Celtic Suite by Beth P. McCoy *Celtic Suite* was commissioned by the board members and musicians of The Paramount Chamber Players (TPCP). The original commission was for choir and chamber ensemble. Beth McCoy created a work for young women's chorus to join the forces of TPCP, enlisting Bella Voce (a chorus of the Highlands Youth Ensemble of the Mountain Empire Children's Choral Academy) for its premiere. The five movements of *Celtic Suite* each reflect on a different historical musical style—Medieval, Baroque, Classical, Impressionistic and Late 20th Century. McCoy spent considerable time researching ancient texts and ultimately decided on a variety of sources connecting various Celtic writers and lyricists over the ages including some of the earliest texts of Irish verse attributed to Amergin Glúingel, as well as texts from St. Patrick, St. Columba, and William Butler Yeats. Ultimately, the work is a small collection of musical and poetic style merged into a modern framework.

While each work is musically independent, the collective texts create an arch that describes the relationship between the human and the divine. "The Mystery" (first movement) answers the unspoken question, "Who are you?", in all its profound relation to the human experience. "Lorica" (Second movement in five parts) tells the mythological story of how St. Patrick's army passed through barbarian lands without being noticed. By a bit divine providence, a fog descends and the barbarian forces only hear the sound of one lost fawn despite the reality that St. Patrick's army is passing by. The cry of the fawn becomes the sound of a prayer for safe passage.

"The Prayer of St. Colomba" (third movement) follows the miracle of the fawn's cry with a prayer for mercy, Godspeed and help in the face of woe. "To a Child Dancing in the Wind" (fourth movement) is a setting of a William Butler Yeats poem describing the carefree nature of youth. Juxtaposed with the previous developing narrative, the poem jars the listener to consider the fullness of joy and the exuberance of the human experience as being a part of a prayerful existence. And "Celtic Blessing", the final movement, blesses the audience with the wit of the Irish and counsels us to love, sing and dance forever.

Souvenirs of Faith by Ann Holler *Souvenirs of Faith* is an arrangement of "old time" hymns for instrumental ensemble. In her own words, "These beloved hymns have survived through

generations, wars, fires, floods, and social upheavals because they are important to so many of us and deeply ingrained in our experience. Each hymn has cultural connotations. Who can hear the pure, simple melody and harmony of "Nearer My God to Thee" without thinking of the last minutes of those unfortunate passengers on the Titanic? Every hymn also has personal significance. As we hear these tunes and sing them, they may transport us to a simpler time and place. They may remind us of our home church, or persons of faith, or favorite singers, or of friends. We may recall that they brought us comfort during trying times or helped us celebrate. They have touched us in a personal way and still do. They are our souvenirs of faith."

Friendly Persuasions by Jake Heggie Jake Heggie originally composed *Friendly Persuasions* for piano and tenor and then arranged a chamber version for flute, clarinet, cello and piano for the recording of the work and this is the version you will hear at the concert in April. In Heggie's own words, "the songs in *Friendly Persuasions* are about four transformative friendships that profoundly influenced Francis Poulenc's life and work. The music is influenced by Poulenc's unique harmonic vocabulary." Lyricist, Gene Scheer, creates four snapshots of Francis Poulenc's life while Heggie imitates Poulenc's style injecting elements of theater and operatic composition. The result is an artistic experience with an entertaining element. In April's performance, the tenor is the ninth winner of the Paramount Chamber Player's Award, Thomas Lewis O'Neill.

Piano Quartet in G minor op. 25 by Johannes Brahms While in Hamm for the summer of 1861 at the age of 28, Brahms completed his first four chamber music works—the three piano quartets and the single piano quintet. His first piano quartet, started in 1859, had given him difficulty. Robert Schumann had passed away in 1859 and Brahms had labored under his mentor's observation that Brahms' ideas were most suited for the symphony in the style of Beethoven. The comparison to Beethoven at such a young age created a struggle for Brahms which only deepened throughout his life. As Brahms labored to fulfill the prophesy, he did in fact use his large-scale chamber music concepts as a forum to work out symphonic ideas. In fact, the quintet was orchestrated in the twentieth century by Arnold Schoenberg as an homage to Brahms whom he had met in the 1890s.

2017-18 Concert Season Dates

October 5-8, 2017 • February 1-4, 2018 • May 3-6, 2018

For further details go to: www.paramountplayers.com
<https://soundcloud.com/paramount-chamber-players>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TheParamountChamberPlayers/>

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